

# Stouffville Says

by Hannelore Volpe

**"Are you worried about the SARS outbreak? What are you doing to protect yourself?"**



**CAROL HUME**

"SARS has not affected me, but it should be a concern to us all for any far-reaching effects. This is just a warning for what could come with other communicable diseases. I am avoiding crowded areas."



**THELMA POWELL**

"We have decided to stay out of crowded places as much as we can. It's important to keep on taking good care of ourselves. Hopefully it will be over soon."



**MELANIE PROVIS**

"At the pharmacy where I work we have had a lot of people asking for protective masks, particularly people who go to the city to work."



**GRACE MCQUADE**

"I am keeping updated on SARS through newscasts. There should be more consistency in the information that is given. The other day, one TV station told people to go to their doctor if they suspected SARS. In another report, the medical officer of health advised people to go to their local SARS clinic."



## Gotta sing, gotta dance

Music Mania dancers rehearse some moves onstage at Stouffville District Secondary School in preparation for the annual town musical, April 24 to 26. Technical crews are also busy preparing the show.

STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

# Behind the scenes at Music Mania

BY HANNELORE VOLPE  
Staff Writer

If you've always wanted to find out what your neighbours really do after work all winter, this month's Music Mania show is a good place to find out.

You might otherwise never suspect which men wear kilts or tights during their off hours, who can belt out tunes like Ethel Merman, put Fred Astaire's dancing feet to shame or make N'Sync look weak-kneed.

This year, audiences at Music Mania's "Forever Flannel" will find out just why the strawberry was chosen as a town mascot and will get a Whitchurch-Stouffville take on "reality" shows.

But most of us don't think of what goes on behind the scenes, where someone is watching with bated breath to make sure everything goes off without a hitch and is ready to jump in when it doesn't.

More than 80 Whitchurch-Stouffville residents have been working since the beginning of the year (some of them since September) on this year's Music Mania production.

The 43rd annual variety show is hosted by the Stouffville United Church Couples Club. Rehearsals recently moved from Summitview Public School and Stouffville United Church to Stouffville District Secondary School where the show is held. The move is "a sign that spring is here," said Music Mania Rosanne Sewerynek.

Showtimes are 8 p.m. Thursday, April 24, Friday, April 25 and Saturday, April 26. A special show for seniors is scheduled for Tuesday, April 22.

Peter Guinane heads up the technical crew, dedicated to ensuring the lighting and sound highlight the action on stage. This weekend, the crew will assemble and install all the lights and sound equipment in the auditorium of SDSS.

*"And then we turn the spotlight on them, and it wipes out their brain."*

Alan Strawbridge of Shooting Stars Productions is providing the audio board. "We will be assembling the stage and making sure it fits right," said local resident Ivan Harris, who has been involved with the show since 1961 and who knows only too well what can go wrong.

He worked on special effects for the CBC for five years early in his career.

Mr. Harris remembers the time a TV set was supposed to explode during a skit — but nothing happened.

Everyone backed off from the set after that, not knowing if and when it would actually blow up. For this year's show, he's looking at whether curtains, painted backdrops or lighting will best portray an underwater scene.

And every year he's observed a remarkable phenomenon — everyone rehearses and rehearses until everything is right.

"And then we turn the spotlight on them, and it wipes out their brain," Mr. Harris said. "They can't remember what to do. I have had it happen to me."

David Baxter, who heads the skit crew, revealed a spoof on so-called reality TV shows will call for a creative sound effect to mask any inappropriate words. His was the disembodied head on the golf green during a skit last year.

That required him to crawl under the stage and position another actor so that he was masked from the audience.

He also recalled the skit where a toilet had to be flushed three times before any flushing sounds were heard.

The humour is designed for both the local audience and visitors from out of town, Mr. Baxter said. He's been in the shows since 1998.

The show is directed by Terri Neville and produced by Marg Butcher. Rod Hooper is in charge of the set design.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$6 for children 12 and younger. They're available in Stouffville at Card's TV and Appliances, 1001 Variety Fame International, M & M Meat Shoppes, Stouffville Book Connection and the Latham Gallery, and at Quaker Pharmacy in Uxbridge.

# Briefly

## Police still looking for suspicious man

There have been no recent sightings of a suspicious man who followed children along Stouffville's Main Street late last month, but police patrols have been stepped up in the area looking for him.

"We are still asking people to watch for a man matching his description and let us know," said Const. Steve Morrell. "Information from the public is very important."

All Stouffville schools have been offered a visit from the force's community services department to speak to children about street-proofing tips and personal safety.

Two children were followed as they walked to Summitview Public School March 20 and 25. One child went home for lunch and discovered the same man staring at her through the kitchen window.

He's described as male white, about 30, with long, dirty blonde hair and a brown goatee beard. He has high cheekbones and pursed lips. He was wearing a dark-coloured sweatshirt and baseball cap.

Anyone seeing a man matching that description is asked to call 905-881-1221, ext. 7541 or Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

## Naturalists head for Ballantrae-area forest

A new series of nature walks led by Tim Lave of the York-Simcoe Naturalists begins this month and continues throughout the summer.

The first walk proceeds at a leisurely pace through the York Regional Forest, Headquarters Tract, north of Ballantrae Wednesday, April 9 starting at 6:30 p.m. Participants should meet in the parking area on the east side of Hwy 48, north of Aurora Road.

For more information on the walks or the club, please call 905-853-1886.

# Quoteworthy

*"It starts with education. It starts with baby steps."*

**Councillor Mark Carroll on proposed pesticide bylaw. See page 10.**

# Contacting Us

Have a news tip? Please:

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