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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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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Town family friendly

Re: *New Voices launched in Stouffville, Sept. 17.*

I was inspired by your recent article and NewVoices columns about newcomers to Stouffville and thought I would share our story.

My husband, Hector, and I recently moved from Sacramento, California to Whitchurch-Stouffville.

We moved to Sacramento 2-1/2 years ago for my husband's work.

We were living in Thornhill at the time, moved to California, got married and had a daughter, all in that order.

Earlier this summer, we found out Hector was to be transferred back to Canada. We originally looked at purchasing a home in Markham and eventually settled on Stouffville.

My parents live in Gormley, so it made sense for us to be as close as possible. At the time, we had no idea how family friendly Stouffville is. It is an

### HAVE YOUR SAY, WHITCHURCH- STOUFFVILLE

► What do you think of this series or other issues? E-mail letters to the editor to [jmason@yrmg.com](mailto:jmason@yrmg.com)

excellent place to raise a family. Situated close to Toronto, we have large-city living without the crime and traffic.

Although we do not live in Stouffville proper, we are very close to Hwy. 404 and have many community resources accessible to us.

Although I am not looking forward to the weather this year, I am very happy we have chosen Stouffville as the place to raise our family.

I hope this story inspires others.

EVA LARA  
WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE



## Ash tree bug comes at time of tight budgets

I was shocked to read some of the dollar figures being used to describe how much it would cost us to save our ash trees from the emerald ash borer, a pesky green insect believed to have been introduced to North America in a shipping container.

(I've always thought it funny when they say a thing was "introduced to North America" as if it's a date or fundraising gala. "Emerald Ash Borer, I'd like you to meet North America, home to 7.5 billion ash trees. Enjoy.")

Turns out the emerald ash borer feels quite at home in North America, and is chomping on our ash trees as we speak.

Of course, there are all kinds of birds, fish, plants, insects and even bacteria that are not native to North America that wound up here, thanks to our ability to travel around and mix and mingle and trade and so on.

It's a reflection of the way the world is, despite our best efforts to stop problems from developing because of it. It's been going on for centuries.

The ash borer, like the Asian long-horned beetle or Dutch Elm disease, is a real threat to our trees and municipalities are taking notice.

Cities and towns and the region are



Bernie O'Neill

all talking big bucks to dispatch this tiny bug, although it doesn't seem clear it's a battle that can be won.

Is this a battle on which we should be spending tens of millions of dollars? Or are we better off to let nature take its course when we need money for other more pressing things.

It gets you thinking how so much of the money we spend, as individuals or collectively through our government, is really going toward a battle against the forces of nature.

(And here I thought most of what I earn should be devoted toward, "Having a good time", which I think was my original philosophy about life, back before I had any responsibilities.)

There's food, of course, which we all need for energy and to renew our cells and grow and feel good and jump around and play hockey and breathe, among other interesting pastimes.

For some reason, I buy a lot of food and may be why one of my sons is now 6 feet 4. He has not missed a meal, as they say.

There's shelter, since we live in a part of the world where it's too cold and rainy and bug infested to live outside. (They call it dying of exposure if you ever become silly enough to give it a try).

There's clothing, since again this is not exactly a place where one can walk around wearing nothing but a few fig leaves. It'll soon be November meaning it won't be long before longjohns will start to look pretty inviting to those of us not used to the cold, despite their fashion drawbacks.

There are hydro costs, since that shelter we own needs to be heated about eight months out of 12, otherwise it's pretty much pointless.

Not to mention the fact it's getting dark around here, earlier and earlier. There's homework that needs light shone upon it, computers to power up, printers that need to print out graphs and charts and other amazing stuff

downloaded off the Internet.

Outside of our own spending, meanwhile, are our taxes that go toward garbage pickup, water, roads, sewers, health care, policing, transit, you name it. They're all part of a vast network of infrastructure and services we rely on to make the cities and towns livable for us, crammed in here together as we are.

Trees are also part of what make the city livable. When you see potential buyers cruising around these new subdivisions, you can just see the look in their eyes: "All this would look a lot better, if only there were some trees."

It's what every neighbourhood is after — that after a few years some trees will grow and finally this place will not look like it was built in the middle of a desert.

I just worry that at a time when budgets are tight and the world sometimes seems like it is one bounced cheque away from bankruptcy, saving ash trees might not be in the cards.

Other trees can be planted in their place. It's just sad that they seem to take a generation to grow.

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