

OPINION

PUBLISHER Dana Robbins
GENERAL MANAGER Shaun Sauve
REGIONAL EDITOR-IN-CHIEF,
METROLAND CENTRAL
Joanne Burghardt

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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

DIRECTOR,
ADVERTISING
Maureen Christie
DIRECTOR
CREATIVE SERVICES
Katherine Porcheron

DIRECTOR,
DISTRIBUTION
Mike Banville

REGIONAL DIRECTOR,
FINANCE
& ADMINISTRATION
Phil Sheehan

EDITOR IN CHIEF,
YORK REGION
Lee Ann Waterman

Managing Editor
Jim Mason
jmason@yrmg.com

Advertising Manager
Mara Sepe
msepe@yrmg.com

Circulation
Co-ordinator
Daphne Lawrie
dlawrie@yrmg.com

York Region Media
Group community
newspapers
The Sun-Tribune,
published every
Thursday, is a
division of the Metroland
Media Group Ltd., a wholly-
owned subsidiary of Torstar
Corporation.

Delivery issues?
To speak to a customer
service rep:
1-855-853-5613

Delivery inquiries:
yrcustomerservice@
yrmg.com

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

COLUMNS

Clowns, Brown highlight our downtown celebration

With more than 35,000 people at the Strawberry Festival last weekend, there are at least that many stories to tell.

Politicians serving pancakes. Kids shaking hands with Doo Doo, the clown who rescued two women from an assault in Toronto last fall. Motorists ignoring no-parking pylons. The usual suspects drinking in public and vandalizing.

Here are a few of my favourites:

If we were in the United States, there would be a statue erected in a town square, a street named and a civic holiday held in honour of **Cpt. Roy Brown**.

It was very Canadian and cool to hear people talk about Cpt. Brown, the fighter pilot credited with shooting down the Red Baron, as one of their own all weekend long.

The plaque in Cpt. Brown's name being erected at the Church Street entrance to Memorial Park will remind future generations of his contribution.

Putting the "memorial" back in Memorial Park. We've neglected that aspect for far too long, Stouffville.

And we can thank 12-year-old Nadine Carter for reminding us about Cpt. Brown.

Fans of the blues know who **Jack de Keyzer** is: Juno-award winning singer/guitarist who plays live about 180 times a year, including Nineteen on the Park in 2014.

de Keyzer didn't disappoint during his show under the festival marquee tent Saturday night. His band is tight, the solos long and sharp.

The dapper sax man in the group is Stouffville's own Richard Thornton.

"I live six blocks from here," he said while mingling with fans between sets.

de Keyzer and his band are playing the blues festival in



Off The Top
with Jim Mason

my home town, Thunder Bay, with Burton Cummings, Tom Cochrane and many others this weekend. Wish I was there.

Downtown merchants wish they had a fraction of the people who filled **Main Street** on Saturday shopping from them on a regular basis.

It's fascinating to watch old friends meet in the middle of the road and catch up on lost years, like an annual high school reunion for the masses.

After that storm that rolled through Friday, Saturday at the festival was unseasonably pleasant and non-sauna like.

And from a survey The Sun-Tribune did two years ago, we know about 60 per cent of those in attendance are tourists. Get that many people together and there will always be complaints. We'll call them suggestions with an edge.

If you have ideas to share, why not get involved? Volunteer. Host or sponsor an event. You can reach organizers through the event's website: strawberryfestival.ca

Do it in the spirit of the festival's original organizers, Jim Kidd and Jim Heidema, and folks like Ged Stonehouse and York Region chair Wayne Emmerson who hosted Canada Day events that preceded the festival.

See you next year.

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

Tip of the hat to our festival

Call it sensational. Call it spectacular. Each descriptive rightfully related to the 32nd annual Strawberry Festival held here last week. Although the weatherman attempted to dampen spirits of show organizers by administering two torrential downpours, the Canadian attitude of determination shone through, resulting in an event equal to anything held before. A tip of the hat to those who gallantly persevered. Examples follow:

Switch in sites

When Friday's storm struck, town councillor Hugo Kroon was about to unveil two engraved plaques honouring First World War Royal Air Force squadron leader, Capt. A. Roy Brown. With rain obscuring his printed page and the audience fast scattering, a quick switch was made to the marquee tent. There, the commemoration was completed with the dignity it deserved. In attendance was Capt. Brown's granddaughter, Dianne Brown Brodeur Sample of Colorado and Carol Nicholson, a niece from Oakville.

John Chalmers, historian for Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame, praised 12-year-old Nadine Carter, a Glad Park Public School student, for bringing the Capt. Brown story to the forefront of Canadian history. "It's largely because of Nadine's efforts we're here today," he said. One plaque will be erected at The Grange course on Rolling Hills Golf Club in Bethesda, where Capt. Brown once farmed and the other in Stouffville's Memorial Park. He referred to the decorated air ace as "Stouffville's adopted son".

Nicole Strawbridge concluded the ceremony with a rousing rendition of our National Anthem.

'A fabulous place'
In a stirring address,



Roaming Around
with Jim Thomas

The Hon. Jane Philpott, Minister of Health and MP for Markham-Stouffville described Whitchurch-Stouffville as "a fabulous place" and the Strawberry Festival as "a fantastic event". "Canada's the best country in the world," she said. Added Mayor Justin Altmann: "We live in one of the finest towns in York Region; one of the greatest towns in Ontario." He praised the festival organization for its ability to bring more than 30,000 visitors to the community each year.

Dog shares honours

In a unique and popular presentation, a dog, born without eyes, shared its master's 2016 'Citizen of the Year' award. Jim Mason, editor of The Sun-Tribune, presented an engraved plaque to Joanne George of Musselman's Lake and her beautiful canine "Smiley". Honoured too was Wendy Jacksie, the town's Sports Person of the Year. The Hon. Jane Philpott and Mayor Altmann also recognized the platform guests.

Best baby

Brayden Kwan, son of Amelia Kwan of Stouffville, was the \$500 winner in this year's Festival Baby Show held in Memorial Park Saturday. There were 36 entries. The prize was posted by Knowledge First Financial.

The event was sponsored by Tiny Bubbles Day Care of Stouffville and emceed by Nada Crupi.

Standing O

A standing ovation was accorded Courtney Britton, organist, pianist, soloist and choir director at Stouffville United Church after receiving the 'Music Town, Ontario' award at this year's Music Festival. The presentation was made by violinist Matthew Eeuwes, the 2015 award recipient.

Young pie champs

Joanna Chiara and Arianna Rizi were winners of the Gladys Clarkson Strawberry Pie Contest. Second was Isabella Clarkson, great-granddaughter of the original sponsor. Third was Isabella's mother, Beth Clarkson. In the jam competition Ellen Simpson was first; Dorothy Wagg, second and Steve Downs, third. There were 17 entries.

Sitting ducks

"All for the kids", said Stouffville firefighter Kevin Chiavatti, one of four dunk tank 'sitting ducks'. Other good sports were Derek Mackenzie, John Paull and James Windsor. Without charge, children were invited to dunk the volunteers as often as they wished.

Neighbours unite

Five minsters; a community choir and a vocal/instrumental team combined to present an outstanding Festival worship service under the big top in Stouffville's Memorial Park Sunday. Rev. Joan Master-ton of St. James Presbyterian Church delivered an inspiring message.

Tradition continues

The tradition continues. More than 800 enjoyed a sumptuous outdoor beef dinner hosted by the Stouffville Lions Club. It was Yvonne Hurst's final event as president. Her successor is Richard Fronske.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 65 years.

