

Balloon driven golf balls send couple to Nova Scotia

While it may well be true for most of us duffers that golf is indeed a good walk spoiled, the game can be, on occasion, a source of great joy for those who have never set foot on a course.

Just ask Uxbridge seniors George and Dolly Izatt, Stouffville Grade 2 student Christian Chicor-

li, and all the kids who'll get a summer holiday this year because of the Star Fresh Air Fund.

These people's lives are all a little fuller these days as a result of a couple of golf tournaments run as charity fundraisers by National Hockey League players. With this general area featuring an abun-



From Where I Live

Bruce Stapley

dance of golf courses, it only makes sense our local links would be in demand by pros looking to gather together to shoot some golf and put a little something back into a society that has been so generous to them.

For the Izatts, the recent tourna-

ment hosted by former Stouffville-Markham minor hockey player and current Buffalo Sabre Brad May at the Cherry Downs Golf and Country Club south of Claremont proved to be their ticket to an important celebration down east this August.

If the truth be known, George and Dolly prefer bingo to golf. In fact, they were playing their favorite game at the Uxbridge Community Centre on a Monday night in early June when they decided to purchase a couple of tickets on a most unique game of chance. The numbers on one of the tickets they bought ended up cor-

responding to the digits on the golf ball which landed closest to the hole as part of the grand finale event at the May tourney last Thursday evening.

It seems someone came up with the untried idea of hauling hundreds of numbered balls up, up and away in a hot air balloon. When the balloon and its contents came over the designated fairway with the specially placed holes installed just for the contest, the balls were dumped en masse. The one with the Izatts' lucky number was judged to be the closest to the grand prize hole, making them the winners of a trip for two to a Caribbean destination.

After the Izatts and the balloon finally came back down to earth, they chose the cash instead. It will be used to help finance their trip to Nova Scotia where they will be a part of a surprise 25th wedding anniversary party for their daughter late next month.

Brad's tournament also brightened the day of a lot of city-bound kids this summer, with more than \$16,000 being raised for the Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund.

As for little Christian Chicorli, this little dynamo of a seven year old Toronto Maple Leaf fan realized a dream as well earlier that same week at the Maples of Balantrae Golf Course. Christian's mother Marie had gone out on a limb and promised her son she'd do everything in her power to get Doug Gilmour's autograph for him sometime this year.

When she heard Gilmour was to be part of the charity tournament hosted by fellow leaf Peter Zezel and the Metropolitan Toronto Police Amateur Athletic Association, she took her son to the Hwy 48 course in the hope of encountering the hockey super star.

Gilmour didn't let them down, taking time out to sign Christian's hat, as well as the Gilmour hockey card the youngster was carrying. The obliging hockey player even stopped long enough to read the letter Christian has written for his hero, and promised to mail the wide-eyed lad a picture.

His confidence bolstered by his success, Christian then proceeded to march right out onto the 17th green, autograph book in hand, to solicit the signature of whomever he might find setting up to putt. The surprised golfer was none other than the highly touted future super star Eric Lindros who ended up handing his putter to Christian to try his luck.

In the end neither Christian nor the Izatts, nor the campbound kids had sunk a chip shot or even managed a par. But the delight that has come their way as a result of this much played summer game will live on long after the thrill of a birdie putt has faded for most die hard golfers.

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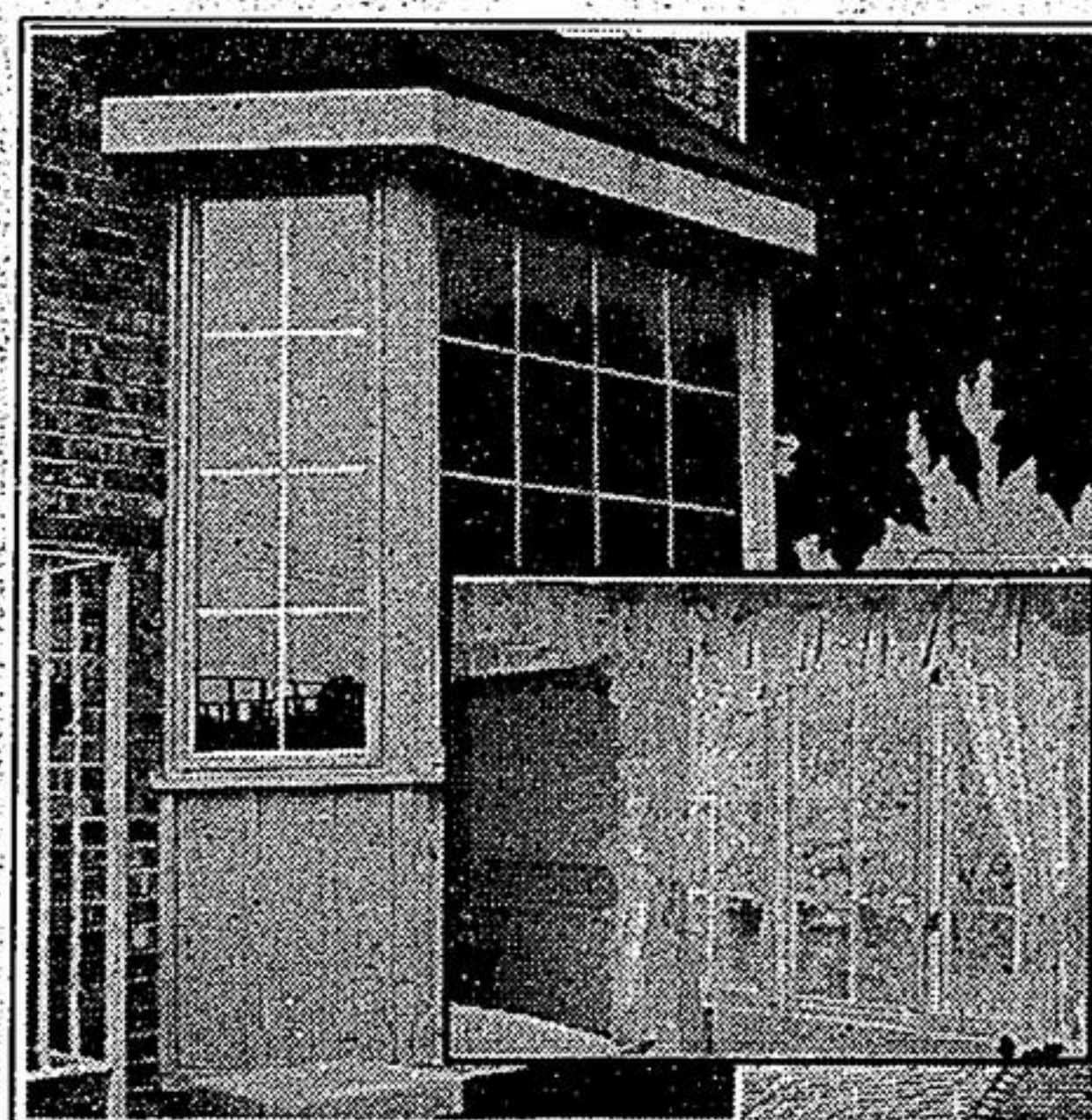


Dianne Morrissette (left), manager of the Laurentian Bank in the Station Plaza on Main St., Markham presents Dr. Bear and Lana Burchette of the Markham-Stouffville Hospital a cheque for \$366 and 2 framed posters.

The money was raised at a customer appreciation B.B.Q. and the pictures were donated by the staff at the bank.

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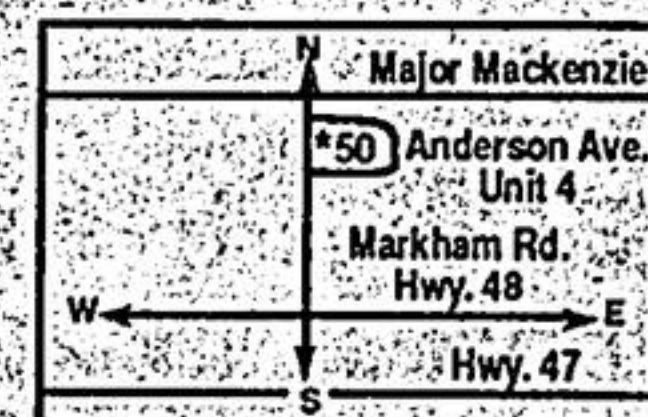


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Peter