

Sun-Tribune

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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

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Questions grow around development charges

Will the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville be facing funding problems in 2011?

Let's check the development charges reserve fund because the town is obliged to report these figures every year under the Development Charges Act. There is apparently no similar requirement for annual reporting for other reserves and reserve funds, so their status is not known.

At the end of 2008, three of our development charges accounts - fire, water and sanitary sewers - had combined deficits totalling about \$2.2 million.

By the end of 2009, the development charges deficits had increased about \$5.4 million to \$7.6 million in the fire, parks and sanitary sewers accounts.

This is money that is to be paid to the town by developers working in our town.

HAVE YOUR SAY

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

When the 2008 development charges deficits were reported to council June 29, 2010, no explanation of the additional \$5.4-million deficit was provided.

Also, there was no indication the treasury department had gone before council to seek approval of the way the town's development charges accounts were handled, with a \$2.2-million deficit in 2008 growing to a \$7.6-million deficit in 2009.

I disagree with the town's interpretation of the Municipal Act.

Council should insist the treasury department bring money bylaws before it for approval as a way to curb further indebtedness.

MARGARET L. MAY
STOUFFVILLE



Let's look to 2011 with sense of hope

Don't you just love a new year?
A fresh start? A chance to look at the glass half full?
For a few weeks any-

way.

Never mind what went wrong in 2010, those days are behind us now!

Let's look at the year ahead with hope - I'm even going to let that fruit fly that's buzzing around my head right now live for a little longer.

Oh, I know, it's not easy to be optimistic once we get back to the daily grind.

Our roads are crazy and there are a lot of careless, angry and stupid drivers on them.

Last year, 24 people died in accidents on York Region roads - 10 were pedestrians.

York Regional Police's Operation Cross Smart saw 1,775 tickets issued to motorists and pedestrians, mostly in Markham, Vaughan and Richmond Hill - where, no coincidence, traffic sucks the most in our region.

That's skimming the surface on drivers who ignore red and amber lights and pedestrians, as well as pedestrians themselves with foolish disregard for basic safety.



Debora Kelly

I'm hopeful 2011 will be the year motorists and pedestrians take a breath, bang themselves on the head and start acting as if they know that life is precious - no matter how frustratingly congested our roads are.

I'm not going to let my bubble be burst by that driver who was clocked at more than 200 km/h in his Benz on Hwy. 400 near King last weekend.

The 33-year-old Richmond Hill man is charged with impaired, dangerous and stunt driving, driving without a licence and operating a vehicle with open liquor.

All too sadly, the year has also begun with another accident involving a pedestrian. A 65-year-old Vaughan woman died in hospital of

her injuries after being hit Tuesday by a SUV making a turn in Thornhill, York Regional Police say.

Last year was marked by municipal elections, which means a fresh start at our town halls.

Not that many of you care - voter turnout, even in the most exciting of races, was in the 30-per-cent range.

Yes, we are far too busy to vote, if not detached, disillusioned and cynical about politics in general.

But with a provincial election Oct. 6 and maybe a federal election, too, I'm hopeful 2011 will be the year apathy dies.

I hope this is the year citizens acknowledge the privilege of living in a democracy and recognize the value and power of the vote.

Oh, I understand why you're turned off by politics.

At the provincial level, there are broken promises, a sagging economy, staggering debt, sky-high hydro rates and reckless spending of our ever-increasing taxes.

Yet politicians seem only to care about politicking. Rather than be disillusioned, why not be outraged instead?

At the federal level, last year began

with another prorogued Parliament - when MPs enjoyed a 63-day vacation on our dime.

It was time to "recalibrate the government's agenda", Supreme Leader Stephen Harper said.

Were you even slightly annoyed by the arrogance? At the disregard for our parliamentary system?

Last year, the opposition asked more questions about Afghanistan in the House than any other issue.

We care about our soldiers and the humane treatment of detainees, but not more so than jobs and health care and quality of life for all citizens.

We definitely don't care for opportunistic politicians who are more interested in manufacturing scandal and taking partisan potshots.

In 2011, I'm hopeful for politicians who put integrity, accountability and legitimate debate first.

I'm full of hope 2011 will see a record turnout of voters who have educated themselves on the issues and candidates' qualifications. In the words of Christopher Reeve, once you choose hope, anything's possible.

Debora Kelly is editor in chief of the York Region Media Group.