

Baseball tournament honours slain York officer



By Jake Courtepatte

Police and fire departments are well known to band together in the name of one of their own, and in the case of Garrett Styles, it has been baseball that brings them together since his passing in 2011.

The seventh annual Garrett Styles Memorial Baseball Tournament kicked off across York Region last week to honour the slain officer, who was killed in the line of duty on June 28, 2011 following what he thought was a routine traffic stop in East Gwillimbury.

Forces from York, Toronto, Ottawa, and Barrie converged on the fields to not only play some competitive baseball, but to raise thousands of dollars for local charities, including Canadian Tire's JumpStart, the Newmarket Baseball Association, and the York Regional Police Association Benevolent Fund.

While final numbers are not yet available, over \$75,000 has been raised for local charities in Styles' name since the tournament's inauguration.

Styles was pinned under a rolled-over van after attempting to take the keys out of the ignition of the stolen vehicle.

The driver of the vehicle, who escaped from the wreck a quadriplegic, is currently serving nine years of conditional supervision for the incident he caused as a 15-year old.

As a youth, Styles played within the Newmarket Baseball Association.

This year's tournament also honoured Constable Mike Pegg in the opening ceremonies, in what tournament convener Steve Warbuck called "a nice tribute."

Pegg passed away as the result of complications from surgery following an injury in training in 2013.

After each playing to a 1-1 record through the round robin, the York Regional Police and Toronto Police met in Friday's final in Newmarket, with Toronto finally taking home the championship 12-2 after their third consecutive finals appearance.

Warbuck said plans for next year's tournament are "already in the works."