

Flamingo Frolicks and 'Therapy Seekers' lined up for Kerry's Place



By Brock Weir

Prepare to seek out a little bit of Therapy when you head over to Town Park this Saturday.

No, don't expect to have to lie down on a couch while a man in a white beard analyses you – unless that's your thing – but take in the sounds of the band, 'Therapy Seekers' as they take over the band shell for the ninth annual Kerry's Place Appreciation Day, which will get started at 10 a.m. at Town Park in conjunction with Art in the Park.

The twofold event has become a popular tradition during the Aurora summer, providing Kerry's Place Autism Services with a chance to thank their volunteers from across Southern Ontario for the work they do, and allow local artists to keep the crowds entertained and connected.

The theme of this year's Art in the Park is 'Flamingo Frolicks,' taking over from last year's 'Porcupine Princess Parade.' As has been the case for the past seven years, Art in the Park has been spearheaded by artist Deborah Campo, whose program of bringing together a variety of local artists has featured in numerous community events.

Ms. Campo will also be reading passages from one of her more recent books, *The Adventures of Miss Wally Wall*, which is a fun inside-peek at the shenanigans of students at the former Aurora Senior Public School, now Wellington Public School.

She will be followed by puppeteer Mike DeRushie. Throughout the morning and early afternoon, crafty activities, Kids Zone games, Autism Awareness craft-making sessions and silent auctions will keep the crowds entertained.

In addition to the fun and games, there will be a Healing Sprites booth about the mental wellness of children, information displays, a free barbeque, and t-shirt sales to benefit Kerry's Place.

'We start from scratch each year,' says Ms. Campo of the planning process for Art in the Park. 'It should be a fun day. Kerry's Place has a mail-out of anywhere between 4,000 people from across Ontario that are made aware of this event. In our second year of Art in the Park, we got a call from Kerry's Place [who had booked the park] and they loved the idea of allowing the artists to participate. That is how it umbrella'd into this.'

While each year's Art in the Park and Kerry's Place Appreciation Day offers something new, Ms. Campo says she is most looking forward to the unexpected. One year included a loud, rumbling roll up of the Lost Boyz Motorcycle Club, who arrived in style to present Kerry's Place with a fundraising cheque and have since become regulars at the event. Then, last year, a rapper took the band

shell by storm.

And, in the end, he brought the house ? well, the park -- down.

?If you are a new citizen to Aurora, this is an avenue to explore and meet people that are creative within the community,? says Ms. Campo.