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This loose snake is safe and sound

A boa constrictor named Sid has been doing some slinking around while his owners are away.

And for Whitchurch-Stouffville animal control expert Jim Ryan

Zeller's second big win

STOUFFVILLE — Who says lightning never strikes twice in the same place?

For Barry Zeller, Market Street, Stouffville, it did.

For the second month in a row, Barry has won the travel voucher in a draw sponsored by the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association in cooperation with Stonehouse Travel.

Barry even drew his own ticket, Association president Joanne Steel told The Tribune. "But everything was on the up and up," she added quickly.

The draw in July was for a trip to Florida, and in August, a holiday to the East Coast.

The Zeller family, including Barry and Barb; children Darrin and Kevin, and Barry's mother, Mrs. Peggy Zeller, will visit the Sunny South in October and the Maritimes next year.

In a special draw, a weekend for two, held for ticket salespersons only, the winner was Cliff Dunkeld, William Street, Stouffville.

Plowing contest

STOUFFVILLE — The York Region Branch of the Ontario Plowmen's Association will hold its annual match Friday, Sept. 2 beginning at 10:30 a.m., on the farm of Floyd Forsyth, Stouffville.

A plowmen's luncheon is set for noon the same day at the Stouffville Masonic Hall, Ninth Line North and Second Street.

The competition will include nine classes. One 'antique' category is for entries 30 years of age and older.

There are eight classes for tractors and one for horses.

The branch president is Grant Wells; 1st vice-president Duncan Marwood; 2nd vice-president Kevin Wells; secretary Elaine Timbers and treasurer Don Pearson.

it was a first in his 26 years of tracking errant pets.

The seven-foot snake escaped from his home — a condominium building at 25 Romfield Circuit in Thornhill — Sunday. He was reclining in the shade under a shrub near his home when a shocked passer-by called York Regional police.

Mr. Ryan, who runs an animal shelter on Stouffville Rd., responded to the unusual emergency call and tried to capture the culprit with snake poles. A young girl, recognizing Sidney, picked up the placid reptile and placed him in the shelter van.

Other neighbors weren't as calm. "A lot of the neighbors were upset and complained that the owners keep several snakes besides Sidney," said Ryan, who added, "I've never had a call like that in 26 years in the business. Dogs roam at large, but what do snakes do? Slither at large?"

But harmless as Sidney seems to be, Ryan said the owners acted callously towards both their pet and their neighbors in not reporting his absence before they left for holidays.

Temperatures dropped to about seven degrees Sunday night and the boa would have suffered, said Ryan. He added there is a slim chance the snake, although domesticated, could have wrapped itself around the neck of a child and squeezed it to death.

Ryan said there is no bylaw against exotic pets in Markham, although there is in Toronto. The owners will be billed for the shelter's emergency call.

Meanwhile Sidney will await his owner's return from vacation in the comfort of a warm cage at the shelter. He took a long drink of water upon arrival and immersed his head and part of his body under the tap. Afterwards he curled up for a nap.

Ryan added that Sidney won't need any special diet while he's in custody. There's a large bulge in his middle and a missing squirrel in the Romfield Circuit area of town. "He won't eat again for a month," Ryan predicted.

Mr. Ryan is the animal control officer for the Town of Markham which includes the Thornhill area.

All year round

Keep schools open: Bowes

Local school trustee Harry Bowes favors keeping public schools open 12 months of the year because it makes good economic sense.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville trustee was interviewed on the subject after a decision by the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation to appoint a task force to study the question.

"Who needs two-and-a-half months' holidays plus time off at Christmas and Easter?" asks Bowes.

He expressed surprise the teachers' federation would be looking seriously at the proposal.

"I see it more as an economic solution. Fewer schools would be required if the instructional year was extended," he stated.

Mr. Bowes estimates a saving of 2 1/2 school buildings in York Region alone.

Bowes claims some teachers aren't happy with vacations at Christmas and March 'break' because travel costs are at their highest.

Bowes admits major scheduling changes would be required in that custodians use this time to refurbish schools for re-opening in the fall. Also, some students are enrolled in summer school.

However, he sees it as regrettable that most buildings, costing millions of dollars to construct and maintain, sit idle more than ten months of the year.

"Certainly the installation of air-conditioning would be much cheaper than building new schools," concludes Bowes.

The three-member Federation task force will make a report next August to the annual provincial assembly.

Even if the teachers' Federations approve of the plan, it would require study and changes in provincial legislation to bring it about. Currently, the provincial government regulates the length of the school year.

The federations represent teachers employed by public school boards in Ontario.



Sidney the snake appears friendly enough, but residents in a Thornhill neighborhood weren't so sure when the seven-foot boa constrictor was discovered on the loose. Here, animal control officer Jim Ryan (left) and helper Angela Gyton hold Sidney who is safely in custody at the Stouffville Rd. pound.

—Sjoerd Witteveen

Hakonson says no

Ed Hakonson says he's not running for Whitchurch-Stouffville council after all.

The R.R. 4 Stouffville resident had been rumored as a possible candidate to succeed Jim Rae in Ward 3. Mr. Rae has announced his retirement from local politics.

Since an article on his candidacy appeared in The Tribune a few weeks ago, Mr. Hakonson says his telephone has been ringing off the hook with enquiries from friends and acquaintances.

Mr. Hakonson said that he has considered running for council, but decided not to do so at this time. With a young family, he feels that the demands of political office would be too heavy.

However, he has left the door open to run in the future.

The only declared candidate in Ward 3 is Nick Tatone, who announced last week.

For some of his thoughts on the local political scene, see Mr. Hakonson's letter on Page A-5.

Miss CNE title eludes Annika

For Annika Hannan just being there was enough.

As runner-up in the 1987 Miss Markham Fair competition, Annika represents Markham Fair when the Queen isn't able to.

The 18-year-old Gormley area woman was one of 106 contestants in the Miss CNE Pageant Queen of the Fairs contest, held last week in Toronto.

Fair queens from all over Ontario were entered. Markham Fair Queen Wendy Ford couldn't attend the CNE competition, so her understudy got to go instead.

"It was a super experience for me," Annika said in an interview this week.

Contestants were interviewed by the three judges and took part in preliminary judging the day of the pageant last Tuesday.

"You had to have a real farm background," she said of the competition.

Annika didn't expect to win the title since she's never lived on a farm. But she was delighted that her roommate for the three days of the competition took top honors.

The contestants were quartered in a residence at Victoria College, a part of the University of Toronto.

Annika shared a room with Kathy McNaughton from Ilder-



ANNIKA HANNAN Vies for Miss CNE title

ton, Ontario. It's a small community near London.

"I was excited for her, she deserved it," Annika said of her roommate. "She had the right qualifications."

Annika just felt fortunate to be there in Wendy Ford's place.

The event included a parade through downtown Toronto by the girls in their banners and crowns and taking part in the pageant, itself.

The Stouffville Secondary School graduate plans to attend Queen's University this fall.

She was sponsored by The Tribune in last fall's Miss Markham Fair pageant.

Main St. facelift set for this fall

STOUFFVILLE — The count-down is on.

In four weeks, Stouffville's downtown will undergo a 2 1/2 month transformation from ugly duckling to beautiful swan.

The brainchild of Stouffville's Business Improvement Area board, (BIA), the project is scheduled to begin the third week of September with completion anticipated by Nov. 30.

Cost of the venture is subsidized by a \$300,000 PRIDE grant.

While still several weeks away, preparation stages are evident. Holes have been cut in the

sidewalks for new lamp post standards. Interlocking brick will be installed from Albert Street through to Park Drive.

To date, a contracting company has not been hired. Tenders are going out Aug. 24, (today), with approval to follow Sept. 13.

Yes, there will be inconvenience, BIA member Bob Ancheril admits, "but it's a positive move, one we all feel very good about. I think we can put up with a little inconvenience."

Board chairperson Sandra Stronach is confident, weather permitting, the contract will be completed on time.

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Midnight Madness