

Children flock to Town Library for Jabberwocky Jungle journey



For five days last week, the Whitechurch-Stouffville Public Library was transformed into an exotic place called 'Jabberwocky Jungle'.

The March Break program attracted hundreds of children including Cheryl Pritlove, 4, of Geoffrey Crescent, Stouffville.



Three-year-old Sean Rice of Geoffrey Crescent, Stouffville, just couldn't take any more. He

slept through most of a symphony concert in Latcham Gallery.



This ferocious-looking crocodile didn't scare seven-year-old Jean-Paul Dumond of Mussel-

man's Lake. Jean-Paul even tempted fate by putting his head inside the crocodile's mouth.

By KATE GILDERDALE
STOUFFVILLE — Outside the Whitechurch-Stouffville Library there's a blitting wind and an array of semi-frozen puddles that somehow manage to be half an inch deeper than your child's boots.

Inside, there's a magical, tropical jungle with lush green foliage (a mass of green balloons), palm plants and a host of wildlife rarely found in a public institution.

A fearsome crocodile lounges on a book counter, snapping its jaws hungrily while a splendid elephant with baby blue eyes and eyelashes stands sedately by the reference shelves, watching exotically colored butterflies overhead.

Perched among the greenery, oblivious to the controlled mayhem created by an invading army of children out to make the most of a week's freedom during the annual 'what can it do, Mom?' ceremony commonly called March Break.

We aren't really in the Amazon, but in the wonderful world of the Jabberwocky Jungle, courtesy of the Library's March Break program.

The excellent entertainment includes movies, a theatrical group, puppets, a magician and music ranging from rock to classical, all carefully selected to appeal to a wide range of ages.

Judging from expressions on their faces, the children are having a marvellous time while the staff, resplendent in jungle print tunics and safari hats, remain smiling and cheerful.

They calmly cope with both the children and any regular patrons that brave the climb through a mountain of outdoor clothing and sand (a few grains of which are still inside the box).

It all started by accident, explains librarian Sheila McLeod. One year, Gayle (Dunford), a member of staff, came back from Hawaii with some exotic dresses. Just for fun, we put them on, piped in some Hawaiian music and discovered excellent public response.

Gradually, it became a tradition. Each year, the staff found themselves becoming more and more ambitious with both themes and entertainment. The crowds kept growing with the numbers attending now almost overwhelming.

Unfortunately, the success of the program creates a problem, Mrs. McLeod explains. We're at the point where we've almost run out of room.

Carolyn Middleton, also a member of the Library staff, estimates 200 passports were sold in advance with approximately 50 additional youngsters coming in on a daily basis.

Mrs. McLeod compares the preparations to putting on a show or a play. There's so much time and energy devoted to getting things ready, then in four days it's all over.

The cost involved in acquiring performers has increased dramatically, Mrs. McLeod says. Keeping the program within a set budget has become a real challenge.

Financial support through the Stouffville Lions Club, the Ontario Arts Council and Outreach is a great help in defraying part of the expense, she explains.

Mrs. McLeod expresses sympathy to regular library users who must contend with the annual upheaval. But from what I observe, everyone entered into the spirit of the occasion.

While it's not something which staff would want to cope every week, they all put forth a tremendous effort making it the highly successful event it is.

Mrs. McLeod describes the program as 'a team effort'.

If we didn't all become involved willingly, it would never work, she says.

Other members of the March Break team are Gayle Dunford, Marilyn Ferguson, Carolyn Middleton, George Schlukbier, Barb Smith and Carol Smythe.



Anne Massicotte, associated with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, showed her clarinet to Michelle Miller of R.R. 2, Markham following a concert in Latcham Gallery Friday.



Two-year-old Courtney Baxter of Geoffrey Crescent, Stouffville, was completely satisfied just playing in the sandbox.

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Interim Taxes

The 1st interim instalment of 1988 taxes falls due on March 31, 1988.

Please return complete bill with your payment. Same will be receipted and returned to you.

Failure to receive a tax notice does not relieve the taxpayer from the responsibility of paying taxes.

To avoid penalty, please make payment by due date.

Sylvia Robb, Tax Collector

Services

A combined Good Friday service for the congregations of Ringwood Christian Church and Stouffville Memorial Christian Church will be held April 1 at 11 a.m.

The location is Stouffville Memorial Christian Church, Main Street East and Stouffer Street North.

Rev. Chris Sorley will bring the message with special music.

An Missions offering will be received.

Drivers

CLAREMONT — The Canadian Cancer Society of North Pickering requires drivers to transport patients to Scarborough General and Scarborough Centenary Hospitals.

Volunteers are paid mileage.

Interested persons are asked to call Rosemary Timms at 649-2431 or Peggy Byron at 649-5560.