

Milestones marked at Stouffville schools



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Oak Ridges-Markham

Spring has finally arrived, and with it has come a number of excellent initiatives brought forward by our provincial government, as well as the celebration of several community milestones in Oak Ridges-Markham.

As some of you may know, April is BeADonor month in Ontario. Each year the Trillium Gift of Life Network, which is responsible for the oversight of transplant and organ donation activities in the province, uses the month of April to raise awareness of the need for organ and tissue donation in the province. Currently, there are more than 1,600 people on the wait list for life-saving organ transplants, but only 29 per cent of Ontarians are registered as donors. To become an organ donor you must register at www.beadonor.ca

On April 5, the Ontario government passed legislation that will create a presumption that will create a presumption that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) diagnosed in first respond-

ers is work-related.

The presumption applies to police officers, firefighters, paramedics, certain workers in correctional institutions and secure youth justice facilities, dispatchers of police, firefighter and ambulance services and emergency response teams.

This commitment is part of the province's strategy to prevent or mitigate the risk of PTSD and provide first responders with faster access to treatment and the information they need to stay healthy. As the

former Medical Officer of Health and Commissioner of Health Services for York Region, I recognize the medical importance of treating PTSD, and I think it is important we continue to acknowledge the tough work that these brave women and men do to keep us safe.

April has also been a busy month in our community.

On April 7, I joined the federal Minister of Health and MP for Markham-Stouffville, the Hon. Dr. Jane Philpott, at the Markham Stouffville Hospital (MSH) for the Innovation Ex event.

We saw a dozen innovations geared towards making patient care more effective and efficient. As a physician, I appreciate the value of innovation through collaboration with peers, the front lines and the leaders of the medical community. I would like to commend Jo-Ann Marr, President and CEO of MSH, and the entire team at MSH for putting together such a fantastic event.

On April 24, I had the

pleasure of attending the official opening of École Catholique Pape-François in Stouffville, where I was joined by the Archbishop of Toronto, His Eminence Thomas Cardinal Collins, Andre Blais, Director of Education and Melinda Chartrand, Chair of the Board, for Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud.

I am pleased our provincial government recognized the need for this new school and invested \$17.5 million to help build it.

Lastly, over the past week I was reminded of how quickly time flies as our community continues to grow. I had the opportunity to attend the 10th anniversary luncheon of St. Julia Billiard Catholic School

in Markham and the 50th Anniversary of St. Mark's Catholic Elementary School in Stouffville. I would like to thank the principals and the staff at both schools for putting on such wonderful celebrations.

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