

COLUMNS

No guarantee of ice time even in the frozen north

Never trust a headline writer. At least this one.

The title 'Carnival move guarantees ice' graced a story previewing Saturday's Snowflakes and Starlight Winter Carnival in our Feb. 4 edition.

The gist of the story was that relocating the event from Mus-selman's Lake to the Ballantrae Community Centre rink would ensure skating could be held.

After all, this is Canada and it was mid-February.

The previous weekend, the tundra-like GTA made headlines for greeting the NBA All-Star Game with an icy grip.

Last weekend, records were broken in the other direction. The snow – and ice – melted under double-digit temps.

There was still fun to be had at the carnival. To see more of Steve Somerville's photographs, like the one on the front page, from the event, go to our website, yorkregion.com, and click on Photo Galleries near the top of the home page. You'll find galleries from many local and regional events there.

The Stouffville Spirit completes its Ontario Junior Hockey League regular season tomorrow night in Markham.

It's a big one for both the hometown Royals (don't call them Waxers) and the visitors.

The Spirit needs a win to qualify for next week's playoffs. A tie or overtime loss would put them into a play-in game with the Newmarket Hurricanes. A win by the Royals gives them the OJHL North Division title.

It's been a wild finish in Spir- itland. Saturday's 2-2 draw with the Aurora Tigers was their fifth overtime game in two weeks. It was also their fifth game in eight days. They lost only one of their last nine. Wild.

The start of the year was not nearly as kind. The Spirit opened with both of its returning goalies injured or ill. They went winless in their first 10 games.

And that was after a garage



Off The Top
with *Jim Mason*

sale that saw three of the Spir- it's top players – Tyson Bruce, Matthew Dunlop and Nick Thomakos – sent to Markham for essentially cash. Only one of the players sent to Stouffville from Markham ever played a game here. It was seven games, by Otis Goldman.

That's shameful in a municipality of 40,000 for a team that won the league championship in 2012 ...

Fans noticed the turnaround at the Stouffville Arena.

There were 325 in the stands Saturday and 527 – albeit several with free tickets – for the Family Day thriller with the arch-rival Hurricanes.

Still, the Spirit has averaged only 231 fans per game in this, their 20th anniversary year. That's seventh highest in the 22-team, just behind Markham and Aurora.

That's shameful in a municipality of 40,000 for a team that won the league championship in 2012 after several other fine playoff runs.

In a place that calls itself a hockey town.

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tri- bune. Follow him on Twitter @stouffeditor

Doctor has prescription for aging

He's a familiar sight, walking casually along Stouffville's Rupert Avenue or strolling through the nearby park, dog 'Lucy' by his side.

Those who know him give their car horns a honk or offer friendly waves. Those who don't, see him as just another retired citizen out for morning exercise. His pet also.

Little does anyone realize the advanced intellect possessed by Dr. Doug Brodie is capable of more than pacing his walk around the block or holding a rollicking canine in check.

Much more, as a group of men attending a recent Stouffville United Church fellowship breakfast at the Fickle Pickle on Main Street would soon discover.

They were awestruck.

The title of his address, "Getting Older Hopefully" was, in itself, more in keeping with a theme selected by a minister or a psychiatrist. However, from the very beginning, the good doctor left no doubt about his acquaintance with the subject.

"Getting old is not a disease," he commenced. "You don't die of old age. You die of tangible something."

"Getting old," he continued, "is the maturing of body, mind and spirit aided by optimism – a positive attitude." He then listed the 5D challenges – deflation, disease, depression, dementia and death.

Dr. Brodie dealt with each in order:

Deflation – wearing out of each of the five senses: Your vision may dim, but you'll always remember a beautiful sunset. Your hearing may become impaired, but you'll always remember a favourite song. Your sense of smell



Roaming Around
with *Jim Thomas*

may diminish, but you'll always remember the aroma of a favourite flower. Your taste may become less discerning, but you'll always remember mom's apple pie. And touch, a sense you'll never forget – a hug, a handshake, a pat on the back.

Disease – this is anything that interferes with the quality and perhaps the quantity of living. There are three types – the treatable, the resolvable and the terminal. The speaker mentioned specifically cancer, referring to it as 'the big C'.

"Although cancer's survival rate has greatly improved over the last 15 years, we fear the diagnosis, at times almost unrealistically," he said.

He listed the five stages of grief: **Anger** – "Why me? I've done nothing to deserve this!" **Denial** – "Not me! I've always lived a healthy life. I want a second opinion." **Bargaining** – "I promise to reform. Let me live!" **Depression** – "This can be the product of any disease, leading to indifference. We give up. Disease conquers us." **Acceptance** – "This is the stage which, unfortunately, some never attain."

Be prepared: "Because physical and cognitive problems can be sudden on onset, we all should

be prepared with four legal documents to make known our **wants, needs and desires,**" Dr. Brodie stressed.

(1). **The Living Will** – this tells the family what we expect as we leave. "What measure of heroic care do we want?" he asked – CPR? Respirators? Catheters? Stomach tubes? – your choice. (2). **Power of Attorney for Personal Care.** (3). **Power of Attorney for Financial Care.** (4). **Will and Testament.** All legal matters. "But remember," Brodie said, "nothing causes family dysfunction more than an 'unplanned for' exit."

The final 'D' – **Death:** "This is the most personal of all the challenges," said the good doctor, "because it's the only one that is universal." He continued: "For this reason, I believe, one requires some degree of spiritual maturity in order to cope."

"What is spiritual maturity?" he asked. "My personal answer is to have definition and understanding of three things": **Sin** – finding a congruency between what you do and what you know is right.

What is faith? – It is total allotment of control and since death is the ultimate loss of control, through faith, it can be the ultimate adventure. **What is God?** – "One answer came at my grandmother's knee as a pre-schooler – **God is love.**"

Dr. Brodie concluded: "Getting old is not a disease. It's a maturity of body, mind and spirit – with a positive attitude. We must be prepared to face up to the 5D challenge. Only then will 'Getting Older Hopefully' be met."

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 65 years.

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