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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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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Town can do more to help inform voters

*Re: Lack of election meetings favours incumbents, letter to the editor by Randy Mole, Oct 21.*

I couldn't agree more. As a candidate for mayor, I was shocked at the town's lack of interest.

Rather than offer halls free for debates, candidates are provided with voters lists and a budget allowance.

We are allowed to spend a specified amount on our campaigns and are solely responsible for funding through self or donations. There are too many people in this town and too little time to get to them all.

I am fairly confident reporters would be all over the debates had there been more than two. Debates should be weekly, nightly – get it flowing, get involved.

The newspapers can only transfer their interpretation and may exclude valuable com-

ments or details of the candidates due to lack of space. Live debates are a must.

So many people don't even bother voting because they are not informed. Just as they are not provided a time to participate in town meetings. What a shame.

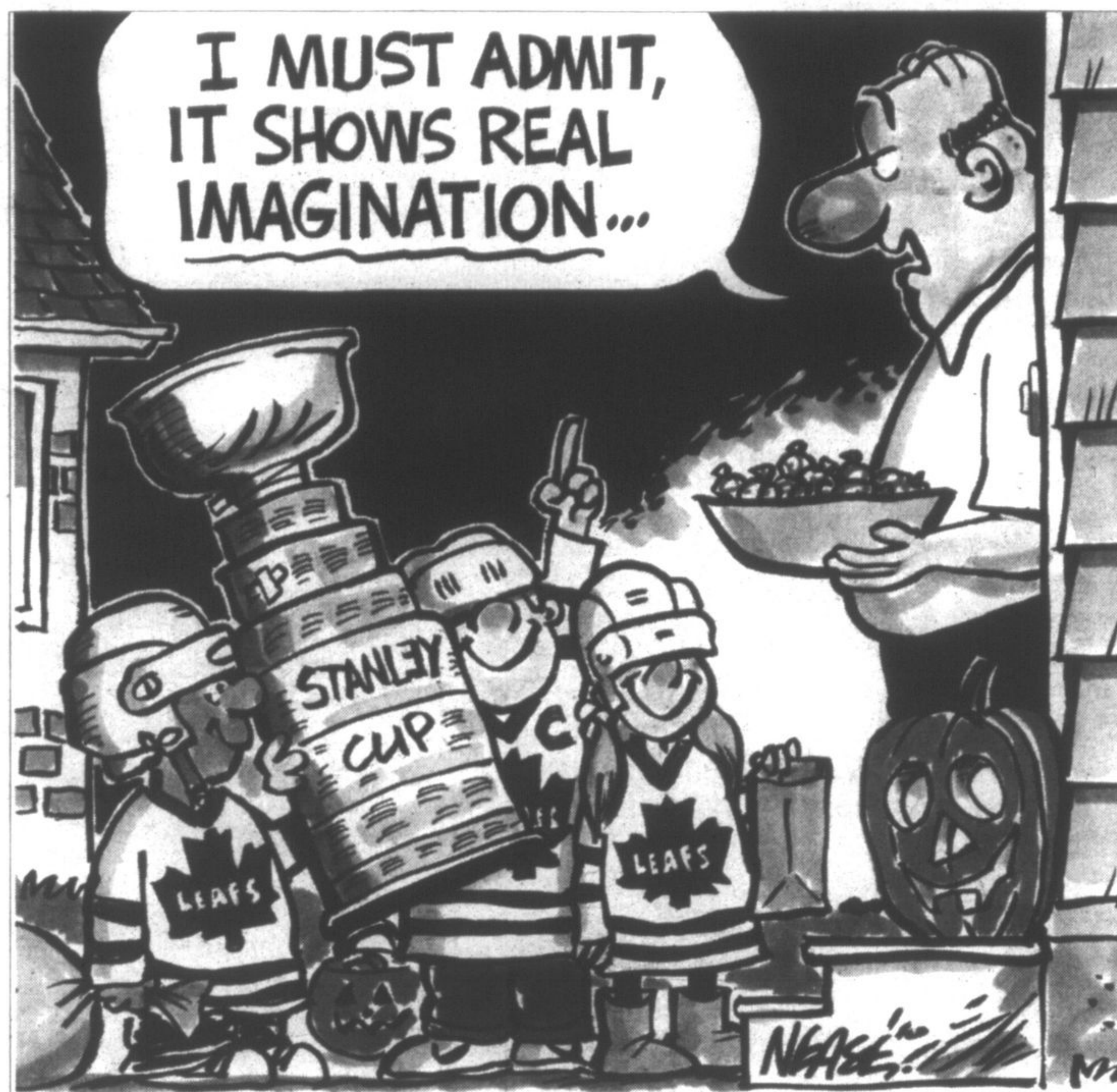
People said they wanted change. Yet, I did not see much reaction. Their way of making their point is not to vote.

This letter is too late for this round. However, I sure hope the town steps up to the plate and hears us.

Spending on the new hockey arena and placing it so close to the other seems odd. Why is all the development crammed together? Bethesda Park? Why take away usable, convenient in-town parks and diamonds?

Why do new houses seem to mainly benefit the builders? They get their money and leave the town with the problems that surface.

CHRISTINE VLACHOS  
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE



## Ozone agreement shows progress possible

International leadership based on sound science can lead to great results.

For proof, we need only "look up, look way up", as one of my colleagues at CBC used to say.

The ozone layer is no longer shrinking.

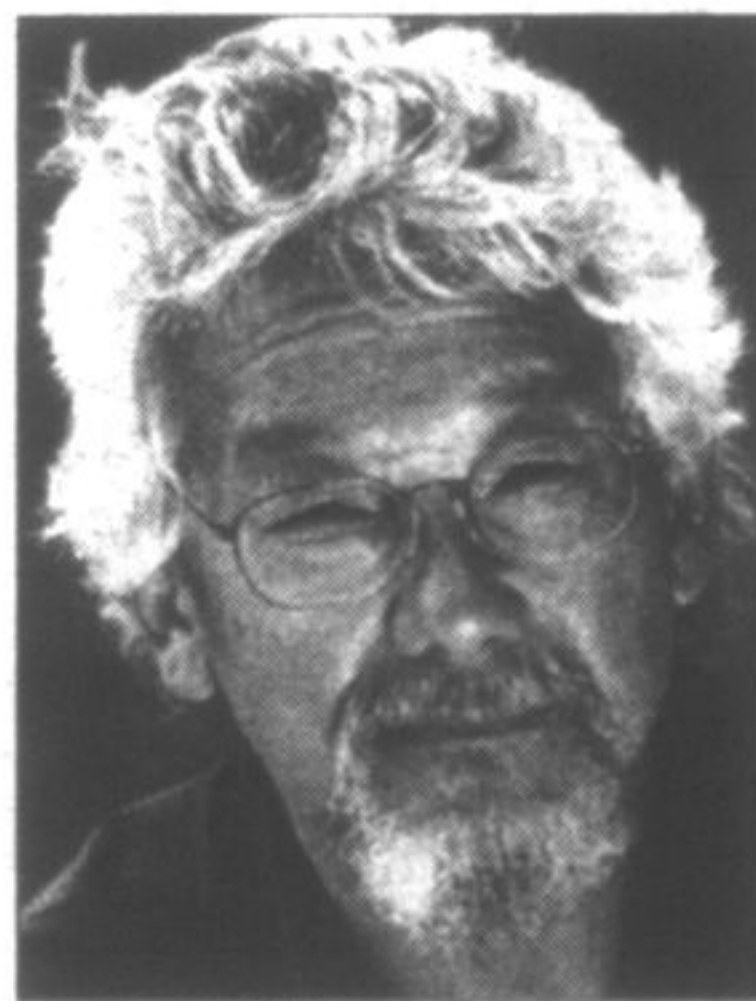
Starting in the 1970s, scientists observed a connection between our use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and a weakening of the ozone layer in the stratosphere.

High above Earth, ultraviolet light breaks chlorine off the CFC molecule and chlorine is a potent scavenger of ozone. Stratospheric ozone absorbs ultraviolet radiation, protecting us from the sun's rays similar to a giant pair of sunglasses.

CFCs were once used in products ranging from aerosol spray cans to refrigerators.

As more of the chemicals were dumped into the air, they began to destroy the ozone layer, creating the potential for dramatic increases in skin cancers and damage to the phytoplankton that form the base of life.

In September 1987, world leaders signed the Montreal protocol on



David Suzuki

with Faisal Moola

substances that deplete the ozone layer.

Now, a report written and reviewed by 300 scientists from around the world concludes phasing out production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances under the Montreal Protocol "has protected the stratospheric ozone layer from much higher levels of depletion".

It's not a complete turn-around, but it is good news. Scientists found

global ozone and ozone in the Arctic and Antarctic regions are no longer decreasing, but they are not yet increasing either.

They also write the ozone layer outside the polar regions is projected to recover to pre-1980 levels before the middle of this century.

UN environment program executive director Achim Steiner noted, without the agreement, atmospheric levels of ozone-depleting substances could have increased tenfold, leading to "up to 20 million more cases of skin cancer and 130 million more cases of eye cataracts, not to speak of damage to human immune systems, wildlife and agriculture".

Interestingly, the scientists and world leaders who worked to protect us from ozone depletion faced many of the same pressures those working to protect us from climate change now encounter.

CFC manufacturers claimed the science on the dangers of CFCs was "rubbish" and phasing out CFCs would cost trillions of dollars and destroy the industry.

As Naomi Oreskes writes in her excellent book *Merchants of Doubt*, many of the same "experts" show

up in the campaigns industry has waged against the science regarding the impacts of tobacco, CFCs, acid rain and climate change.

If we can succeed in tackling the ozone problem, despite attacks from industry, why is it so difficult to resolve an even greater threat to life on the planet, climate change?

One of the scientists who won a Nobel Prize for chemistry in 1995 for his work on the ozone layer has an explanation.

"Arguing which propellant to use was rather trivial to society," Sherwood Rowland says. "One could replace CFCs and still use existing technology. This is quite different from having fossil fuels as our primary energy source for the whole world."

In other words, the stakes are higher — for industry and society.

In many cases, CFCs could be replaced by something as simple and non-polluting as compressed air.

David Suzuki writes an occasional column for the York Region Media Group. Dr. Faisal Moola is the director of science at the David Suzuki Foundation. Visit [david Suzukis.org](http://david Suzukis.org)