

'We are here for others,' citizen of year Stover says

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Mr. Stover started his own teaching career at Summitview Public School in 1961. He stayed six years before becoming a principal at another York Region school.

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"(He stood) true to his Christian faith and value of quality of education," said longtime friend and former Stouffville resident David Ianuzzo.

"I felt that God was speaking to me to bring my talents and aspirations to offer a Christian education to children," Mr. Stover said of his decision to turn down a promotion and take a 50-per-cent pay cut.

He returned to the York Region District School Board in 1984 and finally accepted his promotion. Mr. Stover retired as a superintendant in 1995.

That is when Mr. Stover and his wife of almost 50 years, Nancy, decided to leave town, for a while. The couple moved to a property on the Bruce Peninsula they purchased in the 1970s.

"It was a marvelous experience," he said. But a phone call from the Unionville Alliance Church requesting his help brought the couple back to Stouffville five years later.

"It was all part of our calling. It was God speaking," Mr. Stover said. "We are here for others."

Mr. Stover was a part of the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park start-up group. He has remained on

as chairperson of its board of directors.

"It sparked my imagination of what a venue, such as this in the heart of town, could do to promote very worthwhile arts,"

Mr. Stover called the building a "symbolic light on the hill" and said it should be used not only for the arts, but for gatherings on town issues.

"I don't think it happens very well in the council chambers," he said.

Although lawn bowling is Mr. Stover's sport of choice today, in 1958 he was on Stouffville's provincial Junior 'C championship baseball team.

Since then, team members have reunited on a regular basis. A 50th anniversary reunion, organized in large part by Mr. Stover, was held in 2008.

"Keeping the spirit of team fellowship alive is a testament to the depth of Bob's devotion and loyalty to his friends," according to Ms McWhinnie.

Earlier this year, the father of three and grandfather of 10, was diagnosed with prostate cancer.

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"A bit of an adventure in life" is how Mr. Stover described it before heading off to a radiation treatment. "We're not fatalistic, but we're watching with great interest how God works this out in our lives."

Mr. Stover has few regrets in life. But there is one thing he is taking a do-over on.

As a kid, Mr. Stover took piano lessons on the instance of his parents.

"I hated them," he said.

But Mr. Stover loves music and has decid ed to tickle the ivories one more time.

