

Fireworks, family fun, and ?Fleetwood Mac? take centre stage on Canada Day



By Brock Weir

Canada's Birthday Town lives up to its name beginning next Tuesday, June 30, for two days of Canada Day celebrations in Aurora.

The party starts once again with Dance in the Park, hosted by the Rotary Club of Aurora, which runs from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m., featuring a free night of live bands, along with an on-site barbecue.

The fun continues the following morning at 8.30 a.m. when Yonge Street shuts down in anticipation of the traditional Canada Day Parade. Before the 25-entry-strong parade itself begins at 10 a.m. on Orchard Heights Boulevard winding its way to Murray Drive, kids are invited to head over to the Aurora Public Library to get their creative juices flowing by taking chalk in hand to draw on Aurora's busiest street.

According to Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora, there is an increased emphasis on multiculturalism in this year's parade, along new service clubs and organizations, including the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame.

Following the parade, Lambert Willson Park on Industrial Parkway North is transformed into Canada Day Central, with a virtual trip across Canada for kids with a sense of adventure.

?Our passport activity is certainly a labour of love of mine,? says Ms. Ware. ?We design a passport for interactive activities that reflect a fact pertaining to each province or territory. When you get to ?Nunavut?, for example, there will be a geocaching activity because Nunavut is home to the world's most northern geocache.

?The passport, to me, is one of our most important features. When you get to Canada Day events, sometimes it is just random bouncy castles and the traditional birthday-style activities, but we put a significant amount of time into this so it is educational, interactive, and certainly different.?

Live entertainment will be the order throughout the day as bands such as Delayne Drive and the Aurora Community Band take the stage before young talent takes over as the top eight semi-finalists in the Aurora Teen Idol competition go head-to-head for the final crown.

Following the competition, the evening's entertainment kicks into high gear. Before the traditional fireworks display at dusk, the night belongs to Fleetwood Mac with a tribute to the band and Stevie Nicks, along with a tribute to Tom Petty, and, finally, DESIRE, a tribute to U2.

?I can't get my phone to stop ringing for them,? says Ms. Ware of the tribute to Stevie Nicks and Fleetwood Mac, who performed at the event last year. ?Not only are they talented, but they have a good combination going for them. Stevie Nicks is a huge draw in her own right, Tom Petty has strong followers and then there's Fleetwood Mac!

?I hope Aurora's Canada Day is the location that families will ring in this national holiday. I hope people will travel into Aurora with friends and family and then spend the day with us. I do feel confident the menu we are providing is innovative and really rich with community spirit.?