

Location, location, location

Fun Fest shifts down Fairview

If rumours were as good as facts, Essex would be shifting the annual Fun Fest to McGregor this year to avoid the disruption caused by construction at the new twin-pad arena site. Like so many rumours, this one happens to be false.

Town of Essex Parks and Recreation Director Doug Sweet has a map of this year's Fun Fest layout pinned to the bulletin board on his office wall.

"We're just shifting everything down Fairview Avenue towards the ball diamonds and soccer pitches," said Sweet.

The official entrance to the fairgrounds and the information booth will be at the foot of Langtry Street, between the skateboard park and the Kinsmen Fieldhouse.

Carter Shows midway won't be hard to find. Just look for the Zipper! Rides and games will be set up on the asphalt pad where the tennis courts used to be.

As for main stage entertainment, music lovers will definitely want to bring a set of comfortable lawnchairs because this year's venue will be set up in the parking lot at the main ball diamond, with food concessions and the beer tent nearby.

The Fun Fest committee is always in need of volunteers of all ages. High school students can earn community service hours by signing up, and if you're environmentally conscious, consider signing up for this year's new "Green Team". For more information, contact Jim Proctor at 519-776-6069 weekdays after 3:30 p.m.

Watch next week's edition of the Essex Free Press for your 2008 Fun Fest Guide!!!

In search of youth talent

The annual Youth Talent Search competition is only a couple of weeks away and organizer Natalie Sinn is still looking for local entertainers.

"We still have plenty of room for more applicants," said Sinn. "We generally get between 20 and 25 acts."

This is Sinn's second year as organizer of the only preliminary event in Essex County to send a number of local youth to London's Western Fair every September. Grammy Award-nominated R&B singer Tamia Washington got her start as a winner in the Youth Talent Search. So too did Jordan Collins of Maidstone, who advanced all the way to the Canadian Youth Talent finals two years ago, taking second place for his impressive handling of a drum kit.

Youth Talent contestants must be between the ages of 13 and 21 and must not have reached 22 by the opening day of this year's Western Fair.

Junior Talent contestants must be between the ages of 6 and 12 and must not have reached 13 by Western Fair's opening day.

Judges will choose up to 10 Youth Talent acts and up to five Junior Talent acts to advance to the competition at Western Fair. Cash prizes are awarded for the top three contestants in each competition.

Contestants must prepare an act that runs no more than four minutes. Vocal acts may not use background vocals of any kind and dance acts may not use background taps or tap effects.

"It's open to any type of talent – vocal, instrumental, dance, acting. If someone wants to get up and do stand-up comedy, we'd be happy to listen," says Sinn.

This year's Youth Talent Search competition will be held on Sunday, July 13 starting at 1 p.m. on the main stage at the Essex Fun Fest.

Contact Natalie Sinn at 519-776-8968 for an application, or pick up an application form at the Essex Free Press.

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DPM INSURANCE GROUP Essex is excited to announce that Lesley Tofflemire is joining our team effective June 23, 2008. Lesley will be taking on the role of Commercial Insurance Producer. With over 12 years experience in the insurance business, Lesley will be a great fit with our organization and she brings with her a wealth of knowledge and expertise. Lesley can be reached at our main office line of **519-776-6457** or email at lesley.tofflemire@dpmins.com.



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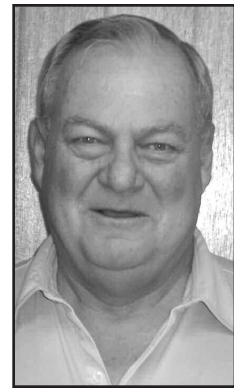
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