

**LETTERS
POLICY**

The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

Letters to the Editor,
The Sun-Tribune
6290 Main St.
Stouffville, ON
L4A 1G7
jmason@yrmg.com

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Best wishes from fellow GBS flu shot sufferer

Re: Million to one shot,
Feb. 11.

I read with great interest the story by Jim Thomas and Tiffany Hsieh on Don Gibson of Stouffville and his illness.

The Sun-Tribune printed another letter from me after I got GBS from a flu shot in 2000.

Since then, I am not allowed to have any flu shots and I have had no further problems.

I am now 85 and still going strong — most of the time!

My best wishes to Mr. Gibson for a speedy recovery.

MARIAN DISSETTE
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE

Region not helping those most in need

Re: Transit riders share
blame, letter to the editor by
Nora Marek, Feb. 13.

Mobility Plus is not the only
York Region service mired in a

dispassionate corporate culture that does not include human objectives in its planning.

Recently, the staff of the York Region transportation committee recommended rejecting subsidies for mentally disabled clients living on Ontario Disability Support Plan payments because they did not fit into its business plan. It also recommended cancelling a pilot program of subsidized transit fares for a shelter in Aurora.

Canadians gave \$82 million to Haiti relief recently, indicating we are a compassionate and humane people who would certainly support these initiatives, even at a cost.

York Region staff do not seem to share these sentiments and have forgotten their mandate — to serve the people of York Region, all of them, according to their needs.

As usual with bureaucratic organizations, the tail is wagging the dog.

DR. R. BAHLIEDA
NEWMARKET



Long-awaited lake park belongs on beach, council

Do politics make a bad playground? And just where will Musselman's Lake's first municipal park be located?

While rumours circulate that it will be behind the old Wagon Wheel Ranch on the southeast side of the lake, Councillor Phil Bannon said private negotiations with the three or four landowners, from whom the purchase of the park site would be made, are still under way.

It may be late in the ball game but, still wanting to come up to bat with my opinion, I will pitch my favoured location.

The good folks in urban Stouffville may not understand why a playground generates controversy up the Ninth Line at the lake. But then, playgrounds are commonplace in Stouffville proper.

At the lake, things are different. Within a 10-door span of where I live I can count 14 children — five around the age of my two-year-old son. There are 20 kids at the corner that wait for the bus. Some of the families are low income, have no access to a car or, like myself, are single working moms.

Cedar Beach, the only park within distance, is a half-hour walk away and the cost for entrance is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. The roads



Deborah Waddington

around the lake lack sidewalks and are dangerous. There have been a number of tragic accidents. Kids at the lake lack access to a public playground — unless they drive!

Those of you who live close by a park — the best of which, I believe, is Memorial Park in downtown Stouffville — will know of the benefits to a community a good park provides.

Memorial Park is the place we frequented most last summer because it was central. It is a social space where people meet and interact and the facilities draw people to it: a ball diamond, swimming pool, library, open field and picnic area are all within steps.

With monkey bars and bridges, a good park provides a launching point for physical activity and the inspira-

tion for imaginative games. Good parks have a natural feature that engenders interaction.

A public park is an economic leveller because no one is prohibited access and it gives parents a few blessed moments of peace and the pleasure of watching happy faces.

There is a site at the lake that is the obvious choice for a good park: the Glendale beach site on the lake's southern tip, which, until recently, was a popular destination for the public.

Across from the variety store, at the crux of the only two routes around the lake, Glendale has the slogan "location, location, location" written all over its 5.5 acres.

A central clearing would provide for a decent ball diamond, a run for dog walkers and a site for a sand-submerged ship hull where kids could climb and play.

There is a great toboggan hill, a wooded path, a short stretch of beach from which to begin the project that the subwatershed report calls "lake shore naturalization" and even a smatter of parking spaces.

In fact, the Glendale site is the obvious choice for a park because it is already being used in this manner despite the posted "Trespassers will be ..."

At Glendale, kids throw stones in

the lake, kids throw Frisbees, kids climb trees, kids build a bike ramp, kids jump along the concrete barriers, a man catches grasshoppers to feed his dragon and folks walk their dogs.

But back at the ranch, the Wagon Wheel property has property but zero street presence. It could provide a link to the Oak Ridges Trails but may not be compatible with the requirements for a playground.

I respect established protocols and trust the processes of consultation and feasibility studies will generate a solution.

However, I hope the process alone will not determine the outcome because the results may be lukewarm all around.

Councillor Bannon has argued to council it "spends 50 cents in the outlying area for every dollar spent in town". We have seen some beautiful new buildings, roads and facilities built in Stouffville recently. Even the clock tower now sports a silver sequined sleeve.

Folks at the lake have been waiting a long time for 50 cents to be spent to strengthen our community infrastructure. Common sense says put a park where children are playing, and that is at Glendale beach.

Deborah Waddington is a member of The Sun-Tribune's Community Links panel.