

Paramedic recovering after region's first open-heart surgery

BY LISA QUEEN
Staff Writer

Ian Phythian hopes to be back saving lives in three months.

In the meantime, the York Region EMS paramedic is happy the life-saving skills of Southlake Regional Health Centre's new cardiac team were there for him.

On Monday, the 57-year-old Newmarket resident went home from hospital, only four days after becoming Southlake's first open-heart surgery patient.

"I'm pretty proud of that. Happy as

hell," said Mr. Phythian, a couple of hours before being discharged from the cardiovascular intensive care unit.

"I'm doing excellent. Thank God, I had it at Southlake, not in Toronto," he said, adding staying at a far away hospital in the city would have added to the stress.

Mr. Phythian's triple bypass came five years to the day after the Ministry of Health made Southlake the regional cardiac centre.

The program serves residents in York, Simcoe and Muskoka.

Mr. Phythian's surgery was per-

formed by Dr. Byung Moon, division head for the cardiac surgery program, who was assisted by Dr. Richard Bauset and the cardiac support team.

Dr. Moon said he was thrilled to finally perform the first cardiac surgery at Southlake after years of planning.

"It was a historic occasion for the Southlake team. We're striving to be one of the best in Ontario, if not the world," said Dr. Moon, who helped pioneer part of the procedure performed on Mr. Phythian.

"This (the cardiac program) is not just a project for Southlake. It's a regional program. It's not like Southlake only is on the map. We're here to serve the whole region. We're here to stay and we're here to look after the patients from the community."

Dr. Moon used a minimally invasive procedure he developed seven years ago with a team of American doctors to take a vein, known as the saphenous vein, from Mr. Phythian's leg.

The vein was then used to bypass blocked cardiac arteries to ensure an adequate flow of blood from Mr. Phythian's heart.

Traditionally, surgeons open up a patient's leg to harvest the vein, leaving the person with a painful, numb and swollen limb.

"They're all grateful we've done something for the heart but unfortunately, they're left with great discomfort," Dr. Moon said.

Instead, his method calls for surgeons to make a tiny incision in the leg to insert an endoscope complete with a



IAN PHYTHIAN: York Region paramedic home four days after surgery at Newmarket hospital.

TV monitor to locate the vein so it can be removed with minimal impact on the patient.

"One of the things I do, it may be a minor aspect but it plays a large portion in the patient's life," Dr. Moon said. "The leg to me, is part of the quality of life."

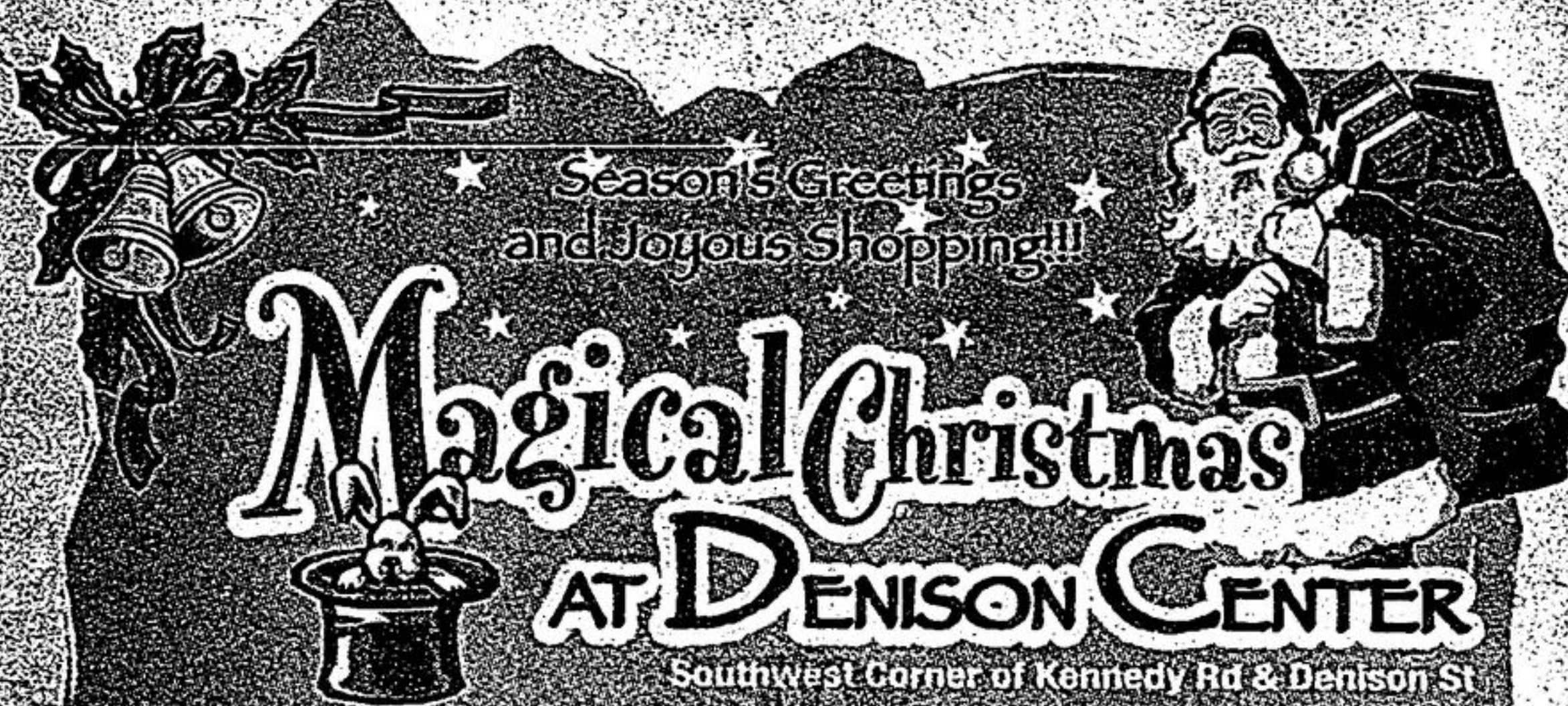
Dr. Moon said Mr. Phythian's surgery went off without a hitch.

"It's a team that has never worked together coming on to do their first heart surgery," he said.

"The team worked like clockwork. I was so proud that the whole thing went off as if we had been doing it for years."

Although Mr. Phythian led a healthy lifestyle before his heart problems started last May, he's confident the surgery will make him feel better than ever.

WRAP IT UP



Season's Greetings
and Joyous Shopping!!!

Magical Christmas AT DENISON CENTER

Southwest Corner of Kennedy Rd & Denison St

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

- 1 pm Suburbanaires Singing Performance
- 1:30 pm Greet Santa & Purple Dinosaur
Lucky Draw
Free Holiday Gifts for Children!
- 2 pm Dan the Magic Show
- 2:45 pm Greet Santa & Purple Dinosaur
Lucky Draw
Free Holiday Gifts for Children!
- 3 pm MFFC Youth Choir Performance
- 3:30 pm Greet Santa & Purple Dinosaur
Free Holiday Gifts for Children!
- 3:45 pm Grand Prize Lucky Draw

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

- 1 pm Jubilation Handbells Performance
- 1:30 pm Greet Santa & Purple Dinosaur
Lucky Draw
Free Holiday Gifts for Children!
- 2 pm Will Magic Show
- 2:45 pm Greet Santa & Purple Dinosaur
Lucky Draw
Free Holiday Gifts for Children!
- 3 pm GGHC Choir Performance
- 3:30 pm Greet Santa & Purple Dinosaur
Free Holiday Gifts for Children!
- 3:45 pm Grand Prize Lucky Draw

Total prizes worth
more than \$800!

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

A CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE

A Light in the Darkness

To celebrate Christmas for those who are experiencing grief

Through music,
scriptures, meditations
and prayers.
A service of reflection
for those who have
experienced loss and
find it hard to be part
of festive celebrations.

Monday Dec. 15, 2003

7:00 p.m.

at Chapel Ridge Funeral Home

8911 Woodbine Avenue
Markham, ON L3R 5G1
(3 lights north of Hwy #7)

with vocalist

Heather Thornton

with clergy and volunteers from
local churches and the community.
Refreshments will be served
following the service.

Chapel
Ridge
FUNERAL HOME

905-305-8508

A caring part of our community.