

Hospital staffers 'take emergency room' to World Youth Day in Toronto

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

Twenty-four men and women, staff at Markham Stouffville Hospital, will offer their medical expertise to World Youth Day pilgrims this weekend in a field hospital at the event's Downsview site.

Eight local doctors, nurses and support staff will cover three shifts this Saturday and Sunday, expected to be the busiest days of the six-day international gathering. Dr. Jim MacLean, president and CEO, is team leader.

"If we can provide as much care as we can at the site of the

major events, Downsview and Exhibition Place, there will be a minimal burden on hospital emergency departments," he explained. "That's better for the people involved and better for the area hospitals."

World Youth Day organizers asked every GTA hospital to help with medical coverage for the event and Markham Stouffville rose to the challenge, MacLean said. "I volunteered first to try to encourage others," he said. "The staff who came forward are really committed."

He said the field hospital has been set up by the WYD health

services department and is equipped to handle almost any emergency — from dehydration to heart attacks.

Markham Stouffville staff were given a two-hour orientation and training course last week and will follow medical directives issued by the organizers, not their own hospital policy.

"It will be like running a mini emergency room," Dr. MacLean said. "I think it will be a real mix of potential problems — a large number of people from all age groups. We really have to be on guard for heat-related illnesses and dehydration."

Retiring police chief will give advice on replacement

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"The transition will be seamless," he said.

Chief Middaugh said his retirement will be just that; spending more time with his family and pursuing his hobby of building and renovating.

"When I signed my contract (in 2000), it was for three years," he said. "It was subject to some flexibility, but there is no reason for me to stay."

The chief said he will not select his successor, "but I am giving advice."

"I don't have a candidate in mind, but there are several officers within the organization who are qualified to succeed as chief," he said.

Const. John Miskiw, president of the York Regional Police Association, welcomed the news the new chief will be an internal appointment.

"We're glad to see them promote someone from within who knows our people and our problems," he said.

Under Chief Middaugh, the association and management worked hard to resolve all issues, Const. Miskiw said.

"One of the things he did was open the lines of communication," he said. "His door and telephone were always open to us."

Chief Middaugh said the high point of his time in York was working with "the tremendous people in the organization and the region. That's not political, it's how I feel." He said his top achievement was giving the police force a degree of stability after "the dif-




ROBERT MIDDAGH: York police chief will retire in February to spend more time with family and hobbies.

ficult times in the 1990s. I was able to unify people in the organization."


He was referring to the rapid turnover in York Regional Police chiefs. Julian Fantino stayed as chief only 15 months after replacing acting chief Peter Scott in 1998. Acting Chief Scott, in turn, had been filling in for Bryan Cousineau, chief since 1992, who left the job after pleading guilty to two counts of breach of trust.

Middaugh has a long history in policing, beginning as a constable in Peel Region in 1967. After 13 years there, he served as deputy chief in Halton Region for 11 years before becoming chief in Hamilton-Wentworth from 1991 to 1998.



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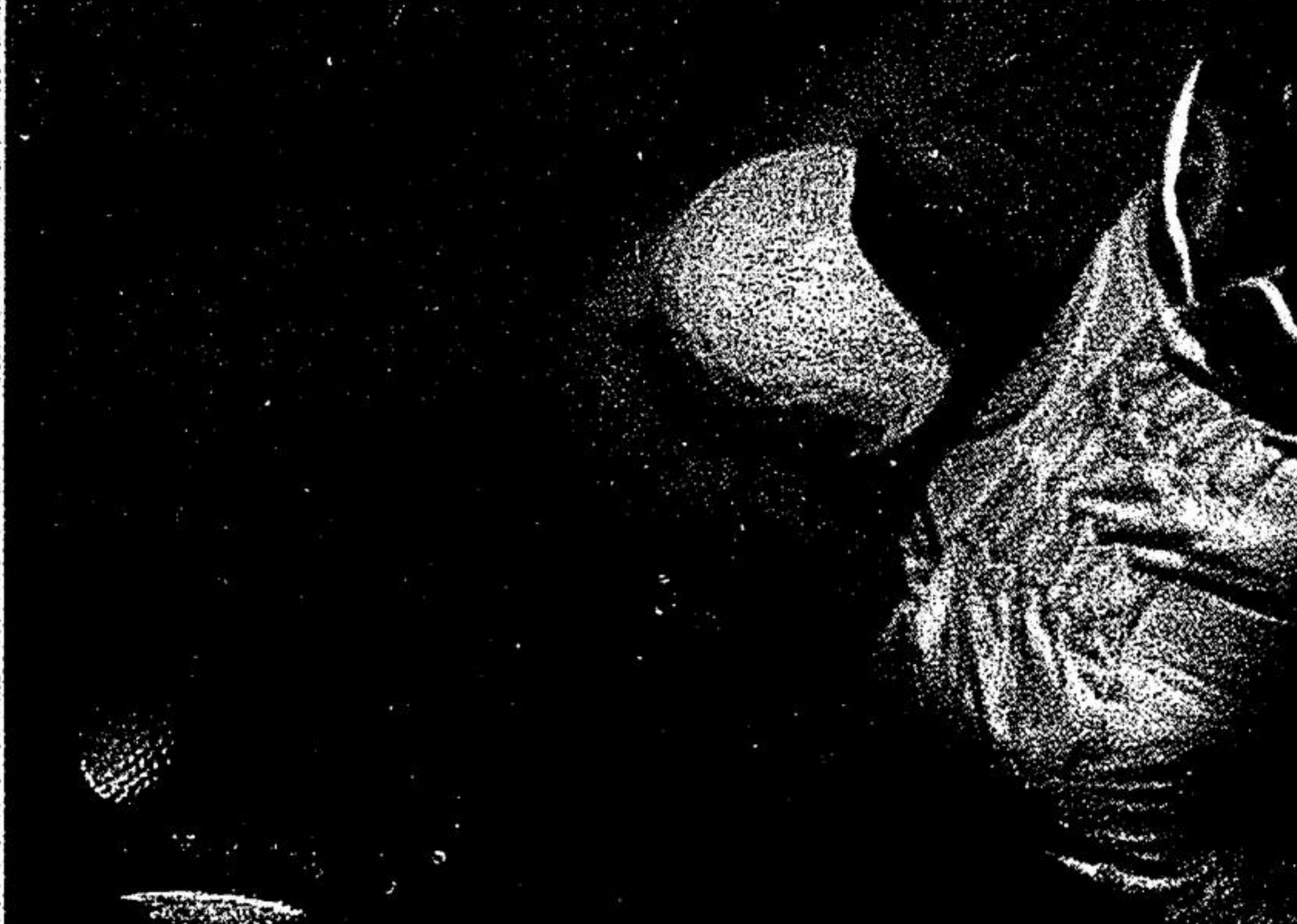
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