

Motus O Gets into the Christmas Spirit



By Kate Gilderdale

"It is a fair, even-handed, noble adjustment of things, that, while there is infection in disease and sorrow, there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good humour."

A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens.

And so say all of us, including Stouffville's multi-talented Motus O dance theatre, whose ebullient interpretation of the Dickens classic has become a must-see on many local calendars as Christmas

approaches. This year, Nineteen on the Park will host six performances of the timeless tale of a bitter, miserly and lonely man, Ebenezer Scrooge, who finds redemption when he is haunted by the ghosts of his past, present and future.

From the grinding poverty of Victorian England to the exuberance of Canada's East Coast, this unique production incorporates music, dance and a witty script in a performance both beguiling and, at times, heart wrenching. When the Ghost of Christmas Future forces Scrooge to watch as Bob Cratchit and his

wife mourn the loss of their beloved son, Tiny Tim, their grief is so eloquently and devastatingly expressed in a powerful pas de deux that it brings tears to your eyes.

Within minutes the mood changes and joy and

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laughter fill the auditorium. By the end of the show, the audience is on its feet and clapping to the infectious

music as a wonderful cast of young dancers whoop it up in a glorious celebration of the season.

Motus O's interpretation of *A Christmas Carol* is a visual and emotional delight, taking the audience on a whirlwind journey of tears and laughter, from potential tragedy to joyous reconciliation.

This year's performances take place on December 19, 20 and 21, with afternoon and evening shows on each day. For tickets and information visit www.nineteenonthePark.ca or call 905-640-2322.

'A Christmas Carol' is to play six shows at 19 on the Park from December 19-21. Motus O photo.

Stouffville's Annual Christmas Dinner Now Offers Meals on Wheels

Volunteers to deliver up to 600 festive feasts to those unable to leave their homes

By Hanneloré Voipe

On Christmas Day not everyone in our community has the ability to leave their home for a festive Christmas dinner or cook their own meal.

That's where the annual EastRidge Evangelical Missionary Church Christmas dinner comes in. Organizers expect to deliver up to 600 meals to our fellow residents in Whitchurch-Stouffville on Christmas Day, up from about 500 last year.

"We won't turn anybody away," said Tamara Carlson, the town's manager of customer services. She urges people to get together with others to share the festive time. Last year, one seniors' home ordered 70 meals. At least one family was signed up for the

Christmas dinner without their knowledge, and "we surprised them at the door!" Ms. Carlson said. A friend or neighbour had put their name on the list.

The Christmas Day dinner was started by Stouffville Country Market owner Norm Clements about 20 years ago as a sit-down affair complete with a visit from Santa. From the market, it then moved to EastRidge Evangelical Missionary Church. More recently, it has become a town-run event.

Ward 2 councillor Maurice Smith has been a long-time volunteer and co-ordinator of the dinner. As it drew more and more people though, volunteers ended up giving their time throughout Christmas Day. "They (volunteers) want their Christmas, too," noted

Ms. Carlson.

With the delivery format, residents have more choice of when and how long they want to volunteer. For instance, it is potato-peeling and bun-bagging day on Dec. 23rd at EastRidge Church. You can volunteer to cook a turkey for delivery to the church around 9 a.m. on Christmas morning, or bake some pies - all in your own home. Around 100 pies will be needed this year.

Drivers are required to deliver the meals on Christmas morning. Financial donations are also welcome.

To find out how you can volunteer or if you would like to add someone's name to the Christmas Day dinner list, call the Town's customer service centre at 905-640-1900.

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