

Get on your feet ? or go to the dogs: June is Recreation & Parks Month

By Brock Weir

June is Recreation & Parks Month and there is something for everyone ? whether you have four legs or the more conventional two. This Saturday, June 3, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Sheppard's Bush is ready to go to the dogs once again for Aurora's Paws in the Park. Back for 2017 after the inaugural event last year was all but completely washed out due to huge downpours, this year's event is intended to celebrate Aurora's love of dogs.

Complete with free treats and activities, an opportunity for pet owners and local pet vendors to meet, as well as a chance to learn more about Aurora's pet bylaws and how to license your pet, it is set to take place rain or shine.

But, this is just the first in a series of events Aurora has planned throughout June for Recreation & Parks Month.

The celebration started in 2005 as an annual ?mobilization movement? across Ontario involving parks, recreation centres, schools, and neighbourhoods in general.

?By celebrating June as Recreation and Parks month, we are able to promote recreational programs and park facilities in the community,? said Franco DeMarco of the Town of Aurora. ?Each year through this initiative the Town of Aurora successfully engages hundreds of participants in activities that increase physical activity, promote healthy eating and encourage safe play. 2017 provides a special opportunity as we celebrate Canada's 150th birthday and the many benefits of parks and recreation in our community.

?We know that participation, both structured and unstructured recreational, sport and cultural activities improves physical, psychological and emotional health. It can reduce rates of sometimes chronic diseases including diabetes and heart disease. Recreation services fosters social, intellectual, physical and emotional development. Participation in recreation and sport and cultural activities reduces the reliance on health and other social services.?

If you're a senior, head over to the Aurora Family Leisure Complex on Thursday, July 8, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. for the Seniors Information & Active Living Fair, featuring 35 exhibitors, 12 on-stage fitness and active living demonstrations, three health-related seminars and, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., a community barbeque hosted by MPP Chris Ballard.

The Fair is sponsored by the Town, Club Aurora, Activate Aurora, the Aurora Seniors' Association, the Older Adult Centres Association of Ontario and the Ministry of Seniors Affairs.

Next, on Saturday, June 10, from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex is the Aurora Playlist Challenge, which will give families to come out and try over 10 different activities from Participaction's 150 Playlist, dubbed the ultimate list of Canada's Favourite Activities.

Those are just two examples of events on tap this month and if you take them all in, you could win. Pick up a ?passport? at the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex or Town Hall beginning this Thursday, June 1, and have them stamped as you go for a chance to win a \$50 credit for Town of Aurora recreation programs.

?We have something for all ages and abilities and the best part is that most of these activities are free,? said Mr. DeMarco. ?Record the activities that you have completed on your passport and once you have completed four types of activities, submit our completed passport by June 30.

?Submit any photos related to June's Recreation and Parks month to us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using our hashtag #aurorajrpm2017.?