



Joan Ransberry

Many hands create successful art show

The friendliest art show in all the world is being held in Markham this weekend. And I'll be there.

Featuring the works of close to 130 artists, Art in the Park is one of the largest art shows in Ontario. The two-day event is being held on the spacious grounds of the Markham Museum on Hwy. 48, just north of 16th Avenue. The show's on Saturday and on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Art in The Park features a wonderful variety of art. Some of the art is fun, some is serious, some is unusual and all of it is good.

The artists come from across Ontario. Meanwhile, an artist from Ecuador is including Art in the Park in a series of Canadian shows.

However, Art in the Park is more than an art show. Live music, including the blues, folk, classical, Celtic and contemporary, will be enjoyed throughout the two days.

And there's no shortage of talent. Musician Bob Vopni's instrumental and traditional blues is a treat to hear. Jazz pianist Cory Livingston and folk singer Brian O'Sullivan, harpist Kim Michele, guitarist Kim Brown and vocalist/guitarist Lisa Swain will all be crowd pleasers. As well, Roanne and her band Anam Cara will do Celtic music proud.

This art show is both an exhilarating and relaxing way to spend a few hours. When people stroll through the exhibit area, they stop and chat with each other and with the artists. Since most of the pieces are affordable, you can make a purchase or two. I have five pieces of art from previous Art in the Park shows. They add much to my home.

As an Art in the Park volunteer, I get to visit the artists throughout the weekend. While on my rounds, I will be mindful of the naked oak shelf in my home. It needs something. I'll get that something at Art in the Park.

Saturday's silent art auction kicks off at 10 a.m. and runs until 4 p.m. Check it out. Thirty-five pieces of art have been donated by the show's participating artists. Proceeds from the auction will go to the Markham Stouffville Hospital.

This is the show's fifth year. When held in Uxbridge for three consecutive years, Art in the Park was a success and when held in Stouffville last year, it was a hit. All signals indicate that Markham's Art in the Park will be exceptional.

The Kreative Kids area is the gem of the event. It's a parent's dream. Children of all ages and all interests flock to the children's area. As well as trying their hand at creating pieces of art, kids can enjoy a wagon and tractor ride and on Saturday, story teller Goldie will tell a tall tale or two. The family can either pack a lunch or take advantage of the food vendors on site.

As a bonus, the admission (\$5 for adults and \$3 for children and seniors and a \$15 family pass) includes access to the heritage buildings, located on the museum grounds.

Art in the Park is a joint effort. Sponsored by the Markham Economist and Sun, The Stouffville Tribune and Markham's cultural venues, it takes many hands to create a successful show. One individual in particular puts her heart and soul into the show. A great deal of the credit for the success of Art in the Park goes to Sarah Harvey-Wassell.

Proceeds from Art in the Park go to Markham's cultural venues. Join me this weekend. Art in the Park is a beautiful thing.

Charity garage sale

A garage sale benefiting the Quiet Food Drive will be hosted by York Regional Police today, starting at 8 a.m., in the parking lot of the regional building at 17250 Yonge St. in Newmarket. Funds raised will be used to buy toys at Christmas for families in need of assistance.

Children's choir

Victory Baptist Church presents the African Children's Choir Wednesday, July 19 at 7 p.m. Call 853-6076.

Botanical garden trip

Schomberg Horticultural Society is planning a bus trip to the Royal Botanical Garden in Hamilton, Wednesday, July 19. Call Colleen McCutcheon at 939-2433 or Carol Aitchison at 939-2956.

Growing trees for moraine

York Regional Forest expansion to stave off moraine destruction

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

Seeking to expand its forest reserves, gain worldwide status and sell some wood, York Region made a unique agreement and is preparing to make another.

The region believes the York Regional Forest — 5,017 acres (2,031 hectares) it owns in Stouffville, Georgina and East Gwillimbury — needs to grow, but its management plan has no money for expansion.

This year, the 18 wooded tracts became the first public forest in Canada to gain a stamp of approval from the Rainforest Alliance, an international conservation group.

And the Nature Conservancy of Canada, a charity that buys and maintains environmentally significant land threatened by development, is offering to expand the forest to help save the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The conservancy, which often turns over land it acquires to provincial agencies such as conservation authorities, has proposed a working partnership to acquire more land for the forest.

It would be the group's first partnership with a regional municipality, said Leonard Munt, a York Region forester. "The NCC has never partnered with anything below a province."

Robert Orland, a land securement officer for the conservancy, said the interests of the group and region overlap, and land on York's portion of the moraine urgently needs protection.

"The threat of destruction of some key natural features is imminent in that area, as a result of urban sprawl," Orland said this week.

A regional report suggests the partnership's first acquisitions would be three properties in King Township, all on the moraine and all "significant policy areas" within the regional greenlands system.

Two of the targeted properties might be donated by their owners, but the third will have to be purchased, the report

indicates.

The regional forest was established in 1924 to combat soil erosion on the moraine caused by decades of excessive logging and ill-fated farming — a dust bowl some old-timers in the region still remember.

In 1998, the region took over management of the forest from the province's Natural Resources Ministry.

After proving that it meets 75 different management standards, the forest gained "sustainable" certification from the SmartWood program of the Alliance.

The Vermont-based program has certified nearly 100 operations from Minnesota to Indonesia, three of them in Canada. Among the closest is a privately owned 54,378-acre preserve beside Ontario's Algonquin Park.

Its certification "gives consumers the power to vote for conservation" practices that will protect the forest's biodiversity and long-term viability when they buy certified wood products, SmartWood's website says.

York's forest sees \$50,000 annual revenue from forest products, which offsets its management costs, including red pine for saw logs, spruce for pulp and logs for log homes and telephone poles.

SmartWood certification, which will be audited, can help in marketing the wood, Munt said. "Europe won't accept any wood unless it's certified."

Orland said the conservancy would work in partnership, not competition, with the Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust, a new non-profit group that also wants to save moraine areas by acquiring land. "It would complement what we're trying to do and what they're trying to do."

The conservancy has already purchased properties in King, Stouffville and Georgina, all of them now owned and managed by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority.

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- AUGUST 8 - THE 3R's
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