

TAKE A BREAK! Don't despair if you're not going south. Stouffville has plenty to do this March Break for the town-bound.

By KATE GILDERDALE
Correspondent

You don't have to go away to have fun at March Break.

Younger children can take advantage of the program at Whitchurch-Stouffville Library, with live performances Tuesday through Friday at 10.30 a.m. Craig Douglas gets things off to a flying start with a fantastic display of juggling, unicycling and comedy.

Little Red Riding Hood will be performed by the Little Red Theatre Group Wednesday,

and versatile musician Deborah Dunleavy will be featured the following day. With four award-winning recordings to her credit, Dunleavy has appeared on television shows and on stage and her show promises action, audience participation and lots of fun.

On Friday morning, Felicity Falls, presented by the Rag and Bone Puppet Theatre, features soft sculptured animals whose warm, funny stories will chase away the winter blahs. Each presentation lasts about 45 minutes and admission is \$2 at the door. A \$5 passport can be purchased in

advance at the library and gives holders priority admission to all four performances. Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum is offering a program from 1 to 3 p.m. March 12 to 14 for students aged 8 to 14. Participants will create heritage crafts, including a papercut Easter scene and a 'stained glass' tissue paper window ornament, which they can take home. They will also learn traditional cooking methods in the Brown House kitchen and take part in the kind of winter activities enjoyed by their Victorian predecessors. The cost, including materials and a light snack, is \$20. To register, call the

museum's toll-free line at 416-213-0900, then dial 905-727-8954 at the tone.

The Ice Box youth centre invites students from Grade 7, and up to enjoy a ski day at Blue Mountain on Thursday, March 13. Participants leave at 7 a.m. and return at 6.30 p.m. and the cost is \$45, which includes transportation and a lift pass.

A Red Cross baby-sitting course will be offered March 11 and 13 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at a cost of \$40. The course is open to those aged 11 and up. Registration is required for March break programs. For more information call 640-6527.



Homeward bound

Robert Boggs transports his children (Jamie in the cart and Megan on his back) as they return from shopping to their home last Saturday.

Photo/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Teachers honored by P.M.

By MIKE ADLER
Staff Reporter

Things tend to blow up good when Carl Twiddy's around.

Just ask the thousands of students who've seen him flash a grease fire — safely, of course — by spraying water into a wax-coated apple juice can.

"The mushroom ball of flame you get is pretty spectacular," says the Markham District High School science teacher. "It leaves a lasting impression on them."

Last month, Twiddy, who has performed such feats for 17 years in his travelling Science Safety Shows, went to Ottawa, where his teaching skills had earned him a moment with Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

"When I was in high school, I swore I'd never be teacher," Twiddy recalled this week.

Fortunately for his many students, he soon changed his mind.

Chretien handed Twiddy a national-level honor, the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in Science, Technology and Mathematics. He also named Mary Ann Holman, who taught at

St. Patrick Catholic School in Markham last year, and Andrew Cherkas, a teacher at Stouffville District High, as local award-winners.

Here's a strange but scientific fact: all three live in Stouffville.

Twiddy has taught in York Region for 30 years, the last 10 at Markham District, where he runs the science department. Two colleagues he's had there were once his students.

He started the safety demonstrations to interest young teens, especially girls, in the sciences, and was running an Industrial Mentorship Program with area businesses 17 years ago — when cooperative education was rare.

"He's at least 10 years ahead of his time," said Cherkas, who also worked with Twiddy.

But the eight-year veteran of Stouffville District, who describes his younger self as "the one weird kid in the classroom who really enjoyed science," has his own accomplishments.

One is the odd-sounding club he started with colleagues called the Society of Bubbleology. It began with bubbles, using them to illustrate sci-

ence, mathematics and art for students.

"It provides some fun and it provides some insight that is not normally seen in the classroom," said Cherkas.

Instilling the love of science early is important, says Holman, now at Holy Spirit School in Aurora. During her four years at St. Patrick, she ran projects designed to spark student interest in ecology.

"Mrs. Holman's knowledge and great ability of design and technology is extraordinary," Grade 7 pupil Maya Ascano wrote last June.

"However, not as extraordinary as her dedication to her students."

Board pleased by Tory funding

York Region's separate school board congratulated Ontario's Conservative government last week for its willingness to fix "unfair" funding for Catholic schools.

Other governments recognized the need for change but remained "frozen" in consultations, the board's chair told hearings into provincial Bill 104.

"We are hopeful now that you will not be dissuaded by those who are seeking to further delay this process," said Vaughan trustee Tina Molinari.

The board believes removing the education portion from local taxes — proposed through

the bill — "is the only way to ensure equal resources per pupil throughout Ontario," Molinari told MPPs.

But the board thinks a \$5,000 cap for trustee salaries in the bill will limit the job to people "who may not take the responsibility seriously," and can't see why the government seeks to prevent school board employees and their spouses from serving as trustees, she added. Molinari also offered the board's help in setting rules for monitoring school board budgets every month, another part of the legislation.

The board is already monitored monthly because of its budget deficit, she said.

Local resident's decorating show celebrates 10 years

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Country Decorating and Collectibles Show and Sale at Markham Fairgrounds.

This spring, organizer Debra Grose-Russell of Claremont will welcome 75 Canadian exhibitors, offering everything from fine reproduction furniture and decorating accessories to crafts and gifts with a country accent.

Ron Black of Colonial Classics will show his custom-made ice boxes, which have proved a big hit with clients at the Little Britain store run by him and his wife, Monique.

The idea for creating the reproductions took shape when Black decided to restore a vintage ice box to use as a microwave stand in his kitchen and found that humidity damage made the original pieces unsuitable for the purpose.

"I spent two years researching and developing our reproduction ice box," he said.

"It was important that the solid brass hardware be reproduced exactly as it was in the 1900s. I finally found a manufacturer in southwestern Ontario who could even reproduce the solid brass manufacturer's name plate that is on every ice box." Each takes about a week to construct and Monique then undertakes the intricate refinishing process.

In recent years, porches and 'gingerbreading' have been making a big comeback and architects have incorporated them into the design of many new homes.

Fretworks International of Welland can help homeowners to add an authentic Victorian touch to their porch with everything from traditional screen doors to beautiful gingerbread trim.

After undertaking numerous restorations on older homes, Fretworks' owner, Len Anthes, recognized the growing demand for such detailing. Five years later, the company employs five people to make and supply products to contractors and homeowners throughout Canada and the United States.

Carousel Classics of Whitby brings the past indoors with beautifully decorated carousel horses. Owners Marie and Steve Chopyk established their business after a trip to the far east, where they met a man who carved wooden horses. The three became friends and the Chopyks brought one of the horses home, and eventually decided to start selling them as a hobby.

Their hobby became so successful that the couple has been inundated with orders for the unique carvings. Each is hand painted by Steve Chopyk in turn-of-the-century style, using a color palette which complements any country decor.

These are just a sample of the exhibitors participating in the show, which runs March 14, 15 and 16. Admission is \$8 for adults and \$2 for children 12 and under and parking is free. Hourly door prizes, donated by the exhibitors, will be awarded.