

LETTERS POLICY

All submissions must be less than 400 words and 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. E-mail jmason@yrmg.com

COLUMN

Small-town newspapering: for better or for worse

Jake Gyllenhaal's slimy character in *Nightcrawler*, took it a tad far.

"I like to say that, if you're seeing me, you're having the worst day of your life," Louis Bloom says in the 2014 movie that delves into the world of ambulance-chasing TV news videographers.

No, I'm not adding that line to my business cards or Twitter bio.

A former publisher of mine had his own spin on the role of the media.

"We see people at their best and their worst," he'd recite, usually following a complaint from a reader who was far from having their best day.

Worst to first.

From bloody crashes on our highways and teary appearances in courtrooms, to a different brand of crying at sports championships and award ceremonies.

Four owners ago, it was mandated the editor of the then Stouffville Sun and its sister publications live in the communities they worked. No exceptions.

I wasn't sold on small-town life or its newspapering, but promised to give this job two years when I took it 33 years ago, months ahead of getting married.

Knowing the dowry was a German shepherd, our next move was to find a home with a fence.

And with none of the three for rent suitable, we bought the only new house for sale in Stouffville, on Spring Street, for \$83,000. (Should have financed three. I know.)

Then life happened.

Three kids later and our third home now an empty nest, I wouldn't have had it any other way.

We have lifelong friends here, community involvements, many a memory — and a diary packed with still-to-be published tell-all stories.

Still, I can see why many a small-town cop, school princi-



Off The Top

with *Jim Mason*

pal and government employee chooses to live anonymously out of town. Our elected officials don't have that option.

At times, smaller town news people are on 24/7 — even before the advent of social media and websites that require round-the-clock feeding and maintenance.

Often, it's a friendly word or news tip from a reader. But not always.

I've been ripped in the aisles of grocery stores and churches.

Taken middle-of-the-night calls from folks with slurred speech. And late-night emails from politicians who have somehow found time to add my job to their long list of responsibilities.

Had fingers, literally and figuratively, poked in my chest while volunteering at a hockey game or a charity walk.

All over stuff we printed — or didn't print.

Favours have been asked. "You're not going to do a story on that, right?"

Friendships have been lost or bruised.

Mistakes have been made. We're not perfect.

And unlike most jobs, our work is on display weekly just like the backyard laundry — and forever in the digital world.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune. Follow him on Twitter @stouffeditor

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Some children don't get it

Some people are ignorant and some don't care about the environment.

But the other day I was walking outside to see my mom and some girl with her friends threw a glass bottle on the road. So I yelled at the girl. But she did not pick it up.

So my mom and I went and cleaned it up. But before we crossed the road, some man was pulling into his driveway and my mom looked at him and mouthed, "There is glass on the road."

So after the man pulled into his driveway, all three of us cleaned it up so no dogs would get glass in their feet and so cars would not get glass in their tires.

People should respect other's property and they should protect the environment

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instead of littering.

If this keeps happening, the world will not be as pretty, because there will be pieces of garbage all over the place.

In school we are taught to respect Mother Earth. Where did these girls get their education?

SADIE MAE MCKELLAR
AGE 9
STOUFFVILLE

Help served up for food truck

Re: Keep on truckin': food truck right recipe for laid-off executive, July 9.

Thank you Sun-Tribune for the cover story! I'm delighted with all the positive feedback I've received from members of my community.

I wanted to highlight that I couldn't have followed my passion to launch Cil's Place this summer without the immense contribution

of my life partner, Tony, who single-handedly built the inside of our Mobile Juicing & Smoothie Trailer from scratch.

He worked long days and nights to ensure everything was to built spec so that I could realize my vision.

I am extremely grateful for his involvement, his talent and most of all, his support of everything I do.

CELINE GALAISE
STOUFFVILLE

