

# South African visitors given warm welcome

**KATE GILDERDALE**  
Correspondent

Three of 12 delegates from the Methodist Women's Network of Southern Africa recently spent several days as guests of Lemonville resident Jean Nauta.

Their trip was organized in co-operation with the York Presbytery of the United Church of Canada through its Face to Face world outreach program, and the three flew to Canada from Holland on Sept. 19, arriving in Lemonville Sept. 29.

Megan Higgs, Doreen Mamputa and Mary van Balla had a hectic, but enjoyable stay. They were invited to judge home baked goodies at Markham Fair, took a tour of Markham Stouffville Hospital, visited the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank and spent an afternoon at Markville Shopping Centre. A corn roast was held in their honour at Lemonville Community Centre on Oct. 2.

All three were visiting Canada for the first time, and were very impressed with the positive attitudes towards equality for women and minorities. "We come from a very poor country and we are struggling to empower our women," said Higgs.

The support and encouragement they have received in Canada has been incredible, she said, "but people here just don't know that they are living in the land of milk and honey. We have been asking to see the poorest of the poor, but we haven't seen anything like the poverty we see at home."

"My first impression was the fact that so much is being done for the disabled," observed van Balla. "Everywhere we went, we could see facilities for disabled people. I was also very impressed that the family unit is still strong - our divorce rate is one

of the highest in the world. We have a lot of single parents and because there's family dysfunction, one finds a lot of social problems."

As a result, said Mamputa, "you find a lot of street children from broken homes and

that's very sad." Although the government has set up some centres for these children, more centres and additional funds are desperately needed, added Mamputa, a deaconess who has been involved in fundraising activities for the centres through her church.

"One of the things we've noticed here is the number of women who are in the clergy," noted Higgs. "South Africa has a long way to go. We love our males, but our women need to be supported."

The three women, who met for the first time at Amsterdam airport, have become firm friends since they arrived. "From the day we came here the welcome has been fantastic, or as Mary would say, fantabulous, and our hosts have been wonderful," said Mamputa.

Van Balla herself would love to settle here. "I'm just going home to sort my life out and my family out and I'm going to be right back in Canada next year."

As far as Nauta is concerned, her visitors have been a source of joy and have also given her a renewed appreciation of her own country. "This couldn't have been a better experience for me," she said.

The Methodist Women's Network was established in 1985, when a group of Methodist women met and looked at the role of women in the church and society. Its goals are to give women a stronger voice, allow them to share ideas and work towards peace and acceptance, both inside and outside the church.



Mary van Balla, left, Doreen Mamputa, centre, and Megan Higgs enjoyed a corn roast at the Lemonville Community Centre last Thursday. The three are on an exchange program from South Africa.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

## Ward 2 gets a candidate and loses one this week

**JOAN RANSBERRY**  
Staff Reporter

A musical chair-style election race is shaping up in Whitchurch-Stouffville's Ward 2.

Yesterday, just as a third candi-

date was coming forward to run in Ward 2, candidate Roland Kontgen withdrew from the race.

As it stands now, Helene Johnson will face off against Mark Carroll of Musselman's Lake.

Concerns about the environ-

ment, lifestyle and the isolation of the town's northern communities are cited as the reasons behind Carroll's entry into the election race.

Carroll, 35, is a landscaper. Born in Markham, he's lived on Elmvale Blvd. in Musselman's Lake for 11 years. "I'm worried about the natural environment, about the lifestyle in our area, about the lake



CARROLL

(Musselman's) about the fact that we're cut off from the town," said Carroll.

The current council had a five-to-two vote problem, said Carroll.

"The two (votes) were always from the northern part of the municipality and the five (votes) were from the rest of town. It favoured the downtown and we (in Ward 1 and Ward 2) got left out," he said.

Married to Kelli, Carroll is the father of Samantha and Jennifer.

Kontgen told *The Tribune* he didn't have the family support that he needed to be a candidate.

## Indoor pool on Tuesday's agenda

The plan to build an indoor swimming pool at the Recreation Complex is being presented to council on Oct. 14.

At last Tuesday's meeting, the town's Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee agreed to ask council for the green light enabling them to proceed to the next stage of a multi-stage process.

The next stage is critical since it deals with costs, stressed committee chair Cheryl Johnson.

"We want an okay to go forward and look at the dollars and cents of it," she said.

As part of the research for the local project, committee members have toured pool facilities in other municipalities, including Vaughan

and Aurora, Johnson said.

A plan to build an indoor pool in Stouffville has been in the works for about three years. A great deal of public interest has been demonstrated.

Mayor Wayne Emmerson said

that while he expects the pool to be built in 1998, it will be the new council that will make the major decisions linked to the project.

The new council will be elected on Nov. 10.

~Joan Ransberry

## Corrections

Decision '97 kicks off tomorrow at 5 p.m. Town clerk Michelle Kennedy reminds everyone that municipal election will be held across Ontario on Nov. 10.

Contrary to information published in *The Tribune* on Tuesday, candidates who have already filed nomination papers do not have to return to the municipal office on Friday. That rule applies to some

municipalities but not to Whitchurch-Stouffville, said Kennedy.

And, Oak Ridges MP Bryan Wilfert will be the guest speaker at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 23, not Oct. 9 as was reported in *The Tribune* on Tuesday.

The meeting to be held at the Angie's Eatery.

We apologize for the errors.



Peter Liaros, 6, in Grade 1, waits to be picked up by his mom after the first day at Glad Park Public School in Stouffville, which opened for the first time on Monday. Behind him teachers discuss the first day's events with principal Walter Chewchuk (top right).

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

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