

OPINION

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Editorial

Hands-on learning key to child safety

Every eight hours a child dies from an injury in Canada.

Ninety-five per cent of accidents can be prevented through education.

That's the math behind York Region's Community Safety Village, a project spearheaded by York Regional Police and the region's fire and emergency services departments.

Under construction at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Whitchurch-Stouffville, it will include a multi-room main building and miniature replica of a downtown.

There will be streets and buildings similar to those in any community when it opens this fall. On the surface, the village looks like a section of a theme park.

It's as cute as it is beautiful, as supporters and media saw for the first time during a tour Tuesday. The buildings are up and the roads are in. The interiors must be completed.

But the message is not about entertainment. This is no walk in the amusement park. It's about instilling safety lessons in our youngest and most vulnerable residents to ensure they aren't one of the scariest of statistics.

Safety and common sense. It sounds so simple, a motherhood issue, if you will. The lessons should be taught by parents and teachers, some might argue.

But they don't get through, even with families, schools and community groups preaching safety.

We know of local accident victims from headlines in this newspaper: child struck by car, baby rescued from pool, teenager electrocuted.

The village motto says it all: Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I may understand. Hands-on learning is the key.

In one room, smoke will be pumped in and students instructed how to stay alive and then exit through a window. You can't teach that at home.

Several York Region corporations have donated money and sponsored buildings.

But more help is needed; \$500,000 of the \$3.5-million cost of construction. It's money well spent.

The village will be open year round and is expected to attract at least 30,000 primary school children annually.

Visitors will have an opportunity to learn about safety as it relates to roads, bicycles, strangers, water, fire, inline skates and skateboards.

Adults, too, may benefit from future programs.



Letters to the Editor

Cultural centre's time has come

Re: *Whitchurch-Stouffville's no Camelot, letter to the editor by Dorothy Giuffre, May 27.*

I agree, council members demonstrated courtesy and respect for the positions they were elected, especially with their unanimous vote to go forward and explore the idea of building a cultural centre in our downtown.

I would, however, like to correct two small facts. First, the arts and culture committee was not there to present a plan of action complete with drawings and a proposed theatre structure for the council's review. We were there to ask council to take the lead in assembling this kind of information.

Second, the role of King Arthur was played by Councillor Ken Ferdinands. He made the motion to set up a task force to research the information needed before voting to spend money on a concept plan, complete with drawings and a business plan, for building a cultural centre at the old town hall site.

As for the background information on this long proposed idea, all councillors were given background information.

As well, new councillors were contacted to give them the opportunity to discuss their questions, supply more background information and provide any other information they might want. A simple return phone call provided interested councillors with all the information they desired.

I would like to thank not only the "loud and boisterous" crowd, but also the many who took the time to e-mail and leave voice messages for their councillor. Council certainly experienced an overwhelming demonstration of enthusiasm and pas-

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All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The Stouffville Sun-Tribune reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

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sion for an idea whose time has come. The task force presents its findings at the June 15 council meeting.

Please continue to show your support by attending if you can and writing and phoning if you cannot be at this meeting. Thank you so much for all the support and enthusiasm.

PAM MANDICH
ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE MEMBER

What fun do vandals enjoy?

Summer is not yet here, but our business has been violated twice in the last few weeks.

First, my barrel was destroyed. Then, to my shock, half of my flower bags have been ripped apart, leaving an ugly mess. They had not been up two days.

Expenses aside, it takes a tremendous amount of work to maintain these plants and we do it with pride and pleasure for all to enjoy. It is beyond my scope to understand what possible fun there can be in willful destruction.

O'Neill Funeral Home anxiously awaits the fine weather to beautify our building and our corner of Main Street with flowers.

ROBIN L. WALSH
O'NEILL FUNERAL HOME



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

New daughter will get time with reporter dad after Stanley

Jermain Franklin had it all figured out. TSN's Calgary correspondent and his wife, Andrea, were expecting their first child June 27.

No problem, the former Stouffville resident thought.

"Even if the Flames make the playoffs, they'll be gone in the first round," he said.

Lots of time to prepare for the big day. Maybe put an addition on the house or write a book on Calgary flame-outs before and during the NHL playoffs.

Wrong, on two accounts.

Little Micah Corine Franklin decided to be born May 1. And the Cinderella-like Flame post-season lives on into June.

"I haven't seen too much of my daughter," Jermain admitted before boarding a flight for Tampa and tonight's Game 5 in the deadlocked final.

Jermain left Toronto and The FAN 590 radio station in September for the gig in Cowtown covering the Flames and the CFL Stampeders.

"It's been a wild ride and who would have thought the Flames would have gone to the final?" he said. Not Jermain.

Now 29, he moved from Philadelphia to Stouffville — no culture shock there — with his family when he was 12.

He played minor hockey here and for the Uxbridge Bruins juniors before graduating from Stouffville District Secondary School.

After earning a communications degree from the University of Windsor, he worked at The Score, Rogers Television and The FAN.

The Flames have given him no shortage of material, from the always chatty Craig Conroy to the multi-storied red hair of Mike Commodore.

"All of the Flames players are genuinely great guys," he said. "Jarome Iginla and the rest are all really good; they always have time for you. Compared to the Leafs dressing room, these guys are awesome to deal with."

The season will be over by Monday and Jermain Franklin can take a few days to meet his daughter and re-acquaint himself with her mother.

"But there might be a parade to cover," he said laughing.

Work commitments will keep him from July's SDSS reunion but he and his family plan on visiting family and friends in Stouffville later this month.

Jim Mason is editor of the Sun-Tribune.

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