

OPINION



PUBLISHER *Ian Proudfoot*
GENERAL MANAGER *John Willems*

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune
 6290 Main St.
 Stouffville, ON. L4A 1G7
 www.yorkregion.com

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

905-640-2612
 Fax: 905-640-8778
 Class: 1-800-743-3353
 DISTRIBUTION
 1-855-853-5613

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Debora Kelly
 dkelly@yrmg.com

DIRECTOR, BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
Robert Lazurko

DIRECTOR, ADVERTISING
Debra Weller

DIRECTOR, PRODUCTION
Jackie Smart

DIRECTOR, DISTRIBUTION
Tanya Pacheco

DIRECTOR, REAL ESTATE AND CLASSIFIED
Gord Paolucci

Editor
Jim Mason
 jmason@yrmg.com

Advertising Manager
Anne Beswick
 abeswick@yrmg.com

Circulation Co-ordinator
Daphne Lawrie
 dlawrie@yrmg.com

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 yrcustomerservice@yrmg.com

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Editorial

Time to go to school on election issues, Stouffville

ISSUE

Many residents aren't prepared for this fall's Whitchurch-Stouffville election

We asked voters across York Region last week what are the biggest issues in this year's municipal election.

Maybe it's too early – election day isn't until Oct. 27.

Maybe the region's electorate truly isn't interested in municipal politics – less than 50 per cent vote every four years.

Maybe there are no issues — unlikely, bordering on impossible.

Whatever the reason, most taxpayers were stuck for answers. It's time to do your homework, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Not this fall, when candidates will already have their platforms down pat.

Now. Get out to a council meeting — available Tuesday at 3 p.m.? — and go to school on local politics.

Is council a good working unit? Do they play well with people making deputations, those in the audience and our town staff?

Get out in your neighbourhood. Are there facilities lacking? Perhaps a dangerous intersection?

How about that vacant lot? What is to become of it and how will those plans affect you and your neighbours?

This town's history has been

written with stories of residents who waited too long to jump on an issue.

Exhibit A? The growth spurt that turned Stouffville into Canada's fastest-growing community during the past 10 years was bemoaned by many as happening too quickly with too many hiccups.

Where were those critics when growth proposals first went to the public in a series of poorly attended visioning exercises?

We know Stouffville will see more growth, particularly to the north of the urban core. We know rural development, especially of the estate variety, won't take place, at least in large numbers.

Are you happy with your hometown? Do you receive fair value for what you pay in local taxes?

What's on your wish list, Stouffville?

What will you put to council candidates — only one has officially declared — when they knock on your door or you have the floor at a pre-election meeting at your local community centre?

Get on that homework, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Tick, tock.

BOTTOM LINE: Don't procrastinate or you, too, could be too late to make your point

GET CONNECTED

SEND YOUR LETTER: Email your comments and/or suggestions to jmason@yrmg.com

COMMENT: What are the big issues? facebook.com/StouffvilleSun-Tribune

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Cost of our MP's mailings could aid our veterans

Re: Conservatives pick wrong battle with veterans, editorial, Feb. 6.

I totally agree with you on the treatment of veterans and the spending priorities of this government.

I would like to add another waste of taxpayers' dollars that could be better spent for the benefit of our veterans.

It's the constant barrage of mail we all receive from our local MP, Paul Calandra, who uses the service of the post office free of charge, a service they want to take away from the rest of us.

Not to mention that our household consists of me and my husband, but I get individual letters for each of us, as well as my son who never lived at my Stouffville address.

I'd like to know how much this costs and

how much of this money they could redirect toward veterans' service.

By the way, have you ever noticed how many cars are parked outside our MP's office?

Not to mention that our household consists of me and my husband, but I get individual letters for each of us as well as my son who never lived at my Stouffville address.

If only one person from each MP's office could work in an office designate for veterans throughout the country, we could keep the veterans offices open all over the country.

ANNE FILLETI
 STOUFFVILLE

Another angel brightens hospital

Re: Chaos in our ER calmed by an angel, column by Jim Mason, Jan. 9.

I really enjoyed your story of the angel you met at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

It reminded me of my brother, Cliff Kennedy, who is one of those angel volunteers who works tirelessly in our hospital. He is loved by all the staff and brightens everyone's day when he is there.

When Cliff retired a couple of years ago, I suggested this might be something that he would enjoy as he loves to make others laugh and enjoys being around people, comforting and helping out.

Like all volunteers at the hospital, he gets his runners on and helps the nurses with whatever they need, including doing coffee runs for them and even dusting and cleaning their counters and desks. He is a "gofer" — he goes for this and for that.

The patients love him and he, in turn, gets great enjoyment out of helping others.

When not working at the hospital, he goes on 10-kilometre walks with his next-door neighbour, who is also retired.

But on those days he works, he says he gets all the walking that he needs. I am so proud of him and all he does on his own time.

DONNA BOADWAY
 GORMLEY

Sidewalk on side of Main unsafe

I walk my son to school in east-end Stouffville most every morning. The sidewalk on Main Street between Harding Gate and Tenth Line seems to be forgotten or, like on Feb. 4, covered in snow from the road being plowed and all of the snow pushed onto the sidewalk.

I am sure the reason is the poorly planned location of the sidewalk. This section of sidewalk was impassible and we had to find an alternative route.

Ever since the construction of the new Shoppers Drug Mart and the road was redone, the sidewalk that was safely located at least two metres away from the main road with a sec-

tion of grass was relocated to directly beside the main road.

This in itself is hazardous for pedestrians. I feel as if the oncoming traffic, especially the huge trucks that turn east from Tenth Line north, is coming straight at me. This makes me feel unsafe.

I feel like I will never be able to let my son walk to school himself with such an unsafe sidewalk along his route. Why this sidewalk was moved beside the road is a mystery to me.

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MARY SPENCER
 STOUFFVILLE