

## Springvale Invites Community To Opening Weekend

By Kate Gilderdale  
Stouffville Free Press

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step," Chinese philosopher Lao-tzu (604-531 BC).

That quote neatly sums up Pastor Bob Flemming's thoughts as Springvale Baptist Church prepares for the official opening and dedication weekend for the facility's impressive new addition at 3885 Stouffville Rd., which has been under construction for four years. When the final phase is completed, "what we will have here is a campus ministry encompassing different people with like faith and values," said Pastor Flemming.

"We moved into the new building six months ago and we are continuing to grow," said Springvale board member John Halse. "We have an agreement with Stouffville Christian School who are currently at EastRidge (Church). They have the second floor of this building. Right now it's just a shell, but they plan to build it to their specifications and hope to be in by September."

Mother Goose Academy, run by Pat Byer, will continue to offer a preschool program at Springvale and on April 20, the Stouffville branch of the Richmond Hill Chinese Baptist Church, which had been using temporary space provided by Emmanuel International, held its first service in the original Springvale auditorium.

At present Springvale Baptist Church itself is holding services in the addition's gymnasium while awaiting the completion of the new auditorium. Meanwhile, construction on the beautiful lobby has been completed and it will be

open to the public for the dedication weekend on May 24 and 25. "Stations will be set up all through the facility so that people can meander around and enjoy the food which will be laid out on various tables," said Mr. Halse.

"I would say the template has now been laid, but all the parts are not filled in yet," said Pastor Flemming. "The other thing we have here is an opportunity for a sports ministry, with staff working in conjunction with the church, but also opening the door to people from the community to enjoy sports and recreation. We're looking at putting up a playing field, baseball diamonds and a soccer pitch on the back 15 acres."

Because of its location on the outskirts of town, Springvale is both a local and a regional church with a strong contingent of young families among the congregation, he said. "We have people coming from Stouffville, Markham, Unionville, Newmarket, Aurora, Richmond Hill and Uxbridge. There are seniors in the congregation, some of them have passed now, who envisioned this corner as a campus for God 30 years ago."

With the new facility up and running, said Pastor Flemming, "by September over 1,000 people will pass through its doors every week." Everyone is invited to drop into Springvale for tours and refreshments starting at 5 p.m. on May 24.

Weekend events include appearances by renowned humorist Phil Callaway and a dedication service with special guests on May 25 at 2 p.m. For more information call 905-887-5651 or visit [www.springvale.org](http://www.springvale.org).



Springvale Baptist Church worship services are being held in the state-of-the-art gymnasium until the new auditorium is completed.

The official opening and dedication of Springvale takes place the weekend of May 24. Everyone is welcome to attend.

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## Community Mennonite Voices

Contributed by Christine Barkey

### MEMORABLE MARCH BREAK IN VIRGINIA

This past March break was one that will not easily be forgotten by our youth group. It is hard to sum up our amazing week in just a few words but I will do my best. About twenty-three members of our youth group piled into four minivans on the morning of Sunday, March the ninth bound for Bergton, Virginia. We were scheduled to leave the day before but were delayed because of the monster snowstorm we experienced. When we arrived the weather was nothing like it was back at home and we were happy to enjoy the warmer temperatures. Our home for the week was a camp called Highland Retreat.

The focus of this trip was to serve Highland Retreat as best we could. We were eager to help out and I know that our enthusiasm helped the days to pass quickly. The first morning was off to a good start already. Our host and director for the week, Gordie, proved to be very entertaining with his welcome speech. He quickly assigned us jobs and we were off. My first job was loading brush into a pickup and then unloading it into a huge pile. Others chopped wood, dug holes, painted cabins, built a bridge and put siding on a shed. There was no shortage of work for us to do and we tackled those jobs one after another. There is no better way to describe our satisfaction at the end of a long day than a shed full to the brim with wood, or the paint on our pants, or the ache in our legs. I think that this trip was a good learning experience for all of

us. It taught me that a little hard work never hurt anyone. I also learned that if you go into a job with the right attitude it immediately turns into something that is fun and enjoyable for all.

I know that many of the youth agree that this trip was very worthwhile. Nick Turman said, "(this was) the greatest March break of my life!" Some of the highlights for me included a massive teeter-totter type swing. Two people sat on a small seat opposite each other and if they were equal weight they would hang suspended in midair. Then, two other people would tug on a rope that hung down beneath one person and the people on the swings would fly high into the air, hanging on for dear life. Another highlight was the campfire we had one night. It was so nice to sing and talk together around a glowing fire.

Each night while we were in Virginia we had devotions as a group. I think that it was a good way to wind down and talk about what happened during the day. At the end of devotions, there were envelopes for each person and we were able to write down an encouraging little note to put in someone's envelope. At the end of the trip we each received our envelopes full of cheerful messages. And that is how we felt when we got home, cheerful, because we had spent our March break in a worthwhile way. We all felt satisfied and accomplished.

We would love to hear from you.  
Contact us at 905-640-9730,  
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**COMMUNITY MENNONITE CHURCH**  
12184 Ninth Line, Stouffville  
905-640-9730

10:00 Sunday School • 11:00 Worship Service



Christine Barkey