

Festival of Lights is celebration of community spirit

Last spring spotted Sandra Stronach, the president of our BIA, walking along Main Street. Starting up a conversation, we soon turned to my favourite subject Christmas, and before you could say stuff that turkey, I had volunteered to organize this year's Festival of Lights.

Now most people don't want to hear, think or talk Christmas until at least early November. Not me by cracky, just ask the Big Guy.

Planning a huge festival in celebration of Christmas is like a dream come true. Since last spring I have planned and plotted and the Big Guy has just been grinned and bearing it like a true sport.

Eric Button, Dave Duggan, Wendy Cowie plus Pat Ratcliffe and Rob Croxall from the BIA jumped on board in the fall with lending hands. Seeing my Christmas-crazed eyes, they graciously let me run with my festival plans and offered nothing but support. Thanks guys!



Rural Route Ruth

Ruth LeBlanc

Just a week tomorrow night, on Fri., Nov. 28, plan to come to Stouffville's Festival of Lights at Civic Square to witness the true spirit of Christmas.

What started as a celebration to welcome Christmas has turned into a celebration of community spirit.

Over the past few months I have witnessed a coming together of people who have caught that spirit and run with it.

The event starts at 7 p.m. with Town Crier Marcel Bossi's official Christmas Proclamation. Next, Mayor Wayne Emerson will light the huge town Christmas Tree and the show begins!

Jumping on stage next will be the Highlanders representing Whitchurch-Highlands Public School. There will be about 30 of them singing their hearts out, led by piano teacher Odette Frye. Word from Odette is that the little rural routers are getting excited about their upcoming performance ... so are we!

Stouffville High School is part of the Festival also, with 20 students coming to serenade the audience with carols.

Not everyone is blessed with a good voice and musical abilities like the Highlanders and the High School choir.

Keep that and the Christmas spirit in mind when the Tribettes grace the stage in a rousing rendition of Rockin Around the Christmas Tree.

With one week to go we are still looking and sounding like gong show rejects; oh, what we do for our town!

At the town offices, the Clerk's Quintet is practicing for their turn at centre stage.

The Quintet stars Winnie, Yvonne, Joan, Laurie and Michele. I know these ladies and I salute their courage.

Like the Tribettes, music is not exactly their calling. What amazes me is the enthusiasm being shown to give everyone a great show and a night to remember.

The guys in town decided to form a Men's Merchant Choir and have a special performance as the finale.

I'm sworn to secrecy, but you don't want to miss it, that I guarantee. Santa will also be making a surprise appearance.

To keep you warm and toasty we will be serving cider, hot chocolate and tasty donuts

and candies. Seating will be available and so will a senior shuttle service.

One of my favourite parts of the festivities will be the Living Nativity presented by Stouffville Missionary Church, right inside the Clock Tower at Civic Square. Actors will portray Mary, Joseph and a real little baby will be there as a gentle reminder of the meaning of Christmas.

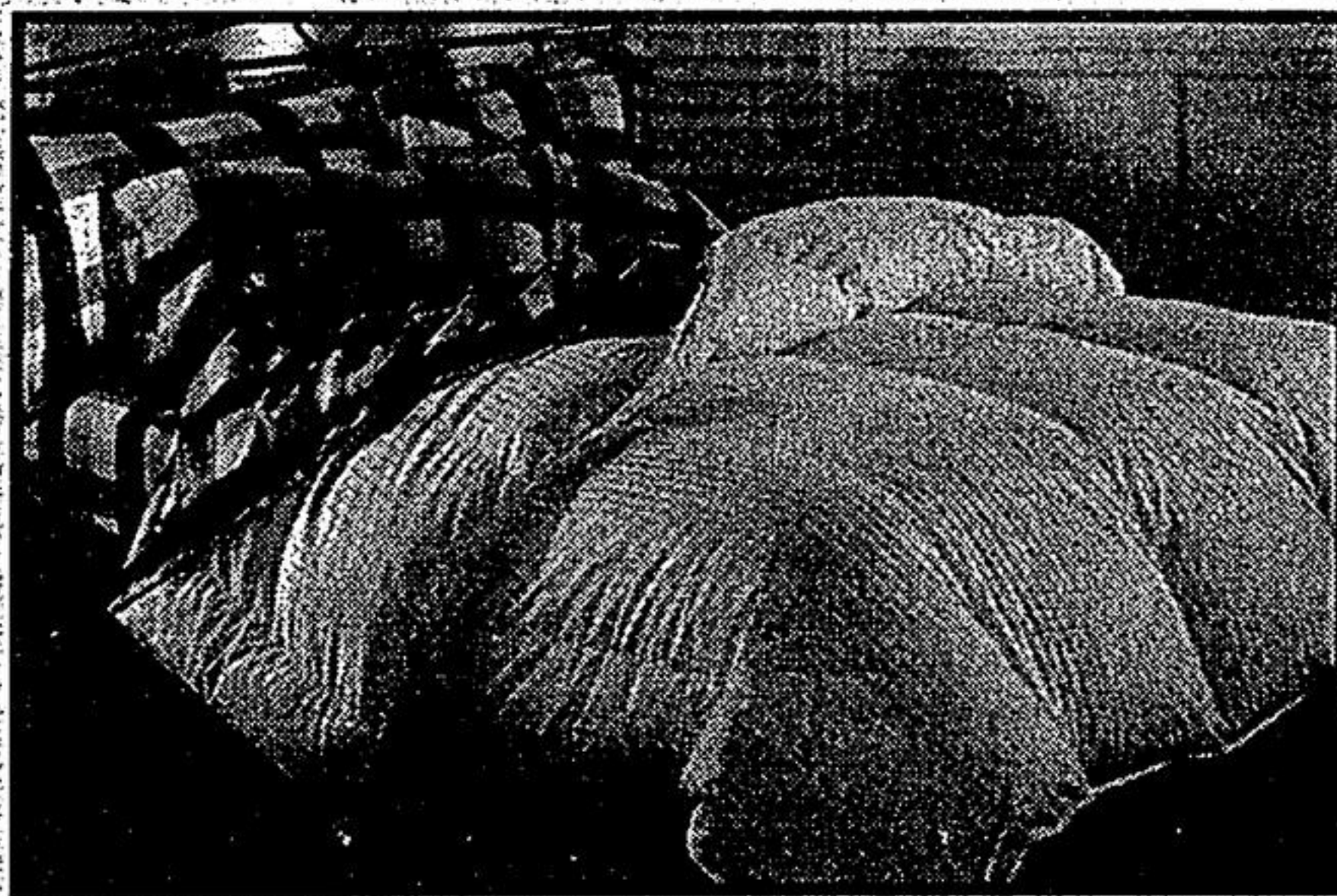
Get out your warmest coat and don't be shy about bringing a blanket and lawn chair.

We at The Tribune are proud to be co-sponsors this year and can't wait to bring in Christmas with a bang. Hope to see you all there.

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