

Strawberry Fest adds new events

Children's area, chainsaws add to fun

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Carving with a chainsaw, an honest-to-goodness children's fun area and lacrosse stars are part of the new improved Strawberry Festival this summer.

There are more events than ever, with four new themed areas for the festival, which runs from June 28 to July 2.

A 17-member committee started planning the festival last September. Another 30 to 50 people, some driving golf carts with walkie-talkies in hand, will volunteer during the festival.

Strawberry Festival committee chairperson Holly Reynolds, who is completing her first year in the post, credits the many long-time volunteers and the meticulous notes and manuals they've developed over the years for keeping things running smoothly year after year.

Mayor Sue Sherban was instrumental in bringing many new events to the festival.

While numerous old favourites remain, new attractions will help to draw in the crowds.

Among them are crooner Brian Roman who will be at the Strawberry Festival for the first time. He recently performed at Massey Hall. At the Strawberry Festival, he'll perform between 5

and 6 p.m. during the Stouffville Lions roast beef dinner, which runs from 4:30 to 7 p.m. He'll also be singing Sinatra, Elvis and other tunes from 6:30 to 6:45 p.m. in the Franklin Park marquee before the Strawberry Festival's opening ceremonies.

MP Lui Temelkovski and MPP Frank Klees are expected to attend. The Stouffville Citizen of the Year, Sports Personality of the Year and Youth Award by the mayor's youth council will be presented. The Summitview Public School kettle drum band and The Fabulous Invictones will perform.

On June 30, from 4 to 9 p.m. the Multiverse, a Stouffville business, is hosting a games afternoon for children (from 9 to 99) at Latham Hall.

In the evening, local musician Tom Pullin and the North of Seven band perform from Mr. Pullin's new CD Another Year Gone By from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Franklin Park marquee, followed by the Yuk-Yuk's comedy cabaret. There is a \$15 per person charge for the Yuk-Yuk's show (for mature audiences).

On Saturday, Main Street will be closed from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. so people can enjoy the vendors, food and entertainment.

Strawberry Festival chairperson Holly Reynolds is encouraging all local groups to join the Strawberry Festival parade, which begins at 9:30 a.m.

Since there is no midway this year, the Strawberry Festival

committee has come up with four new areas, including Centreville in Diamond 1. The Get Active Zone in the Latham Hall parking lot, the Kids Zone at the Memorial Park picnic shelter and family entertainment in the Franklin Park Marquee featuring performers from local dance and music schools. Centreville features attractions ranging from pony rides to chainsaw carving by Jim Menken and an antique farm equipment display.

Visitors can join the Stouffville Spirit and Stouffville Spartans from Stouffville District Secondary School for ball hockey tournaments. The Rock, Toronto's lacrosse team, will be at the festival July 1, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with team captain Jim Veltman signing autographs beginning at 11 a.m. The extensive Kid's Zone has everything from a bubblegum blowing contest to bouncing corral to animal balloons and magic.

The fireworks at dusk on Saturday night will be lower than in previous years because of encroaching housing development and the Blackboard Blues Band will perform throughout the evening from 6:30 to 11:30 p.m.

The last day of the Strawberry Festival is July 2 with the ecumenical church service and strawberry social afterwards.

For more information and a complete schedule, log on to www.strawberryfestival.ca

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