



Tara Kelcher, who has just completed her first fifteen minutes in Kindergarten already looks bored. However, it is also possible that the brand new Orchard Park pupil is yawning because the night before school started she was too excited to sleep.

—Annegret Lamure

Visitor to Arabia saw thief's hand chopped off in market

(Continued from page 1) how different Saudi Arabia really is," revealed Gary. He and a friend borrowed a truck (it was, of course, a white Datsun) and went to the gold market.

"It was actually a lot like at The Stouffville Sales Barns," explained Gary, "except that in each of the booths there hung thousands of dollars of gold." What really amazed him was that though much of the work was exquisite in its detail and craftsmanship, everything sold for so much a gram. "The labour was thrown in for nothing."

After leaving the gold mart, they went to the town square where more stalls were set up. "There was a crowd of white-robed people gathered around a man wearing a brown robe" said Gary. "I just saw a sword flash out of the corner of my eye. Then I realised a man had just had his hand cut off for stealing from one of the vendors. The stub of the man's hand was immediately put in black pitch and then he was offered the hand." Gary paused and then said, "he declined it." Apparently the man got off lucky because public beheadings which are carried out in the public square are still very common.

Crimes such as stealing are so heavily penalized because they violate the Moslem religion, which is a strong force in the country. "This means that there is very little crime," explained Gary. However, it also means there are no movie houses, no liquor outlets, and no dances or entertainments of any sort. And of course, women have no rights whatsoever. All women have to wear unrelieved black dresses, and are not allowed to show their faces or legs in public. They are also prohibited from driving, owning property, or going into restaurants.

"A man will go into a restaurant, and the woman will wait outside for him with the children," said Gary, "sometimes the man will bring her out a drink." Gary was also amazed at the driving habits of the locals. "Almost anyone can drive (except women, of course), although they're now trying to issue licenses to keep down the number of 12 and 13 year old boys driving," he said. Apparently in Saudi Arabia there are no speed limits and no stop signs.

"When you approach an intersection you honk your horn and go through," said Gary, "there are lots of accidents." Since there are no policemen in Arabia, if you happen to get killed in a traffic mishap, the army is called in to investigate. They leave the body in the car and notify the relatives to pick up the corpse. "If the family is poor, or relatives are so far away that they can't come, the car and body stay in the street until someone complains about the smell. Then the car and body are removed and buried together," said Gary.

Because of the severe penalties for theft, no one would dream of touching a car left at the side of the road, and consequently, the sides of the road are strewn with cars. "If a 74 or 75 Cadillac quits running, the owner pushes it to the side of the road and buys a new one," said Gary. There is no industry or skilled labour to speak of in Saudi Arabia, so no one knows how to fix it. "The only thing they produce is oil," laughed Gary, "and they sure have a lot of it."

There is no doubt that Arabia has oil to burn. While flying over the country at night, Gary noticed numerous fires all over the landscape and learned later that when oil bubbles out of the ground and threatens to run across the road, it is set on fire to prevent it from messing up the landscape. It is estimated that over one million dollars worth of excess oil is burned in this manner every day.

Gary made many other interesting discoveries during his weekly sleepless forays into the city, but after five weeks on the night shift, he was transferred to days.

He now had to work from 6 a.m. till 6 p.m. in the phenomenal heat of the Arabian summer. "The thermometer that I took over didn't read high enough to register the temperature in the sun," said Gary. He said the average temperature was 135 to 160 degrees and 110 to 115 in the shade. "Unfortunately, there was no shade in Saudi Arabia," remarked Gary wryly.

After working for three weeks in the sun, he had lost 25 pounds and collapsed for the first time. "I was taken to the National hospital, and the hygiene left a lot to be desired," remembers Gary. He explained that it was incredibly crowded and dirty, with blood on the floor. "It was a frightening experience just to be there," he said. Gary was given a needle and some pills and he went back to work. "I was really pushing myself, but I didn't want the country to beat me," Gary explained, "but two weeks later I collapsed again." This time he was taken to a medical clinic set up for the U.S. Corps of Engineers and spent six days there waiting for his papers to be processed so he could be shipped home. Gary who had by this time dwindled from 213 to 158 lbs. was suffering from anemic dysentery, and infectious hepatitis, and was so weak he was unable to travel alone. Eventually someone was found to accompany him as far as Mirabel airport in Montreal. However, he had no way of getting home from there since he was too weak to go on to Dorval airport and catch a plane there.

"My cousin, Ron Vautier, went 40 hours without sleep to drive to Montreal after work to pick me up and then drove me all the way back to North York Hospital where a blood specialist was waiting," said Gary gratefully. He explained that his wife and children were at the cottage without a phone and he had been unable to reach them until the last minute.

His appearance was a real shock to his wife Jo-Anne. She thought his emaciated looks gave him an uncanny resemblance to Abraham Lincoln, but it didn't take him long to recover.

"I'm back up to 170 pounds and plan to go back as soon as I'm fully recovered," said Gary, "I signed on for six months and I want to go back." He paused and then added somewhat unnecessarily, "I don't like to quit."

Early in July a new club executive was elected. President for 1977-78 is Dr. Doug Brodie; Paul Roney, Past President; First Vice President Ron Lee, Second Vice President Jim Richards; third Vice President Ed MacAloney; Secretary John Smith, Treasurer Tom Wood; Lion Tamer John Moffatt; Tail Twister Bill Richardson; one year Directors Ross Garrett and Ron Berry; and two year Directors Bill Davidson and Graydon Card.

Story hour will start at library

The Whitechurch-Stouffville Public Library will hold a pre-school children's story hour once again this fall. The program will consist of stories, learning games, puppets, songs and movies for three to five year olds. It will be held from September 27 - November 18.

Films for women

The Whitechurch-Stouffville Public Library will offer a free daily morning film series from September 27 - November 18. The program will be held in the new library gallery from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. The series is designed to be of interest to parents and especially to women and mothers.

Chief Librarian Terrence B. Verity describes the program "as a chance for the young child to be introduced to the library's environment and materials." Registration will be held September 13 - 24, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the library. No phone registrations will be accepted.

Since registration is on a first come first served basis parents are encouraged to register as early as possible. More information and brochures are available at the library.

Development day stays the same

AURORA — York's secondary school teachers lost a bid last week to have the date of a professional development day changed from Nov. 10 to Jan. 30.

Teachers were seeking the change because of what they called inadequate time to prepare programs for the day. The November date was chosen by the York County Board of Education — with which authority to set the date rests — because it coincided with a Council for Exceptional Children conference.

In making the decision last May, trustees agreed that it would allow interested teachers to attend at least part of the weekend conference. Teachers, through their federation, disputed the decision.

No more than 100 of about 950 teachers in the group will be attending the conference, said Eric McLean, district officer of the local Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

In addition, the federation objected to the fact that the York board had opted for only eight of

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Stouffville Lions Club enters 40th active season

STOUFFVILLE — This year marks the 40th year of operation for the Stouffville Lions Club.

Throughout its history the club has maintained an active role in raising money for needy individuals and in support of worthy community projects.

In the 1976-1977 year the club raised \$10,380. Of this, \$5,000 was raised through the car draw; the Bike-a-thon made \$3,500, sale of Christmas trees netted \$1,500 and \$380 was the profit from the beef barbecue.

By bringing the Ronnie Prophet-Carole Baker show to the arena the Lions earned more than \$3,000 but this sum will be counted in the revenue for the upcoming year. It is slated to be donated toward paying for centennial activities, if necessary.

This year the club actually gave out more than it earned. It donated \$11,639, or \$1,259 more than was raised. This, however, does not represent a perilous financial position for the service club as it has a surplus from other years.

Stouffville Lions donated money to finance leader dogs for the blind, hearing aid equipment, local young people's organizations, public speaking, recreational services, individual athletes and teams, social services, etc.

The largest single donation was \$5,000 to the new Whitechurch-Stouffville Public

Uxbridge tables gravel control law

UXBRIDGE — A bylaw amendment which would give greater control of aggregate extraction in Uxbridge Township was tabled after second reading last week.

The amendment to bylaw 1517 would have required all new aggregate development or redevelopment to be subject to development control of the planning act.

At present, the pits and quarries act overrides the planning act, leaving municipalities helpless to control this type of industry within its borders.

The amendment would ensure that the municipal planning act takes precedence. The amendment was first worked out several months ago after consultation with gravel producers and ratepayers and has been circulated. "Everyone had the opportunity to state objections," said John Paxton, the councillor from Goodwood.

However, because of the crucial nature of the bylaw, council wanted the opportunity to examine it and check all the details, and despite the protests

of councillors Gary Harrena and Sandy Ewen, it was tabled until the next council meeting.

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