

SENIOR SCAPE: Spreading Generosity

By Sylvia Dickens

You might think the Aurora Seniors' Centre is just a social club, but there's far more to it.

Over several decades of its existence, the Centre has grown immensely into one that spreads generosity and supports the community in many ways.

The Centre enters the Town's parades each year and has even won a few awards for best float.

These are created through the dedication of our workshop crew. It's not just about winning or the fun of coming up with a theme or creating the structure. It's about making sure our Centre gets its rightful representation. Perhaps more important, it's about supporting the community.

The Aurora seniors don't just take.

The Sew Much Fun group has just completed a sizeable batch of items to donate to the Operation Smile program. This program sends doctors to other parts of the world to perform sometimes life-saving operations on children who suffer from cleft lip and facial deformities that hinder their ability to eat.

As we speak, our sewing ladies are handing over to the local Operation Smile coordinator a bundle of 52 bags each containing toiletries, coloring books and a mirror so every child can see their new smile.

Also included in the package are 50 hand-made hospital gowns, 25 dolls so the doctors can demonstrate the procedure on their faces and help the children better understand what will happen, and 100 no-no arm bands to prevent the young patients from touching their faces during the healing process.

The Centre creates several events throughout the year that are geared to making sure town residents add fun to their hectic schedule. On June 22, for example, the Centre held a Family Picnic and Fun Fair and invited the whole community. It included a sing-along of traditional songs: Deep In The Heart Of Texas, She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain, Take Me Out To The Ball Game and others. The Silver Stars and the Evergreen Choir are often invited to perform somewhere in the community to help entertain and ease the burden of life.

Since the inception of the Evergreen Choir nine years ago, it has performed for the community. For the past four years, the choir members have performed a Spring Concert at the Centre and then taken it to senior residences who also enjoy the spring repertoires. In the past two months, the choir was welcomed by residents of Hadley Grange and Park Place Manor.

Some members of the recently formed Keep Singing group, which meets Thursday mornings, has begun visiting nursing and retirement homes to sing to the residents. So far, this casual sing-along group has been to Sunrise Retirement Home, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Cobblestone Lodge and plans to continue visiting other homes during the summer.

Our Centre also has donated funds to CHATS. Two teams, the Aurora Senior Walkers and the Aurora Seniors Board Bunch participated in the Walk for Wellness program in February. After walking 50,000 steps throughout the week, the teams gave the \$1,500 raised to CHATS to support seniors' programs and services in the community.

The Centre was the only non-profit organization which chose to donate not only the required 50 per cent of pledges collected, but the entire 100 per cent.

Individual members have also made their mark on the community. Helen Roberts, Dorothy Gummersall, Dierdre and David Tomlinson received the 2014 Heritage Celebration award for actively working to represent and preserve the town's prestigious history.

Ron Coe, the Centre's Workshop Coordinator, has been instrumental in many projects, the most recent being the construction of Lending Library bookcases. This project is a coordination between the Centre and the Aurora Public Library. People can grab a book, read it, pass it along and bring it back to the libraries.

In years past and present, the Centre's community involvement continues. The Centre truly is more than a social club. If you want to get involved in some of these projects and put some fun in your life, all you have to do is join at only \$20 a year.

For more information on the Aurora Seniors' Centre, drop by 90 John West Way, visit www.auroraseniors.ca, email auroraseniors@rogers.com or call 905-726-4767 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday to Friday.