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22 Angels get a blessing from Johnson at Eastern Canadian softball championships.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENT: Hymn sing with Dr. John Moore
WHEN: Sunday, Sept. 6 at 7 p.m.
WHERE: Parkview Village auditorium



21 The spanking debate - is it ever okay to spank your child as a discipline measure?

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LEISURE: Skateboarders move to Thicketwood Park

Boarders get \$25,000 facility

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
 STAFF WRITER

Telling skateboarders to get lost will, hopefully, be a thing of the past in Stouffville.

In less than a year, a state-of-the-art skateboard park, valued at about \$25,000, will be built at Thicketwood Park in downtown Stouffville, if council adopts a preliminary plan ironed out at a special council meeting Wednesday.

"Let's get on with the job and make a skateboard park a reality," said Mayor Wayne Emmerson.

The proposal should be rubber stamped on Oct. 5. In the meantime, the skateboarders will meet with a parks and recreation committee. As well, early next week, the teenagers will survey students at local schools to find out how many would use a skateboard park.

Teen spokesman John McQuire told council that at least 125 local teens are avid skateboarders. "There's a great deal of interest," he said.

Mike Vandervoort, 16, said he got involved in the process of securing a spot for the sport because he's fed up with "having people call the cops" on the skateboarders.

"We need a spot where nobody will bug us," said Vandervoort.

The situation was getting very discouraging, said Jason Davis, 15. "Everywhere we go, we're told to go away," he said.

A section of Thicketwood Park, south east of Latham Hall, is the preferred site for the facility, stressed Vandervoort. Not only is Thicketwood central, it's town-owned, he pointed out.

"It's better if it's on town property. If it was private, we'd have to pay

A LAUGHING MATTER



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Two-year-old Charley Raymo finds excitement upon sighting the big swing at Stouffville's Memorial Park, Wednesday.

Wiche assailant requests transfer

Teen who stabbed York cops seeks move to Toronto halfway house

BY JENNIFER BROWN
 STAFF WRITER

The teenager who stabbed two York Regional Police officers is asking a Newmarket judge to transfer him to a Toronto halfway house, after spending half his jail sentence in a youth detention centre in Oakville.

In Newmarket court Thursday, the teen's lawyer Brian Scully asked his client be transferred to a facility such as Kennedy House in Scarborough, where he can be closer to his mother and have greater freedom.

A psychological assessment by Dr. Graham Furrall concluded the boy no longer needs to be housed in secure custody, but could continue rehabilitation in an open-custody facility.

The youth stabbed Det. Bob Wiche and another officer in June 1997.

The teen, who can't be identified under the Young Offenders Act, used a homemade knife to stab Wiche several times in the neck and back in June 1997.

A second officer, Det. Dave Kingston, was also injured during the attack.

The stabbing occurred at the Newmarket courthouse during a recess in Wiche's preliminary hearing on a manslaughter charge in connection with the fatal shooting of 16-year-old Faraz Suleman of Markham.

Suleman was behind the wheel of a stolen Jeep Cherokee when he was shot by Wiche during an attempted arrest on a Markham residential street in June 1996.

The charges against Wiche were later dismissed by the courts.

The teen, who was distraught over Suleman's death, pleaded guilty to stabbing Wiche. He was sentenced last fall to the maximum three-year jail term allowed under the Young Offenders Act.

See PSYCHOLOGISTS, page 10.

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