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905-640-2612

Classified: 1-800-743-3353  
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**EDITORIAL  
Editor**

Jim Mason  
jmason@yrmg.com

**ADVERTISING  
Retail Manager**

Mike Banville  
mbanville@yrmg.com

**Classified Manager**

Bonnie Rondeau  
brondeau@yrmg.com

**DISTRIBUTION  
Circulation  
Supervisor**

Carrie MacFarlane  
cmacfarlane@yrmg.com

**Stouffville  
Manager**

Carolyn Norman  
cnorman@yrmg.com

**PRODUCTION  
Manager**

Sherry Day  
sday@yrmg.com

**INTERACTIVE**

**MEDIA  
Marketing  
& Advertising  
Manager**

Dauna Andrews  
dandrews@yrmg.com

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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.

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



# OPINION

6290 Main St.  
Stouffville, ON, L4A 1G7  
www.yorkregion.com

**PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot**

**EDITOR IN CHIEF**  
Debora Kelly

**BUSINESS  
MANAGER**  
Robert Lazaruko

**DIRECTOR,  
OPERATIONS**  
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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Leash-free park plan good for humans, too

*Re: No leash, no problem: Will Stouffville also lap up a dog park? March 6.*

When I sat down with my coffee last Saturday morning to take a look at the Stouffville Sun-Tribune, I was surprised to see your article on leash-free dog parks in York Region.

I had just been speaking with a friend from Cambridge, who told me that she was taking her dog to the local dog park for a fun run and socialization with other dogs. It made me wonder why we do not have a dog park in Stouffville.

I would be happy to voluntarily pay \$20 to use a local dog park and know several neighbours who feel the same.

It's not only a great idea for our dogs, but a great way for us humans to socialize, meet and get to know our neighbours.

Even 10 years ago, I didn't understand why "the town just didn't want it".

Have you ever seen a town with so many dogs? Hopefully, this time the proposition of a leash-free dog park will be accepted by council.

WENDY COWIE  
STOUFFVILLE

### Customer service No. 1

I have been a customer at Schell Lumber in Stouffville for more than 10 years.

I've never ceased to be amazed at the quality of service they provide. Whether it's a question about a 10-cent nail or a bathroom renovation, they've got the knowledge and always take time to answer questions.

Most recently I purchased a house lock and, when something went awry, they bent over backwards to fix it. How lucky we Stouffvillites are to have such a great store with such great people providing such great service.

JIM PRIEBE  
STOUFFVILLE



## O Canada lyrics have more woes than just thy sons

I recall a decade ago writing about Senator Vivienne Poy proposing to change the lyrics of O Canada. She didn't like the "in all thy sons command" line either. The idea was floated again last week in the throne speech right after millions of us heard the anthem sung so proudly at the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver.

At the time I didn't like the idea and still don't. I'm a traditionalist.

Besides, if a royal commission started tinkering with this thing, it might never stop.

For as I said then, the anthem is rife with words some people may find offensive.

1. Right off the bat are the words O Canada. Where does this O come from? Isn't it archaic? Does it not discriminate against our young people? You could argue Hey, Canada or Yo Canada, even What's up Canada? — how about Who-dat Canada? — would be more appropriate. You know, to foster a feeling of inclusiveness amongst our youth.

2. Then there's, "Our home and native land." Hello! Not every Canadian is from here originally. They immigrated here. So Canada is not



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their native land. Which makes the line an affront to immigrants.

Not to mention our First Nations people, who no doubt don't like us calling this our land, when they think of it as their land.

Besides, many people have Canadian citizenship but don't live here. So Canada is not their home.

Perhaps a better lyric would be, "Our summer place of residence and land where many of us were born, while others moved here, and still others left." It covers all the bases.

3. Then, of course, there's the notorious, "True patriot love, in all thy sons command."

Never mind the sons. Why patriot love? Why not maternal love?

Clearly this is another sexist lyric, the word patriot being derived from patrios, or of one's father.

Not to mention the word command. So militaristic, like some male dominance thing. Why not inspire, generate, facilitate or engender?

We could change sons to souls, except that may offend the atheists or anyone from any of the religions where they don't believe we have souls.

Not to mention the cynics who don't believe in love. They have rights, too.

Maybe the best word to replace sons — one that would be acceptable to Ottawa's bureaucracy — would be social insurance number holders.

Thus, "True patriot love in all thy sons command" could be "Real feelings of warmth, in all those with a social insurance number facilitate."

4. The next line, "With glowing hearts we see thee rise, the true north strong and free" will have to go, obviously, since a) some people have artificial hearts, which rarely glow, experts say, b) some people are blind and therefore don't see thee rise and c) some of us clearly don't like the idea of our country being strong, as if

we're going around kicking sand and snow in other countries' faces, which isn't nice.

A better line would be, "With various types of hearts, some artificial, we 'sense' thee rise, the true north (for those of us who are way up north — the deep south for those of us in Florida) vital and autonomous."

5. Last but not least, there's that lulu of a lyric, "God keep our land, glorious and free", the God reference having been added in 1970, which offends atheists and non-Christian religious people who might interpret this as a Christian God keeping a watchful eye on the land and not Allah or Buddha.

I think a better line would be, "O supreme being, or God, or four-leaf clover, or rabbit's foot, or whoever's in charge, keep our (or whoever's) land, glorious and free, Yo Canada, we won't necessarily stand on guard for thee, Hey politically correct Canada, we'll change our lyrics week-lyyyy!"

And there you have it. Our new national anthem lyrics, for now at least. They have a nice sort of Canadian ring to them, don't you think?

Stouffville resident Bernie O'Neill is a York Region Media Group editor