

Stouffville Says

By Hannelore Volpe

Will you get a flu shot this year?

—asked at A & P in Stouffville



Lori FARRELL

I think it is important for me because I have asthma. My two daughters, who are 10 and seven, will get their first flu shots this year as an extra boost because they are very active.



Eva JOHNSTONE

No. Never. I don't believe in flu shots. I just keep healthy. The risks of the flu shot outweigh the benefits for a healthy person.



Patti PENNY

No. I have been healthy enough. I am sick very rarely. Young kids and older adults should get the flu shot if they have a health problem.



John WHITEBREAD

I won't be getting one. I don't think I am at high risk. It is more important for older people who are more susceptible to the flu. For them it has more dangerous consequences.



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

Stouffville salute

Gladys Clarkson of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 459 ladies auxiliary salutes during service at the Stouffville Cemetery Sunday. The legion hosts a service today at 10:30 a.m.

Skate park to go portable

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

When the Over-The-Edge Skate Park in Stouffville opens its doors next summer, there might not be any to open.

And the ramps, half-pipes and other structures could be sporting a new, sleek look.

EXPENSIVE REPAIRS

With expensive repairs looming for the once-state-of-the-art facility, the town considered alternatives including changing it to an open, unsupervised facility with no admission charge, replacing the structures with large portable ramps, half-pipes and benches of more durable materials and moving the park.

Town council this week approved buying portable equipment. The cost has been estimated at \$75,000.

Stouffville's skate park opened as a leading-edge facility in 1999, a move largely spearheaded by then-councillor Judy Scala. It was the first skate park in York Region and people flocked to it from as far away as Pickering, Etobicoke and downtown Toronto.

More than 5,000 people used the park in 2000, a number that has since dropped to an average of 3,000 annually. Now there are skate parks in Richmond Hill, Vaughan and Markham, leisure services director Tom Graham said.

A \$500,000 Markham facility, which opened this month draws mainly skateboarders to its unsupervised facility, which has been integrated into a park near the Centennial Community Centre on McCowan Road at Bullock Drive.

"It was a project about a decade in the making, program co-ordinator Martha Neely said. Area youths were involved in all aspects of planning the facility, which has "use at your own risk" signs prominently posted.

Richmond Hill opened its skate park in August in the town's largest park, Richmond Green. The open concept is important since it is always accessible, landscape architect Candace Zboch said.

"It is a major trend in recreation filling the gap in that age group (pre-teenagers and teenagers)," she added.

After five years, many of the wood supporting structures at Over-The-Edge are beginning to decay, making it difficult to keep screws anchored. The surfaces also need to be re-done. During that time, several companies that specialize in skate park equipment have emerged. With newer technology, large, moveable stainless steel bases covered with durable concrete or steel surfaces are in use.

The anticipated life of these types of ramps and pipes is between 15 and 20 years. Lower

maintenance is another advantage, but permanent structures are more costly to construct.

Portable skate park equipment can be moved if the site is moved," Mr. Graham said.

The skate park is just one facility being examined as the Memorial Park master plan is formulated.

At a recent Whitchurch-Stouffville council meeting, Councillor Rob Hargrave noted the present location is ideal as it is within walking distance for many of the town's young people.

MEETING PLACE

"It does serve a purpose for meeting and connecting," he said.

The portability of the skate park equipment under consideration appealed to Councillor Susanne Hilton.

"We will have a skate park in future no matter where it is placed," she said.

The department of leisure services department is considering whether to change the park to an open, unsupervised facility similar to most other facilities.

Mayor Sue Sherban is working with a supplier of skateboarder clothing and accessories to see if a funding partnership is possible for the facility.

The leisure services department will host a public meeting in January to explain the options and seek input.

Briefly

Habitat for Humanity showcased at sale

The Nifter Gifter is coming to Stouffville Dec. 4.

The craft show with the catchy name features handmade items and other goods from local home-based businesses. It is being held at Latham Hall on Park Drive South.

The show gives representatives of Habitat for Humanity, the charity home-building organization, a chance to talk about its programs and highlight the problem of homelessness in York Region.

Habitat builds homes for those unable to afford them, using donated labour and materials and has been in York since 2001. Houses are constructed by buyers and volunteers under trained supervision, often on donated land. The house is sold at cost and buyers make mortgage payments based on their income. A Habitat house is under construction in Mount Albert.

Children will have their own area at the show to draw pictures of what home means to them, said Janice Morgante, executive assistant to the Habitat board.

Stouffville resident Wendy DeMorest decided to organize the show for local entrepreneurs and home-based businesses that don't have stores to sell their wares.

As well as benefitting vendors, Ms DeMorest, a life and business coach, hopes the show gives people a convenient place to do Christmas shopping in Stouffville.

Students from Glad Park Public School are providing a gift-wrapping service with proceeds going to the school. Pat Montgomery of Candlelight and Memories is donating wrapping paper and supplies.

Home businesses and craftspeople from Whitchurch-Stouffville who want to be part of the show can call 905-640-9678.

—Hannelore Volpe

Quoteworthy

'It was a minor letdown. But you have to take what life gives you.'

Randy Johnston, on returning to the Stouffville Spirit after being cut in the Ontario Hockey League. See story on page 26.

Contacting Us

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