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Editorials

An example for all of us

Every once in a while, a story of sheer determination comes to the fore in this area, an accomplishment against what we might consider incredible odds.

When this happens (and it undoubtedly happens more often than we know about), we feel the individual should be singled out for special praise and acclaim.

In the past three months, three have come to our attention, all involving young people. The first was in the Tribune's March 13 issue, a story related to the achievements of a nineteen year old Grade 13 student at Pickering High. Diane Micaly, Appleview Road, Dunbarton, has been totally blind since the age of four. Yet, despite this handicap, she has accomplished more than many of us do in a lifetime. She plays the piano and flute in the High School band. She's learning the trumpet and hopes to master the oboe and clarinet. She sang in the chorus for the musical "Brigadoon", takes ballet lessons, makes many of her own clothes, the list goes on and on; truly an inspiration to everyone who's come to know her.

The second was in The Tribune issue of

March 20. Eighteen year old Janette Burgess of Hollinrake Street, Ballantrae, suffers from cerebral palsy. In spite of this, she enjoys swimming, rides horseback and next winter, may take up cross-country skiing. In addition, she's continuing her education at Stouffville High and, like Diane, is an inspiration to a wide circle of friends.

This week, we commend the perseverance of Stephen Schmucker, Main Street, Unionville. Like Diane, Stephen is also blind. Yet, he participated in a nineteen mile Bike-a-Thon; Saturday, co-sponsored by the Markham Lions Club and the Markham Unit of the Canadian Cancer Society. Along with co-cyclist John Maduri, Pomander Road, Unionville, the two not only completed the route in sixty-two minutes, but did it ahead of everyone else.

Given a challenge, young people represent the greatest force on earth. Some need a helping hand. Some are self-motivated. Regardless, we must never sell them short.

Diane, Janette and Stephen are living proof of what can be accomplished against seemingly impossible odds.



"Trampoline nothing---that quilt cost me \$465.00!"

Roaming Around



Pffft - \$14.65 up in smoke

By Jim Thomas

Snap, crackle, pffft, pop — fourteen dollars and sixty-five cents up in smoke.

That, I'm ashamed to admit, was the extent of the fireworks display "enjoyed" by the Thomas family, May 19.

The kids had been looking forward to it all weekend. Just about every time I turned around, one or the other was asking, "when are you gonna get 'em Dad?" Then they'd follow up the query by relating how little Johnny's father was preparing a magnificent display and if we weren't going to have anything, they'd like to go over there.

Faced with that kind of "peer pressure", I gave in, promising a backyard show all our own. That was fine.

However, unbeknownst to them, I had a trick up my sleeve that had worked the year before. The idea was to wait until the very last minute, around two minutes to six, then go in and "load up" at a drastically reduced rate. A miscellaneous bundle, priced at close to eleven dollars, I obtained for about seven. And why not? Fireworks on May 20 are about as much value as a Christmas tree on Dec. 26. So, rather than hold them over, merchants

are prompted to take a cut, and a sizeable one at that. But no sir. The shopkeeper I visited was sticking by his guns. Take 'em or leave 'em, he as much as said as I bided my time looking for bargains.

I wasn't alone. Other parents, stunned by the prices but not daring to go home empty-handed, were doing the same. "A rip-off, a rip-off," one mother kept repeating to herself.

Would you believe, a single rocket, four dollars? I couldn't, but there it was, in bold, black figures — \$4.00, one even at five. Rip-off was right.

If it hadn't been so late, I'd have shopped around. But time was running out. So I did the worst of two things. Instead of taking a boxed lot for \$11.60, I chose them individually, trying to keep track of the total as I placed them on the counter. But somewhere along the line, my calculations went wrong. Fourteen dollars and sixty-five cents, the cash register read. I couldn't believe it but modesty (if you can believe that), kept me from putting half of them back.

Now the cost I could take. As much as it

hurt, I was prepared to cut back on my four cups of coffee, six packages of chewing gum, two doughnuts and an order of toast and jam the next day, to help make up the difference, but the result of this extravagance was just too much.

We had a terrible time getting the sparklers to sparkle; the burning schoolhouse wouldn't burn and one of the rockets didn't even have a wick. In less than five minutes, the show was over and all we had to show for it were five disappointed kids with ashes in their eyes, a shell-shocked dog and an anemic pocketbook.

"Is that all there is?" came the chorus as the last rocket sailed out of sight. I had to admit that it was. I also had to admit that I'd been had.

But it won't happen again — once burned, twice wary, as the saying goes.

Next year, we'll pack all the kids (and the dog) in the wagon and view the display, courtesy Markham Kiwanis. For two dollars adults (and children free), an entire family can see a show worth \$4,400. Now that's a bargain!

A long-awaited project

This coming weekend, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Conservation Club, will commence a long-awaited improvement project in the area of the Town dam, north of the High School.

We commend the membership for taking an interest in this site, a potential wildlife sanctuary close to the main urban centre of this municipality. However, the Club shouldn't be expected to do all the work alone. Volunteer assistance is needed, both Saturday and Sunday.

In addition to the planting of shrubs and trees, a barricade will be erected and signs will be posted. There'll also be a general clean-up of the property.

If the Scouts and Cubs, Girl Guides and Brownies are willing to offer their helping hands, the Conservation Club is more than anxious to utilize their services.

Young people not affiliated with these organizations are welcome too.

The action starts at 9 a.m.

Strangled by frugality

Late Tuesday (but too late for publication), the tax rate for Whitchurch-Stouffville was scheduled for finalization by Town Council. As predicted earlier by Mayor Eldred King, the increase for 1980 will be about \$15 for the average home-owner.

Commendable? It all depends on how you look at it. With growth practically at a standstill, councillors must have been using

exceedingly sharp pencils, to keep the figure so low.

Our concern is that they've kept the figure too low and, in doing so, no new projects or programs can be contemplated.

It's one thing to keep a tight rein on the purse strings. It's quite another when we pull the strings so tight we strangle ourselves. That, we fear, is what's happening in Whitchurch-Stouffville.



Town Conservation Area is an egrets' resting place

The potential of the Conservation Area, north of Edward and Church Streets in Stouffville, is depicted in this extremely rare picture taken by Denis Sainsbury, R. 2, Stouffville. The birds, perched on a dead elm tree, are white egrets, seldom

seen in this area. The Whitchurch-Stouffville Conservation Club is holding a work bee at the site this weekend and hopes to maintain the property as a wildlife sanctuary.

Sugar and Spice



I'm glad I'm not a farmer

By Bill Smiley

I'm glad I'm not a farmer. I'm glad I'm not a number of things: a bar-tender, a doctor, a goal-keeper, a fighter, Chairman of the Treasury Board, among many others. But I'm particularly glad I'm not a farmer.

A bar-tender must cope with a low class of people, forever trying to tell him their sordid secrets.

A doctor must handle some of the lowest parts of the human anatomy: piles, bowels; ingrown toenails, seed warts on the sole.

A fighter, professional or merely domestic, must constantly be on guard against low blows, physical or vocal.

The Chairman of the Treasury Board is faced with trying to sell savings bonds at a low interest rate when everyone else — banks, trust companies, and jumped-up usurers of every color are offering the moon in interest.

But the farmer is faced with the worst low of all — low income, low prices, and the low opinion of the vast majority of lowly-informed people in the land.

A number of things has recently brought this to my attention, though I've known it, peripherally, for years.

Last Saturday, the Old Lady and I gazed, with the fascination of a rabbit facing a rattlesnake, at a tiny prime rib roast of beef in the meat counter.

We turned simultaneously to each other and as I was blurring, "What the hell ..." she was saying, "It's been two years." We bought the little beauty, we slavered as it roasted, and we attacked it when cooked like a couple of Eskimos who have been living on boiled moccasins for two months, and have finally killed a seal.

Lying groaning after the orgy, I began to think. The roast wasn't much thicker than one of the steaks you tossed on the barbecue ten years ago. It weighed 2.35 pounds. It cost seven dollars.

With whipped turnips, roast potatoes and onions, a little garlic rubbed in, and a salad, it was something you wouldn't be ashamed to serve Queen Elizabeth.

Then why was it such a big deal? Because we, like so many shortsighted, spoiled Canadians, have been shying away from the beef prices in the supermarket for a couple of years without really thinking about it, muttering, not really blaming the beef farmers,

but feeling hard done by.

A bottle of whiskey of any decent brand, costs eight dollars plus, the price of three pounds of prime rib roast. Which would you prefer? Which takes more tender loving care? Which returns a decent profit to the producer?

In West Germany, people are paying seven dollars a pound for beef. If this hap-

pened in Canada, there'd be lynching parties running through the country-side, looking for beef producers.

Same day we bought the beef, I picked up a five-pound bag of P.E.I. potatoes for 49 cents. Ten cents a pound. I'll bet you'd pay more for manure, if you wanted to green your lawn.

A pound of bread, shot through machines, is about seventy cents. A pound of butter, likewise, is up around \$1.45. A pound of eggs costs about forty cents. A quart of milk is ninety per cent water and costs around seventy cents.

A lousy lettuce, imported from California, costs a buck. Same for a bunch of asparagus. A pack of cigarettes costs more.

Six imported tomatoes, shipped from New Mexico green as bullets, and less tasty than mashed toe-jam, will run you nearly a dollar. There's something crazy about our way of life, our prices, our values.

We pay \$1.25, and will eventually be paying \$4.00, to run a rusty piece of metal from here to there. There are about six middle-men: the Arabs, the shipping company, two or three governments, the trucking companies, the eventual dealer.

And we shudder as we walk past the meat counter and see that beef, choice, is \$3.38 a pound.

Would you rather have two gallons of gas or a pound of beef? Would you rather have a quart of rye or two and a half pounds of beef? Would you rather have a pack of fags or ten pounds of potatoes?

Perhaps I'm not making my point. Eggs and butter and cheese are right up there in price, but the farmer who supplies the milk is working for peanuts.

However, these products have some kind of control. After all, Eugene Whelan dumped sixty zillion rotten eggs on us a few years ago, and Canada can't give away its huge supplies of powdered milk.

But a lot of our farmers are being royally shafted: especially the meat producers and the poor devils who come up with our spuds.

Have you any idea of the capital cost, the heavy interest, and the horse labor that goes into producing a pound of beef or a pound of potatoes?

I thought not. I'm glad I'm not a farmer.

Editor's Mail

Memories

Dear Mr Thomas:

Ninety per cent of your town's residents no longer know me, in fact few village "oldtimers" will remember me.

Regardless, I know Stouffville. During the summer as a cottager at Musselman's Lake, I was a constant visitor, sometimes by car, a few times on a bicycle and more than once on foot. I loved it — just walking down your tree-lined Main Street gave me a big thrill. On occasions, I'd drop into Shine Davis's Tobacco Shop and listen to the stories as told by "big Morley", Pat Malloy "Bucket" Rae and a few more of the "boys around town".

My biggest thrill came in watching Stouffville play ball. You had some great teams "way back then" — the Lehman's, "Red" Forsyth, the Clendenings — what a great bunch of guys.

That brings me to the point I want to make. What's happened to your beautiful park? I returned to Stouffville last weekend and was disappointed in the way it has deteriorated — not the beautiful place it was the last time I was there. There was once none finer in York County, maybe Ontario.

If the advice of an outsider is worth anything, don't let this happen. A good park is a town's finest asset. Maintain it well and you'll reap dividends a hundred times the investment.

Sincerely,
 Mac McDonald,
 Niagara Falls, Ont.