

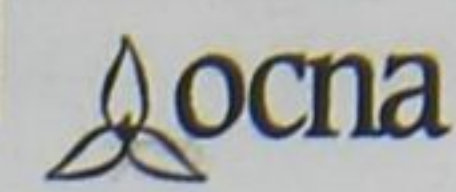
**WHITCHURCH-STOUFFVILLE THIS MONTH**

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# Opinion

## A Heritage Worth Preserving

According to a province-wide report released by the Real Estate Investment Network on April 13, current homeowners in Whitchurch-Stouffville have plenty to celebrate.

Ranking our community fifth among 59 cities and towns in terms of potential return on investment in residential real estate, the study noted, "This is one of the hidden gems in the whole region. In every region, there exists a town that hasn't realized its potential. Whitchurch-Stouffville is that town for the southern Ontario region."

In the fall of 2003 Whitchurch-Stouffville boasted the highest average purchase cost for a single-family home at \$412,073. This figure is more than \$100,000 ahead of nearest rival, Markham, and represents an increase of almost \$50,000 over the previous fall.

One reason for the town's popularity is enshrined in its motto, 'Country close to the city'. Add to that close proximity to Toronto, improving GO service and proposed access to regional transit, and this community has much to recommend it to potential residents.

However, properly planned growth is essential to preserve any semblance of the small town charm which makes it such a desirable place to live. We must support efforts to retain the town's heritage, revitalize the downtown core and encourage the development of an arts centre, along with a vibrant shopping district, to counteract the faceless suburban sprawl of strip malls, parking lots and garish plastic signs.

Being part of the 2004 Doors Open Ontario will do much to re-ignite pride in our community. On June 5, a number of local sites will invite visitors to discover first-hand some of our hidden treasures, including Cedar Beach Park and Pavilion, the Stouffville Clock Tower, Schell Lumber Sash and Door Shop and York Regional Forest's headquarters.

Thirteen dedicated volunteers from the Heritage Advisory Committee, the Museum, the Historical Society and the Tourism Association have worked long and hard to make the community part of this Ontario initiative, which has its roots in a heritage event which took place in Glasgow, Scotland in 1990.

According to the Doors Open Whitchurch-Stouffville website, "Our mission is to bring our community to the forefront of heritage conservation, promotion and tourism in Ontario. We strive to create awareness and excitement about our local heritage. This is the key to preserving our treasures and developing an appreciation for the identity for the communities within Whitchurch-Stouffville."

It's yours to discover and it's free.  
 Come out and celebrate our history.



# Letters

## Hospital parking a 'hot ticket' concern

To the Editor:  
 There is a new system for paying for parking at Markham Stouffville Hospital: no more attendants and gates, just machines to insert money and receive a ticket. We are being asked to estimate the time we will be spending there -- to the tune of \$2 a half-hour -- and pay in advance. If we underes-

timate, we are threatened with receiving a \$30 ticket; if we overestimate, well, we just lose the money, I guess. So what?

Granted it is possible to make several trips to the parking lot to add more money; admittedly, not very convenient when one is in an examination room, waiting for a doc-

tor and wearing one of those flattering gowns. Or perhaps with a baby just unwrapped, to be bundled up and taken out again, or any number of different scenarios.

My recent visit with a doctor there took an hour and a half, with X-rays, even though I actually only saw the doctor for

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## Sounding Off

What was your favourite project at school this year?



**BRETT KIRKNESS**

Mine was this game board we had to design. It was fun learning about all the circuits, putting them together and at the end we got to play.



**CAROLYN MARSHALL**

A cascade book we made about ancient civilizations. I did mine on the Aztecs and most of their cities are in Mexico.



**CHRISTIE DUNEC**

My favourite project was when we picked our favourite animal and did a report on it. I picked the dolphin. When I was in Florida the dolphins came right by the boat.



**JACKIANNE ABBEY**

My favourite project was mandala which is a painting on cloth. We did it because a woman from an art school came and taught it to us. At the end we put all our squares together.



**LISA WOODCOCK**

My favourite project was picking our favourite musical artist and then making a CD cover for them with their biography.