

Strawberry Festival '98 features array of events

KATE GILDERDALE
Correspondent

Join friends and neighbours at Memorial Park June 25 for the Stouffville Lions beef barbecue and get into the Strawberry Festival mood.

At 8 p.m., Music Town Ontario presents the eighth annual Sacred Music Night at Stouffville Missionary Church.

Plenty of fun activities are planned for Friday and Saturday, with a great mix of old favourites and new events.

Official opening ceremonies take place in the park at 7 p.m. Friday, when awards will be presented to the Citizen of the Year and the Sports Personality of the Year.

The Optimist Club will honour exceptional young people with the Youth Overcoming Adversity Award and the Community Achievement Award, and the annual Variety Show will follow the presentations.

A cornucopia of entertainment will be featured on the clock tower stage Saturday, featuring everything from clog dancing to the Music Mania chorus and dancers.

Main Street, which will be closed off to vehicles until 5 p.m., will be bustling with activity throughout the day.

More than 100 visiting vendors will offer a wonderful selection of neat items, ranging from jewellery to folk art, in the Berry Big Craft Show and Sale.

Get an early start at the Ballantrae Lions pancake breakfast, which begins at 7 a.m. in the park, then stroll downtown and enjoy the parade, visit the senior's art display at the Silver Jubilee Club and buy some beautiful homegrown strawberries from the Scouts' booth, located outside Freckles.

Traditional methods of ice-cream making will be demonstrated at the museum booth and youngsters can enjoy carnival rides in the library parking lot. Children's festival

entertainment includes everything from science shows to a children's village in the park and people of all ages can admire the beautiful babies participating in the Progress Club's Strawberry Baby Contest.

No Strawberry Festival would be complete without fun competitions of all kinds, among them pie and jam contests, a spelling bee, the Lioness bike decorating contest, three-on-three basketball, the historical quiz and the I luv Freckles contest.

This year, the festival committee is emphasizing youth entertainment, with everything from a skateboarding, in-line skating and BMX show to Saturday evening's Strawberry Jam Youth Concert, showcasing talented local musicians.

Sunday's events include Strawberry Festival runs for adults and kids, the Ecumenical Association's community church service, children's theatre, pony rides and the Novopharm Strawberry Social.

Strawberry 'jam' attracting youth

Improved entertainment and a greater variety of activities for youth are focal points of this year's Strawberry Festival.

"Our number one emphasis is on youth," said Ward 6 councillor Sue Sherban, who is on the festival committee. "We have increased the festival budget substantially through local fund-raising to accomplish our goals." Now that the pavilion has been taken down, a tent will be erected in Memorial Park to accommodate events such as the Lions Beef Barbecue, she noted.

Greater emphasis is also being placed on Saturday morning's festival parade, which will go from the train station to Park Drive.

The committee hopes to make it a feature attraction, which will include bands, service clubs and local organizations. Anyone who

is interested in participating can call Carol Guinane at 642-4462.

New to this year's festival are two youth awards, sponsored by the local Optimist Club, and mad science demonstra-

tions at various locations in the park. The Wild Ones sports show will appeal to skateboarders, in-line skaters and BMX fanatics, while young athletes can hone their skills at the 3-on-3 basketball event at the Memorial Park courts.

Strawberry jam takes on a new meaning at the 1998 festival. In addition to the traditional preserve-making competition, young musicians will strut their stuff in the Strawberry Jam Youth Concert Saturday night at Thicketwood Bowl.

- Kate Gilderdale



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