

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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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

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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Editorial Clear choices in election

Made up your mind for election day?

If you haven't voted at the advance polls, Monday is your day to act.

In Whitchurch-Stouffville, we will elect a mayor and six councillors. All voters elect the mayor. You'll also elect one ward councillor.

If you are a public school supporter, you will have one vote for the trustee who will represent Whitchurch-Stouffville and East Gwillimbury for the next four years.

Do you know in which of the town's six wards you live? Not so quick. Some boundaries have changed for this election.

Do you know who the candidates are? Where do they stand on the issues that concern your neighbourhood? Don't know? Phone or e-mail the candidates. Compare responses. Compare response time.

The town's financial status is the most prominent and divisive issue in this election. Almost all candidates challenging for seats, as well as some incumbents, think the town is too far in debt. That debt load, including cost overruns, will hamstring the municipal-ity going forward, they say.

Nonsense, say most of the incumbents. The debt is very manageable. The tax hikes residents will face are reasonable, they say. The facilities are needed.

The number of capital projects council tackled during the last four years is indeed large, compared to those built by previous editions of council.

The list includes the town's second twin-pad arena, downtown arts centre, fire/EMS station, Bethesda sports park and the redevelopment of Memorial Park.

All are not in favour of all projects. Fair enough. Many think the town spent too much on its arts centre, while patrons adore the facility. Others are just happy to see something done with the once-abandoned town hall.

All four arenas are fully booked, yet non-ice fans think council should have built its ice pads one at a time.

Many members of council will argue they are building for the future as well as now and saving tax money in the long run.

The new soccer fields were long overdue and a rumoured private indoor soccer pitch will hopefully aid the game even more.

We know fewer than 50 per cent of you will vote. Fair enough. It's your democratic right.

But if you chose not to exercise it, do you have a right to complain about our elected officials and their decisions?

See you at the polling stations?



Letters to the Editor

Attack on good man cowardly

Re: Smear attacks at work, Oct. 14.

What a shame it has come to this in my small town where my trusted mayor has been attacked personally.

Wayne Emmerson is a stand-up citizen of this town. I proudly display a sign on my front lawn for the upcoming election.

I first met Mayor Emmerson when he worked at Schell Lumber, where he was always courteous and willing to help a customer in any way he could. He soon learned my name from my frequent visits to the store and was always willing to help.

I remember when he decided to run for mayor. I was truly happy when he was elected. I thought to myself we couldn't have picked a better man.

Mr. Emmerson and his family were frequent visitors to ball diamonds in the community, out for their evening walks, always taking time to stop and chat.

There is so much more to Mr. Emmerson than people know. I remember the day my six-year-old asked me: "Mom, if I write to the mayor do you think he will come visit my school for show and tell?" I told him there was no doubt in my mind he wouldn't.

So, my youngest son and his friend wrote to the mayor and, sure enough, Mr. Emmerson visited St. Mark school and proudly spoke to the students about his role. The students surrounded him as they all eagerly asked questions.

To take time for the children, elderly and other residents of your community throughout the years is what makes someone a real mayor of a small town.

This small town has been lucky to have someone like Wayne Emmerson as mayor.

Shame on whoever the cowardly person was who sent packages about Mr. Emmerson. You seriously do not

know the real Mr. Emmerson. Perhaps you need to step out of the shadows and show your face so this town can decide what kind of person you are.

I will be voting Oct 25, for a mayor who I feel has the citizens best interests at heart and that will be candidate Wayne Emmerson

ANNE OAKES
STOUFFVILLE

Mayor should declare conflict

Re: Smear attacks at work, Oct. 14.

Whether Wayne Emmerson did or didn't "get a special deal" on the houses he bought in the Ballantrae Golf and Country Club, it's an absolute and total conflict of interest that the mayor is buying houses direct from a developer in his own town.

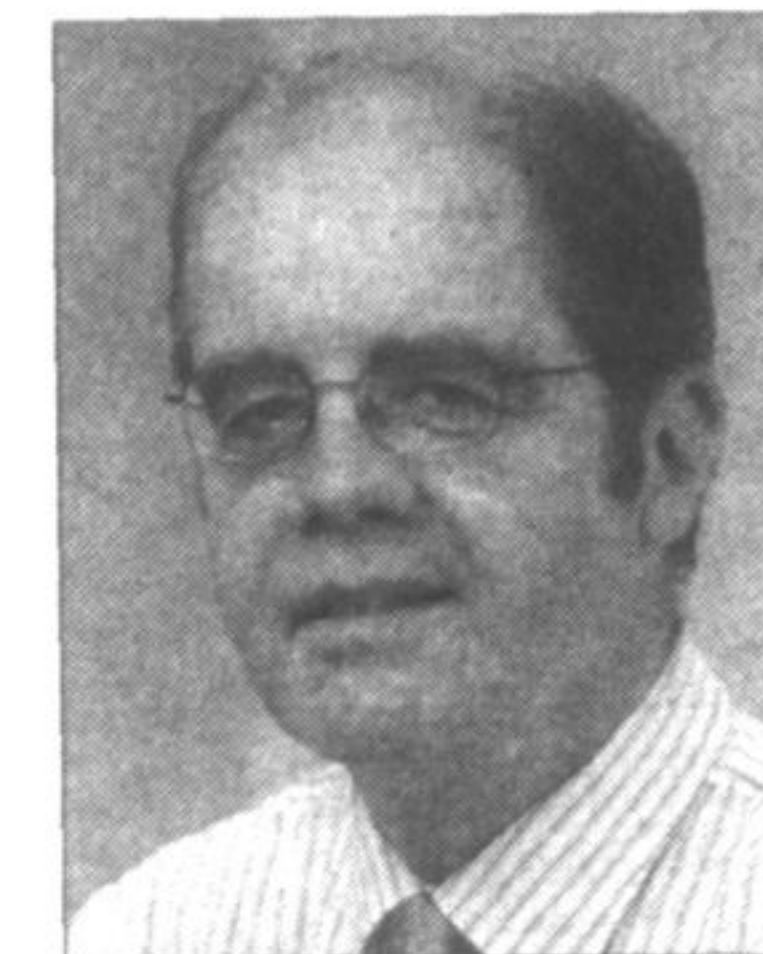
Other corporations have rules prohibiting employees from transacting with companies with whom they do business. If nothing else, it makes transactions appear much more above board.

Mr. Emmerson would like to suggest his personal life and dealings are separate from his public life but, unfortunately, when you become a public servant, you have to accept some of your personal life does become public.

I can't believe Mr. Emmerson wouldn't at the very least understand how his transactions appear "sneaky" to Whitchurch-Stouffville residents.

He could have declared what he was doing at the time he made the purchases to let everyone know if he truly had nothing to hide. Since he didn't feel the need to mention it that should at least put doubt into whether or not he can be trusted as mayor.

AMANDA VAN VEEN
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Election 2010 isn't all the buzz

Frank Frano has been cutting hair since he was a little shaver of 10 years old. He has coiffed Beatle cuts and perms, to buzz cuts and ducktails.

He's been a barber for 55 years in his native Italy, as well as Germany, England, Toronto and, for the last 23 years, Stouffville.

He's heard it all, too. Men let their hair down as they're getting it chopped off. They'll talk women, kids, sports, stocks and travel; things they can't do with a dentist's knuckles in their mouth or a doctor's hand (you fill in the blank).

This isn't your grandpa's chop shop. With leather high-backs, a flat screen and cappuccino machine, it's a sweet lounge.

Youngest son Rosario is the son in Frank's and Son Barber Shop.

Sometimes the language changes and the downtown Main Street shop sounds like Naples - and not the one in Florida.

And at election time, the talk often turns to politics. But not so much as of Monday, with the vote seven days away.

"Very quiet this election," says Frank, as he cuts what I have left.

There's nothing official here - the only pole is on the front porch with its twirling red and blue stripes.

But what election chatter there is includes voters:

- being nervous over the town debt;
- wanting even more facilities, including a seniors centre, bowling alley and curling club.

"People love this town," Frank says. "They just want it to be the best it can be."

Take note, candidates. It's like asking for a once-trendy mullet at Frank's. You want it both ways: business (tax control) in the front and party (more leisure options) in the back.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.