

Whitchurch-Stouffville stable undergoes total transformation

By DENISE McDONALD
WHITCHURCH — It's not often you'll see a riding stable acquire a new name, undergo total renovation and change its management all in one fell swoop.
But Pat Connelly, present manager of Whitchurch-Stouffville's new Warden Ridge Equestrian Centre is doing just that.
"This barn has been operating for the past nine years as a sort of backyard curiosity," said Pat in reference to the Conc. 5 operation; pre-

viously known as Ashmount Farm. "During that time some bad reputations were spread around about it because the farm's owner, Rick Foreman is not a horseman."
Therefore, continued Pat, "we want to build a better reputation by supplying the best facility and service available in the market today."
According to the equestrian, she came to Warden Ridge last November as a boarder and was literally nominated manager by other boarders last January.
"I've been a horse consumer in the Toronto area for the past 10 years and before that had my own operation in Norwood, east of Peterborough," she said. "I guess you can say I'm a housewife with nothing better to do than ride horses."
Pat laughingly refers to herself as one of those kids who could never say "cow" while growing up and claims to have her roots in so many different disciplines of riding, she has no particular niche.

"When I became manager, I sat down with the owner and pointed out all his potential assets," she explained. "Then I talked it over with my employees and looked at all the pet peeves we experienced as boarders. What we'd now like to do is try and correct them as best we can or be as honest and upfront with the clientele as possible."
Although many renovations are still in the planning stages, Pat has completed re-flooring the stalls, put new lighting in the barn and fenced the entire paddock areas with rails imported from England.
"When planning what I wanted to happen here, I looked at all the various technology available in the equine industry," she said. "The fencing I chose is Caledonian Thoroughbred Rail which is the safest I could find for horses and most economical in terms of care and maintenance."
Future goals include enlarging the barn to hold 80 horses from its present 27 and putting up a second indoor arena.
"Our present one is 70 feet by 160 feet; however, the new one will be 380 by 90 feet," Pat added. "Because of the cost of steel and general wear and tear, it will be built along the lines of a dome or bubble tennis court, air-lock system. Not only will it be well lit and not have condensation, it'll be a lot warmer in winter because the air is constantly circulating."
"Since January so much work has been done on the place, I wish I'd taken before and after pictures," she continued. "It was almost scary to keep horses in."
Pat also pointed out the new facility will not be restricted to any one riding discipline, but be open to all riders from barrel racers to those involved in upper-level dressage.
"So long as you're a good horseman or woman and take care of your animal, you're welcome in our barn."
"Nobody is perfect and we're definitely not trying to be the best barn on the block," Pat claimed. "We'd just like to create a better situation and run this farm as right as possible."



Horsin' around at Windridge Farm

Pat Connelly, manager of Whitchurch-Stouffville's Warden Ridge Equestrian Centre, is pictured with stablemates Mirror (black horse) and Windsor Lad. — Denise McDonald

AROUND TOWN

HOME FROM ECUADOR
Marjorie Sproxtom arrived home from Quito, Ecuador, for a year's furlough this past week. Mr. and Mrs. Harold Doner and granddaughter Heather of Forwich, visited Friday afternoon with Marjorie. Miss Fern Doner of Regina, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Cober of Willowdale also visited the Sproxtom residence. A family gathering was held at the Sproxtom home Saturday evening.

PRIZE LIST
The Prize List and entry form for the 1987 Markham Fair is now available at The Tribune office and other locations around town. The Markham Fair is held annually at the Markham Fairgrounds, McCowan Rd. north of 18th Ave., by the Markham and East York Agricultural Society. This year's fair will be Oct. 1-4.

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Installation must be completed in accordance with the provisions of the Tender Documents.
The property may be viewed from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m., Thursday, July 30, 1987, when a representative of the Ministry of Government Services will be in attendance.
Documents may be obtained from the representative or from:
Ministry of Government Services, Public Tenders Office, Room M1-43A Macdonald Block, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario M7A 1N3
Telephone (416) 965-1152 and will be received at the above address until 3:00 p.m., Friday, August 7, 1987, at which time they will be opened in public.
For further information please contact George MacLellan, Tel. (416) 965-2040.
The lowest or any bid will not necessarily be accepted.
T.O. 095 File No.: M670-115