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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
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Editorial

Fighting crime before it happens

A guard patrolled the front entrance to Stouffville's CIBC earlier this week, a Hummer from an area security company positioned prominently in the bank's parking lot.

The downtown branch was robbed last week. A knife was used, York Regional Police said. No arrests have been made.

That's not mega news, even in Stouffville. The same branch, and other Main Street financial institutions, have been hit by robbers dating at least as far back as the 1980s.

Also last month, the Shoppers Drug Mart in east-end Stouffville was held up by a man with a handgun. He left with prescription medication he demanded from an employee.

As unique as the pharmacy robbery may have been here, it, too, should not have surprised anyone.

Our former small town is now more small city, sitting on the urban edge of Canada's largest metropolis.

Crime happens in the big city. And as merchants who had vehicles driven through their stores' front windows here about 20 years ago discovered, crime has no boundaries. In fact, criminals often look for a crack in the armor on the fringes of our urban centres.

Stouffville can be Exhibit A in that case study.

We can also be pro-active. By all reports, the employees robbed here last month did everything right. They complied with the robbers' request. No one was injured. Money and drugs can be replaced. Not so for human beings.

You can make your home, business and vehicles crime resistant.

Join or create a Neighbourhood Watch group just like residents in southern Stouffville did last year following a string of scary, daytime residential break-ins.

York Regional Police and other organizations have tips and tutorials to help you fight and discourage crime.

Visit the police website (yrp.ca) or the community policing centre in the Stouffville train station for advice.

It sounds too simplistic, but it works, police tell us.

Police officers often downplay crime statistics, telling us only those who become involved in seedy, illicit activity have to worry about becoming victims or statistics.

Try telling that to the drug store employee or bank teller in Stouffville who were threatened with weapons last month.



Letters to the Editor

Prices seem out of line for police station renovation

Re: Police office costing town \$560,000. Councillors question deal with York Regional Police, Jan. 31.

In regards to the new police sub-station at the municipal office, does anyone else feel \$1.15 million to renovate 4,500 square feet of office space is a bit over the top?

I am not a builder but have done two major renovations to my own home. Acting as the contractor, my cost was approximately \$125 per square foot. So, 4,500 square feet should come in at a cost of something in the area of \$575,000 to \$775,000.

I would love to tender on this renovation. This is basically office space with no holding cells. These are your tax dollars being wasted.

It may not seem like much money saved, but we need to start saving wherever we can. This country is in a deficit situation, both federally and provincially. The spending has to stop.

Projects still need to go on but the cost of those projects needs to be reduced.

Competitive tendering needs to be used in every situation and I cannot believe the low bid for a small renovation such as this could not be done for less than \$1.15 million.

FRANK J. VAN VEEN
WHITCHURCH STOUFFVILLE

New trees need water, too

How many other people have noticed the planting of dozens and dozens of new trees on both sides of Main Street between Hwy. 48 and Ninth Line?

They replaced the dead trees planted in 2009 under warranty.

'HAVE YOUR SAY, STOUFFVILLE

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

Every day during the summer, town workers are always watering the beautiful coloured hanging baskets and barrels in the downtown area.

I hope the town remembers during hot summer months to give these new trees a shot of H2O a few times per week.

GERRY MCGUCKIN
STOUFFVILLE

Keep our sidewalks clear

In most every city or small town I've lived in during the last several decades, a bylaw insisted walkways, whether in front of stores or homes, were to be cleared off within 12 hours of a snow storm.

Does this not apply in Whitchurch-Stouffville? (Yes it does, in certain areas, under bylaw 2007-251-RD.)

But for 48 hours last week, it was impossible to travel the sidewalks.

I don't think the responsibility should be completely on the town's back. If merchants want customers, no matter what the weather, a quick shovel and splash of salt might help.

And, homeowners, the exercise is good for the heart, waistline and safety of others.

R. DYNES
STOUFFVILLE



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

I wasn't in Stouffville anymore

I was riding an elevator in our daughter's mid-town Toronto apartment building when I nearly did it.

A woman got on, loaded down with more laundry than the Baltimore Ravens could have soiled during Super Bowl XLVII.

I held the door open until she and her collection of baskets and cleaning products were firmly in, smiled and — caught myself.

I wasn't in Kansas anymore, Ioto. I adore Toronto and all big cities I've visited for their cool architecture, local dives, swanky spots and unique cultural action.

But they aren't Stouffville. Few places are. (Insert hick town/hayseed one-liner here. Pretty sure I've heard them all.)

Sorry if I sound like Gomer Pyle, Radar O'Reilly or a country radio tune, but they don't say hello to each other in the city. Same goes for holding doors and letting vehicles merge down in Rob Ford's hood.

They do know how to use their car horns well. And when they wave, some don't use all their fingers for some reason.

If I'd said hi to the woman and her laundry, I had visions of her glaring back like she remembered seeing my mug on America's Most Wanted.

(City people with dogs are a different breed I discovered while taking daughter's pooch on a bathroom run. They converse and smile, even if they only remember you through your canine companion's name.)

I've said it before, but feel it needs repeating for fear we, too, lose our innocence: Keep saying hello to each other. Stouffville. It won't lower your taxes but it might help your blood pressure.

Hold that door. Wave. Check on the elderly. Remain courteous. Smile. Phone a friend. Say thanks.

We're not Mayberry, Cabot Cove or Twin Peaks any longer, but let's keep the small town alive, kids.

Or we'll all have to get dogs.
Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.