

**PROCLAMATION**  
 THAT the week of February 1st to 7th, 1987, be proclaimed as "White Cane Week" in the Town of Markham.  
 Carole Bell, Mayor.  
**MARKHAM**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
 of the **MARKHAM FAMILY LIFE CENTRE**  
 Wednesday Feb. 25  
 7 p.m.  
 Lindner's Heritage Room  
 Markham Village Lanes  
 Main St. Markham  
 Public Welcome

# Arlene soars to the top

By JIM THOMAS

Small town boy makes good. This is common reference to the native son who leaves his community and establishes himself in a high profile position. But times are changing. And so are the success roles of young

men and young women. Discrimination is out and equality is in. No success story points up this fact more clearly than that of Arlene Yakeley, daughter of Herb and Florence Yakeley, Harold Street, Stouffville.



Arlene Yakeley, formerly of Stouffville and daughter Samantha. Arlene is a supervisor at the Air Traffic Control Centre, Pearson International Airport. Previously, she held the position of Meteorological Technician. Arlene trained in Ottawa following graduation from Stouffville Dist. Secondary School.

This 34-year-old mother of one has made it to the top. She's a supervisor at the Air Traffic Control Centre, Pearson International Airport, Malton. Despite the intensity of her work, (thousands of lives are dependent on staff decisions), Arlene makes it all sound very routine. However, she honestly admits, "I sometimes get sweaty palms."

"Sure, it's stressful," she says, "but one is trained to cope. Decisions must be made immediately." How did it all begin? Like so many would-be graduates at Stouffville Dist. Secondary School, Arlene vividly recalls contemplating her future "way back then".

And two people come to mind — Gerry Waite, her Geography teacher and Rae McFadden, a staff employee in the airport's Meteorological Department. She applied and was accepted.

Arlene passed her training course at Ottawa with flying colors and soon qualified as a meteorological technician. She served in this capacity ten years.

Although the importance of her present position boggles the mind of a layman, Arlene says she never thinks in terms of lives. Besides, she explains, if something suddenly goes wrong, there's always a back-up plan.

The busiest sector is to the south-west, says Arlene. The tower makes verbal contact with each passenger plane about 40 miles out of London. The pilots of small planes are in touch as well if they come inside the designated Pearson air space.

Because landing room at Pearson is limited, it's not unusual to put pilots on 'hold' for up to an hour. If the situation is serious, departures are often delayed or the flight is diverted should shortage of fuel present a problem, Arlene explains.

Although in close contact with the pilots, Arlene seldom meets any personally. "I get to know their voices," she says. Arlene has high praise for Air Canada. "It's a very conscientious airline and the pilots are excellent," she states.

While female air traffic controllers remain in the minority, (less than 10 per cent), Arlene says there are no barriers to girls entering the profession. "They're encouraged," she claims.

I asked Arlene if she still retains contact with former high school classmates. "I don't see them often, but I try to keep in touch," she replies. She mentions specifically Sally (Schell) Sandford, Tyrell-Ann (Holden) Williams and Sue (Hallman) Kerswill. She makes an effort to get home at least once a month.

"I guess my highway's in the sky," she concludes.

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## "THIS COULD"

The Toronto Sun, Monday November 24, 1986



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