

# LIFESTYLE

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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 1992

## COMMUNITY NOTEBOOK

**Berries and Pets:** This Saturday's Strawberry Fair at Milton District Hospital will include a pet show at 1 p.m. The annual event organized by the hospital auxiliary begins at 10 a.m. The hospital volunteers will be dishing up fresh strawberries, donated by Andrews Scenic Acres, topped with ice cream. Hotdogs and hamburgers will also be served. There will be activities for children and baked goods and crafts will also be sold.

**Strawberry Social:** 'Tis the season to eat strawberries and Ebenezer Church is providing an opportunity to enjoy the fruit. The church will hold its annual strawberry social Saturday, June 20 from 5-8 p.m. The church is located on Guelph Line north of No. 20 Sideroad.

**Charity Burgers:** The fourth annual Charity Burger Day at M&M Meat Shops will continue from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the Main Street location on Saturday, June 20. For a minimum donation of \$1, supporters will receive a hamburger and drink. Proceeds go to the Canadian Foundation for Ileitis and Colitis. The 102 Ontario stores hope to raise \$300,000 that day.

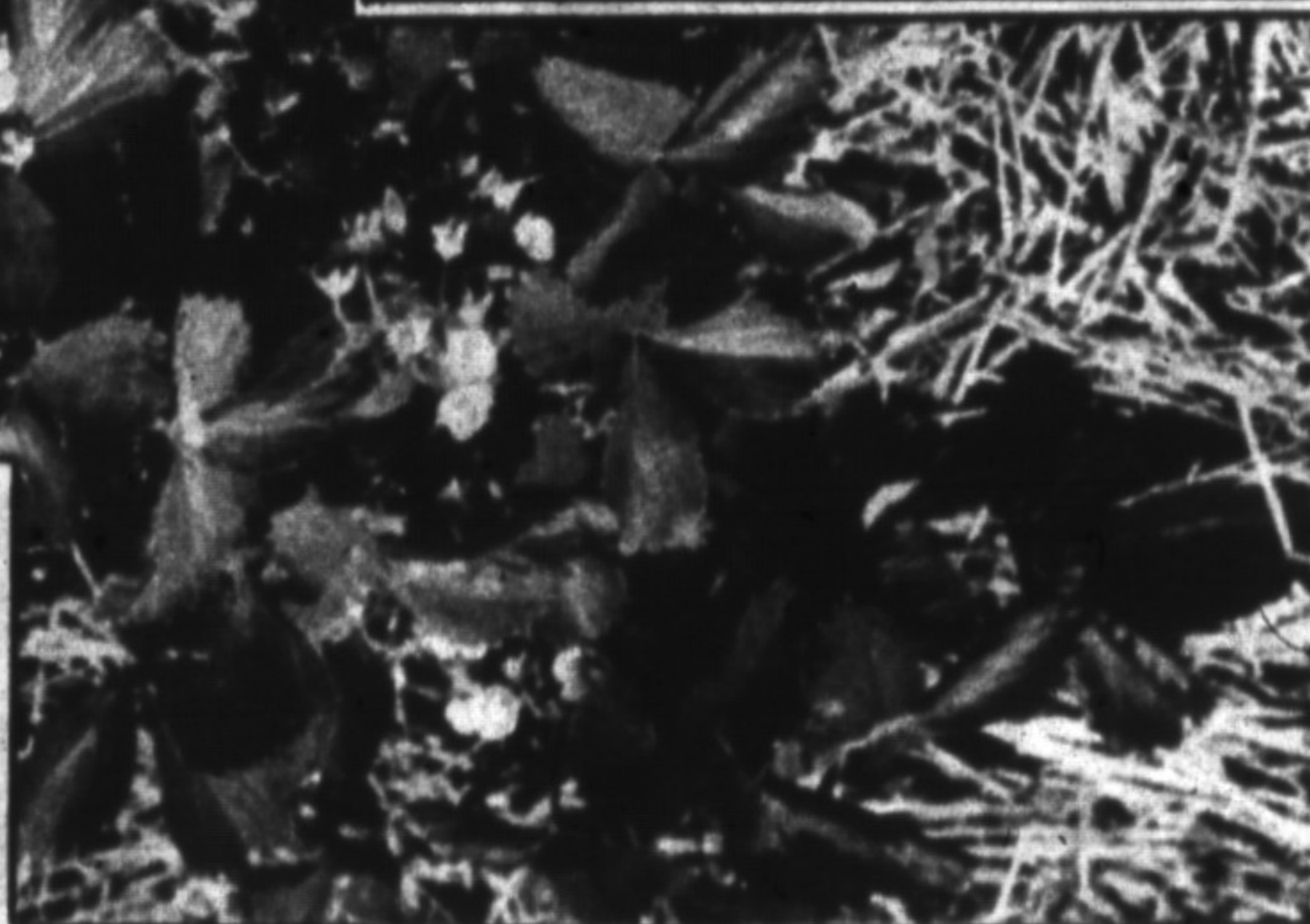
**Gigantic Garage Sale:** Lots of baby items, toys, household items and a sewing machine are among the finds that await shoppers at Saturday's garage sale in support of Deborah's Home. The event runs from 8 a.m. to noon at the corner of Hugh and Mary streets.

**Pro-Life Vigil:** Father's Day has been selected by the North Halton Pro-Life Association as the day for a vigil and walk. The June 21 "Father's Day Vigil and Walk" will begin at Our Lady of Victory School at 2 p.m. The group will travel from the school at the corner of Derry Road and Commercial Street to Milton District Hospital at Derry Road and Bronte Street. All are welcome to join the event. For more information call 854-2318 or 878-9101 after 6 p.m.

**Meet the Artist:** Trisha Romance will be personalizing her art at the Harrop Gallery on Sunday, June 21 from noon to 4 p.m. Her new release *Nursery Rhymes* will be featured along with a selection of upcoming new regular edition releases. Tickets will be sold for a draw prize of a framed *Nursery Rhymes* print with proceeds going to the Epilepsy Research Fund. The Harrop Restaurant and Gallery is at 345 Steeles Ave.

**Learn to Drive:** A summer driver education course is being offered by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Transportation. Course dates are from Monday, June 29 to Monday July 6. The program includes 25 hours in-class instruction and 10 hours in-car training and an additional 10 hours observation. Classes will be held at W. E. MacMillan Public School and T. A. Blakelock High School in Oakville. For information call Sue Trumbell, 878-1240, at the Halton Board of Education's Adult and Continuing Education office.

Photos by GEORGE TANSLEY



Strawberries are on their way and should be ready tomorrow at local pick-your-own farms. The plants are coming along nicely at Springridge Farm on Bell School Line. Heather Penman, an employee of the farm (top right), puts the berries to good use in delicious recipes. Two water ponds on the farm as well as lots of rain have helped keep the plants healthy.

## Springridge expects a berry-good season

**S**TRAWBERRY LOVERS are being forced to show a little patience this year.

Crops of the luscious fruit are late because of cool weather in April and May, say farmers, but only four days past the average berry harvest.

In comparison to last year's early crops, though, strawberry pickers will be waiting an extra 10 days.

That means strawberries should be ripe and ready tomorrow at local pick-your-own farms, says John Hughes, co-owner of Springridge Farm in Milton.

It's the 80-acre farm's 32nd year of operation on Bell School Line. John and Laura Hughes run the family pick-your-own strawberry business, which they inherited from John's father.

Three varieties of the popular berries over 18 acres will grace the farm nestled on the side of the Niagara Escarpment. Early season strawberries which should be ready tomorrow will be followed by two more crops by the end of the season in early July.

The varieties vary in sweetness and size. Overall, about 8,000 pounds of strawberries will be available at Springridge.

Mr. Hughes can recall helping his father grow berries as a boy. His talent comes from experience.

"There's a fairly high level of risk involved," says Mr. Hughes. Two natural ponds on his property are used for irrigation. He keeps pesticides to a minimum.

Ten acres of Montmorency cherries and pumpkins, pick-your-own, of course, will come along later in the summer. Cold winters and early spring frosts killed the cherry buds the last two years and resulted in a total crop loss at Springridge. But 1992 will be fruitful, says Mr. Hughes.

Ready-picked berries and pumpkins are available as well for those with less time and energy on their hands.

The Hughes' also bring their crops indoors to yet another phase of Springridge Farm — the barn market which serves as a retail outlet for preserves, baked goods, and a wide range of country gifts.

This area of the business — housed in a newly-restored 19th century barn — is Mrs. Hughes' specialty. "I feed on it. I love it," she says.

A petting zoo and play area for kids make the farm a family affair. And a new element on the property has been added as well — fully-catered staff parties. "We keep spreading out," comments Mrs. Hughes.

While pick-your-own farms are becoming more scarce every year, says Mr. Hughes, an increased number of people are picking their own strawberries than ever before.

Farmers in Ontario grow nearly 3,800 acres of the berries — or nearly 20 million pounds — every year and more than 60 per cent of those berries are harvested by consumers at pick-your-own farms.

Springridge is expecting more than 15,000 families to visit their farm during strawberry season. That's over and above the 120 busloads of seniors and school children who will tour the farm.

Many will attend the farm's two major charitable events — the annual Springridge Strawberry Festival for the United Way, July 4 and 5, and the Harvest Craft Fair to raise funds for Milton District Hospital October 17 and 18.

Those wishing to take advantage of the first berry harvest can drop by the farm anytime starting tomorrow weekdays from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on weekends from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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