

Auctioneer Terri Surman Makes her bid

By Paula Crowell
STOUFFVILLE — "I had butterflies the size of elephants."

This was Terri Surman's reaction when asked how she felt about being profiled for the new television show Pizzazz.

The Manitoba Street resident and local auctioneer was videotaped in action by Global TV Aug. 16.

The 11-year Stouffville resident opened Terri's House of Auctions at 394 Main Street West, April 5 of this year. Since then she's held sales there every week.

She obtains items on consignment by private owners. She will sell any household contents. The auction taped by Global was called oldies and goodies.

It included some antiques and other collectibles. "I plan to do (this type of sale) every three months. People like a variety," she said.

The only thing she won't sell is livestock. "I'm on agreement with the Town because of zoning."

Terri has come a long way from merely an auction enthusiast to one of the few women auctioneers in Canada.

Mrs Surman was one of four female students out of a class of 30 at the Mason City College of Auctioneering in Mason City, Iowa.

She took the course in November, 1982. It lasted nine days, from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. and covered the basics of auctioneering.

"The main thing was (learning) number sequences," she said. It covered, "chanting, setting up auctions, advertising, standing up in front of people, cashing, clerking, every problem you could possibly encounter at a sale," she explained.

Mrs. Surman added that while an auction was held during the course, the real work began on her arrival back home. "I don't think anything could be more scary than my grand opening. About 300 people showed up."

"I found it hard to mix professionalism with personal feelings," she said explaining that it became an emotional experience when many presented her with gifts and good wishes. "I was very touched."

Husband Don, a Bell Canada employee, helps out when needed, but most of the work is done by Mrs. Surman herself. "He's pretty used to me doing my own thing," she said, adding, "he thought if (the idea of operating her own auctioneering business) was great."

Although she has a real estate license, she's never worked outside the home until now. "I wasn't looking for a career until I felt good about the kids. The (career as) Mom came first."

Mrs. Surman has two daughters, Tammy, 16 and Debra, 13.

This segment of the Pizzazz program should last three to four minutes. It will be aired sometime in October.



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STOUFFVILLE — It was a night of contrasts, bids at rock bottom and prices sky-high.

The variance left auction attenders shaking their heads.

The sale, that attracted a large crowd, was held Thursday at Terri's House of Auctions, 394 Main Street West.

It began at 6:30 p.m. and concluded at 12:30 a.m.

Terri Surman, operator of this weekly attraction, was the lone auctioneer.

Several antiques attracted attention including a 1905 Doherty organ manufactured at Clinton, Ont. It brought \$80.

A 1921 Willis Co. piano sold for \$800.

A collapsible display case, circa 1895 brought \$150 and an age-old deacon's bench sold for \$140.

A brass spittoon went for \$27.50 and a set of lights for a Model "T" Ford brought \$17.50 each.

Other prices follow: A horse collar-\$2.00; a scrub board-\$6.00; an army combat helmet-fifty cents; a bedpost-\$1.00; a 1955 licence plate-\$2.00; a captain's chair-\$22.50; a blanket box-\$50.00; a wooden butter churn-\$10.00; a love seat-\$75.00; a pine washstand-\$35.00; a Stouffville cream can-\$15.00; a china cabinet with interior light-\$115.00; a century-old rocker-\$100 and a butterfly table-\$15.00.

A portion of the sale was filmed by Global T.V., for presentation on a show called "Pizzazz" that commences programming next month. This particular episode, including 'shots' at Terri Surman's house on Manitoba Street, will be aired sometime in October.

Wm. T. Newnham

Heads up education committee

William T. Newnham, former president of Seneca College and a one-time Markham boy, will head up an eight-person commission to plan and implement expansion of the separate school system.

Appointment of Mr Newnham to this important post, has been made by Education Minister Dr. Bette Stephenson.

The vice-chairman is Edmund Nelligan, former Director of Education for the Metro Toronto Separate School Board.

Purpose of the Commission is to advise the Minister on the specific means by which the new policy can best be carried out and assume responsibility for the overall administration of its implementation.

The Commission is expected to complete its work by July 1, 1987.

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