

'Most Excellent' Line of Work for Well Travelled Stouffville Event Planner

Mike Feld takes his act from coast to coast combining technical expertise with a natural stage presence

By Bruce Stapley

You may have seen him with his signature black baggy shorts and shaved head, microphone in hand as he hams it up at Stouffville school fairs, festivals, the Terry Fox Run or last summer's Pan Am Games Torch Relay Celebration.

Mike Feld is the epitome of perpetual motion, a man whose job description is at times limited only by the number of hours in the day. The owner-operator of Stouffville-based Most Excellent Productions juggles assignments like a clown juggles props, providing the complete production of multimedia presentations for companies, charitable organizations and special events not only here in Town but all across Canada. His company has looked after the Salvation Army's Santa Claus Shuffle in Toronto, handled the West Jet Children's Christmas Party in Calgary, and recently did a spot with Home Depot that was televised on City TV's Breakfast Television show.

When it comes to setting up a function it's a matter of utilizing all his resources in order to



give the customers what they want. "We customize events for the client - the music, the entertainment, whatever. Last year at the Latham Gallery fundraising gala there was a Cuban theme so we found them a Cuban band. We always ask, 'What do you want to do? What can you afford?' Then we try to make it work for them."

The strangest event he can remember doing? "We did the Bed Race for Markham-Stouffville Hospital a few years ago," recalled Mike. "We had to have sound all the way up and down Main St."

While Mike's staff consists of four full time employees, he has a list of

Mike Feld is just as comfortable performing at a special event as he is looking after the technical details of the productions he arranges.

free lancers he can draw upon for the larger events. "I can get video and audio guys, event people, people to drive trucks, set up tents what have you. That comes with years of doing this."

He admits the pace can border on the frenetic. "We

might have to rent a truck and ship things out west. You're running around all day with speakers, computers, microphones and batteries and you sometimes find yourself doing one event and planning others at the same time. It's crazy. But

it always comes together." While the work can be exhausting it also has its payoffs. "It's fun every day. You're always doing something different."

Mike learned his craft during an 18 year stint as National Community Events Director for Shoppers Drug Mart, working on marketing partnerships. "We did the tall ships down east, the St. Jean Baptiste Parade in Montreal, the CNE and the Santa Claus Parade in Toronto." It was during that time that Mike developed his skill as a showman. "We once drove from Calgary to Yellowknife to do a presentation, stopping in every town to do a video as the Hoser Brothers."

He thinks it is his willingness to get up and perform as master of ceremonies or simply grab a microphone and work a crowd that has helped Most Excellent Productions make its mark. "Anybody can hire a sound company, but if you can get behind a microphone that's added value."

Much of the work Mike does in Stouffville is at cost, or on occasions for free. "When we work with the schools in Stouffville on their kids' shows they have zero budgets so we try to help them." He feels a sense of obligation to help out at the Remembrance Day ceremonies in Stouffville each year. "How else can I repay the veterans for what they've done?"

While holidays or even a little down time can be hard to squeeze in, Mike takes every opportunity to regroup by just sitting on the dock looking out at the water at his Musselman's Lake home. On those rare times when he can string a few days together for a getaway, he and his wife Ursula escape up north. "We go to Algonquin Park where the phone doesn't work. That really is a good place to relax."

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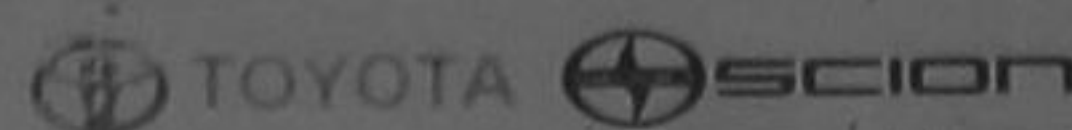


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