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INSIDE WELLINGTON

THIS WEEK

Celebrating writing in Eden Mills, *Stretch Orchestra* offers Empty Glasses concert, Fergus, Harriston Fall Fairs, Events, Sports, Rural, County

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Young volunteers help enhance local parks on new TVO series Giver

TORONTO

What can six kids accomplish in three days?

TVO and Sinking Ship Entertainment are pleased to announce the launch of Giver, a new 13-part live-action TV series that engages kids in their local communities, as they volunteer their time to re-imagine and rebuild local playgrounds in parks across Ontario.

Giver was conceived as a way to teach and encourage kids to become more involved in their local communities.

"Giver shows what kids can do when given the chance to make a difference," said Patricia Ellingson, TVO's creative head of Children's Media.

"Giver proves that when given the opportunity, kids can and will do amazing things."

Working with the Ontario Parks Association, TVO and Sinking Ship Entertainment put a call out to communities across the province in order to select the locations with the greatest need for safe parks.

They received more than 60 submissions from across Ontario and 13 communities were selected.

In each location a team of six kids was involved every step of the way, from coming up with creative concepts and themes, to drawing up the plans, to the actual tear down and construction, followed by a public launch of the finished parks.

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With only three days to finish the project, the kids felt a great sense of pride in all that they were able to accomplish.

“From being on Giver I learned that you can make a difference in your community no matter what your age, shape or size,” said 12-year-old Giver participant McCaiden Dixon from Fergus.

McCaiden was one of six local kids, with three pet dogs and over 20 volunteers, who came together last June to film the Fergus episode.

While other episodes feature kids re-imagining a playground for themselves, the Fergus show is the only one to feature the makeover of a dog park.

Many upgrades were made to the Fergus Dog Park as a result of the show, including new agility equipment and trees, a dog house fort and a new water line.

“It was truly humbling to watch as each community came together to support these young kids,” said J.J. Johnson, creator of the series and partner at Sinking Ship Entertainment.

“I was constantly reminded of how nothing is impossible when a group of dedicated people decide to work together to enact change.

The Fergus Dog Park show will air on TVO on May 8 at 6:30pm and May 13 at 3pm. An episode featuring Guelph’s Circus Park airs April 24 at 6:30pm and April 29 at 3pm.

April 13, 2012

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