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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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## Editorial

### Get the message? Eat better, exercise

A generation ago, the one fat kid in class was the butt of jokes or isolated from schoolyard games.

In today's classrooms, more than a third of children are overweight or obese, says Statistics Canada. And the numbers are growing.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation's annual Report on Canadians' Health recently revealed 13 per cent of York Region residents 18 and older are obese.

During Heart and Stroke month, the war on obesity continued, with parents and students bombarded with messages urging healthy eating and exercise.

Each year, about 250,000 potential years of life are lost in Canada due to cardiovascular diseases. Yet grim statistics apparently aren't enough to scare people into action.

Various ideas have been bandied about to attack the problem. In New York, Mayor Bloomberg has touted the success of his soda tax — hailed as a victory in the fight against obesity.

Unfortunately, a tax on so-called bad foods only hurts the poor, who can't afford to eat higher priced fruits and vegetables.

The key isn't to penalize purchasing of fast foods and junk foods. It's to extol the virtues of healthy eating.

York Region Community and Health Services is aware of the study and its implications.

The department's message to residents has always been to incorporate a healthy lifestyle and more physical activity. Each of us should have 2.5 hours of exercise per week.

Perhaps our government could find new, creative ways to reward those who eat and serve up healthy food.

Lately, the federal government has been offering tax credits for children's sports programs and adult gym memberships.

Our municipalities, too, could band together to create tax incentives for businesses, shops and grocery stores that sell healthy foods.

These efforts may make healthier foods more accessible, more widely available and competitive with the fast food joints and their high-fat, sugary foods.

Our children also need much more encouragement to choose good foods and to avoid hours of daily TV or video games.

Much classroom time is dedicated to teaching children smoking kills and AIDS kills. We owe our children the hard, blunt facts about obesity, heart disease, fatty foods and lack of exercise.

OH DEAR, OH DEAR,  
ON WEDNESDAY IT'LL  
BE SIX WEEKS SINCE  
MY FORECAST...  
WAS I RIGHT?  
WAS I RIGHT?



## Letters to the Editor

### Commuters just want safety

*Re: Don't erect more traffic lights or repair outdoor pool, letter to the editor by Wilf Morley, Feb 24*

It is evident Mr. Morley does not use the outdoor pool nor has he travelled by GO train or bus.

To suggest commuters walk from the train tracks down to Market Street, cross the road, walk back up to the GO train parking lot and then walk to the end of the parking lot in order to safely get to their cars is ludicrous.

Not only would this tack an extra 15 to 20 minutes to an already hour-long (one-way) commute to/from work for most riders, but it would result in a major inconvenience for disabled and elderly people who have mobility issues, as well as parents with young children.

The idea of a crossing guard should be considered as a possible, cost-effective solution to the problem. I highly doubt this would generate a negative response from any commuter. All we care about is getting across the road safely.

Kudos to Councillor Rob Hargrave for listening to what taxpayers have to say and for having the spine and honesty to support these concerns.

It's hardly the response I got from my own councillor, Richard Bartley in Ward 5 when I contacted him about the pool closure. His response to me was that I could use his pool if the public pool closed. It was nice to be taken so seriously by a person who came knocking on my door last election asking for my vote.

Ward 6, consider yourself lucky to have Mr. Hargrave for your representative.

And Richard, see you in July!

NANCY SMART  
STOUFFVILLE

### Act of kindness in drive-thru resulted in all-day smile

This letter is to the anonymous driver of the silver van who paid for my extra-large coffee at Tim Hortons drive-thru on Sandale Road in Stouffville last Thursday morning.

When I flashed my lights at you to let you go ahead of me in the drive-thru, it was because I've been in your situation: approaching the driveway from the south and having to make a left-hand turn while a driver approaches from the north.

I know how frustrating it is to have two cars approach the driveway at almost the same time, only to have the southbound driver quickly turn in ahead of you. That morning, we both approached at the same time, but I thought I'd let you go first, so I flashed my lights. I was certainly not looking for anything in return, so I was very pleasantly surprised when the woman at the window advised me you had paid for my coffee.

Your simple act of kindness was with me all day, putting a smile on my face every time I remember the incident, or relayed the story of your kindness to others.

I didn't even think to note your license plate number, I only know you ordered an extra large coffee, triple cream, one sugar, and you turned south on Ringwood Drive.

Oh, and you paid for my coffee. Amazing how far \$1.72 will take someone. Thanks again.

SHARON BAXTER  
STOUFFVILLE

You can read letters, columns, editorials and stories from *The Sun-Tribune* on [yorkregion.com](http://yorkregion.com)



## Off The Top

with Jim Mason

### Playoff fever strikes Ninth and Millard

Parking and traffic could be downright downtown Toronto-like in the Ninth Line and Millard Street hood tonight.

Blame it on playoff fever.

Those upstart Stouffville Spirit, in their funky barber-pole jerseys, lead the heavily favoured Newmarket Hurricanes in an Ontario Junior Hockey League playoff series. Game 4 begins at 7:30 at the Stouffville Arena.

Be there early if you want to pull up a prime piece of bleacher. Even with the Leafs, and their own playoff hopes, hosting Philadelphia on Leafs TV.

The Spirit is averaging more than 500 fans through four games in this year's postseason. Far from Leaf-like attendance but more than two and a half times what the Stouffville team averaged during the regular season.

With good reason.

This Spirit team is on a roll, going 16-2 to end the regular season before earning a first-round playoff bye and dumping the storied Markham Waxers in the second round.

For the local fans, there are five Whitchurch-Stouffville boys on the team: Chris Porter, Paul Geiger, Robbie Acton, Mike Robinson and Trevor Carrick.

Second-year defenceman Brennan Serville is on the NHL watch list for June's draft in Minnesota. He and teammate Matt Neal — 100 points in 50 games this year — have big-time U.S. scholarships starting this fall. Newmarket has even more players with NCAA packages.

It's high-octane, quality hockey right in your back yard.

Even if you don't appreciate the national obsession, there's plenty of drama, community spirit and old-fashioned socializing in store at local rinks come this time of year.

See you there.

Stouffville Sun-Tribune editor Jim Mason is a former director of the Stouffville Spirit.