

Not just for tourists

Grab the kids, and get out and explore some local sites.

BY STACEY MATHIAS-GEER

FOR NORTHERN LIFE

The summer holidays are here, the weather is fine, and your kids have become permanent fixtures on the couch.

If you are anxious to drag the kids away from the video games and out into the open air (sunscreen lathered, of course) but think you have to leave town or break into their university savings to do it, think again. Greater Sudbury is filled with cheap (or free) fun and educational things to do with your kids.

If you have a budding paleontologist or etymologist in your midst, check out the Dinosaur Valley Mini-Golf on ValleyView Road (six kilometres west of Highway 80.) Your dinosaur-loving tots will be in awe of the impressive steel-sculpture skeletons such as Tyrannosaurus Rex, Stegosaurus, Gallimimus and Brontosaurus standing guard in the park's multiple mini-golf courses as they tee-off.

The mini-golf park which first opened in 1998, is the brainchild of Josee and Marcel Rainville who designed, financed and hand built the entire mini-golf course themselves. The park is dedicated to their son Steven, (who also helped design part of the course) who passed away five years ago of childhood leukemia.

For their creative efforts the Dinosaur Valley Mini-Golf was awarded the First Annual Tourism Innovation Award, by the Tourism Federation of Ontario last year.

"We have active imaginations and don't know when to stop," said Josee Rainville, describing the crazy amount of work and artistic energy that went into building the dinosaur park.

Prices range from \$2.95 per child (under 12), and \$3.50 per adult for nine holes, which takes about one hour to play (the perfect amount for the under six set) up to \$20, and \$17 respectively to play all 54 holes.

Not interested in golfing? Then take a relaxing walk through the wheat maze, or explore the exhibit of 30 skeleton insects. The Dinosaur mini-golf park is open from 8 am to 11 pm daily from May 1 to Sept. 8. Phone 897-6302 for further information.

If the day is dismal, it doesn't mean you must be confined to the house. Why not tour some of Sudbury's local museums? Two museums in par-



ALEX SMITH meets T-Rex

ticular that might inspire interest are the Sudbury Region Police Museum at 190 Brady St., and the Northern Ontario Railway Museum and Prescott Park in Capreol.

The former tracks the history of the Canadian police service from 1883 to the present year, and includes the evolution of uniforms and armour, old, restricted and prohibited weaponry, a look at advances in forensics through the years, as well as pictures and facts about local crimes.

The rail museum pays homage to the development of the railroad in the region as well as its impact on local resources. Prescott Park has an old steam engine, a wooden caboose dating back from 1899, and instruction car among other train vehicles that will enrapture any train lover. The museum also has a section on lumbering, and mining and has a gift shop and tea room. Admittance to both museums is by donation.

Phone the Sudbury Region Police Museum at 675-9171 ext. 2635 for more information. The phone number for the rail museum is 858-5050.

For budding artists, the Art Gallery of Sudbury hosts a free walk at A.Y. Jackson Lookout every Wednesday throughout the summer. This is perfect for parents and kids. Bring your lunch and attend art demonstrations and other activities. Parents and caregivers of toddlers can also participate in Junior Picasso Days, July 21, Aug. 4, and Aug. 25. The program which runs from 10 to 11 am involves a story, a sing-song, and a craft on a related