



BE RESOLUTE AT YOUR LEISURE CENTRE

By Hannelore Volpe

Have you ever made a New Year's resolution only to have all that bubbly enthusiasm peter out somewhere between the popping of the champagne cork at New Year's Eve and now?

I would love to know how many exercise machines in basements across the nation are living unfulfilled lives covered in cast-off clothing. I can only guess sadly at how many teach-yourself books have been abandoned after too short a time, their owners still ignorant of the gems within.

How is it possible that our best intentions to exercise, learn something new, get that great job or volunteer have somehow pooped out?

I don't know if anyone really has an answer to that burning question, but, fortunately, there is a place in town where you can be Resolute and have fun doing it.

That would be the Whitchurch-Stouffville Leisure Centre! It includes the fitness centre and swimming pool and the

Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library, all in one downtown Stouffville location at 30 Burkholder St.

Visit this busy place and you'll see it for what it is: a microcosm of who we Stouffvillians are - of all ages, backgrounds, interests and talents.

Early each year, there is a pronounced upsurge of new clients at the fitness centre.

Most come to lose weight, noted fitness programmer Craig Baillie.

Unfortunately, "people put weight loss as the only priority," he said. "Most don't focus on the fact that they will be stronger and sleep better."

At the fitness centre, people are encouraged to focus on changing their lifestyle, "taking the focus off the result and putting it into the process," Mr. Baillie said.

The centre offers an assessment of your fitness goals and will tailor personalized programs. People coming to the centre range in age from their early teens to over 90 and many have been coming there for years.

One inspiring example is local resident Kay Wagg. The 89-year-old made the decision about three years ago to head to the gym daily "to keep the bones moving", she said. She works out on the treadmill and a variety of exercise machines.

And yes, she still goes dancing once or twice a week.

But for those who don't feel the bite of the fitness bug, "it is over by March," Mr. Baillie observed.

If you head over to the swimming pool and peer into the big glass windows, you could see residents diligently stroking through the water, some doing aquafit exercises, others swimming more casually and socializing, or youngsters doing swimming lessons.

"A lot of people enjoy the lane swim," said Yorick Tong, aquatic supervisor. "Some have been coming for their daily swim for years."

The number of people joining the aquafit classes and the lane swims increases in the early part of each year, but "there is a drop-off after a month or so," Mr. Tong observed.

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A big hit at the pool is the Friday evening swims for families. And it's a pretty easy "resolution" to make. For \$5, a family of two adults and three children can enjoy an aquatic evening out.

More of us are also heading to the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library every year, to get the latest read, learn something new, do research (including genealogy) or volunteer.

One notable group of volunteers is the 25 or so high school students who made the decision to complete their community service hours at the library. Some are members of the library's teen advisory group, which meets monthly and offers input on teen programs and collections.

"Another important job is being a reading buddy to younger children in the community, to help encourage literacy and a love of reading," wrote Faith Roebuck Shergold in an e-mail. She is the library's co-ordinator of Community Engagement and Young Adult Services.

Student volunteers also help with programs such as Whitchurch-Stouffville YOU 177. The YOU 177 project aims to have all residents in town read and discuss the book *Dream* by Susan V. Bosak and then create a Dream Star with their wishes for the community.

Tech help with new gadgets and devices received as gifts during the holidays draws many people to the library.

"We accommodate that in one-on-one computer training that folks can register for, or drop-in tech help on Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 5 p.m.," Ms Shergold added.

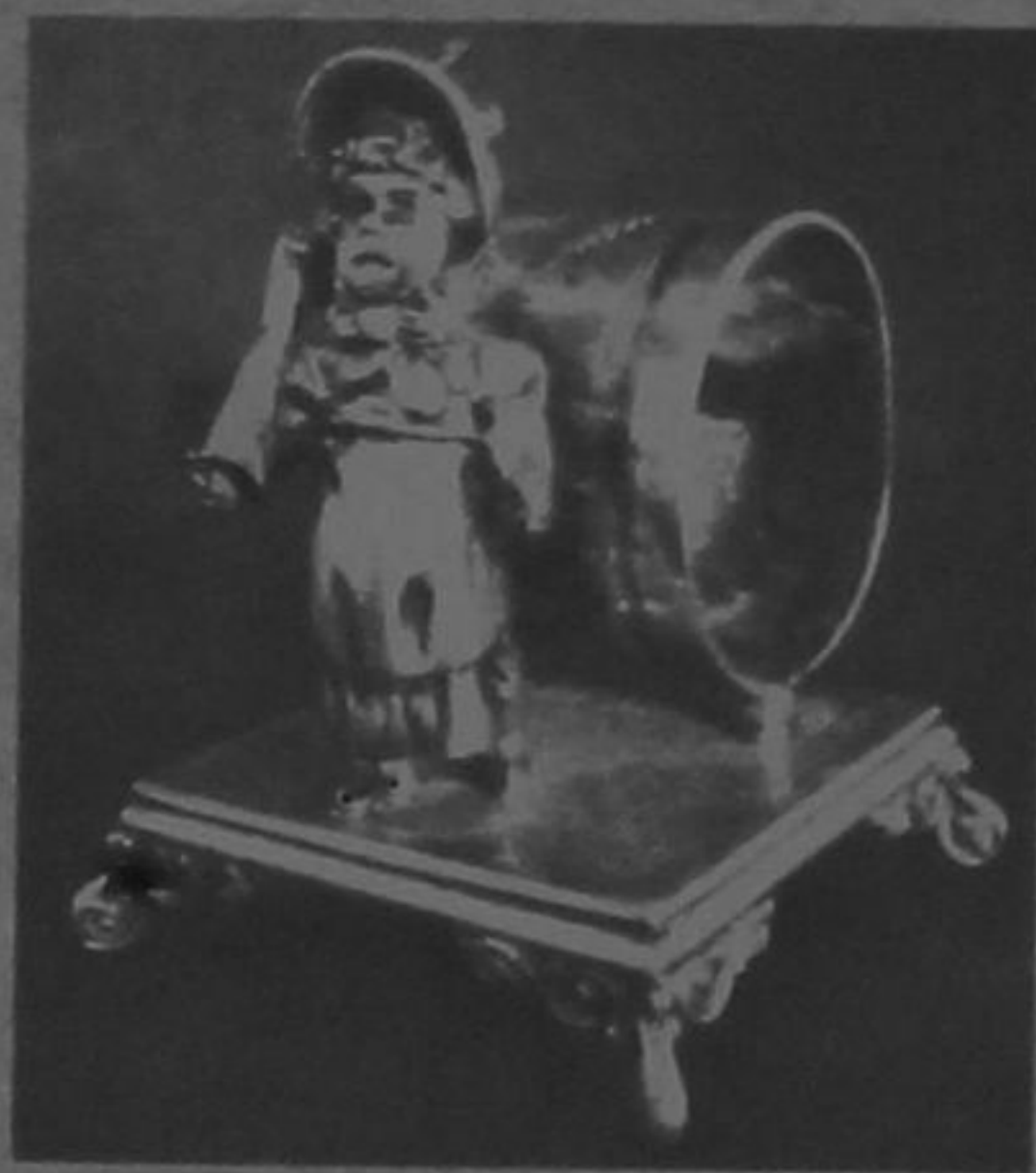
The ESL (English as a Second Language) classes continue to be popular with new residents who want to improve their language skills, as well as with a number of dedicated adult volunteers.

For more information on the Whitchurch-Stouffville Leisure Centre's programs, log on to townofws.ca/en/recreation/leisure-centre.asp

For the library, check out their website at wsplibrary.ca Or just walk yourself in and have a look!



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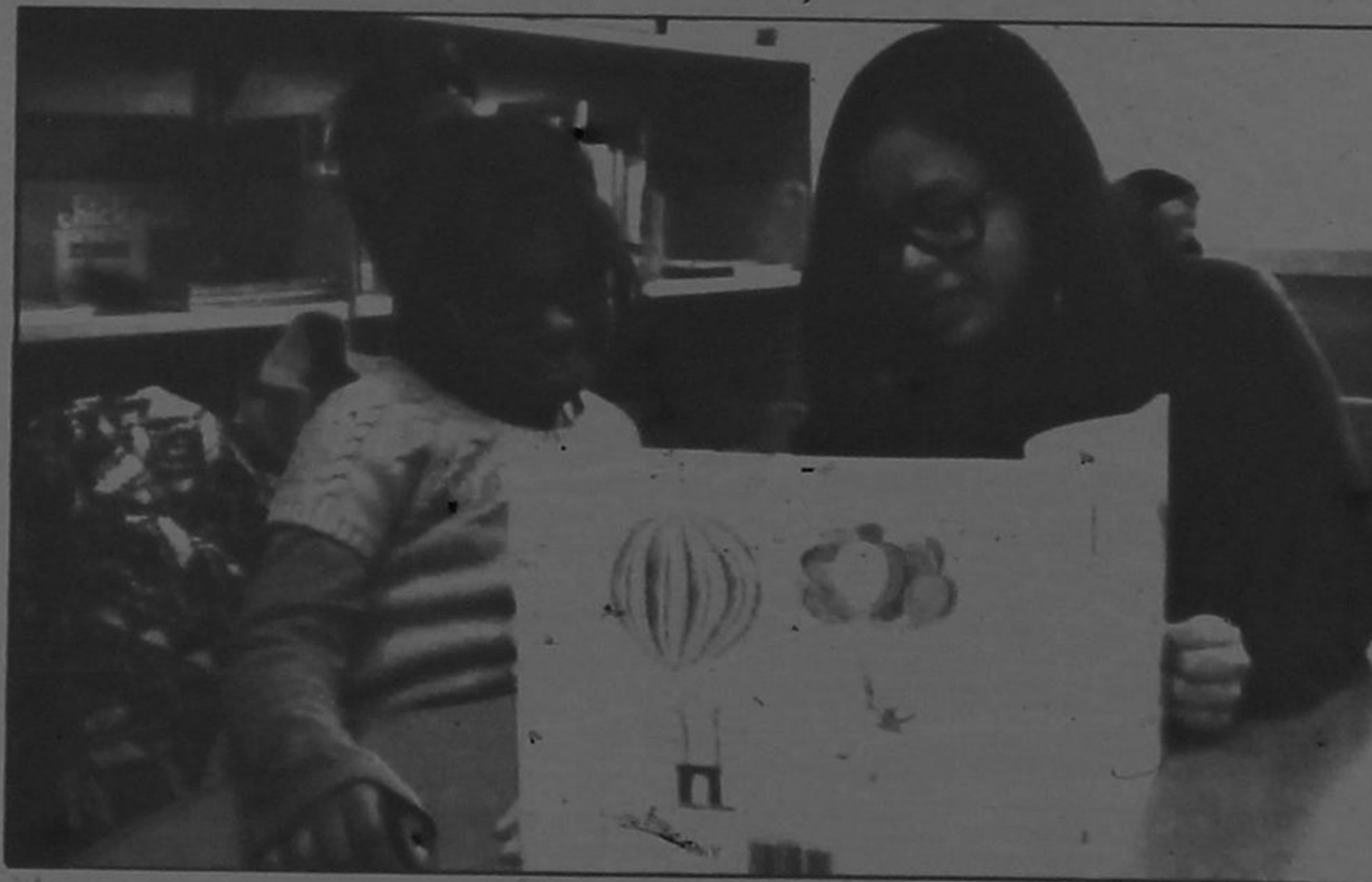
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Manushaa (left) and Maegan are reading buddies at Whitchurch-Stouffville Library.



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