



MAYOR HELPS MOLLY: The local fundraising campaign to repair or replace Molly the Moose – the mascot of Sweet Molly’s British, Scottish and Irish shop – raised \$796 in public donations on Sunday during the Leathertown Festival, including a generous donation from Mayor Rick Bonnette. – Frances Learment photo

‘No moose abuse’ campaign grows

Last week’s vandalism of Molly the Moose, the mascot of Sweet Molly’s in Acton, sparked donations from a growing number of Acton residents who are angry, frustrated, but not willing to give up without trying to help.

When news that Molly had been knocked off her stand at the corner of Mill and Wilbur Streets, a number of Acton BIA (Business Improvement Area) members pledged to help fix or replace the moose. In just a few hours at the Leathertown Festival on Sunday, \$796 was raised by volunteers who manned a booth, accepting donations from people who signed a “Moose Aid” card. Those cards, available at a variety of Acton businesses, will be displayed at the Acton BIA’s new office. BIA manager Josey

Bonnette said people quickly responded to Molly’s plight, including Monica Galway of Profile Beauty Salon. “Monica is putting together a gift basket to raffle, and I thought we have thousands of people in the downtown for the Leathertown Festival – a perfect opportunity to try and raise some funds,” Bonnette said on Sunday.

In his opening remarks at the Leathertown Festival, Mayor Rick Bonnette, one of many who donated cash to the Molly fund, said the vandalism was the work of “senseless idiots.” “It is a cute little landmark and these donations to fix or replace Molly prove that Acton is a caring community, despite the vandalism,” Bonnette said in an interview.

Despite having her \$4,000 moose mascot

vandalized four times in the past year, Sweet Molly’s owner, Carrie-Anne Bennie, said she will not give up and let the vandals win. She’s waiting to hear if Molly can be repaired, and if not, she’ll buy another moose – this time with re-enforced legs that can’t be easily snapped. Asked about the fundraising campaign, Bennie said she always knew that Acton was a “caring community” and the fundraising efforts just prove it.

The police investigation into the vandalism by three young men, captured on surveillance camera video, continues and Bennie is anxious for an update. “I don’t expect moose abuse to be top priority, but I’ve phoned (police) a couple of times and not got anything back,” Bennie said on Sunday.

Multiple benefits from Yoga in the Park

As the soothing sounds of pan flutes filled the air, mixed with the squeals of kids playing on a nearby swing set and barks of ball-chasing dogs, a small group of yoga enthusiasts stretched, relaxed and let their minds wander as they took part in the sixth and final Yoga in the Park session last Thursday in

Prospect Park.

Led by Leanne Monaghan of Staying Alive Fitness, the group spread out their yoga mats and enjoyed the free body/mind exercise which has generated 400-pounds of food for Acton’s FoodShare, and \$373 for Links2Care’s Back Pack program.

For Monaghan, the response to the program, now in its fifth year, was a surprise. “I had absolutely no clue at all that (Yoga in the Park) would be so popular. It’s been a great experience because we’ve drawn people from Georgetown, Milton, Rockwood – we’ve helped a lot of people by introducing them to a really gently form of yoga,” Monaghan said, adding helping the community with food and cash were the reasons she started the program.

New to yoga, Charlene Wood of Brampton came to the session with a friend. “I’m not very good at it, but I try, I try,” Wood said, adding the park setting made the class special. Her friend, Jennifer White of Georgetown who works at Staying Alive Fitness, has volunteered at several of the weekly sessions. “Everybody leaves feeling relaxed, and we’ve

been really lucky weather-wise. This is a very gently yoga that is suitable for anybody and everybody, and it’s that small-town feel,” White said when asked why the program is so popular.

For Rudi Mueller of Georgetown, the weekly Yoga in the Park is chance to take a free class and enjoy being outdoors. “There aren’t too many yoga classes outdoors and this is a beautiful spot – I’m an occasional participant and really enjoy it because yoga is good for me in terms of stretching and physical fitness,” he said.



YOGA BENEFITS: Staying Alive Fitness owner Leanne Monaghan led the final of six sessions of Yoga in the Park last Thursday in Prospect Park. – Frances Learment photo

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