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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

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Editorial

Missing links in council's legacy

No one can accuse Whitchurch-Stouffville council of not spending money during its last term and a half.

The seven members of council, including the mayor, have built:

- a double-rink arena complex;
- a showpiece of a ball diamond in Memorial Park;
- a new community room to go with extensive renovations to the municipal museum in Vandorf;
- a consolidated yard and office facility for the municipal works and parks department;
- a soccer and baseball/softball park on Bethesda Road;
- Lebovic Centre for Arts & Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park, the town's multi-purpose, multi-million-dollar event centre in downtown Stouffville.

In brief, council has invested millions, much of it money received from developers who took part in the first stages of the town's building boom.

But it's not enough money for some, especially those groups who haven't benefited as much as they would have liked to.

Local soccer enthusiasts will have an indoor facility to use, but it's being privately built.

The soccer community has been lobbying councils for years for additional fields, indoors and out.

And it's hard to ignore their case, given the hundreds of adults and children involved in the beautiful game in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Same for the public library users. They would like the 12-year-old facility in Memorial Park to be enlarged and improved.

That hasn't happened yet, despite intense lobbying at the library board and town council tables.

Throw the town's growing and organized seniors community into that category. A permanent facility for the 55-plus crowd has been much discussed but not approved, yet.

It's perhaps the biggest and most serious omission on our community's to-do list.

Our seniors have demonstrated they deserve better.

When town councillors deal with their 2013 budget next month, it will pretty much be their last kick at the can for this term of office.

At least in terms of capital projects.

A new council will be elected next year.

Let the lobbying begin - or continue.

DADDY, MAKE HIM STOP SQUEEZING THAT ANIMAL... IT'S SCREAMING!



Letters to the Editor

Library decision overdue

Re: Council ready to 'stand pat', Jan. 3

I would like to begin by wishing you a happy new year. Unfortunately, I have discovered after reading your paper and discovering town council has likely vetoed immediate plans for our library growth with: "... expansion likely waiting for 2014 election".

Councillor Ken Ferdinands said the town is "still grappling with what a 21st century library will look like - is it still stacks of books or some other model?"

Whatever the model, it will need more space, whether for books or electronics - probably both. Reciprocal agreements with other libraries certainly have their place but they are not the answer to Stouffville's library problems.

Ask any student, Mr. Ferdinands, and you will discover they need a place where they can find the resources and staff to help them fulfill their educational needs, preferably a place close to home. Markham library is not close and cannot accommodate Stouffville's students as well as their own.

Perhaps councillors don't use a library and that is the reason they cannot understand the importance of having a good one, big enough for everyone. The delaying tactics reported in the article in your paper are just that. They have been used by council for many years.

At a council meeting last year, an able representative of the seniors club mentioned the decision his club was seeking needed to be made in 2012, since 2013 would be lost to election campaigning.

Is that what we are seeing here? We won't get a library expansion because the council is too busy campaigning?

Let's get our priorities straight. Students need a library expansion. We all do. Councillors were elected

to work every year for the needs of the residents of Stouffville. Let's hold them to account.

JOAN RIZI
STOUFFVILLE

Beer, wine in corner stores no longer the answer

Re: Another round of change in order, column by Jim Mason, Jan. 3.

Nice try! "Corner store clerks and supermarket cashiers can be trained and certified to check for ID just like waiters and bartenders are now."

Time to give your head a shake. Those same clerks and cashiers are part of the problem with youth smoking, along with parents who expect others to raise and discipline "their" kids.

Just get The Beer Store to turn over as much revenue as the LCBO and we might have a little paycheck left for ourselves for a change.

As for Tim Hudak taking power? He is as scary as Bob Rae ever was and he nearly killed the NPD party. And Stephen Harper is trying to give away as much of the country as possible.

Yes there was a period in my life that I felt the American way was a better choice, with having booze and beer at the corner store.

But over the years, I have seen how freely the wrong people get it with the system we now have in place. It wasn't that long ago that booze and drugs were available at the back door of a local residence. York Regional Police were regularly seen there trying to bust it up.

We need leadership that will protect Canadian businesses and stop trying to put a million people on every block of land.

STEVE PICKARD
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Still time to get a life, hockey fans

My son couldn't care less if the NHL shut down forever.

And he's not alone.

He hasn't played hockey since he was 7.

Going to elementary school with Michael Del Zotto (New York Rangers) and high school with Steven Stamkos (Tampa Bay Lightning) obviously didn't rub off. He'd have trouble identifying either on Sportsnet tonight.

He's more into reading, movies and playing video games than watching others play games.

That's him.

Unlike Ryan, there are many others whose lives seemed to sway with the prospects of another NHL season being cancelled due to labour difficulties. The scars of 2005 remain fresh on real fans, apparently.

And, knowing I'll watch my share of games when the shortened season begins, I still say to those folks: "Get a life, please."

Instead of fretting all fall over whether the Leafs would trade for Roberto Luongo or Zach Parise would get to count his \$98 million, you should have been out there living your own life.

Maybe visiting someone in a long-term care facility or hospital.

How about cheering on the local hockey kids, from the juniors down to the mites? Better yet, you could have used all that accumulated hockey IQ to volunteer with one of the youth organizations. Who better to quote the wisdom of Donald S. Cherry than you?

Phone a long-lost relative.

Join a service club.

Check on an elderly neighbour.

Or, as a former boss used to affectionately say: "Make yourself useful."

It's not too late. You can still PVR your four games a night.

The Stanley Cup can wait until June.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.