

SPORTS: Hockey season ready to hit ice

Assistant GM no stranger in Spiritland

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The Stouffville Spirit have been a big part of Dan McEachen's life.

While the 45-year-old Stouffville resident did not play for the tier two Jr. A hockey squad, he and his wife, Florence, have volunteered their time in several capacities.

They billeted players, including legendary goal scorer Michel Bond, and assisted in game-day operations.

On the ice, McEachen's cousins Mike Sullivan and Mark Sullivan starred with the Spirit.

SON, COUSINS STARRED FOR TEAM

As well, their son Patrick recently completed his final season as a defenceman with the Spirit and will go to Clarkson University in New York state this fall to play hockey and study.

Patrick's exit won't keep his father away from the Spirit.

He signed on last spring as the club's new assistant general manager under Ken Burrows.

"The Spirit have been a big part of our family life," McEachen said. "I'm very excited to be working with the Spirit and to help Kenny Burrows."

McEachen has been busy scouting, interviewing candidates for coaching positions and organizing the team's

**JR. A TEAM
CAMPING NEXT WEEK**

▶ The Stouffville Spirit opens training camp for their 2009-2010 campaign Wednesday.

The club will play six pre-season contests starting Aug. 21 when they host the Collingwood Blues at the Stouffville Arena at 7:30 p.m.

For more, go to stouffvillespirit.com

rookie camp.

He'll also help with the club's website and continue to assist in the club's game day operations.

McEachen acknowledged he has plenty to learn in his new role.

He did coach teams in York Region for eight years, including leading Richmond Hill Stars squads to Ontario Minor Hockey Association titles in 2000 and 2001.

AAA MINOR HOCKEY COACH

"During those years I gained valuable experience in putting teams together, scouting, organizing team budgets, scheduling and other things. I believe

those experiences will help me now. But obviously I have a lot to learn from Kenny (Burrows)," he said.

Burrows was ecstatic in having McEachen come aboard to handle additional responsibilities and help make his job a little easier.

"Dan's a local guy who has plenty of minor hockey experience. He's been with this team a long time and has done lots of things with the club. He's a hard worker and had expressed an interest in doing more with the team when the opportunity presented itself," Burrows said.

While the job could be a stepping stone, McEachen just wants to give back.

WANTS TO GIVE BACK

"I remember when Patrick attended his first Spirit rookie camp at the age of 15. (Late assistant coach) Pat Madigan and Kenny Burrows looked after him and made him feel comfortable. And Spirit owners Dave Laren and Zeev Werek provided Patrick with the opportunity to be recruited to the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association).

"I'm getting involved with the Spirit to help give back to an organization that has given so much to our family. And I want to help players from the Spirit move on in their hockey careers, whether it be the NCAA, OHL (Ontario Hockey League) or CIS (Canadian Interuniversity Sport)," he said.

McWhinney nets job in Alabama

The Huntsville Havoc of the Southern Professional Hockey League will be injecting a little spirit into their roster for the upcoming season.

Dan McWhinney, a former goalkeeper with the Stouffville Spirit, recently signed a contract to play for the Alabama team.

A 24-year-old Sault Ste. Marie native, McWhinney has played in 77 games between the pipes in the Central Hockey League and the United Hockey League.

McWhinney has a 49-44-14 professional record, a 3.30 goals against average and a 90.0 save percentage.

Playing last season in Odessa of the CHL, McWhinney won four games and lost four and sported a 3.50 goals against average. His best season came with Fort Wayne in 2006-07 when he went 9-3-1.

Having observed McWhinney during his time in the CHL, Havoc head coach Randy Murphy thinks his latest acquisition can be a real asset.

"McWhinney had a great rookie season and I saw him a lot over the past two seasons in the CHL. He is still a hungry goaltender that wants to succeed wherever he is so I expect him to feed off that," Murphy said.

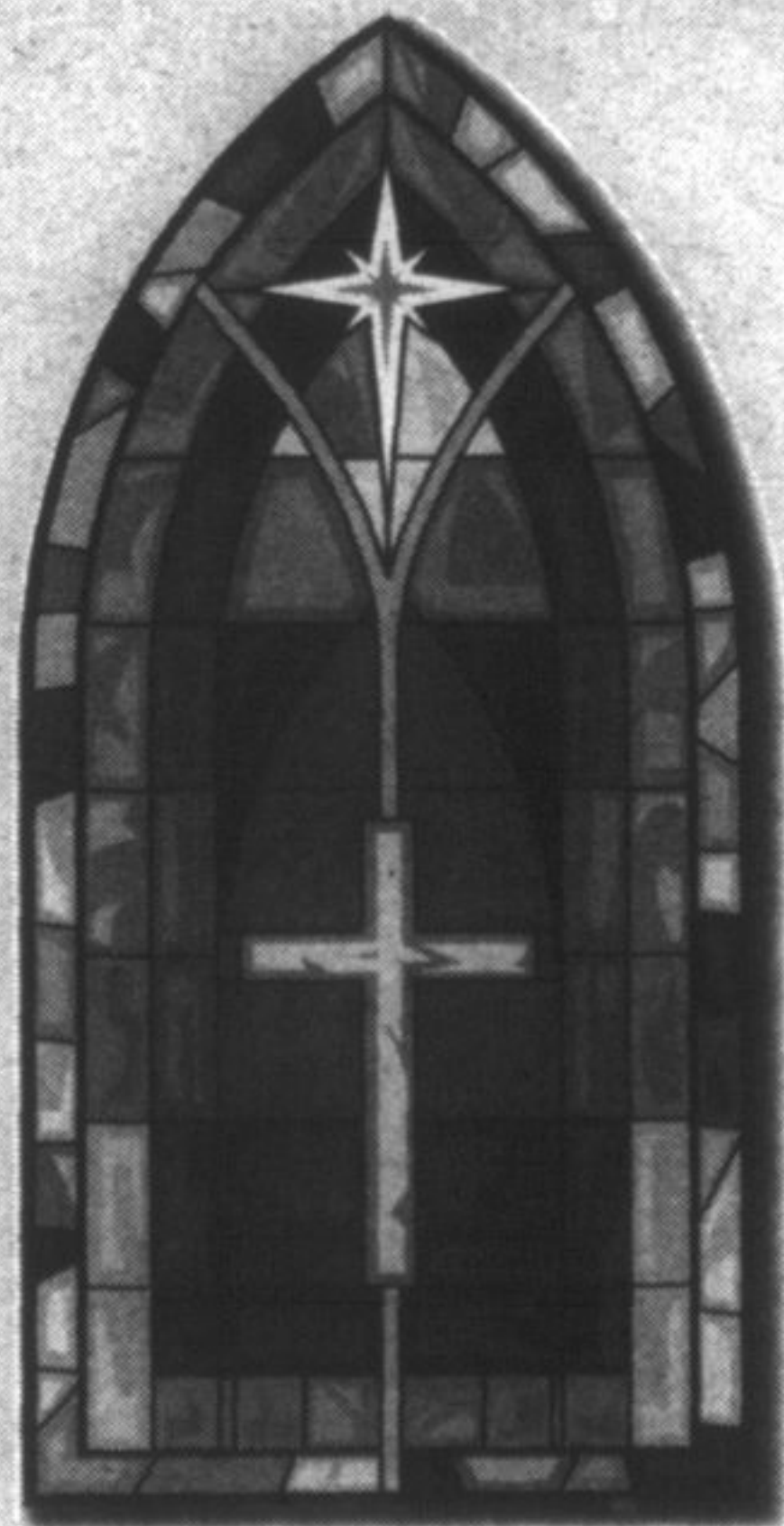
After joining the Spirit in the 2004-05, he led the team to the Provincial Junior A Hockey League final in 2005-06. The Spirit won its only post-season hardware in team history that season, the North Conference and North-West trophies.

"I've heard nothing but good things about coach Murphy," McWhinney said. "Having spoken with him the last couple of weeks, he knows what he is trying to build and has a grip on things. Personally, I want to win a championship. I want to play with a good group of guys. I've had several people tell me how great the fans are and how they like the city. I'm excited to get started."

Last season, the Havoc finished in fourth place in the SPHL regular season standings with a 29-24 win-loss mark.

-Michael Hayakawa

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 Rev. Kathryn Strachan, Minister
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 email: st.james.stouffville@bellnet.ca
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9, 2009
 Hymn-sing
 9:45 a.m.
 Service of Worship
 Guest Pastor
 Rev. Jean Armstrong
 10:00 a.m.
THURSDAY AUGUST 6
 Prayer meeting
 7 p.m.
 'A Friendly Family Church'

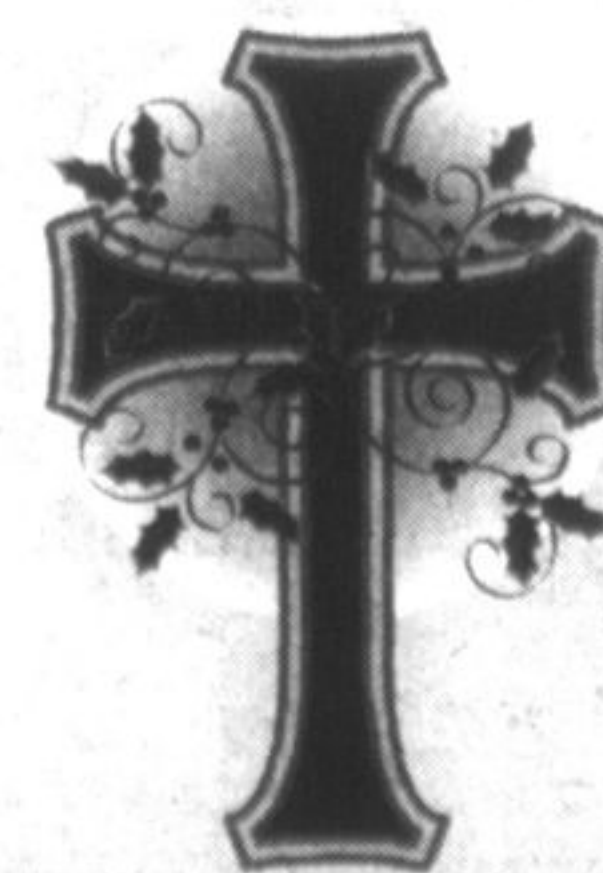
Stouffville Pentecostal Church
 6853 Main St. • Stouffville
 905.640.5696
Sunday August 9th, 2009
 10:00 am
 Pastor Earl McNutt
 Hey Kids! Family Camp
 August 24-28 - 5:45 pm - 8:30 pm
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www.spcfamly.ca & www.spckids.ca
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 Student Ministries: Alex Street
 Children's Ministries: Sharon Russell
 Counselling Services: Karla Kamerman
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 10:00 a.m.
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 10:30 am
 Morning Worship
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