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**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.

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OPINION

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Editorial

True north strong, free and golden

The party we came to know as the Vancouver Olympics is over. But what will its legacy be? Will Canadians see themselves in a better light? We should.

"Compare for a moment the Canada that was with the Canada that now is," John Furlong, chief organizer of the Games, said at Sunday's closing ceremonies.

Winning the most gold medals of any nation in winter Games history helps.

So does hosting the world for two weeks and garnering positive media attention around the planet.

The world now sees us in a different light.

So should we. The little county that has so often been in the shadow of the United States can do so much more than talk a good game.

That same country that couldn't win a gold medal on home soil, as we heard so many times before the Vancouver Games began.

Fourteen golds put that dubious distinction to rest.

But what does it mean long term? For York Region and the rest of the GTA, we hope it translates into the bar being raised when the Pan American Games come to town in 2015.

And that doesn't just mean building or refurbishing facilities to a world-class level and acting as good hosts.

We have to be competitive. In a world of split seconds, that doesn't mean always owning the podium. But we must be able to compete with the rest of the world.

That requires money, as this country discovered in they years before Vancouver. That's corporate and government dollars.

Thank you to the companies that backed our athletes all the way to Vancouver.

Still, we need more of you doling out larger sums as we lead up to the summer Games in London in two years and the Pan Am Games.

Locally, we need that support at the grassroots level.

As nice as it is to see our countrymen and countrywomen medal at the Olympics, it's even more important to see our population participating in recreation and athletics.

From a broader base, champions will be developed.

From that same base, a healthier country will grow.

A country that is so much prouder than it was three weeks ago.

The true north strong and free.



Letters to the Editor

Stouffville missed boat with seating, sightlines at new rink

Re: Stouffville's new arena no winner: visitor, Feb. 20.

As a Stouffville taxpayer for 33 years, we had occasion Feb. 17 to visit the Clippers Sports Complex to watch one of our grandsons play for Uxbridge.

Our first impressions were quite favourable, until we took our seats and the game started. Then it was absolute frustration. We were grouped together, as is our custom, in seats above the centre red line and our home blue line.

If anyone seated beside us leaned forward to get a better view, our sightline was obstructed, as it was with the heads and shoulders of those who sat in the rows below us. We could not follow the puck or play up and down the near boards or for a good 10 to 15 feet out from them.

The second pad was being used for a practice. Still, there was a line-up in the men's washroom. Just how long would the lines have been if there were spectators for four teams or, much worse, in case of tournament play with eight teams in the building?

The facilities, even with the two family washrooms on the upper level, are totally inadequate.

Mayor Wayne Emmerson, after reading an e-mail from us, said the ice pads are the same as those at Angus Glen in Markham.

While the designs are similar, they are not the same. As subtle as the differences may be, they make a big difference.

At Angus Glen, each row offers 31 inches of seating room, while at Clippers that figure is 28. At Angus Glen, each row of seats is 21 inches below the row above, while Stouffville has 17. The end result is heads are your view.

A recent article in The Sun-Tribune said the population of Whitchurch-Stouffville should top 51,000 in the next 10 years. That may be conservative.

This raises the question why a facility has been built now with inadequate seating for just over 300 in each pad.

Why not have an eye to the future with one of those pads a stadium size for 1,000 or more spectators? Stouffville calls itself a hockey town and is very proud of the Clippers tradition.

Two quotations apply: "If you build it, they will come" and "You have missed the boat".

Once the hockey season starts next fall, the arena staff will receive many more similar comments, especially when Stouffville hosts a tournament.

JIM & LYNN FERRIS
STOUFFVILLE

Town survey smacks of racism

Re: Have your say on future recreation, Feb. 13.

It is questionable why Whitchurch-Stouffville's leisure department needs to know in its new survey the genetic or ethnic background of residents.

But the troubling question arises, how come there is no option to put "Canadian" as your ethno-cultural background? Options exist for American, South American, Australian, Central American and a large number of other racial alternatives that do not seem to be any business of the town's leisure department.

What is the intended use of the results of this extremely racist survey?

This survey seems the type a bigoted redneck would put together to try and see if he liked a particular neighbourhood or not.

CHUCK SUIKKI
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

The day Sidney made us remember

Unless you over-served yourself, you know.

You'll know who you were with and where you were when Sidney Crosby scored that goal Sunday night.

People of my generation will equate it to the days JFK was killed, Neil Armstrong walked on the moon and Paul Henderson scored the goal.

Just as the next generation remembers 9/11, the Indian Ocean tsunami and the Blue Jays winning the World Series.

Keith Acton was in a precarious spot during Sunday's Canada-USA gold-medal hockey game. His bosses with the Toronto Maple Leafs, head coach Ron Wilson and GM Brian Burke, held the same posts with the American team.

"Text your boss a message," some of the more than 325 people in Mr. Acton's Boston Pizza in Stouffville urged him before overtime began.

The suggested greetings weren't Hallmark friendly. They weren't even PG.

The assistant coach, who wanted to have a day job come Monday morning, wisely begged off.

What he did do was accurately predict a guy wearing No. 87 would score the winner for Canada.

Bingo. The joint exploded. Strangers, many in red and white, hugged and high-fived.

What had become a morgue when the Americans tied the score was in full party mode. Beer flowed. Glasses clinked.

All stood to sing the national anthem in unison with their hockey heroes on the other side of the country.

All was well again in hockey nation.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.