

Sixth Pond Spiel at Island Lake Saturday

By Tabitha Wells

The Orangeville Curling Club will be hosting their sixth annual Pond Spiel this Saturday (Jan. 31).

The event, which takes place at the Island Lake Conservation Area, came from the idea to take the sport back to something more toward the roots of curling, which started outside on natural ice in Scotland.

"We are hoping to have close to 100 curlers here from across the province," said Kim Burt, chairman of the Pond Spiel. "It's such a unique event, and the curlers will be out there on the Saturday, curling on the ice."

Orangeville Mayor Jeremy Williams will be completing the ceremonial first throw of the rock, and they are hoping to have an appearance by Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson and MPP Sylvia Jones.

"Sylvia has been wonderful with us over the years, and she has some curling experience, so she knows a little bit about what she's doing out there, which is great," Burt observed.

Each team that participates will play a total of three games; two out on the lake, and then one game back in the curling club. Each of the curlers are provided with three meals over the course of the day, as well as prizes. The curlers are also encouraged to wear costumes out to the event, and according to Burt, they have seen a number of unique and fun costumes over the previous five years. Curling outdoors proves to be interesting each year, as the natural ice conditions are very different than the controlled indoor ice.

Because it's harder to get the rock from one end of the rink to the other outside, the playing area is shortened.

The event is also open to the public, and the Orangeville Curling Club encourages people to come out and watch it.

There will be a barbecue and some hot beverages available for those who attend.

For more information on the event, or to inquire about any possible remaining spots, email to pondspiel@orangevillecurlingclub.ca or phone 519-941-0751.

The Orangeville Curling Club has been in Orangeville for 125 years, and the Pond Spiel is their biggest fundraiser each year.

"We'd really like to just invite people to come and check us out, and see what curling is all about," Burt said. "You don't have to be crazy fit to curl, and it's a really fun social kind of sport."