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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

Ask residents before closing outdoor pool

Re: Pool could become accessible water park, Jan. 13.

Where is the community consultation in the decision to replace Stouffville's outdoor pool?

Swimming is an activity many families can do together rather than sitting on a bench and watching your kiddies run around a splash pad.

I'm not going to put on my bathing suit and run through rings of cold water. In fact, in the existing water parks around town, I don't think I've seen a parent do that.

I would like a survey conducted to see what the preference would be. On a 30-degree day in July, it's nice to head to the outdoor pool in Memorial Park.

It gets a lot of use during the summer. My older son can now ride his bike over with his buddies and go for a splash on a

HAVE YOUR SAY

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hot day. It's not the same swimming in the indoor pool during the summer.

It would be a big mistake for town council to take the pool away. It was one of the reasons we moved here seven years ago.

In fact, we used to make the trek up here before we lived in the area just to go to the pool.

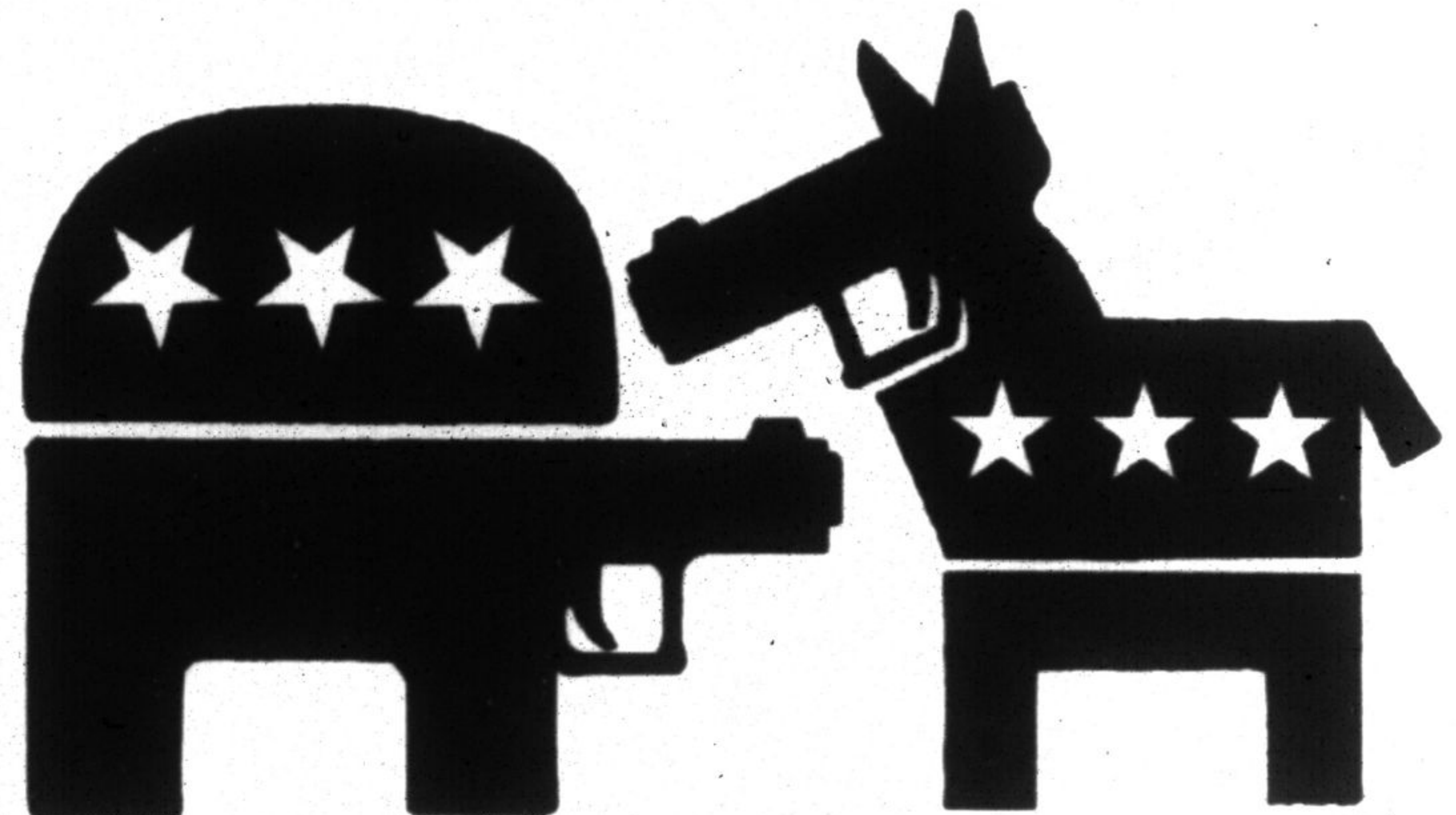
Well, as Stouffville turns into mini Markham, I will probably say, "Honey, where now?"

The town should take my suggestion and do an online poll of Whitchurch-Stouffville residents.

Pool or water park? I have a feeling I'll have to do my own petition.

DAWN VAN-SICKLE
STOUFFVILLE

POLITICAL RHETORIC IN AMERICA...



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Hospital expansion: community's got your back?

I "threw my back out" two weeks ago, which is how I came to a new appreciation of the term.

You actually end up wanting to remove your back and place it in a garbage pail at the curb with the Christmas tree and the recycling.

"This back is shot!" you tell yourself. Best to throw it out.

Unfortunately, the price of new backs has shot up in recent years — or else they haven't quite perfected the back transplant.

Which is why you are still forced to try and get your back back to normal, which isn't always easy.

Even if they could fix your back, you feel like you'd never be out of danger.

Things start to get back on track. You're feeling good, taking it easy, going on a trip. Perhaps to Australia! Then one wrong move and, "Arrrrgh! My back!"

"Man throws back out in Out-back."

Which would serve you right. A guy with a bum back shouldn't venture too far from home.

Mind you, you'd have something to talk about at cocktail parties.

How the guy with the Hummer strapped you to the roof and drove you to Melbourne. How the airline transported you by stretcher and



Bernie O'Neill

charged you for the three seats you took up and how your request for medicinal marijuana was turned down by the courts only to become an election issue, leading to a majority win by the Marijuana Party.

When you're a tall guy like myself and your back goes, for a minute you feel like a piece of spaghetti that's snapped. It doesn't feel fixable.

Here, your back is at the backbone of your life and you never knew it.

I'd like to say I threw my back out in the weightroom, or doing something more glamorous, say, lifting the front end of a runaway car that had come to rest on an unsuspecting senior citizen, a la Superman.

In reality, I dislodged my sacroiliac going on a long drive with the kids up north to visit family, shovelling snow

off a lake for outdoor skating purposes and then taking another long drive back down south.

In other words, I hurt myself by sitting on my rear-end for an extended period, while lifting a shovel a little in between. Guess I'm getting old.

How I'll recover (I haven't recovered yet) I'm not quite sure. I've tried the different inversion positions, stretching, yoga, hot water bottle, cold pack, pain killers and so on, while still going to work since I typically use the same moronic method of reasoning I use at times like these, which is to consider what Early Man would have done.

He had to eat. Would he lie down all day on his Sealy Posturepedic and risk starvation or being eaten by a sabre tooth tiger or crushed by a woolly mammoth? Of course not!

He'd pick up his aching carcass and go about his hunting and gathering as best he could, even if he did look like the Hunchback of Markham.

It all makes me think of the big expansion now in, the works at Markham Stouffville Hospital, needed because the community around the hospital is growing, but also aging.

It's a \$400-million expansion, which is a lot of money. (I'd throw my back out carrying this much in \$100 bills.)

So do our taxes simply pay for all of this great new hospital space?

No. The hospital is expected to raise \$50 million within the community, in part to buy new equipment.

In essence, we need to show our local commitment to expanding the hospital, since we are in competition for government dollars with other communities in Ontario that would also like to see their hospitals expanded or simply modernized.

Many individuals and groups are already aware of this need and have done much to help the hospital meet its fundraising goal.

If you are doing any type of charity event over the next year, you really should put funds toward our local hospital's expansion.

You can encourage the same with your children, at their school, in your place of worship or on your street.

An expansion may not seem as glamorous as when the hospital was first built, but in many ways, it's as if we're getting a brand new hospital, which will help new residents having all those new babies, as well as those like myself whose parts or no longer brand new and at times need fixing.

It seems we all need to make a visit to the hospital one time or another.

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