

Espress Yourself ~ coffee, tea and poetry

BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

For a little while anyway, you might want to bypass the elliptical poetic messages of Emily Dickinson. Give that reading of John Keats' *Ode on a Grecian Urn* a rest. Dispense with Byron. Forget you ever heard of Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Take *Sonnets from the Portuguese* and send it packing.

Down the street, or maybe not that close – but at most a short drive away – you'll find a place appropriately named Espress Yourself Caffé in Milton. Along

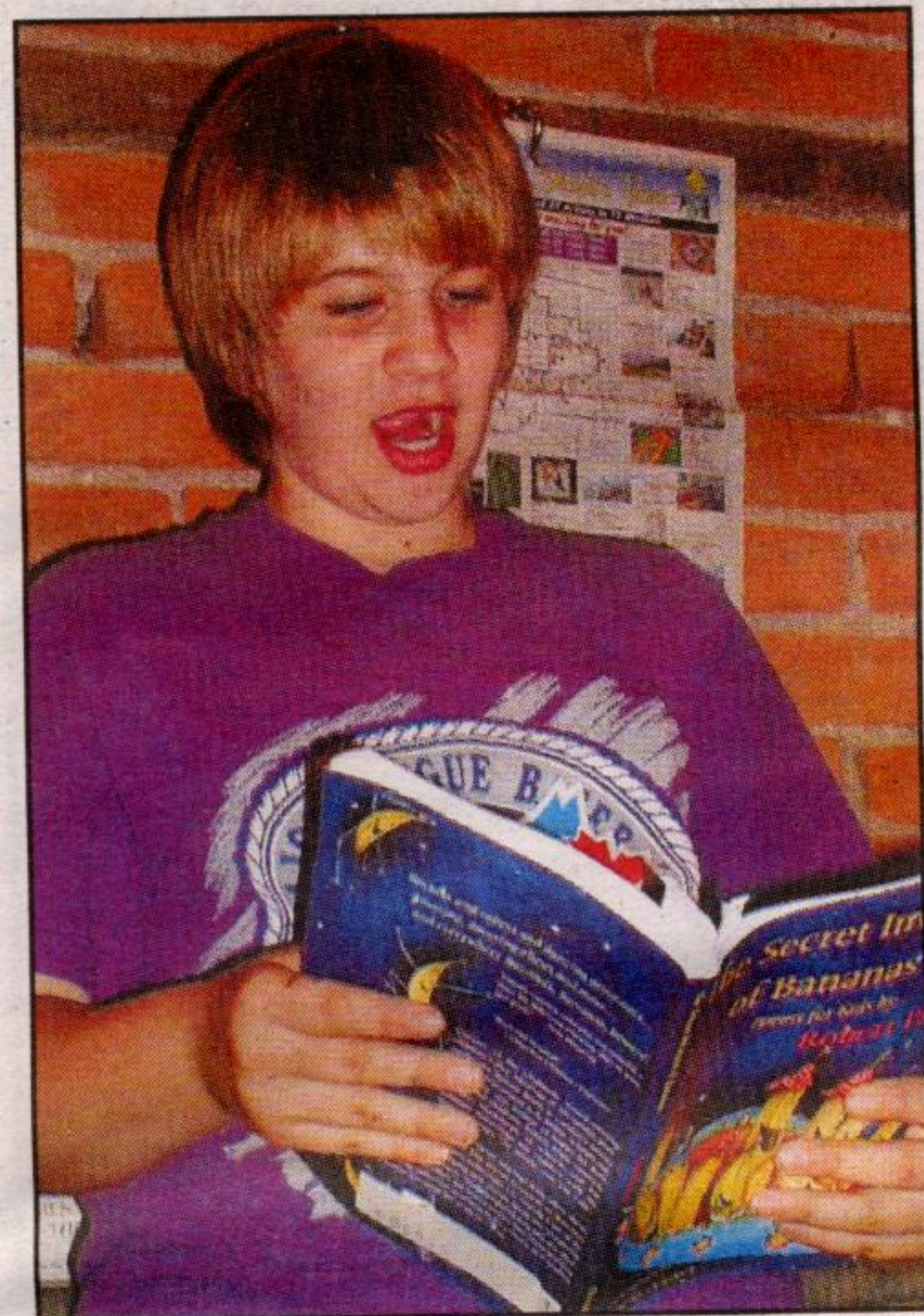


PHOTO BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

Sophia Civiero, 10, shows poise beyond her years as she entertains her audience at Espress Yourself Caffé in Milton. Sophia charmed people with her reading of a poem by Robert Priest, the author of *The Secret Invasion of Bananas*. The poetry group she and her mother belongs to covers Milton and the surrounding areas. The group meets at the cafe located on Milton's Main Street once a month.

Milton's Main Street, this business serves up more than a steaming cup of good coffee – or tea depending on your preference. On selected nights, Espress Yourself Caffé offers a poetic home brew that's served up with all its steaming significance. The metaphors are wonderful to hear. The syntax can be scintillating. Sometimes the lines fall flat or get lost in your mind. But mostly the words attract your interest. You're here to listen to poetry. And local people, not dead poets or people far removed from your life, are doing the telling.

Tracy Repchuk, editor and founder of *Poetry Canada Magazine*, a published poet, and the leader of a poetry group that covers Milton and the surrounding areas, is the moderator for this evening of poetry. The theme is different poetic styles on this night, but if you look or listen closely enough you'll know the theme is universal. Life, its hardships, and its passages, are on display.

"FORGET THE OTHER SEX, IT'S CARS... THAT COUNT"

Sometimes our ride along the road is smooth, sometimes so-so, sometimes pockmarked with potholes, sometimes comical, often sad.

We strap in our seat belts. Over ten of us are sitting on chairs arranged around small tables.

Jenny Panda, a local artist who also writes poetry, introduces us to an acrostic poem, a style of poetry in which the first letters of each line of the poem can be arranged to create a particular word of its own significance. Then we are on another journey with Kilbride poet and novelist Jean Burbidge as she tells a story about the fleetingness of life in her

Ode to Childhood, an example of yet another style of poetry. We hear her speak of time "turning as we dreamed." Then there's her literary snapshot in sepia tones in which she shows us her grandmother as she ages, first helping her and then Jean helping her grandmother. We revisit this same theme again when she speaks movingly in another poem about the girl she once was. "I was too slow to catch her up. Now there is only me."

The comic side of life, edged with heartache, is there too tellingly played out by one Ryan Lowrie, who wears a shirt with what looks like a happy face and a sad face on it. We listen to him, a young man, as he describes his unsuccessful ventures with women. His work prompts a series of laughs from one woman in the audience who can look at the lighter side of young love from her vantage point. The titles speak for themselves. They include *Long Overdue Explanation* and *Not Really Sorry*. In the second poem Ryan is described as the "guy who isn't really sorry for what he has done."

Ryan should learn something from

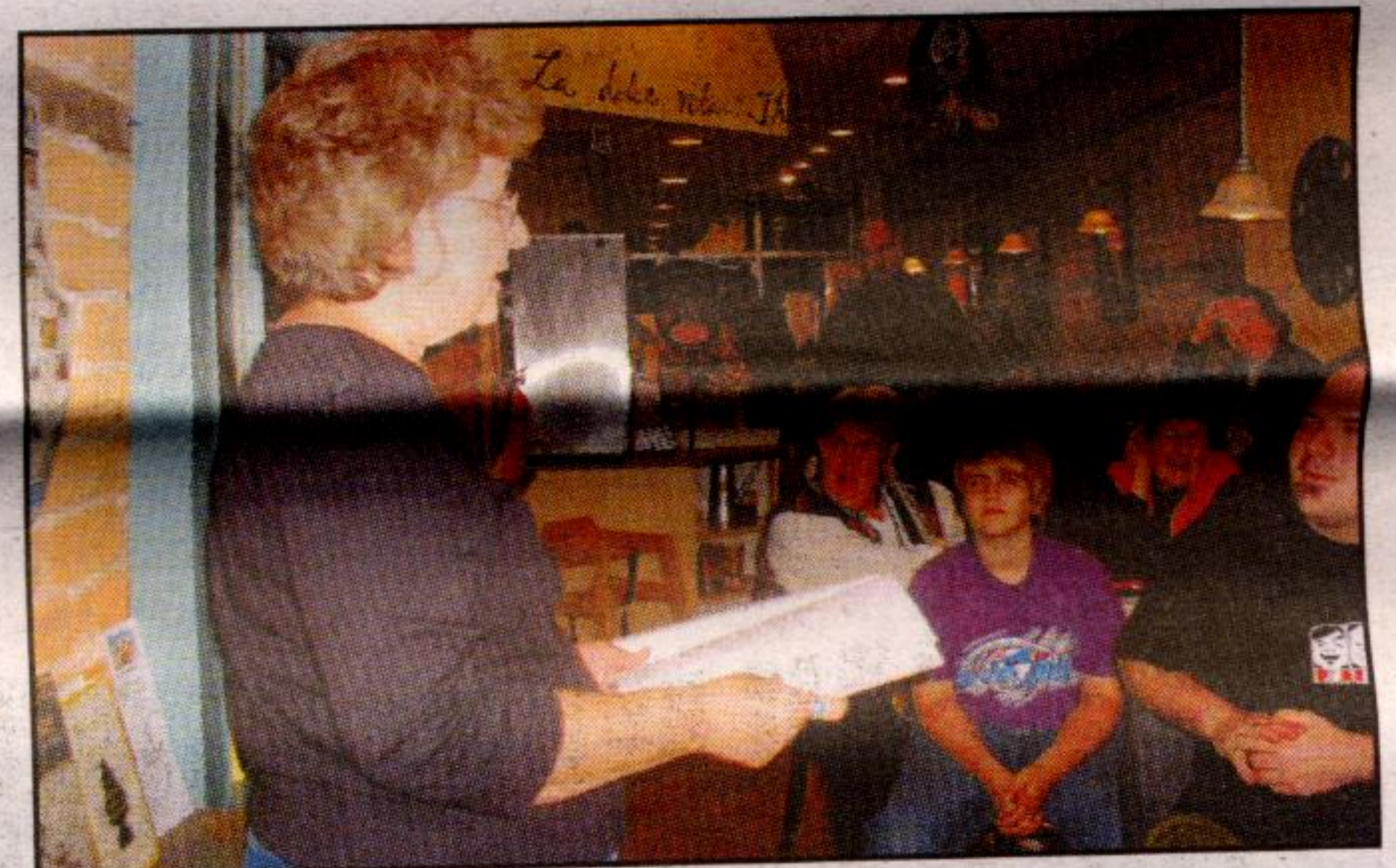
Tracy Repchuk's spouse, a man older than Ryan who knows a thing or two about women. Forget the other sex. It's cars and everything about cars that count. Dave Repchuk heard his muse calling and we can sense that he is transfixed by all things automotive. His poem entitled *Men's Interest* mentions the word "chrome" nine times. He writes about "glossy chrome"

and "shiny chrome" and "coloured, sculpted curves" and "bench cloth buttons" and "shift chrome 8-ball."

As the evening draws to a close we listen to George Arnold, and it seems fitting that he is there to provide the last readings. George, a visitor from the Oakville Open Mike Poetry Group, looks something like the part of a poet from days gone by with his white hair and his black top and black pants. He takes us on a poetic journey to the stars, the constellation Orion to be specific. The night is a special one where you feel "the saxophone breeze." Too bad we couldn't inhabit this poem every day, but there are always other nights, always other poetry readings, always other topics to mine for their literary value. So don't despair.

For those of us interested in poetry the evenings are fun-filled and relaxing. The next series of poetry readings is set for October 15 at 7 p.m. at Espress Yourself Caffé. The subject this time is survival.

To learn more about the poetry readings, contact Tracy Repchuk at 905-331-6602 or email her at Tracy@federationofpoets.com



Local poet and artist Jenny Panda delivers some poetry to go along with the coffee at Espress Yourself Caffé.

Family literacy a cause for Thanksgiving event

This October when you want a break from slaving over a hot turkey, escape the kitchen and rush to a local farm for old fashioned family fun.

Literacy North Halton and Long Lane Orchards of Campbellville are partnering to present a fun-filled family literacy event just on your doorstep. The two-day show, October 9 and 10 will highlight expert storytelling, face painting, crafts and games. If you want to venture outside, you can wend your way through the crazy corn maze, leap about on giant straw bales or hitch a ride on a wagon to the nearest pumpkin patch.

This is the second year both groups have combined talents at a Pumpkin Fest.

"Last year we were amazed at how excited everyone was to be able to take a break on the weekend and come out and listen to stories and buy pumpkins," recalls LNH Outreach Coordinator Wendy Somerville. "This year we have gone much bigger so that the event will run at Thanksgiving over two days and we will have many more activities to entertain the entire family."



PHOTO BY WENDY SOMERVILLE

Little Lucas Delvoie, mother Jennifer and family goat Mortimer listen attentively to *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* in anticipation of the upcoming family literacy Pumpkin Fest event at Long Lane Orchards, Thanksgiving weekend. Literacy North Halton volunteer Jane Furlong tries her hand at storytelling.

Promoting family literacy awareness is one of the mandates of the local adult literacy agency. The group stresses that if parents are unable to read to their children, children are at a definite disadvantage right from the start. This event is an excellent way to remind people that low literacy can affect the whole family.

Pumpkin Fest will run from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. on both days. For information about the event please call Long Lane Orchards 905-854-2673 or Literacy

North Halton 905-873-2200.

Literacy North Halton is a non-profit agency serving Milton, Acton and Georgetown. It receives Trillium funding, and is supported by Milton and Halton Hills United Ways and the local community. The organization relies heavily on assistance from volunteers. If you or anyone you know would like to learn more about the program please call 905-873-2200.

Thursday Evening
6:45 pm

Drop in storytime for
Children 3 and up
Bring your teddy bear & parents

October 14 through December 2
No registration required

Milton Public
Library

905-875-2665

TEDDY BEAR TIME