

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.

Letters to the Editor
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OPINION

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Editorial Building bridges with spaghetti

Laura and Nathan Jory were simply looking for local events they could attend to meet other people in the community. But the newcomers were coming up empty in their search. So the couple, along with friends Curtis and Amanda Miles, decided to create their own event that would also help out Whitchurch-Stouffville's less fortunate while, hopefully, bringing the town together.

Mission accomplished. The Community Spaghetti Dinner was held Monday at Latham Hall in Stouffville Memorial Park. The cost was \$1 a plate.

"We really wanted to make sure it was accessible to everybody, with the hope of helping those who need it and get to know each other," Mrs. Jory said.

The drop-in dinner included spaghetti, sauce, salad, bread, coffee and tea. The spaghetti and some of the sauce was donated by the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank.

They were prepared for a large crowd, but would have been happy with 25 diners.

They were overjoyed when 140 people from a wide cross-section of Whitchurch-Stouffville showed up on a frigid Monday evening.

The diners, too, went away happy. This was old-time Stouffville revisited. A community supper held, not to raise big money for charity, but to bring folks together.

Building community one bowl of pasta at a time.

The Jorys aren't done. They're planning more events, including another dinner in April.

And they don't have to be alone. In the wake of a \$450,000 house fire allegedly caused by a suburban drug lab last week, Mayor Wayne Emmerson suggested residents get to know their neighbours better. Great idea.

You, too, can build community in your neighbourhood:

- Bring Neighbourhood Watch to your subdivision. Learn how to team up to fight crime before it happens.
- Host a street party, winter carnival or other event in your neighbourhood.
- Check on the elderly and others with special needs in your area. A handshake, greeting card or bouquet of flowers show you care.

Many people moved to Stouffville for its small-town charm and friendliness, especially during the last five years. It's not up to politicians and bureaucrats to mandate such behavior.

It's up to all of us to foster it in all we do in Whitchurch-Stouffville.



Letters to the Editor

New toboggan hill, splash pad only 'consolation prizes'

Can someone please tell me where the toboggan hill is?

The core of our beautiful town is slowly being whittled away.

First, they took away our softball diamonds. So many families had enjoyed walking to those diamonds as players and fans.

Then, they ripped apart the Thicketwood toboggan hill while four of my kids were among those waving their hand-made signs.

We were told a new and improved and safer toboggan hill would replace it across the street, along with a winding path that could be flooded and skated on in the winter.

Hidden by a stubby, meandering mound of dirt, littered with trees and snow fences is our new toboggan hill. No longer visible or inviting to Park Drive commuters, the south side of this hill is the new tobogganing surface, about half the rise and run of the old hill, perhaps really only suitable for toddlers.

In the past, a snow day would find plenty of action, as families gathered in full view on the toboggan hill before the snow even settled.

During last week's snow day, our new toboggan hill was untouched, except for my own footprints and my daughter's.

It seems as though we have lost yet another draw to our town's precious core.

Now we're learning that our only outdoor pool may be replaced with another splash pad?

Let's not pretend this sorry excuse of a consolation prize will draw us together as a community, as our outdoor pool does.

HAVE YOUR SAY

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

These are not improvements from the Stouffville I grew up in or returned to.

Let's ensure our efforts remain focused on strengthening the core of our community, attracting both residents and visitors to our centre, supporting our downtown and sharing publicly in family-centred recreation.

MONICA (KUSATZ) MCCONKEY
STOUFFVILLE

Only in Stouffville, luckily

I got up early on Feb. 2. A neighbour had plowed our driveway. Todd Bros. had plowed our street. Great job, as usual.

Got my gas at Stouffville's Beaver station Monday night. It was freezing cold. They were lined up. When the one gentleman who was serving everybody came for payment, he was all bundled up and you could hardly see his face - except for a huge smile underneath it all.

God bless him. Freezing cold. Customers lined up, but time for a grin.

Not too often these days do you go into a store and someone holds the door open for you. But it happens all the time in this town.

I heard someone wants to change the name of this town.. How about naming it after a lottery because we feel we won the big prize when we moved here.

TED MEDLEY
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Troublemakers rule our roads

That was cute, York Regional Police.

You know, disguising coppers as construction workers so they could nab drivers still using their handhelds near Upper Canada Mall last week.

With deepest respect, I don't need to don a white hard hat and drive up to the shopping centre in Newmarket to see motorists talking on their cellphones like it wasn't against the law.

I can sit in the window of our office in downtown Stouffville with a large mocha and get my quota in all of half an hour.

- Woman in fancy SUV having extremely animated conversation with unpopular person. I'm guessing the alimony cheque bounced or she couldn't get an appointment at her spa. Either way, driving was not first on her mind.

- Dude in construction vehicle checking out the sidewalk scenery and going to town on his Blackberry. Another law-breaker.

They are everywhere. And they are not alone in showing disrespect for others on the streets of Stouffville.

Some of my other faves:

- Those who insist on making U-turns in the middle of downtown traffic. Safety and pedestrians be damned, they're making that six-point turn to avoid simply going around the block.

- Runners and walkers who hit our roads two and three abreast when there's a perfectly clear sheet of sidewalk a couple of metres away. Sorry, don't get the logic, especially at night, folks.

- Homeowners who regurgitate snow dumped in their driveway, and then some, back on their street after the municipal plow has done its thing. It's as if they are counter-punching the town for doing such an evil thing in the first place.

Blaming politicians for our winter.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.