

# Search for new home, students on at Christian school

**School marks 25th anniversary with reunion**

BY HANNELORE VOLPE  
Staff Writer

During Stouffville Christian School's 25-year history, one thing has remained constant — the passion and love of its students and parents for the school.

The school is holding special anniversary celebrations April 28 and is encouraging all alumni to attend.

The school began in 1981 after a group of parents couldn't find the Christ-centred teaching they wanted for their children. That's when families from Springvale Baptist Church, Stouffville Pentecostal Church and the former Stouffville Missionary Church (now EastRidge) got together to push their vision.

**ENROLMENT DOWN**

The result was a small private school that began in a former church building with 44 elementary school children. The school has remained on the same rent-

ed property on Pickering Airport lands throughout its 25-year history. It is located near the community of Altona, on the Uxbridge-Pickering Town Line, a few minutes east of Stouffville.

The school increased in popularity until it had an enrolment of 300 students in elementary and high school and need three school buses to transport them. Classroom space was increased with portables; there are about nine on the site now.

Local educator Bob Stover was the first principal.

Since then, however, enrolment has slowly declined to the present 57 students in junior kindergarten to Grade 8.

"Part of our job now," said principal Jake Vriend, "is to see if we can start to rebuild again."

That includes looking for a new facility that the school can own.

Small class sizes mean students get more individual attention when they need it, to excel academically. Students who have graduated from the Stouffville Christian School have done well in

high school, Mr. Vriend said. Although the school's curriculum is Christ and Bible-centred, there are both Christians and non-Christians in the student body.

At least 14 denominations are represented and there are some families that don't attend church, Mr. Vriend said.

The school holds unique events, such as its annual Harvest Fest, a day of fun activities where students also bring vegetables to school for distribution to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank and local seniors' homes.

**BAND, TEAMS**

The school band comprised of Grade 5 to 8 students won a gold medal at the Music Alive festival in York Region this month. The school has also done well in soccer and hockey tournaments held among several Christian schools, Mr. Vriend noted.

There are five full-time and three part-time teachers, including a special education teacher.

The 25th anniversary cel-



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Stouffville Christian School principal Jake Vriend poses at school site east of Stouffville. "Part of our job now is to see if we can start to rebuild again," he said.

ebrations will be held tomorrow. At the dessert evening, there will be time for alumni to mingle and talk to old friends. Rev. Joe Boot will speak on the role

of education in transforming the future of Canada.

The evening starts at 7 p.m. at the Premiere Ballroom, 9019 Leslie St. in Richmond Hill. Tickets are

\$25 per person.

For more information on Friday's event call 905-640-3297, or e-mail scslinda@bellnet.ca

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