

OPINION

Stouffville
Sun-Tribune

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Editorial

A festival to remember, strawberry fans

Take a bow, Whitchurch-Stouffville, Take a breather, Strawberry Festival committee.

The 23rd annual edition of our annual summer festival ended with the final blast of Canada Day fireworks Sunday. It was five days packed with almost something for everyone.

Main Street was jammed with fest-goers Saturday afternoon under ideal early summer weather.

The centre of Memorial Park was wall-to-wall with thousands of fireworks fans Sunday.

The festival tent was filled for Friday's comedy show.

The festival has grown from the marriage of a Canada Day breakfast and craft show with a massive slo-pitch tournament in the early 1980s.

Sponsors have come on board. Almost all local service clubs and churches are involved.

What did you think of the 23rd annual Strawberry Festival?
e-mail jmason@yrmg.com

The Love Stouffville campaign of service and good deeds was a welcome addition. Hats off to the Stouffville Ministerial Association and its crew of volunteers.

Residents arrange their summer vacations around the festival.

But, there's always room for improvement.

- What about our youth? There were events geared to young children, seniors, young adults and families, but what about our teenagers? We talk a lot about our youth. We want to keep them involved and off the streets and out of trouble. How about an outdoor concert to complement the skateboard activities. Invite the local bands that play concerts in the GTA.

- What about our newest citizens? The festival is a golden opportunity to include the people who have bought the new homes that line the outside edges of Stouffville.

- Slo-pitch softball, the bread and butter of the old Buttermakers tournament at the festival, is not the draw it was. But residents enjoy high-end fastball in this town. The international women's exhibition game and provincial elimination tournaments of recent years drew solid crowds.

Want to get involved? The festival is always seeking volunteers.

Look for the committee's annual meeting this fall. It's your chance to give input, and praise.



Off The Top

with Jim Mason

Showing us the love, Stouffville

It was a love-in, under a tent. Stouffville Christians packed the magnificent white marquee in Memorial Park Sunday morning for a message. Hope. Renewal.

They got all that and a pep talk of the best kind.

Scott Clubine, the youth pastor at EastRidge Evangelical Missionary Church, addressed the annual inter-faith church service at the 23rd annual Strawberry Festival.

He's a local kid, who grew up on T&R Donuts and Clipper hockey games. His only time away from his home town came while attending university.

While Scott's classmates at Stouffville District Secondary School couldn't wait to blow this town, he couldn't see any reason to leave. His family has more than 200 years of deep roots in the community. Everything he wanted was here.

So he stayed, or at least returned after school, and now leads the youngest of our residents in this town's newest church.

He also led the Love Stouffville campaign, which hit town like a friendly tornado over the last week of June. The project of the Stouffville Ministerial Association was intended to show love to local residents.

Participants, in their nifty t-shirts with the Love Stouffville logo (a small town version of I Love New York, one guesses) t-shirts washed cars, cooked lunch, handed out bottled water and newspapers to commuters and cleaned the park in preparation for the festival. All for free. No strings attached.

"I'll take the free car wash, but I won't eat a free hotdog," one resident told Scott, as if not wanting to fall under a spell. Fair enough, until he wolfed down three dogs.

No plans were announced for recurring Love Stouffville acts of kindness. That's a shame.

A town in transition needs all the love it can get.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune.

Letters to the Editor

Here's how to reduce crime

Re: *What's left for vandals to steal?*; letter to the editor by S. Winn, June 21.

What's the answer to question? Not much. It's a no-win situation.

Many people today have no respect or understanding of the hard work that went into acquiring possessions.

A possible solution could be the removal of cow bells, church bells, the town managers and their followers that say everything must be paid for by someone else.

Removing the source of all these ding-a-lings should reduce crime somewhat.

LARRY BRASSEUR
WHITCHURCH

Keeping Hansen's dream alive

This year marks the 20th anniversary of Rick Hansen's Man In Motion Tour, his round-the-world wheelchair odyssey to raise awareness and funds for spinal cord research and accessibility.

On June 10, Whitchurch-Stouffville continued its involvement in this cause with its fourth Wheels in Motion event.

Thanks to the support of this community, almost 200 participants and volunteers raised more than \$10,000 in support of research and improving accessibility for all.

Wheels In Motion events, held across

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Canada, return 50 per cent of funds raised to the community to be used to enhance accessibility. It is with the support of this community that we have been able to help individuals with needs in their own homes, as well as automated doors at our local arenas.

Two churches in the community have also benefited from this quality-of-life program and received funding to address accessibility issues.

This summer, the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will be constructing accessible picnic tables for Memorial Park, as well as a platform in Pad A of the Stouffville Arena to improve seating options for spectators confined to wheelchairs.

Rick Hansen wheeled around the world fuelled by the dream of a fully accessible and inclusive society and a cure for spinal cord injury.

You have helped keep this dream alive, Stouffville.

MARTINA BARTLEY AND WAYNE FEASBY
STOUFFVILLE WHEELS IN MOTION

LETTERS POLICY

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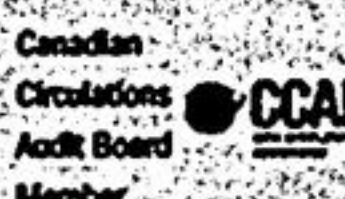
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