

**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,

The Sun-Tribune

6290 Main St.

Stouffville, ON

L4A 1G7

jmason@yrmg.com



OPINION

Editorial

GO Transit pledge meaningless pittance

Is it just us or are you, too, feeling a bit like an unwitting panhandler, with our hat outstretched to catch all the spare change being tossed at us?

Last week's "15 minutes or it's free" promise to GO Transit riders by Premier Dalton McGuinty is nothing more than a meaningless pittance to the majority of Ontarians.

It solidifies the Liberal government's solid record of attempting to buy off taxpayers with their own money with "rebates", "credits" and "guarantees" that, in reality, do very little to offset the plethora of new taxes and fees over the last eight years.

This time, Premier McGuinty is saying if he's still around next year — we haven't forgotten there's an election on the horizon Oct. 6 — GO riders will get back their \$6 or so if their train is more than 15 minutes late.

Impressive on the surface; the government is standing behind its strong commitment to "excellent customer service". Nothing wrong with that, right?

In fact, Toronto Mayor Rob Ford sailed to victory last year vowing, among other things, to improve poor government customer service.

But to use the premier's own words, the refunds would be meted out only in "the most extraordinary and unusual of circumstances".

He's made sure that's the case, too, by waiving the one-way fare refund if the delays are caused by weather, collisions, police investigations and medical emergencies.

So why bother?

So far this year, less than 1 per cent of trains have been delayed by 20 minutes or more. Rightly so, surveys found GO commuters express a customer satisfaction rate of 82 per cent.

So, GO Transit is doing a pretty good job already of "getting people to work or school and back home on time".

This guarantee program is estimated to cost \$6 million to \$7 million annually — small change in terms of government spending, but wouldn't it be better to put that money toward expansion and infrastructure investment in transit? If you really wanted to get people out of their cars and on to the trains and buses, that is?

It's another election goodie for GO commuters in the vote-rich 905 who don't take the time to read the fine print, at the expense of all taxpayers.

Who knows, next year, when you order a pizza, it may be delivered by GO Transit.

Or, if the Liberals do get re-elected, next year, you'll be able to renew your health card at the local pizza joint.



Letters to the Editor

Ban motorized boats from Musselman's Lake

Re: Residents at work on solutions, letter to the editor by Rick Wigmore, Aug. 11.

Where does Mr. Wigmore get off thinking the Musselman's Lake Residents Association, of which he is president, speaks and represents the whole lake community?

According to Mr. Wigmore's letter, Councillor Phil Bannon has been very active in arranging a meeting with their executive, York Regional Police, EMS and fire.

This meeting should have been open to the public so any and all residents of our lake could attend and have input as to how to improve water safety around the lake.

Just because most residents do not have motor boats does not make them less water safety aware. They could have very good ideas on improving water safety around the lake.

According to Mr. Wigmore's letter, Cedar Beach has just instituted a new policy for the use of life jackets by anyone renting paddle boats. This should have been a policy enforced right from the beginning, not just now.

According to Mr. Wigmore, these high-powered boats continue to rescue people on the lake. This makes one wonder if these boats were not on the lake, would people need rescuing?

From our "ivory tower" vantage point we can see 75 per cent of the lake and have often observed motor boats harassing flocks of water fowl resting on the surface of the lake by intentionally steering their boats right through them.

Also, we have seen some motor boats come very close to other water-

HAVE YOUR SAY, STOUFFVILLE

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

craft, such as canoes, paddle boats and kayaks.

This whole situation seems to be damage control for the boat owners around the lake and Mr. Bannon for future votes.

What is pathetic is Councillor Bannon's continued support of the MLRA's ongoing thinking that motor boats belong on this small lake. They are destructive to the shoreline, aquatic life and pollute the water with gas and oil residue.

Also, these boats are trespassing every time they go onto the lake unless they have written permission from four separate property owners as researched by the town at a cost of \$5,000 paid to their legal department.

Richmond Hill's Lake Wilcox is larger than Musselman's and they have banned motor boats on that lake.

In closing, let us not lose sight of what caused this issue in the first place, the loss of two young and vibrant girls.

MARY ANN & BOB JAMES
MUSSELMAN'S LAKE

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Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Best letters can go unwritten

If I was a reader, I'd be firing off letters to the editor regularly.

It has something to do with having a point of view.

That opinion was awakened and shaken like a bottle of orange juice last Friday morning. Seems the keeners erecting more homes beyond our back yard decided to get a head start — in advance of the town-enforced 7 a.m. curfew.

Hammers hammered. A forklift was backed up, it's emergency beeper in full bloom. Guys yelled just to be heard over the din.

I briefly considered pulling a Jerry Seinfeld. You know, finding out where said construction workers live and banging pots and pans below their bedroom window Sunday about 6:40 a.m.

Instead, I e-mailed my councillor while the coffee perked and the sounds ramp up. He's on it.

On another note, I received great action with a letter I didn't send or even write.

When the weather's right, there's no finer lunch spot than the park next to Duffin's Creek, just south of Main Street and west of Mill Street.

The stream goes by under an eclectic grove of deciduous trees. It's a place of peace, just steps from noisy downtown.

One day, the park benches disappeared. Not wanting to lug lawn chairs or a blanket, my picnicking was done, I thought.

Maybe someone else wrote, because: shazam. One weathered old bench has become two more comfortable models, all in the shadow of sculptor Ron Baird's big gift to Stouffville, Blue Angel.

Grab a sandwich, coffee or ice cream from one of our many fine downtown eateries. Bring a Frisbee or a book.

Lap up the remaining days of summer. Just don't thank me. I had nothing to do with it.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.