

Parents of murdered teen behind new Surrey park and public art piece

BY JENNIFER SALTMAN, THE PROVINCE SEPTEMBER 11, 2014

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Emergency responders attend to Devon Allaire-Bell after he was stabbed behind Frank Hurt Secondary School in Surrey on April 24 2011

Photograph by: Shane MacKichan, PROVINCE

The grand opening of a Surrey playground and unveiling of a new public art piece next Saturday will mark an important milestone for the parents of a murdered teen.

Since Devon Allaire-Bell was stabbed to death — and his friend seriously injured — during an altercation with a group of men at Frank Hurt Park in April 2011, the 19-year-old's parents have been working to make the park a safer place.

Right away, Cynthia Allaire-Bell began ripping out invasive plants that blocked sight lines through the forest and hid garbage, discarded needles and condoms.

At her urging the city implemented cleanup days, during which parks department staff, Allaire-Bell's friends, parents and their coworkers came to help.

When the park was being redesigned, Allaire-Bell and Wayne Bell suggested an art piece by Robert Davidson, who had adopted Devon and his brother into the Haida eagle clan. The art piece, Eagle Calling, will be unveiled next Saturday.

The grand opening will take place at the park (76 Avenue and 138 Street) Sept. 20th from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and feature music, entertainment, refreshments and children's activities.

"Although the city couldn't accept our application to have the park named after Devon, it certainly was inspired by Devon and we will always know in our hearts why it's there," Wayne Bell said. "We will spend the rest of our lives thanking everyone who was involved in this project. Devon was taken from us and we will never get him back, the only thing we can do is come together as a community and take back our parks."

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