

Theresa Yake

Tasty hobby now booming business

By DENISE McDONALD
Some might say she's a combination of Willy Wonka, the Easter Bunny and Laura Secord all rolled into one.

Others might refer to her as a culinary princess in the world of succulent treats.
But whatever the case, Whitchurch-Stouffville resident Theresa Yake may soon become one of this area's leading authorities on the art of crafting handmade specialty chocolate.

According to Theresa, her chocolate making prowess started as a hobby when she attended a one-day course with her mother at the age of 11.

"After that I started making chocolate gifts for my family at Christmas and Easter," said the Kennedy Road resident.

However, while working at a bakery in Markham, Theresa suggested the owner try her chocolate when he showed interest in purchasing some elsewhere.

"He said to bring it in and when he tried it, he fell in love," she said. "He right away told me to think of a name for my own chocolate company so his wife could have it registered."

Thus 'Theresa's Treats' was born, a name she claimed was arrived upon thanks to the culminating effort of family and friends.

Afterwards, Theresa launched a strenuous campaign to fill the abundance of orders for her special-

ty chocolate that began pouring in. "While I was going to school it was not uncommon for my days to begin at 6 a.m. and end at midnight," she said. "And now that I'm working full time, I have to spend all my free evenings and days off working with the chocolate."

Theresa claimed she uses both dark and white chocolate wafers which must be melted down before they can be set into molds.

"Before I even put the chocolate in I have to paint the different colors on the mold," she explained. "Then if I happen to be making something hollow, I have to keep flipping it over and over so the chocolate doesn't congeal in the centre."

After the mold has set, Theresa then sticks all appropriate pieces together with melted chocolate and trims off any excess.

Included in her impressive selection of handcrafted specialty items are chocolate houses, Christmas sleighs, Easter bunnies, chickens and eggs, Valentine hearts, solid chocolate suckers and other filled items.

"The peak time is at Easter," she said. "Last year I sold over 500 eggs, not to mention all the rabbits and chickens on top of that."

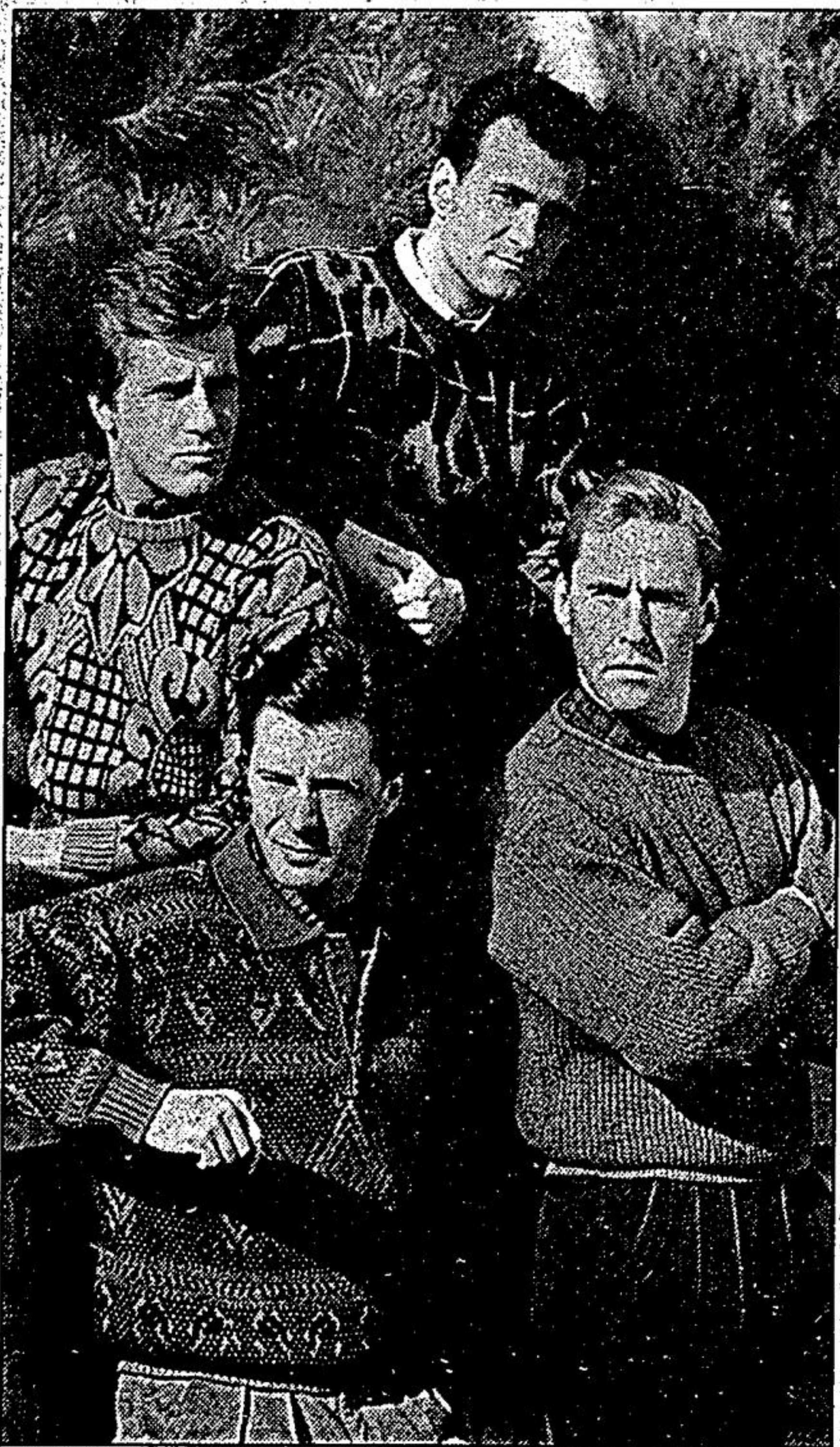
"Sometimes when I get really busy, Mom and Dad have to give me a hand," she added. "But I still hope someday Theresa's Treats will become big enough so I can make it a full time job."



What originally began as a hobby, after taking a one-day course with her mother at age 11, has now led to the formation of 'Theresa's Treats,' a specialty chocolate enterprise owned and operated by Theresa Yake (pic-

tured) of Kennedy Road, Stouffville. Although she once sold to local businesses and bakeries, Theresa now operates solely out of her home and can be reached at 888-1069. —Denise McDonald

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