

Idol comes to Milton Mall

BY ANN KORNUA

Idol fans flocked to Milton Mall August 18th for the final competition for the Milton Mall Idol competition where youngsters aged 12-17 competed. The top 10 finalists from all over Milton, Campbellville, Oakville and Mississauga competed for prizes, including recording time. On hand to welcome the contestants was Canadian Idol's Faith McMillan, a Burlington native who placed in the top 30 on the popular TV series Canadian Idol. The winning contestants were 14 year old Rebecca Fernandes of Oakville in third place, 12 year old Sam Nikolich of Milton in second and taking home the top ranking prize was 14 year old Brianna Palmer of Mississauga with her rendition of Aretha Franklin's "Natural Woman".



PHOTO BY ANN KORNUA

Brianna Palmer of Mississauga (front), took home the top prize for the Milton Mall Idol competition. In the back from left are second place winner Sam Nikolich from Milton, Canadian Idol competitor and host Faith McMillan from Burlington, and third place winner Rebecca Fernandes from Oakville.

recreation & entertainment

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Relaxed and friendly Rockwood Trail Riders offers horse riding for both new and experienced riders

BY JENNIFER ENRIGHT

A relaxed, friendly and nurturing atmosphere is important for the development of any person who wants to learn the intricacies of riding a horse. And that's something that Joanne Milton, as president of the Rockwood Trail Riders (RTR), says that her club offers its members as well as any non-members that take part in events held each year by RTR.

"Actually, the Rockwood Trail Riders' motto really says it all for the club - horsemanship, sportsmanship, and fellowship," says Milton, who is a coach as well as president of the club since 1995. "I get a lot of comments from people the first time they've been to a Rockwood Trail Riders' show saying how relaxed it is and how friendly everyone is."

RTR, which is one of the oldest continuously running saddle clubs in Ontario, has been offering both English and Western style riding since 1964. The volunteer-based club is geared to both new and experienced riders as well as people that want to enter competitions and those that would prefer to be less competitive.

The club offers a wide range of opportunities for both aspiring and veteran riders. Aside from both English style and Western style, which Milton says is not offered at some clubs, riders can take part in hunter/jumper events, eventing, riding in harness, English style dressage or Western reining events. Both dressage and its Western counterpart known as reining, test horse and rider as the horse completes various patterns in the show ring. It's what's been described as the equine form of ballet and it's something that Milton says is beautiful to watch.

For the more daring, there's also Western style barrel racing, something that Milton says is suitable for certain types of riders. "You've got to not be afraid of speed," she says with a laugh. As well, Rockwood Trail Riders offers side saddle riding in both English and Western style, a skill that Milton is adept at. "Actually, RTR is one of the few places where you can show in Western side saddle," notes Milton, who is the first instructor in Canada certified by the International Side Saddle Organization (ISSO).

Each year, members of the club get a chance to compete in outside events as well as at the club's four shows held annually on the second Sunday of the month in May, June, July and August. Then there's the Rockwood Trail Horse Trials in Rockwood, an event open to competitors as well as non-competing riders and English as well as Western riders. The trail trials, set for September 11 this year, include a beautiful ride through Brebeuf Camp.

Many of the club's members, whether they're younger or older members, take part in competitions. But, as Milton stresses, they're seen as a means of developing the abilities of each individ-

ual rider rather than the "be all and end all." Milton sees competition as a useful tool that can help improve "riding ability and horsemanship ability." That's why each year the club gives its younger members a chance to compete at the annual Ontario Saddle Clubs Youth Team Tournament. This summer riders from RTR placed seventh and eighth overall at the event. The tournament, which was held in Paris, Ontario, this year, attracted over 20 teams. "It exposed them to a higher level of competition than what they would see at our local club show. And a lot of them came back saying things like, 'I know how to improve for next year.'"

Milton says she gets a lot of satisfaction from seeing people gain confidence as they become more skilled at riding a horse and she enjoys watching riders experience the sheer joy of just being around horses. Whether they're there for competition or not, the emphasis is on making riding a pleasurable experience, notes Milton. "We want to go out there and have fun riding horses."

For information on the Rockwood Trail Trials, people can contact Sheila Robins at 519-836-2796 or whistrob@sentex.net. The deadline for registration is August 28. The fee is \$20 for competitors and \$10 for non-competing riders. Following the event, there will be a barbecue.

General information on Rockwood Trail Riders is available on their website at www.geocities.com/rockwoodtrailriders or by email at rockwood.trail.riders@rogers.com.

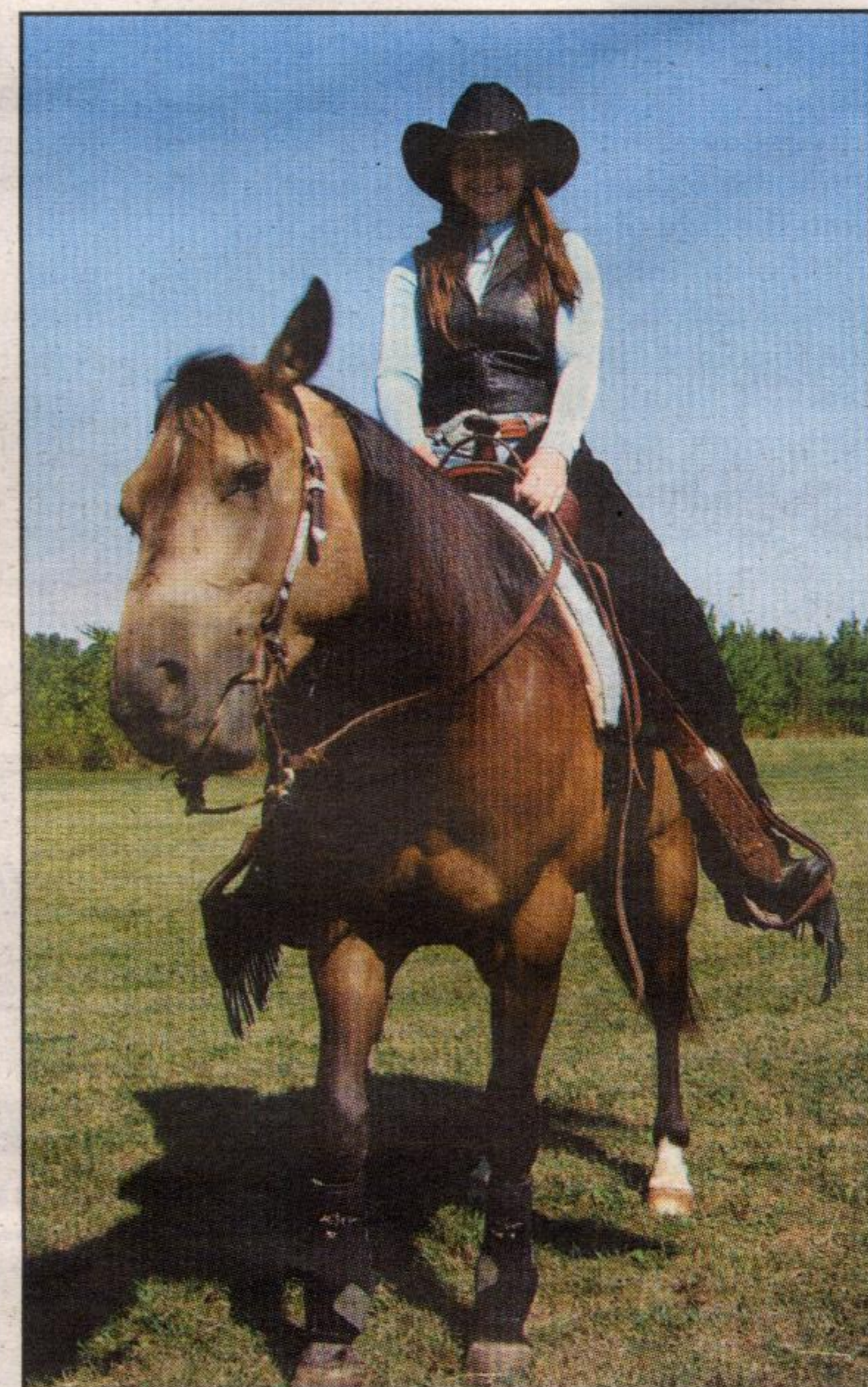


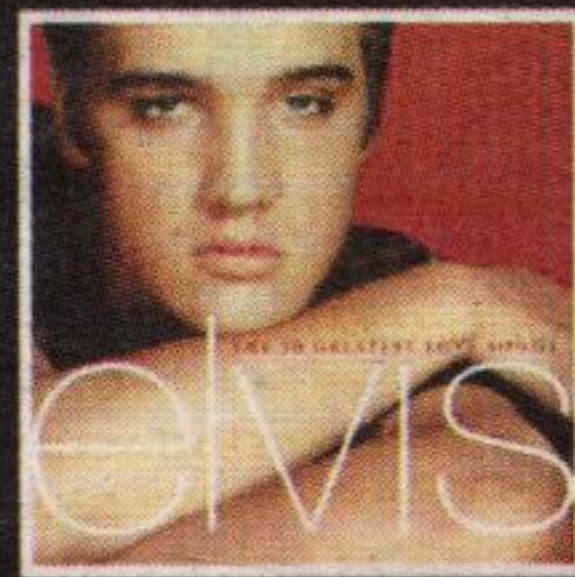
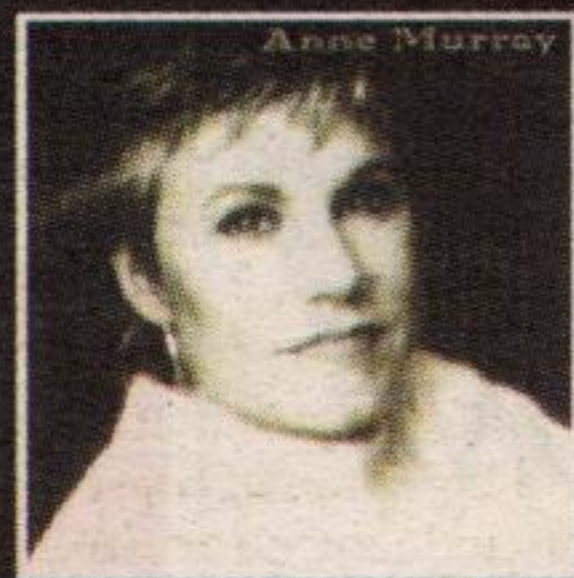
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Fourteen-year-old Taylor Mariani (pictured here with her horse Mr. Jac Fox) is one of the younger members of the Rockwood Trail Riders, a local saddle club that attracts riders from Georgetown, Milton, Brampton, Rockwood, Hillsburgh and many other local communities. The club, which first opened in 1964, currently has over 90 members.

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