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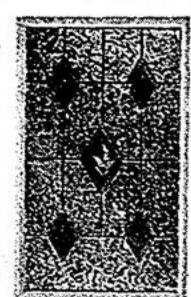
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Festival lets you be yourself

Perhaps one of the greatest delights of living in Stouffville is that it allows you to abandon the tiresome veneer of Eighties' sophistication and just be yourself.

Nowhere is this more evident than during Strawberry Festival, which has become the ultimate community gathering, offering an incredible array of events and a wonderful opportunity to meet friends and neighbors in what has rightly been called the friendliest town in Ontario.

As well, it brings back the innocence of a less frenetic age, with its baby contests, baking competitions and, dare I say, the Miss Whitchurch-Stouffville Pageant; an event which probably would have been banned long ago in a more culturally aware bastion of the new era of puritanism.

We may think we live in an enlightened age, but that view only applies as long as you subscribe to what's socially ac-

KATE'S CORNER

Gilderdale

ceptable, which right now would tend to rule out pageants for teenage girls. Such events are generally described by such overworked

adjectives as "inappropriate" or "sexist." Isn't it strange that, in a society which claims to cherish the idea of individual freedom,

there are so many social reformers who want to ban what they personally disapprove of? The young women who take

part in the pageant presumably. do so of their own free will and quite obviously enjoy doing it. Why would anyone want to stop

It puts me in mind of some survey results I read recently, ing that the majority of young teenage girls were more preoc- sity degree. cupied by their boyfriends than their future careers and that stage and answer a question some of them were so spaced with intelligence and without out they thought they could get married, have children and Wednesday evening, has my unthen stay at home to look after dying admiration. them.

Interestingly, no one seems to have asked similar questions of teenage boys, but I wouldn't mind betting a fair number of them are more interested in fast cars and attractive girls than in grounds of sexism, never mind the Toronto Stock Exchange.

views among the young should sional athletes. be demanded by the generation that, in its own youth, brought us free love, a mistrust of big business and the beginnings of the drug culture?

Getting up in front of a capacity crowd, parading up for many years to come.

and down a runway and performing a song or dance does require a certain amount of which shocked experts by show- courage, confidence and talent, even if it won't get you a univer-

And anyone who can stand on hesitation, as these girls did last

Of course pageants don't appeal to everyone, but neither does major league baseball, which is a male-only preserve and which, as far as I'm aware, no one has tried to ban on the inappropriate behavior -Doesn't it seem ironic that something not unknown in the this desire for such mature ranks of highly paid profes-

The Strawberry Festival is not, after all, meant as a deadly serious endeavor. It's about friendship, fun and frivolity. It's also one of the reasons this family plans to be in Stouffville

York group boosts reading skills

are currently discoverng the advantages of literacy in the York Region-South Lake Simcoe area.

Literacy Council York Simcoe has just celebrated its fifth year as an organization dedicated to teaching illiterate adults how to read.

But according to the council's administrator, there are still many challenges to be met by the organziation.

tutors," says Florence Winterkorn, a Lake Simcoe area resident who heads up the council from its Newmarket head quarters. "And although we are

Thanks to the efforts of 106 funded by the Ontario Ministry of cording to Mrs. Winterkorn. migrants, via an English as a se-Thanks to the efforts of 106 Idided by the older of the dedicated volunteers, 118 people Skills Development, we are "They are not slow, but they just cond language program, and are currently discovering the adunderfunded, and need donations didn't accomplish when they mentally handicapped people to so we can expand and initiate new programs.

The program is based on that of a missionary in the Phillipines, who, discovering that illiteracy was the biggest problem there 50 years ago, initiated a reading system based on the phonetic Simcoe area. approach.

Laubach, the Phillipines mis- Laubach tutors.

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were in school."

students and seven tutors Winterkorn. residing in the Stouffville area. Students are referred by the and can be done either at the stuvarious social service agencies in dent's home, or at the home of the York Region and the south Lake tutor.

While tutors don't need any The system, called "The special qualifications, they are September. Laubach Way to Reading required to attend a 12-hour "We are always looking for Series," is named after Frank workshop to become certified

"The majority of our students Canadians and mentally healthy are in their 40's, are blue-collar individuals, the council is making workers and have families," ac- an effort to help both im-

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building.

give them the freedom and power There are currently eight of the written word, says Mrs:

Tutoring is mobile, she claims?

The next tutor training workshop was announced for late

Mrs. Winterkorn, who has worked on a volunteer basis with the Big Brothers organization As well as teaching native and the Brampton Women's Institute, asks that anyone interested in becoming a tutor call her at (416) 853-6279.

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