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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

## Year-round Thanksgiving

So, you missed taking part in the mayor's third annual Thanksgiving food drive last week?

It's never too late to give because the need is growing.

The volunteers who run and staff the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank know.

In 2010, between 30 and 50 people a week required the food bank's assistance. This year, there are about 40 to 80 people in need weekly, some of whom are previous clients who made their way out of their predicament only to return.

The Ballantrae-area food bank was the big winner in Saturday's community drive.

A record amount of non-perishable food was collected.

The food bank wasn't alone.

Several coats were also collected for the first time during the drive.

They will be distributed to clients at the food bank, as well as at the United Way, Inn From The Cold and other York Region organizations.

There was also the substantial issue of community building.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville's new municipal offices were turned into a grocery warehouse during the drive.

Residents from a wide spectrum of age and community involvement pitched in. It was especially gratifying to see young people, including scouts, guides and minor hockey players, working hand in hand with our senior citizens.

The development community also stepped up again this year. It donated more than \$8,000, which will be turned into fresh food for the food bank. Geranium Homes and its suppliers deserve special mention for their continued commitment to the campaign.

In total, \$10,000 was donated.

The one-day campaign is history, but you can still chip in. As you do your Thanksgiving dinner shopping this week, buy a little extra for a needy family and deposit it in the food bank hampers found in most of our supermarkets.

You, too, can write a cheque for the food bank.

And if you can't afford a donation, you can volunteer at the food bank.

Even with the needy in our midst and the economy remaining sluggish, we have so much to be thankful for in this corner of Canada.

Most of us also have an abundance to share with others.

Thanksgiving is never over



## Letters to the Editor

### Council doing its job by not blocking new businesses

Re: Why did council approve second car wash?, letter to the editor by Mark Milne, Sept. 29.

The business world operates in an open, competitive market and council's role is to verify building permit requests are in compliance with zoning/licensing issues, not to decide whether one business should be allowed to compete close to another.

Just think of the abuses that could happen if council was allowed to block businesses from setting up shop simply because another business - most likely one it liked - was already operating nearby.

I do applaud Mr. Milne for his support of a local business. When we buy locally, we help not only individual companies, but the community as a whole.

JULIE KING  
GORMLEY

### Free enterprise working fine

Re: Why did council approve second car wash?, letter to the editor by Mark Milne, Sept. 29.

Come on, man. Are you kidding? If someone can build a better mouse trap, then they should be allowed to build it, shouldn't they?

Last time I looked, we all still have the right to open a business if we meet zoning and other criteria put in place by our elected officials. If we follow Mr. Milne's logic, half of all businesses in town would never have opened.

I like to have a choice. This is just some good old-fashioned free enterprise taking place. Sure makes sense to me.

DREW KNOX  
STOUFFVILLE

### Fair move disharmonious

Re: Over-board' with overaccommodation, column by Dave Gordon, Sept. 24.

I attended the Markham Fair last Thursday at 10 a.m. to volunteer at a food booth to raise money for charities. During previous years, I witnessed dozens of school buses bringing in children to visit this magnificent production.

This year, hardly a bus appeared. I inquired as to why and was told because Thursday is Rosh Hashanah, a Jewish holiday, the public school board trustees in York Region decided to cancel this field trip because it is not inclusive.

So, if three or four children in a class are Jewish and are away from class, the remaining 20-plus children are denied the adventure of learning of their heritage, seeing their first farm animal and, for many new Canadian children, getting a chance to learn about the history of our country.

During the years, I have watched so many children laughing and happy with eyes full of amazement learning from this experience. I am confident the parents of the Jewish children would not want this form of all inclusiveness and would want the remainder of the school classes to attend and learn from our fair, which has run for 167 years.

This is just white, liberal guilt from the school board foisted upon our society by a few individuals who always feel they know what is best for our diverse communities.

This attitude of all inclusiveness all the time will foster disharmony, divisiveness and possibly anger and hatred by some, while destroying all of us coming together as Canadians first with flavours of other countries, religions and cultures second.

TIM FLYNN  
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

## Cost of health care paid in parking lot

I made some substantial donations to Markham Stouffville Hospital during recent weeks.

It was called feeding its ravenous parking machine.

It just seems so out of place.

We pay to park in so few places in York Region. Maybe it's one of the reasons people move here.

I forked over less to leave my SUV for more hours at the Rogers Centre and Molson Canadian Amphitheatre in Toronto this summer than at the hospital this fall.

Dishing out \$15 for two hours must be especially difficult on seniors and others on fixed incomes. (Yes, there are discount weekly and monthly passes for those making frequent visits.)

And I'm not blaming Markham Stouffville for any kind of cash grab here. As it says on its website: "Hospitals are mandated to use parking fees as a revenue source to supplement government funding. Parking revenues help us provide the community with programs and services it needs."

My experience at the hospital was speedy and first rate. While I could hear others with less-urgent needs whining about their time spent in emerg, the system appeared to be working, even on a busy Saturday night.

I could also hear two people registering next to me, both from southern Durham Region. The wait at their neighbourhood hospital is so much longer, it's worth the 30-minute drive to Markham, a young dad said.

It's the same reason some of us Whitchurch-Stouffvillites travel to Uxbridge's Cottage Hospital, which now is a satellite of Markham Stouffville.

If parking fees make this all happen for us, I'll gladly keep feeding bills into that machine in the parking lot.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.