

York Region Media Group community newspapers  
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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

## Editorial

### Ain't no Sunshine for rest of us

So, are you on the \$100,000-plus so-called Sunshine List? Or are you an "average" Ontarian earning \$45,000 a year?

For those of us earning a modest living, learning 10,000 more Ontarians are earning six-figure salaries in 2009 — a recession year — than the year before is rubbing salt in the economic wound.

Since the mid 1990s when the Mike Harris government decide to shine a light on high salaries and show where tax dollars are going, average income earners have had to grit their teeth over rising numbers of police chiefs, hospital CEOs, school board and municipal bureaucrats earning staggering salaries.

But for the Ontario residents living below the poverty line, the salt in their wounds came in the form of last week's provincial budget, telling them despite higher food costs and rising costs of heating fuel, electricity and transit, they will endure unspecified cuts to their special food allowance and only a 1-per cent hike in their basic needs allowance.

York Region activists lobbying for fairness for the poorest of the poor argue if the government cuts the dietary food allowance by 10 or 20 per cent while raising overall low-income assistance rates 1 per cent, that translates into a real cut to the income of thousands of Ontarians to the tune of 9 to 19 per cent.

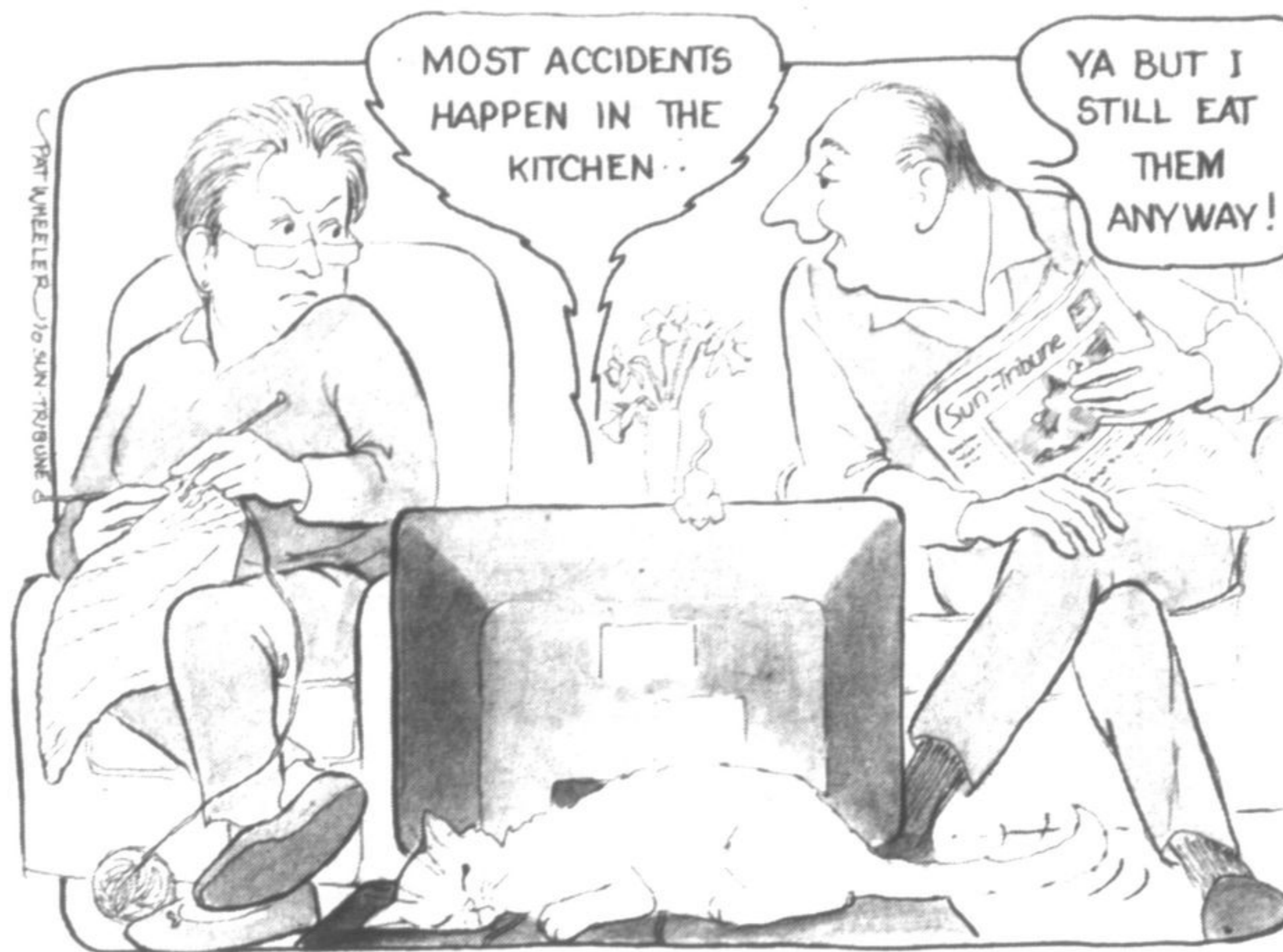
Add inflation into the equation and the least fortunate members of society are falling further behind each year, even as the Sunshine List recipients grow more numerous and more wealthy.

The Do the Math Working Group, which took its case for a higher food allowance to York Region's MPPs in the past year, say the majority agreed that living on current disability or assistance payments each month would be tough or next to impossible.

Advocates for the poor charge that needy Ontarians will become more susceptible to debilitating illness and disease if they have less money to buy healthy food. They will turn up at our hospitals for treatments for their illnesses and medical problems, no doubt representing more of a burden to our overstretched health care system.

That same health care system that sees the top bureaucrats of each of the government-created LHINs (Local Health Integration Networks) earning quarter-of-a-million-dollar salaries, plus financial officers, planning directors, community engagement officers and systems experts earning up to \$200,000.

Something stinks here and no amount sunshine will make these figures look or smell any better. Tell your MPP our government shouldn't allow the gap to widen between the rich and poor if we want a caring society.



## Letters to the Editor

### Take public transportation to Pearson airport, too

Re: The smooth way to fly out of Stouffville, column by Jim Mason, April 1.

You informed Stouffville readers how convenient and cheap it is to use public transportation to travel from Stouffville to the Toronto island airport.

Readers may be interested to know the same holds true for Pearson International Airport.

After a flight home from Europe last summer, our family took the Airport Express GO bus from Terminal 1 to the Richmond Hill Centre Terminal (\$5.35/adult). The driver courteously took our luggage out of the luggage compartment and we stepped onto the next platform where we bought a ticket for York Region Transit (\$3.25).

The spacious Viva Purple bus had room for our luggage and took us directly to the Markham Stouffville Hospital, where we transferred to the Stouffville Bus (No. 9). This bus dropped us off 200 feet from our home near Millard Street and Ninth Line.

Most are surprised to hear public transportation from Stouffville to Pearson and beyond is not only possible, but cheap and convenient as well.

The future of public transportation for Stouffville residents includes good east/west routes, like the Hwy. 7 route to and from our hospital. It was therefore distressing to hear funding for the planned construction of "bus-only" lanes along Hwy. 7 was withdrawn in last month's provincial budget.

That kind of vision will, literally, get our town and our region nowhere.

I encourage readers to write our MPP, Helena Jaczek, and ask her and her party to reconsider that decision and return to their earlier GTA-wide

### HAVE YOUR SAY

► What do you think of these issues or others? E-mail letters to the editor to jmason@yrmg.com

transit plan, which included the "bus-only" lane for Hwy. 7.

ARNOLD NEUFELDT-FAST  
STOUFFVILLE

### TV, movie shoots should make residents proud of Stouffville

Re: Supernatural TV show takes over Main Street, April 1.

I wanted to say what a pleasure it was for Stouffville to host the cast and crew of the TV show Warehouse 13 last week as they filmed in and around the downtown area.

It was great fun to see the making of a real Hollywood gunfight right on Church Street.

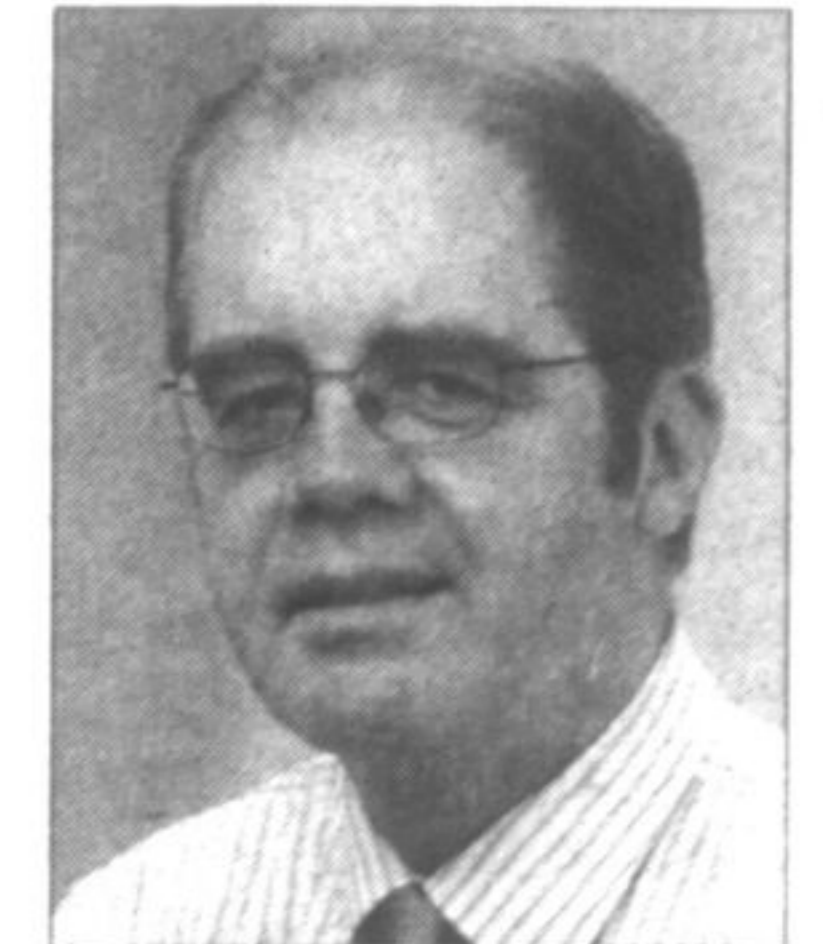
And as residents, it should make us all proud of our town's charm and beauty. (What better proof is there when film companies deem our town as one that should be photographed?)

When the location manager for GEP Production Inc. asked if they could shoot a scene at our house, my family and I were delighted — and compensated, thank you.

During filming, the cast and crew were warm and welcoming and gave our eight-year-old son a seat to watch no less than right beside the director.

My family and I will be watching when the show premieres in April. The only question I have is: when can we do it again?

D. DELHUARRY  
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Mailbag closed to candidates, supporters

Columnists, reporters and editorialists may not like the news, but it's true.

Surveys tell us letters to the editor are one of the best read features of a newspaper, this one included. They're also used as a gauge of readership.

Readers want to know what their neighbours are thinking. Some like to debate with others. Letters can also give editors story ideas.

It's the person next to you at the doughnut shop or soccer pitch spouting off about civil servants making more than \$100,000 or the pros and cons of the new arena. Except they sign their name to it and allow us to publish it.

But, there are limits, especially at election time.

There are more than six months until about half of us will vote in the municipal election. But the campaigning is clearly underway.

There are three candidates for mayor and four for council seats.

Rules? We don't print letters from candidates nor their family members and campaign workers. (If you don't identify yourself as one of the above, we'll ask.)

If we did print letters from candidates and their friends, we could fill full editions with free campaign ads between now and October. (There are some letters from candidates and their family on file that will not be printed.)

Same rules apply for all varieties of elections.

So, let the debate continue. Follow the rules and fill The Sun-Tribune's mailbag every week, please, readers. Tell us, and the candidates, what the biggest issues in this Whitchurch-Stouffville election are.

We want to hear from Joe and Josephine Citizen.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.