

# Stouffville dancers Scotland-bound

Students from Anne Milne's School of Dance in Stouffville were ranked among the top highland dancers in the country at the recent ScotDance Canada Championships in St. Catharines.

"We had about 15 trophy winners at this event," Ms Milne said.

Four of them will soon be packing up their kilts and dancing shoes to compete in Scotland at the World Highland Dancing Championships and the Commonwealth Championships.

The Commonwealth Championships are Sunday, Aug. 24, with the World Highland Dancing Championships taking place the next weekend.

Burlington resident Courtney-Anne McRitchie, who has been coming to Anne Milne's studio for only a year, is this year's Canadian and North American Champion for 11-year-olds.

Stouffville's Georgina Muir, 17, was the second runner-up at ScotDance Canada while her sister, Lucy, was fourth runner-up among the 11-year-olds.

Last year Georgina won the

## Our Town

with Hannelore Volpe

Canadian championship in her age category while Lucy won an Ontario title.

Georgina overcame dance-related injuries to compete again. "Most people wouldn't have been able to make a comeback," Ms Milne said. "Dancers across Canada are impressed with that."

Ms Milne has been teaching highland and Irish dancing at the Masonic Hall on Ninth Line for three years. Registration for fall classes is today and Tuesday, Sept. 2. For more information, call 905-642-3963.

### Teens run French storytime

Two Stouffville teens, Kate Karczmar and Helen Drew, come to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library every Saturday morning, arms laden with French language books, games

and worksheets.

They're among the eight bilingual student members of the Optimist Club of Markham, who are spearheading York Region's first Library Reading Project in collaboration with the York Region Chapter of Canadian Parents for French.

They are leading the library's summer French storytime for French immersion students in Grades 1 to 4 for eight weeks until Aug. 16. There are separate storytimes for the younger and the older students. Canadian Parents for French, which sponsors the program, provided \$2,500 for French materials and books to the library.

Ms Karczmar and Ms Drew are entering Grade 11 at Pierre Elliott Trudeau High School in Unionville this fall.

They are working under the guidance of teacher Yvonne Dufault, who is head of French immersion at Pierre Elliott Trudeau High and teacher Bianca Berlatie of Glad Park Public School in Stouffville.

"Students gain community service hours while providing service to the library," Ms Dufault noted.

# Tough year for Markham Stouffville Hospital

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pleased to hear they are getting additional funding, they pointed out they are still facing combined accumulated debts of more than \$30 million.

Southlake is expecting its debt to hit about \$15 million this year, while York Central's debt is more than \$10 million and Markham Stouffville is reporting a \$5.5 million loss.

"We will continue to look at our operating costs, on a month-by-month basis," said Markham Stouffville vice-president Lorne Zon, adding his administration is looking forward to the financial review promised by the province for all hospitals at the end of September.

York Central's acting president, Asmita Gillani, said she was pleased with Mr. Eves' funding announcement.

Ms Gillani also praised the province for reimbursing York Central's SARS costs, estimated at \$4 million, as the Richmond Hill facility was one of the hardest hit hospitals during the outbreak.

It was forced to close for 20 days in

the spring following an internal spread of the deadly respiratory illness.

Mr. Carriere said the province has already reimbursed 75 per cent of Southlake's \$1.2-million SARS costs.

The hospital also received \$240,000 to help alleviate the backlog in surgery created by the SARS crisis.

Markham Stouffville's Mr. Zon said his staff is still compiling SARS-related costs and lost revenue, which includes parking lot fees, catering profits and semi-private and private rooms that sat empty as the hospital struggled to contain the disease.

"It's about what we expected," he said of the \$1.9 million.

### SARS AGGRAVATES CRUNCH

But most hospitals in the GTA, including Markham Stouffville, are facing a serious cash crunch and SARS has only aggravated that, Mr. Zon pointed out.

"We're getting through a tough year. Normal volumes are down, normal projections aren't the same," he said, adding hospitals are also dealing with the massive backlog of services post-

poned during the crisis.

"We're playing catch up, but that has costs, including the physical capacity of our staff. That's true of every hospital."

Meanwhile, OHA president Hilary Short praised Mr. Eves for the cash infusion.

"We appreciate Premier Eves' substantial commitment to hospitals," she said. "The premier has provided the full amount promised in the province's March 2003 budget and increased it significantly."

"He has also provided immediate relief for those hospitals most affected by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)."

Mr. Eves, who said he's boosted hospital funding to \$10.4 billion this year, continued to slam the federal Liberals.

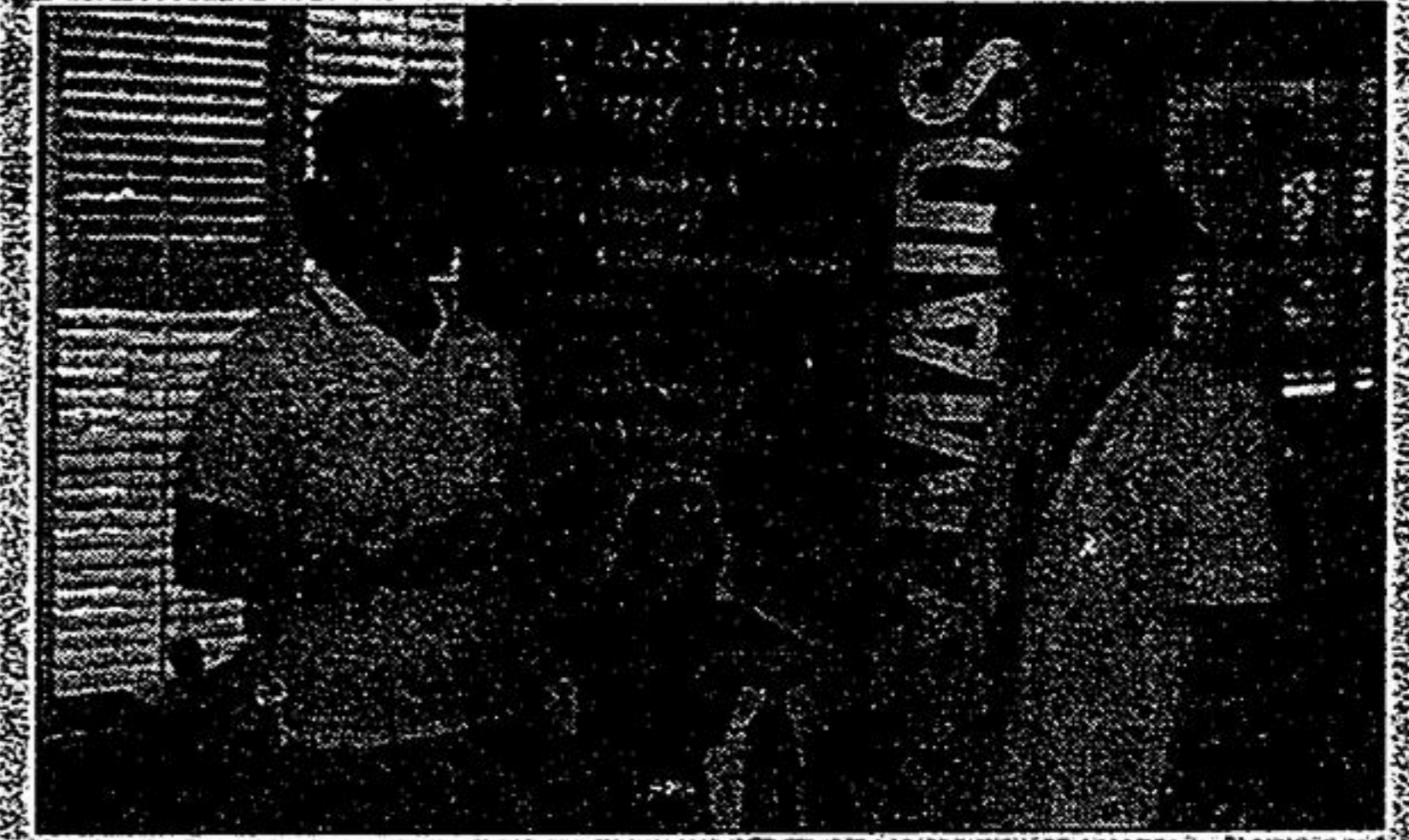
"The federal government must act immediately on its commitment to provide a further \$2 billion from its surplus."

"Ottawa clearly has the capacity to honour its pledge and provide the additional funding now."

— with files from Kathleen Griffin

Advertising Feature

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### Merry Maids

Sheroo Pochkhanawala (R) of Merry Maids in Markham joins Marion Zimmer of the Markham Stouffville Hospital Foundation in drawing the winner of the \$100 Cleaning Certificate. Merry Maids has donated \$100 worth of cleaning each month for a year.



### Rose & Firkin Staff Support Hospital

The staff of the Rose & Firkin Pub on Main Street in Unionville organized a Golf Tournament and a Barbecue in support of Markham Stouffville Hospital. \$750 was donated to MSH Foundation.

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