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Players in left field as camp folds

BRUCE STAPLEY
 Correspondent

Roughly 70 youngsters and their parents have been left hanging after

a Stouffville area baseball camp went broke last week. Triple Crown Baseball Camp, which operated out of Bruce's Mill the past two summers, filed for

bankruptcy June 23 after enrollment proved insufficient to open for the summer.

According to the camp's trustee in bankruptcy, an attempt is being

COMMUNITY

made to contact those who had signed as campers.

"We've been trying our best to notify people and try to line up alternative camps in the area for them," said Selwyn Postan of Mandelbaum and Spergel Inc.

Postan said his company is presently looking to see if there is any chance refunds might be made available for those who had enrolled with the camp.

"We're still investigating funds that are on hand. We're looking to get funds to distribute to them."

Strawberry Festival biggest yet

JORDAN H. GREEN
 Correspondent

More than 10,000 people turned out for this year's Strawberry Festival, making it the largest yet.

"I've never seen such a crowd," said Barbara St. John, one of the festival organizers. "We couldn't be happier."

According to festival committee chair Dave Houston, there were almost 13,000 people at the fair. "Fifty per cent weren't Stouffville residents on Saturday, they come from all across the region," he said.

Last year's estimated crowd count was under 10,000 people, because of the rain, according to St. John.

The laser fireworks stole the show. "Personally, I think that last night's laser fireworks show was the best we've had so far. (They) were probably the most spectacular we've had," Houston said.

"We had a lot of compliments on the laser fireworks," said St. John.

Other show stoppers were exclusives, only in Stouffville. "I think having the museum and the northern wood carvers, it was great to have there," said Houston. "(We had) a lot of new events and demonstrations, things we haven't had in the past."

According to Houston, a fair veteran on the organizing committee for more than 10 years and a magician who travels to other fairs, Stouffville's Strawberry Fest is one of the best fairs in Ontario.

"We have one of the best fairs in Ontario, just because of the number of things we do," said Houston. "We get roughly \$10,000 from the town to run a \$35,000 festival, (yet) we do really well."

The quality of the Stouffville festival is

comparable to big city productions, like North York's, which has a \$200,000 budget, according to Houston.

More than 1,100 pieces of birthday cake were dished out, celebrating Canada's 130 birthday, according to St. John. "They all line up, they just love the cake," she said.

If there is anything Houston would change for next year, he'd avoid closing Main Street, and have the whole event down in the park. "At 3 p.m. a Leon's delivery truck drove by. That's not safe," he said. "I work festivals and fairs all over, and I would say 95 per cent are not on the town's main street."

Volunteers try to keep people from driving through the blockades, but occasionally people slip by when no one is looking, posing a safety hazard to the thousands of people walking on the street.

Closing the main street also costs more money, as firefighters have to remain on standby, according to Houston.

He hopes to bring the issue to a vote on council, so that next year's festival will be bigger and better than this year's successful fair.

"It can be done very well, in a nice setting," explained Houston. "The number of things you can bring in... this festival could be a lot bigger and better."

Having the event in one place would increase the number of corporate sponsors, and make it easier to take in all the sights, sounds and smells. Most festival goers stayed on the street, never seeing the other attractions in the park, said Houston.

The festival committee has been disbanded pending the municipal election this November, but will be formed again after the election to plan for next year's fair.



CONCENTRATION: Jason Keller, 11, gives an impromptu juggling demonstration during the Strawberry Festival with his hackysacks while on Main Street over the weekend. For more Canada Day coverage, please see page 8. Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

@random

A 12-year old boy gave his parents the scare of their lives when he failed to come home at night.

Aaron Kroon of Elmvale Road in Stouffville hadn't been seen since 8 p.m. Tuesday night and when he still wasn't home the following morning at 7:30 a.m. his mom called police.

"He's never done this before," said Linda Krone, Aaron's mom. "He always phones."

The police filed a report, but did not start a search right away.

Neighbors started printing and distributing posters. While the community searched for him, he called to say he'd spent the night at a friend's home, safe and sound.

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