

Hospital expansion put off until 2014-15: CEO

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for the region, Mr. Emmerson said. "York Region is the fastest growing area in Canada and we've only got three hospitals," he said. "This likely doesn't sit well with the Vaughan Health Care Foundation, either."

"We all want to make sure our residents have access to a proper health care system. The need is sooner rather than later."

Longtime Unionville resident Don Hammond credits Markham Stouffville Hospital with his well being and saving his life following cancer treatment.

"The hospital's been very good to me, but we're building houses and moving in families faster than the hospital can handle them," he said.

"Now there's a longer wait? I don't think so. The wait time in emergency is already atrocious. If they could reduce that time they'd ease a lot of people's pain."

HOW TO KEEP UP WITH GROWTH?

The owner of a Markham upholstery business believes Ontario should review hospital needs on an individual basis rather than impose a sweeping moratorium on hospital redevelopment projects.

"This area needs it bad," he said. "The government should start loosening its purse strings. We could use the help."

Markham Stouffville Hospital is in the pre-tender process for a capital redevelopment project, part of the government's five-year \$30-billion-plus infrastructure investment plan.

However, with the province planning to spread out that funding, the much-needed expansion will be delayed for a year.

Until now, the construction was to begin in 2010 but with the delay, the doors won't be open to the expansion until 2014 or 2015.

"Disappointed doesn't even capture what we are feeling," hospital president and CEO Janet Beed said.

"I don't know how we are going to be able to keep up with the growth."

One only has to drive down Ninth Line to see the growth in Markham, she added, pointing out the region's population has grown significantly in recent years. The hospital used to attend to 100 new patients a day. That number has ballooned to 160 and it is difficult to manage that volume with just 21 stretcher bays in the emergency room.

SURGERIES CANCELLED

With only 0.6 beds per 1,000 people in the hospital compared to 1.5 to two beds in most other facilities, the hospital will have to increase staffing and continue to cancel elective surgeries to manage the volume.

"Extra staff will mean people who aren't seen on a stretcher will be looked after in a chair," Ms Beed said.

"Today, the directors met three times about it and we still have six or seven years to go (until the redevelopment is complete)."

"We are just simply trying to do a massive catch-up across the province to keep up with demand," she said. "But I am really disappointed York Region is not a priority on the agency's list."

York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill is completing the first phase of expansion, which includes 22 new complex continuing care beds, family birthing centre, inpatient medicine unit and the expansion of the emergency department, critical care, dialysis, surgical, mental health and chemotherapy units. The north wing is expected to be operational by next spring.

Construction continues on the \$110-million regional cancer centre at Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket. Scheduled to open next year, the centre will provide cancer diagnostics, cancer surgery, chemotherapy, radiation treatment and follow-up care to the more than one million people who live within its catchment area.

Local Furniture Store Offers Customers Free Gas

By: Casey Underwood
Freelance Feature Writer

(Markham, ON) - Local retailer, Almira Fine Furniture is helping their customers dealing with the rise in gas prices.

For a limited time, Almira is offering not only great discounts on their furniture collections, but customers will receive gas cards based on the value of their purchase.

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Owner Steve West says, "On a typical bedroom suite purchase, our customers can receive anywhere between \$300 and \$450 in gas cards on average. Saving on quality fine home furnishings and on the cost of gas, it's a win-win situation."

Please go to: www.almira.com or visit the store to see the fantastic selection and learn more about the current gas card promotion.



Public Notice

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday, June 18, 2008

3:30 p.m.

Oakview Terrace

13256 Leslie St., Richmond Hill

(South of Bloomington Sd. Rd. - 2nd driveway south of the Diamond Back Golf Course)

Contact: Marie (905) 895-2371 Ext. 222

WORKSHOP from 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Men & Boys' Violence Against Women
Understanding and Addressing the Issues
With Dr. Michael Kaufman

\$135.00 early bird registration by June 6th/08

Email for details: mking@fsyr.ca

Who is our Best Sport?

The Sun-Tribune is seeking nominations for Whitchurch-Stouffville's Sports Person of the Year.

Tell The Sun-Tribune about a coach, manager or executive member you know that is making a difference by volunteering in our sports community. Supporting material and testimonials appreciated.

Label nominations "Sports Person of the Year" and mail/deliver to:

6290 Main St., Stouffville, L4A 1G7

or e-mail: stouffvilleawards@yrmg.com by June 15.

Award to be presented during Strawberry Festival, June 25 to June 29.

For more information call:
Jim Mason at 905-640-2612



Who will be Whitchurch-Stouffville's Citizen of the Year?

Know an outstanding resident that gives of their time to make our community a better place?

Tell The Sun-Tribune why they should be honoured. Include supporting material and testimonials.

Label nominations "Citizen of Year" and mail/deliver to:

6290 Main St., Stouffville, L4A 1G7

or e-mail: stouffvilleawards@yrmg.com by June 15.

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