

# Stouffville Free Press

Whitchurch-Stouffville's Independent Community Owned Newspaper

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## VOTING ... ... on our future

"Suburbia is where the developer bulldozes out the trees, then names the streets after them," Bill Vaughn.

Welcome to suburbia. Drive west on Millard from Ninth Line towards Hwy. 48 and you are greeted by a treeless vista; row upon row of new homes without so much as a sapling to soften the acres of brick, concrete and tarmac. On a laneway just north of Hwy. 48, mature trees have also been cut down to make way for development along the Millard St. extension.

Although the town's Secondary Plan calls for the protection of mature trees, current rules are clearly not doing the job. At a recent council meeting a resolution was proposed that would include existing vegetation and trees in draft subdivision plans, to allow for public debate on tree preservation before approvals are granted, but the resolution failed to carry.

Another hot election topic is the establishment of a performing arts venue in town. The present council has already backed the refurbishment of 19 Civic Ave. as an arts centre, albeit on a much smaller scale than originally envisioned.

Mayoral candidate Wayne Emmerson says he would like to see a larger facility in a different location. However, such a project, if approved, would likely take several years to come to fruition. That may be too late for the York Durham Academy of the Performing Arts, which is facing an uphill struggle to mount its upcoming season because of a shortage of appropriate venues.

The prospect of losing the only licenced daycare facility in Ballantrae is a major worry for parents in that community. While the town rightly points out that the Ballantrae Community Centre is a public building, designed to be used by all residents, it appears there are no other venues in the area which can accommodate a daycare centre. Trying to find alternatives outside the community would place a huge burden on parents; a solution is urgently needed.

If you have concerns, now is the time to voice them. The next council will be in office for four years, and it's important for voters to express their views on town issues to those seeking election. Being on council is a tough job and the people who run for office are taking on a major burden on our behalf.

It's impossible to please all of the people all of the time, but those who enter municipal politics want to make a positive difference to the quality of life, and for that they deserve our respect.

## Readers Write

### An open letter to Ballantrae Community Centre board

To the Ballantrae Community Centre Board of Directors:

I am writing to you as a member of the Ballantrae P.S. School Council and a concerned parent. We are a group of parents, community members, and staff whose mandate is to form a link between the community and the York Region District Board of Education. We are very concerned about the possible displacement or closure of Ballantrae Child Care.

Presently, there are 51 Ballantrae P.S. students who use the daycare. This equals about one fifth of our school population. We are very concerned that parents will choose to withdraw their students to attend schools closer to another daycare facility. The closest daycare centre is 15 km away, in Stouffville or Aurora. Something like this would have a huge negative effect on our school, and ultimately on the community.

We are also concerned that those students who do stay will have to be bussed after school to another facility, and will no longer be able to participate in after school sports, track and field days, or any other program that extends past the regular school day. A bussing program would also increase daycare fees. We have several families in the area who are struggling to get by, and would not be able to afford the increase.

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## Free Thoughts

The seemingly unnecessary blasting of the early morning train horn has left some local residents a tad discombobulated...



## Word from the Web

Want to praise, protest or pontificate on issues facing our town as we head into the election? Our online forum is growing and we want to hear from you. Here's a sampling of recent posts

GO TO  
[www.stouffvilleonline.com](http://www.stouffvilleonline.com)  
and join the discussion.

"I love this town but we are bigger than one main street. Stouffville just has to start thinking that way."

"Stouffville needs to get on the ball re the theatre project. As has been seen in many other small and not so small towns a theatre really helps build the area. Restaurants have a growing clientele, other visual arts start up and the town has a sense of pride in its

accomplishments. Also it serves a need re all the groups who are willing to make it go! Additionally the up and coming generations need a cultural centre and support for the arts and a place to perform."

"I am one of the new residents of Stouffville and wish I would have known about the traffic problems before buying (of course the builder won't tell you!). There is definitely a

problem as there are now too many residents for the infrastructure currently in place."

"Perhaps they should limit the number of houses going up until new roads are put in place. Or limit the number of houses period. I moved here to get away from the city!"

"I would like to see Musselman's Lake cleaned up and Ninth Line fixed. It's a

very dangerous road that needs cars to slow down and room for people and their kids to walk. I would love to see Whitchurch-Stouffville take pride in having a lake so close, invest in parks by the water for swimming and playgrounds for children. If you make it a pedestrian friendly area, what a wonderful place it would be to spend a day with the family only 10 minutes up the road."