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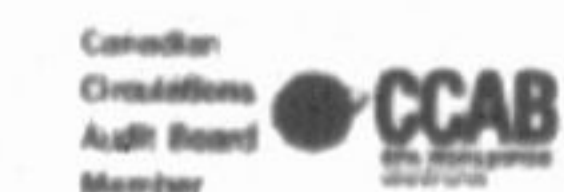
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The Sun-Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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# OPINION

**Stouffville Sun-Tribune**

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Library deserves more

Re: Skatepark, seniors club on wish lists, Oct. 27.

Your story on the pre-budget consultation meeting of council Oct. 25 included the concerns of residents over library underfunding and space issues.

Mayor Wayne Emmerson is quoted as saying, "...the library board must first conduct a planning study and perhaps redesign its current layout. Can they utilize more? Yeah, I think they can utilize it better".

I would request the mayor join us in the library to indicate where there is any inefficiently used space.

The mayor also mentioned "this was about the fourth time in recent history someone has come before council to lobby for the addition (to the library) to be moved ahead from the current timetable of 2014/2015.

These approaches to council on behalf of more than 400 residents who have signed a

petition (online at <http://WSLibraryPetition.blogspot.com> or in person at Candlelight & Memories) have been met with stony silence, as have our e-mails.

Does the mayor realize students such as the two who spoke at council must go to Markham to do their school assignments?

Our library needs to be properly funded to finance books and staff. There needs to be space for more computers, study carrels and activity rooms for the youth of our community. If you invest in youth, they will have an investment in the community.

Can we not work together to produce something of which we can all be proud and that will pay dividends now and down the road? Can we not have a transparent planning process? Stouffville, we can do better than this.

JOAN RIZI  
STOUFFVILLE



## Should war medals be hidden away?

Should my father's war medals languish in a memory box, never to be seen and admired?

I was struck by the story in the media about the elderly wife of a war veteran who was told she can't wear her husband's service medals — even on the right side of her jacket — because it is against Canadian law to do so.

I must say I had no idea that law existed and I very nearly broke it myself just a few years ago.

My father had been a radar technician in the Second World War, serving in England.

Our family made sure late in his life, dad had the medals he earned and how Veterans Affairs fast-tracked them for a special presentation at a local high school.

It delighted and embarrassed him several years before he died and he wore them proudly on Remembrance Day even in his retirement home.

But after he was gone, I wondered what to do with those shiny medals.

Wearing just his service pin and a poppy, he was always such a proud



Marney Beck

veteran, marching in sleet or snow every Nov. 11 either in Toronto ceremonies, or in the small Ontario community near his farm.

The year after he died, I was encouraged to come out with the local Girl Guides to participate in my local Remembrance Day parade, as I had done many other years.

I seriously considered wearing his medals proudly, pinning them to my jacket, but something about that idea made me hesitate.

Mostly, I was worried about offending the veterans in the parade.

I may be getting and feeling older, but there's no way I'd be mistaken for a war veteran.

So I put them in a special wooden keepsake box and showed them to the Brownies and Girl Guides with whom I was marching. They were delighted to touch and feel "real medals".

I held them with me for the ceremony and carried them carefully home, feeling I'd at least showed them off and handled them with respect he and they were due.

But seriously, what are all we children or wives or grandchildren of veterans to do with these medals?

We all know the First World War vets are gone and the Second World War vets number fewer and fewer with each passing year.

Stories of war exploits can seem unreal or ancient history to the younger generation, yet I have found young people very intrigued by war medals. Even my own kids were pretty keen to admire grandpa's medals, sparking a conversation or two.

I agree with and understand the laws restricting the wearing of medals. Of course, only the veterans who have performed the actual service to our country have the right and privilege to wear them.

However, medals can be worn on

the right side by family members of veterans in Britain and Australia. Perhaps we need a similar law in Canada.

*So I put them in a special wooden keepsake box and showed them to the Brownies and Girl Guides with whom I was marching. They were delighted to touch and feel "real medals".*

How can we honour our selfless war heroes if we hide away the medals which honour their bravery and service? What good will my father's medals do to keep the remembrance alive if they're languishing in my basement or attic?

Marney Beck is a York Region Media Group editor.