

# OPINION



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## Building better community begins tonight, Stouffville

**ISSUE**

**Many residents still want that small-town feeling in our now small city**

**N**on one can deny Whitchurch-Stouffville's population has exploded.

In the past 30 years, the number of people living here has more than tripled.

Stouffville itself has seen most of that growth. And the bulk of it has hit home since 2006.

We may no longer qualify for small-town status – are we a large town or small city? – but those roots live on.

Last weekend's tragic stabbing brought that fact home. Long-term residents especially clamoured to find out who was injured, how they could help and what else could be done.

That doesn't happen as automatically in Scarborough or Mississauga, where violent acts are more common and communities are not as tight.

Many of us still pride ourselves on knowing our neighbours and what goes in our town.

We still care.

With more growth on our horizon, how do we keep that feeling alive?

We do it by gathering. As long-term residents, we do it by welcoming newcomers into our neighbourhoods, schools, sports groups, organizations and places of worship.

As newcomers, we accept that

invitation as we seek out ways to get involved in our new home town.

Tonight, you have an excellent opportunity to learn more about your community.

More than 20 not-for-profit organizations – including the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides, along with the Air Cadets, Stouffville Multicultural Association, Christian Blind Mission and Stouffville Royal Canadian Legion – will take part in Inside Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The annual get-to-know-us event is on in Civic Square, in front of the Lebovic Centre for Arts & Entertainment – Nineteen on the Park, from 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Representatives from the groups will be on hand to answer questions people may have about them and to potentially enlist a few volunteers.

It's one-stop shopping for the civic minded and curious.

Don't see an organization listed you'd like to join?

Whitchurch-Stouffville has an excellent reputation for aiding residents in starting up clubs and associations. The town is seeking out more space to provide to classes and groups for us.

You can sit home and watch a ball game or reality TV. Or you can make a difference in the lives of your neighbours.

It's your call, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

It's your town.

**BOTTOM LINE: Building a community that still cares is all our responsibility**

**Is there an issue about which you are passionate? You could be a Saturday Forum contributor and get the chance to have your piece published along with your name and headshot. E-mail your 450-word submission to jmason@yrmg.com**

## LETTER OF THE WEEK

### Town, developer heard concerns

*Re: Residents told council, letter to the editor by Kate Greenway, Aug. 17.*

First, I would like to mention absolutely no one has done more for our area than Councillor Phil Bannon.

It always amazes me that he doesn't get more credit in this paper for all that he does, from fundraising to making sure the needs of the residents are met.

Mr. Bannon also has a skill set that is unique among politicians. When there is a problem or concern in the neighbourhood he is always able to put the experts and the resident association together.

One of many examples was concerning road safety where he formed a committee including the residents association, York Regional Police and relevant staff from the town and region.

Now, let's move on to the Geranium development. Ms Greenway did an excellent presentation before council on her concerns with the development on Lakeshore Road.

The presentation was so good when our association asked Councillor Bannon to arrange a meeting between us and Geranium, we used Ms Greenway's presentation as a framework for discussions.

Geranium answered and looked into every one of our concerns that being 1. density 2. Waterloo Biofilter Septic System 3. waterflow across the development 4. traffic flow.

These concerns were addressed and all concerns including Geranium responses plus Ms Greenway's presentation in its entirety were all posted on our residents website (www.musselmanslake.ca) and

### Get ready for return of students, drivers

Well, we had the summer that never was, the CNE is on and my vegetable garden is about to be harvested.

That can only mean one thing: summer is almost over and it's back-to-school time.

Sept. 3, the kids will be back to school and the school buses back out in full force.

Once again, I urge the drivers out there to watch

out for the kids and the buses. Most students will be excited to be back – some not so much – and kids being kids may forget the road safety rules and dart out on you when you least expect it.

Keep an eye out for the flashing red lights that signal students are getting off the bus.

Vehicles must stop both ways whether the students cross or not. It's a big fine if you don't and get caught.

Students are taught to wait for the bus driver to

are still there to be viewed.

More recently, we have posted all the conditions Andrew McNeely, director of planning and building services, and his excellent town staff have made conditional for this development moving forward.

When it comes to protecting the interests of the residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville, no one is more knowledgeable about development and its impact on the community than Mr. McNeely.

*It always amazes me that Phil Bannon doesn't get more credit in this paper for all that he does, from fundraising to making sure the needs of the residents are met.*

I understand Ms Greenway's chagrin at not stopping this development. However, as we have posted on the website "in a perfect world, fields would remain fields" but unfortunately this is not reality. People need places to live and the developers fulfill this need.

Reality is you cannot stop development but we have found by working with the developer you can help shape the future of the development and the community.

Kate Greenway should be proud her presentation although not stopping the development played a key role in shaping it.

**RICK WIGMORE**

MUSSELMAN'S LAKE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

give them the go-ahead to cross, but sometimes they do not.

None of us wants to be involved with an accident.

Also, please pay attention to our town's crossing guards. They are trying to get everyone home safely, as well, and have often complained about vehicles not stopping for them as the kids cross the road.

No one would want to have a child's injury or death on their hands.

**DAVE BROOKS**  
STOUFFVILLE

**WEIGH IN ON THE DISCUSSION ... e-mail your comments to jmason@yrmg.com**

