

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**

905-640-2612  
Fax: 905-640-8778

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ADVERTISING

905-640-2612  
Classified: 1-800-743-3353  
Fax: 905-640-8778

DISTRIBUTION  
905-640-2612

EDITORIAL  
Editor

Jim Mason  
jmason@yrmg.com

ADVERTISING  
Retail Manager

Mike Banville  
mbanville@yrmg.com

DISTRIBUTION  
Circulation  
Supervisor

Carolyn Norman  
cnorman@yrmg.com

PRODUCTION  
Manager

Sherry Day  
sday@yrmg.com

INTERACTIVE

MEDIA  
Marketing  
& Advertising  
Manager

Dawna Andrews  
dandrews@yrmg.com

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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

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Press  
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Canadian  
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Audit Board  
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# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**

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

PUBLISHER Ian Proudfoot

EDITOR IN CHIEF  
Debora Kelly

BUSINESS  
MANAGER  
Robert Lazaruko

DIRECTOR,  
OPERATIONS  
Barry Black

DIRECTOR,  
ADVERTISING,  
DISTRIBUTION  
Nicole Fletcher

DIRECTOR,  
REGIONAL PRODUCTS,  
CLASSIFIED,  
TODAY'S HOMES  
Debra Weller

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Downtown businesses moving over parking

Re: Sorry, we have parking, column by Jim Mason, June 10.

I felt compelled to reply to Mr. Mason's column. I must disagree with his view and clarify or put into perspective some of his facts.

I have operated a business in downtown Stouffville for more than 31 years. We attract clients locally, as well as from out of town.

Parking has been an issue since before we opened and lately it has just gotten worse.

The now-defunct business improvement area and the town were instrumental in creating the parking lot behind the CIBC lot and for black-topping the area behind businesses on the north side of Main Street, facing Commercial Street.

A number of business have moved from the downtown due the lack of convenient and

available parking. There are other business looking to relocate also due to the parking.

The downtown has lost all parking on Commercial and most parking on Church Street South in the last couple of years. The town did obtain parking near the Lebovic Centre for Arts & Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park and expanded the lot.

You are correct parking spaces were available in the town lot and on Main Monday. This is probably due to the fact at least five businesses are closed Mondays (for their weekend) and there are two stores vacant and I am just talking the central block only, between Market and Church streets.

There are opportunities available. However, landlords, property owners, merchants and residents will have to work together with a vision for a joint solution.

DAVID BARTHAU  
STOUFFVILLE



## Sadly, summer doesn't suit all of us equally

The summer solstice will be here in a few days.

While religions through the ages have held festivals or based special rites around the day with the most sunlight — and there will no doubt be some event involving “free spirits” in downtown Toronto running around in togas drinking home brew and sounding their vuvuzelas in tribute to Mother Earth — we probably won't do a whole lot around my place.

Maybe sit out back for a bit. Relax. Play some bocce, the great Italian lawnbowling game that is a bit less formal than the English variety. (It lends itself to holding a bottle in your hand, your lawn doesn't have to be perfectly flat and you don't have to wear a white shirt, or, if you're a guy, any shirt.)

When the sun finally goes down, I'll say, “Hey, the sun went down, four seconds later than it did last night. Amazing. OK, now you kids go to bed. You've still got school tomorrow.”

Although that excuse is only going to work for another week or so.

To everything there is a season and for those of us here in York Region, the season that is about to arrive is summer, a season I don't think I personally appreciate as much as I should.

Maybe it's the fact it always seems to be over before it gets started, the days soon to be getting shorter and the first cold nights coming after the early



Bernie O'Neill

August long weekend.

Or that I manage to book off my two weeks holidays right at the time a two-week monsoon settles over Ontario.

Or that I have to burn before I tan.

Or that I don't really golf as well as a guy in his 40s should golf.

People just assume I golf. Must be the plaid bellbottoms and lime-green shirts I wear to work. Or my giant umbrella.

Actually, I'm less like Tiger Woods than I am Tigger, of Winnie-the-Pooh fame, because most days, everything I swing at seems to bounce. I swing at the ball, graze the top of it, the ball goes straight down then bounces up, travelling in a graceful arc for 15 yards, after which it hits the ground and rolls back toward me for 10.

And that's just my putting.

So I tend to avoid golf unless I'm out

with my sons who are nice enough not to laugh at their old dad and are aware of who is buying the post-game meal.

And maybe I don't cycle as much as I should, not having the skin-tight Tour de France attire designed by NASA that people wear these days.

Still, when you consider it's summer here and winter in Australia because the Earth, which is a sphere, is tilting on its axis, so the sun's light, which has already travelled millions of kilometres to get here and is darned tired, is hitting us at less of a glancing blow than it was six months ago, when it was so cold out you could freeze your ears off or even die, you'd think we'd soak up every minute.

The days will get shorter as the Earth starts tilting back in the other direction. Winter's not far off.

“That's how fragile the whole setup is. We're all just kinda hanging here by a thread,” you tell your kids.

“That's why school's out. Not so you can help me on the farm, since I don't own a farm, and thank heavens I don't because knowing my skills we'd all starve to death. But because that's when the weather is nice, so you have to get out and enjoy it, make hay while the sun shines, because you only live once.”

Or something to that effect, to scare them away from the video games.

Along those lines, what I am looking forward to is taking my sons to visit my mom and sister up north and going out

to the cottage at which I was blessed to be able to spend summers as a kid.

There's a little boat there with a 9hp motor. We tool around the little islands, fish and swim (don't know where that word comes from, but that's what people say, “tooling around” in the boat).

What's new is everyone must have a pleasure craft operator's card, to prove you know how to tool around without killing yourself or your passengers and crew, anyone in any other boats, or any innocent bystanders on shore or in lakeside restaurants.

It costs \$50 to take the 36-question multiple choice test online. No card and you're subject to a \$250 fine.

Critics say the fact the test can be taken online means people are cheating or getting others to write it for them.

I'd argue it probably has raised awareness about the fact there are rules when taking your boat on the water that don't involve making sure you've got enough ice in the beer cooler.

If you haven't taken the test yet, you may want to get online and get it done before they close the loopholes.

Otherwise, you may be stuck stuffing your body into one of those cycling suits that really look best on people who cycle more than once a summer.

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