

"Girl Next Door"

# Jennifer on skates is poetry in motion

By JIM THOMAS  
 UXBRIDGE — Those closest to the Uxbridge Figure Skating Club enthusiastically applaud her accomplishments.

For Jennifer Cook is their pride and joy.

At age 15, she has her gold in free skate and hopes soon to complete her seventh figure.

Next week she leaves with the Ontario team to participate in the Canada Winter Games at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Only recently she advanced to the Divisionals at Barrie.

She's our "Girl Next Door."

Jennifer has always lived in Uxbridge. She has two brothers, Greg, 17, and Blair, 12.

Encouragement provided by her parents, Ron and Marion Cook, has aided her greatly, Jennifer says. Michael Sanderson is her coach and Richard O'Neill her choreographer.

Jennifer skates all year round, "wherever I can find ice," she says. She spends from four to six hours a day at the rink, mostly in Uxbridge but sometimes Thornhill and Scarborough.

Like in any competitive sport, figure skating has its hills and valleys, Jennifer explains. However, the rewards far outweigh the disappointments, she claims.

While she doesn't recall the year, Jennifer thinks her first skating experience was about age three. She's been going strong ever since, even to sharing a Toronto show with Toller Cranston and Brian Rocker.

It's not unusual for Jennifer to rise as early as 6 a.m. She even skates during lunch periods.

Sometimes it bothers me that I can't be with my friends," she says, "but they seem to understand. They, like her parents, have been very supportive," she notes.

Support has also come from Principal Fred Rhodes of Uxbridge Secondary School and members of staff. Jennifer says.

On her return from the Canada Games, she'll attend the Ontario Games at London.



Fifteen-year-old Jennifer Cook is the pride of Uxbridge. Her figure skating talents have helped put the town on the map. A Grade 10 student at Uxbridge High, Jennifer leaves this week to participate in the Canada Winter Games at Halifax, Nova Scotia. — Jim Thomas

A student in Grade 10, Jennifer plans to go on to university following graduation and study sports psychology. She may also serve as a part-time skating instructor. "It'll be something to fall back on," she says.

Jennifer enjoys other recreational activities in addition to skating. These include basketball, volleyball, soccer and track. She and brother Greg work on weekends at National Gym Sports in Stouffville.

## High News

# Students celebrate Groundhog Day

By GEOFF CARNEY  
 S.D.S.S. Reporter

Like it or not, it's true. Many of our mammalian relatives have been recognized for their outstanding contributions to our society. Just look at the beaver. Because of the value of its pelt and its role in the exploration and colonization of our country, we have put its industrious image on every Canadian nickel. Or consider perhaps, the flamingo. Due to its symbolic expression of Floridian culture, the producers of Miami Vice have dedicated a ten second clip, during the credit role of each episode, to its honor.

Stouffville Dist. Secondary School, not to be outdone, jumped on the bandwagon last week. On Feb. 2, everyone at S.D.S.S. banded together to pay tribute to the Groundhog!

Well, perhaps not everyone, but certainly a handful of devoted Grade 12 groundhog fans.

Unlike some occasions, this was NOT a spur-of-the-moment idea. The festivities had been planned for months. So join me, if you will, as I stroll down memory lane to

the origin of Groundhog Fever.

It is late September. On the night before it is due, skilled basketball star, (and talented comedian), Darren Montgomery remembers about his 2,000-word essay on weather patterns. The ensuing composition, entitled "Groundhog — Weatherman of the Animal World", didn't go over well with his Geography teacher but it proved a huge success with fellow classmates and other entertainment-starved students.

It was funny, yes. But there was something more to it. It seemed to symbolize the classic "last minute assignment" when a student's only hope of survival is to get the teacher in a good mood and hope for the best.

It was eloquent. It was hilarious. It was, (and still is), a classic.

We now go to early December when the diehard fans of our senior basketball team, in honor of the boys' first victory and Mr. Montgomery's incredible 38-point performance, unanimously decided to call themselves "The Groundhogs".

By Christmas Holidays, the countdown was on — 50 days until Groundhog Day.

Things escalated from there. On the pretense of studying for exams, students prepared furiously for the Big Day.

One art student, using an airbrush, mass produced Groundhog Day T-shirts while sweethearts all over S.D.S.S. received Groundhog Day cards with messages like "I worship your shadow", or "Be My Groundhog!"

At long last, the day arrived — Monday, Feb. 2. Instead of comparing exam stories, students told about Groundhog Eve when their families sat around the decorated groundhog hole in the corner of their living rooms, exchanging gifts. It was beautiful.

But the highlight of Groundhog Day, the Groundhog Party, must go unreported. Call it groundhog luck; but yours truly contracted a 24-hour virus and was bed-ridden for the social event of the year.

But am I depressed? No way. There are only 356 days until Groundhog Day '88.

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