

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Steve Barton Golf Classic raises over \$17,000 for Sacha's Park

July 19th, 2015

Hawkesbury, ON –

Over seventeen thousand dollars was raised this past weekend at the Steve Barton Golf Classic towards efforts to build a universally accessible playground in L'Original. Proceeds from the sold out event, which was organized by well known Vankleek Hill native Steve Barton, will go towards the purchase of accessible equipment for a park being built in memory of Sacha Chenier. The park, once built, will be one of the most inclusive playgrounds in Canada and feature items that will allow children of all abilities to play together. Over 160 golfers participated in the tournament which was held at the Hawkesbury Golf and Curling Club on Friday July 17th. In addition to a full day of golf, participants also had opportunity to bid on an impressive collection of silent auction items which had been donated to the cause. Some of the more popular items included signed NHL memorabilia, a multitude of items donated by local merchants, and a road trip to see the Kingston Frontenacs with included hotel accommodations.

Near the end of the evening Sacha's mother, Jacquelyn Chenier, spoke to those in attendance about how difficult it had been to take Sacha to the playground. "His wheelchair would often get stuck in the sand around the play-structures, and there wasn't usually much for him to do". She went on to explain how, during a Make-a-Wish trip to Florida with Sacha, the Chenier family had opportunity to visit a universally accessible playground with their son. *"It was an eye opening experience"*, explains Jacquelyn. *"We saw that a playground could be built in a way that offered something to all children, regardless of ability. Our hope is that some day, playgrounds like this will be the norm and not the exception for communities. Sacha's Park will be a step in that direction. It will truly be a place where EVERYONE can play"*. The attendee's support for the project was evident in the standing ovation given to Mrs. Chenier after her presentation.

Jason Chenier, Sacha's father, adds "we are thankful to Steve and his great team for putting together such a fantastic event, and are so appreciative of all of the sponsors who contributed to its success. The tournament has certainly brought us a big step closer to making the dream of Sacha's Park a reality".

Steve Barton, organizer of the tournament, says he was happy to be help with the project: "I was just really thrilled to be associated with the Chenier family. It's a great cause and I look forward to visiting Sacha's Park once it opens".

The park's fundraising efforts will continue at the upcoming *Herb's Customer Appreciation BBQ* on August 12th at Herb's Travel Plaza located just south of

Vankleek Hill at Highway 417. Proceeds from the event will be donated to the cause.

More information about Sacha's Park can be found online at gofundme.com/EveryoneCanPlay

(attached photo taken at the Steve Barton Golf Classic, L-R: Jacquelyn Chenier, Steve Barton, Jason Chenier)

About Steve Barton:

Steven Barton has been a professional linesman for the National Hockey League (NHL) since 2000, officiating in both the regular season and playoff games. The resident of Vankleek Hill teaches other referees to help them develop their skills. He coaches for hockey schools and volunteers at a variety of community events. He is a speaker at tournaments, graduations and fundraisers. He is founder of the Steven Barton Hockey Academy and a member of the NHL Officials Association. Barton is the son Gary Barton, the current mayor of Champlain Township.

About Sacha's Park:

A playground, to be known as Sacha's Park, is being proposed for the new Place La Seigneurie development in L'Original. The playground, once built, will be different than a typical playground in that it will be universally accessible allowing children of all abilities to fully enjoy the park and its equipment. The goal for Sacha's Park is to create a playground that is inclusive and where the equipment works for everyone, including children with disabilities. A playground where EVERYONE can play. The Chenier family have purchased property for the park to be built on and are working with the Township of Champlain, who are supportive of the project, to secure funding for the equipment, which will cost several hundred thousand dollars.

About Sacha Chenier:

Sacha Chenier was an 11 year old boy who lived in L'Original, Ontario. He was severely affected by cerebral palsy and required the use of a wheelchair for most of his life. He was also born blind, epileptic, and with severe cognitive delays. Sacha required assistance for his daily care, as he was unable to do the most basic of tasks without help. He was lovingly cared for at home where he lived with his parents Jason and Jacquelyn and his older brother Sebastien. Despite his many challenges, Sacha was a happy little boy who loved to be around other children. He attended school in Hawkesbury at Ecole Paul VI where he was loved by his many friends. Sacha always had a smile on his face and his infectious laughter could brighten up a room. Sacha passed away suddenly on June 9th 2014 due to epilepsy related complications.

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More information about Sacha's Park

GoFundMe.com/EveryoneCanPlay

Facebook.com/SachasPark

Tumblr: sachaspark.tumblr.com

Twitter: @SachasPark