

# Fighter pilot wows kids

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Thursday's excellent presentation by a Canadian airforce fighter pilot had students from Ballantrae Public School clamoring to learn more.

Captain David Deere, based in Cold Lake, Alberta, described the qualifications and training methods required to achieve the ultimate goal of flying F-18s as part of Canada's defence force.

In addition to a slide presentation, he showed a film of pilots in flight training, comparing the movie 'Top Gun' to real life.

His squadron's job, he explained, is to monitor Soviet air traffic, and if necessary to intercept planes flying too close to Canadian air space.

"We intercept their planes quite often," Captain Deere declared. "They do come close to see how fast we react." The atmosphere is very friendly as the planes fly side by side. "We take their picture and they take ours," he noted, pointing out that the squadron's role is defensive rather than aggressive.

His job, he said, has taken him to Bermuda, Florida and Hawaii as well as the chillier climes of Inuvik, where the temperature averages minus 40 celsius.

"We have a sister squadron in

California," he told the students. "We fight F-14s, F-15s and F-16s there. We usually do very well against them."

If you want to become a fighter pilot, your first step is to go to a recruiting centre, advised Captain Deere. "They will start screening to see if you are suitable."

Sometimes you will be pressured to try something else in the service, he cautioned. "You've got to be determined to get what you want."

Captain Deere outlined the different options for successful applicants, which range from four years of university and four years of service, to entry as a cadet, with no university training.

"There are no pilots who haven't got at least one or two years of college training. It's worth going to university or college, if not for the education, then for the parties," he quipped.

After an exhaustive training, perhaps one or two of 20 students will be selected as fighter pilots and will start training on an F-5.

"It's a good plane for learning how to fly and fight." After six months and 100 hours, successful graduates start flying F-18s.

"Your fourth flight is solo," said Captain Deere. "That's how fast they want you to learn."

The Grade 6, 7 and 8 students had plenty of questions to ask, including how high the planes fly, "72,000 feet," whether Captain Deere had ever blown anyone up, "no," and whether squadron members have nicknames in real life.

"Yes, and mine's Bambi, because my name is Deere," he admitted. Captain Deere has

been in the service since 1980. "I've had four years of university and four years of flying," he states.

Originally from Georgetown, he entered the airforce because "I wanted to do something different. I never thought I would get this far."

If reaction from Ballantrae students is any indication, there'll be a record lineup at the recruiting centre in a few years' time.

## Art lovers show and sale

By KATE GILDERDALE

Stouffville art lovers take note: Sheraton Antiques, 59 Main Street East, are holding their annual Art Show in the store on Saturday, September 24 between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., and Sunday, September 25 between 12 noon and 5 p.m.

Featured artists from the Markham Group of Artists are Judy Livingstone, Pat Wheeler and June Ford, working in a variety of media including watercolours, acrylics and pen and ink. "June Ford has a number of pen and ink drawings of local historical buildings, as well as

some watercolours," says Sheraton's Suzanne Munro.

Pat Wheeler, a well known local cartoonist and illustrator, offers a variety of styles and subjects, "she doesn't stick to any one style," Suzanne observes. Judy Livingstone does water colours and some miniature prints, as well as working in acrylic and mixed media.

The art featured in the show is on sale to the public, and the three artists will be on hand during the event. For more information, call Andy or Suzanne Munro at 640-4564.

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## Have Your Say

Should Stouffville residents be allowed to raise racing pigeons in lofts in their backyards?



Sandy Kitely  
Circulation Manager  
"No. I think it's something that should only be allowed in rural areas. A large number of pigeons would be very messy."



Julie Wood  
Shopkeeper  
"I don't see any problem with it. As far as I can see, there would be no harm, as long as the neighbours weren't bothered by it."



Chris Dudas  
Engineering Inspector  
"I think they should be allowed to keep them in their backyard as long as the adjoining neighbours complain. It should be the same with any pets."