

Family celebrates dad's memory with fun day to benefit hospital

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Cornfield Shindig will go toward a life-saving fetal heart monitor to give babies suffering cardiac trouble a fighting chance.

Bill Hood was a seventh-generation Canadian. His family roots were in farming. And his roots are here in the local area. The Buttonville Grist and Flour Mill was owned by a Hood, the Hood General Store, owned by Bill Hood's father, was a landmark at the turn of the 20th century and all of Jim Hood's uncles were farmers.

Bill and his wife Mollie raised five sons in Buttonville before moving to Lemonville in 1989.

"We were raised on a 50-acre farm," said Hood. "Dad and mom bought it to keep five boys out of trouble. It worked. Every time we suggested we go and do something, my dad would find some stones for us to move. Dad taught us much and he sure taught us how to work."

To supplement the mixed farming operation, Bill Hood was an agent for Imperial Oil. In his years of delivering furnace oil to area farms, he made friends with hundreds of farmers along the way.

When times were tough and milk cheques small, Bill Hood never pressured the farmers to pay. A hand shake and a farmer's word were enough. It was simply the way of doing business. The farmers paid when they could and Bill Hood understood when they couldn't.

Bill Hood had a passion for hockey and softball. He was a member of the old Markham Millionaires and later, managed the Buttonville Sluggers.

Bill Hood never shied away from work. He'd roll up his sleeves and lend a hand at the Stouffville

Strawberry Festival, while his wagons and tractors were often used in the local Santa Claus parade.

"All people had to do was ask," said Jim Hood.

Bill Hood had a serious side. The well-being of the community mattered to this decent and gentle man. Bill Hood looked out for the local United Church, the St. John Ambulance, the Lemonville Community Centre, the local museum and, of course, his dedication to the Markham Stouffville Hospital has never been matched. Many believe that had it not been for Bill Hood's driving efforts to have a top-notch hospital in the area,

Company enhances global reach

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designed to supply the North American market," Keller said.

In late March, Novopharm employees, including close to 200 in Stouffville, learned that the Canadian-owned pharmaceutical company had merged with Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. of Israel. At the time, Novopharm Ltd., was the second largest generic drug company in Canada, with a presence in Hungary and the United States.

Now that Novopharm is under new ownership, company officials expect to take even more of a global reach.

Novopharm's primary business has been in the development, production and marketing of generic prescription pharmaceuticals, including vitamins and over-the-counter products.

Novopharm manufactures a variety of pharmaceutical products and has been in Stouffville for five years.

Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd. is Israel's largest pharmaceutical company, with 80 per cent of its sales outside Israel, mainly in the United States and Europe.

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The Hood family invites everyone to a country party in honour of their dad, Bill Hood, who was one of the founders of Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Markham Stouffville Hospital would never have been built.

This year's Cornfield Shindig includes lots of live entertainment, including performances by the popular Grant Fullerton. And, with the kids in mind, there will be special appearances by Arthur and D.W. Pikachu and Blues Clues characters. As well, a rock-climbing wall, pony rides, horse-drawn hay rides, celebrity derby, horse race, a fish pond, face painting and clowns will all add to the fun.

More than 150 volunteers will be on hand to make sure everyone has a good time. Of course, as well as a beer garden and food court, lots of Ontario fresh corn will be available. The day includes a silent auction, draws and a chance to meet and mingle with the farm community. Admission is \$5.

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