

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
Classified: 1-800-263-6480
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
Sabrina Brown
sbrown@metroland.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:
customersupport@
metroland.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

If you grew up in Stouffville this may sound familiar

Sure signs you grew up in Stouffville: Back before the entrance signs – depending on where you enter – read 40,000 and something.

When the village looked liked Mayberry and your life was straight out of Happy Days, Family Ties or Leave it to Beaver.

A lot more people went to church in this then WASP enclave – far from today's Stouffville, which is so much more representative of Canadian reality.

Stouffville and Whitchurch were separate entities back then.

You couldn't get away with anything. Everyone knew you – and your parents were a four-digit phone call and a couple of blocks away.

You refer to the Stouffville Country Market as the sales barn(s) or flea market. Both references date you.

You square-danced your way through high school.

You learned to swim in an outdoor pool – during its three-month season.

You were a Clipper. You may have worn Cooperalls and a mouthguard.

You remember The Lion pub when it was a car dealership, before it was the Steerburger restaurant.

You bought pizza, coffee, donuts and hamburgers from local joints; the big chains didn't arrive until the 1980s.

The clerk at the Beer Store knew every underage kid in town. And he worked every shift.

Or back when the burgh was dry and folks drove to Markham for their beer and spirits.

You tell your kids about the good old days sliding down the toboggan hill in Memorial Park.

You remember when there were banks, hardware stores and a supermarket in downtown Stouffville.
The GO train didn't come



Off The Top
with *Jim Mason*

this far north. Same for the 404.

Canadian Tire was your general store. The Main Street site is now home to a vacant lot.

You went to high school on Edward Street not Hoover Park Drive.

Max Webster played your high school dance.

And future NHLer Keith Acton or TSN Radio's Mike (Rehill) Richards was in your class.

You know where Orchard Park Public school was located.

You remember when Stouffville had a mall – the current LCBO plaza.

You may have been born in Stouffville's own hospital – Brier Bush, which has been replaced by Spring Street, near Main and Stouffer.

Not that you attended, unless it was for a Boy Scout or Girl Guide badge, but town council meetings were held in what's now the top floor of Nineteen on the Park.

The clock tower in Civic Square was home to a loud horn that blared during every fire department call, alerting all within earshot morning, noon and night.

Stouffville likely didn't have a movie theatre when you were growing up.

Some things don't change.

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

Dream of African hospital near reality

It's a mission. But not impossible.

Ask Gene Paisley. For the 90-year-old Stouffville resident, the dream of building a hospital in the village of Carpenter, Ghana, on the west coast of Africa, could soon become a reality.

To date, more than \$6 million has been raised or pledged towards erecting a facility costing an estimated \$10 million.

Adding an initiative to the challenge is the promise by Vancouver humanitarian James Pattison to match the project dollar for dollar with construction to begin once receipts reach the half-way mark.

Paisley recently returned from an eight-month Ghana visit where his son and daughter-in-law, David and Brenda Mensah serve as church directors and missionaries. Health permitting, Gene plans to go back.

Without a hospital, services are provided in small clinics under shade trees or in school classrooms. Dr. Jennifer Wilson of Uxbridge has been a regular provider, travelling to Carpenter twice a year while husband Graham takes care of their five children.

Paisley is loud in praise of what Dr. Wilson has accomplished along with other area professionals, including Stouffville optometrist Dr. Martin McDowell.

It was Dr. Wilson who, with Susan Fockler, also of Uxbridge, travelled to the United States and obtained life-saving pumps now used following child births. Previous to this, hundreds of babies were considered still-born, said Paisley "their bodies tossed away".

He noted that, under proper surgical care, as many as 300 hernia operations were performed during a period of 10 days.

Paisley describes as



Roaming Around
with *Jim Thomas*

"amazing" the number of professionals who willingly give of their time and talents without charge, "even paying their ways there and back", he said.

While seeking additional funds for the hospital, Paisley honestly admits people are continually "bombarded with charity requests from all directions".

"It's really wonderful what Canadians do," he said.

As a second-time visitor, Paisley said he was wonderfully received.

"They made me feel like a king," he said. "I'd never experienced such hospitality."

Before leaving Canada, he made up his mind not to complain about the heat or the food.

"It doesn't hurt a person to sweat a little," he joked. "And I never missed a meal."

It was March 9, 2014 that Gene's wife Laura passed away. But residents of Carpenter did not forget. More than 1,500 attended a worship service in her memory.

In a 2015 newsletter, Dr. Wilson wrote: "When we are faithful to do our part, others will rise up and do theirs. I could never have imagined the number of health professionals who were ready and waiting to be given an opportunity to help universally, looking

for a way to show mercy to their global neighbours through giving so generously."

Eugene 'Kick' Paisley is a Stouffville native, the son of T.H. and Lillis Paisley. In addition to daughter Brenda, Gene has two sons, Gary of Brechin and Grant in Vancouver, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Because Summitview Public School and the Christian church were directly across the road, "mother could watch me go in and come out the doors of both," he recalls. There were no opportunities for side trips.

Gene remembers receiving the strap only once. Principal Cedric Watson administered the whacks, for what reason Gene didn't reveal. "The soreness in my right hand only ended last week," he said with a laugh.

The link between Gene and his son-in-law is a heart-warming story. It was Stouffville's Vince Gallo who introduced the two. Gene invited David to serve as a hired hand on his Lincolnville farm.

A portion of his wages covered tuition fees to Ontario Bible College. Following graduation, David went on to obtain his master's degree from Acadia University in Nova Scotia. Brenda was then a bank employee in nearby Kemptville.

"It was a union meant to be," she agrees.

Several years ago, Gene and David travelled to Ghana together.

"The farm bought us our tickets," Gene says. Since then, he's continued to give that country assistance, both physically and financially.

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