

S/U

Giving thanks for what we have can be difficult at times

While trading "I'm so busy" stories with a female friend and working mother of two young children over lunch the other day, my companion suggested it's times like this we should make a point of noting at least three good things that happened to us at the end of every day.

With this being Thanksgiving weekend, I figured it's as good a time as any to reflect upon the concept of giving thanks for what we have, while at the same time acknowledging that what is considered a birth right for one person is sometimes seen as a luxury for others.

The thing about being thankful for what we've been smart enough or lucky enough to acquire is precisely that there are always going to be some who fall through the cracks when it comes to experiencing the basic joys available to the average middle-class individual.

This came up during a somewhat strained recent telephone conversation with a reader who chose to take me to task for using this newspaper as a forum for those who would celebrate the coming of a second ice pad in their town.

The point was made by this rather irate individual that ice palaces are being created while there are those amongst us in town who are without jobs, a steady source of food, and other essentials.

I simply replied by saying how wonderful it was that thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers and generous residents, we have a food bank which is able to provide for the needs of those who have fallen upon hard times.

Giving thanks can be difficult sometimes. There are just so many things that keep going wrong.

Scott Peck, who authored the much-acclaimed self-help book *The Road Less Travelled*, starts off the work with the simple observation: "Life is difficult."

It's how you deal with your difficulties, and eventually rise above them that determines your ultimate quality of life, he goes on to explain.

I noted to my lunch companion the other day that every time I look into the smiling face of my one year old son I try to make a point of savouring the moment, freezing it for future reference, no matter how hectic life is at the time.

It's at those times I give thanks for the joy of children, despite the



From Where I Live
Bruce Stapley

shambles they can make of both your sanity and your free time at my age.

I also give thanks at those moments that a near-tragedy that left my oldest son badly burned and scarred for life a few years back wasn't worse, that he's still here and able to enjoy a normal existence. Then I offer a quick, silent prayer for those who have lost family members unexpectedly.

When I watch my umpteenth three iron shot misfire and bounce feebly up the fairway on a sunny October Sunday afternoon, I try to look up at the wispy clouds, breathe in the warm breeze, and give thanks that I can walk the entire 18 holes of a golf course at a relatively brisk pace.

And while I am the worst one for bemoaning our unending, drab winters, I try to give thanks that we are not located on a fault line, we never suffer from drought or famine, and we are all but immune here to the ruinous hurricanes and floods that afflict so many other parts of this continent, and the world.

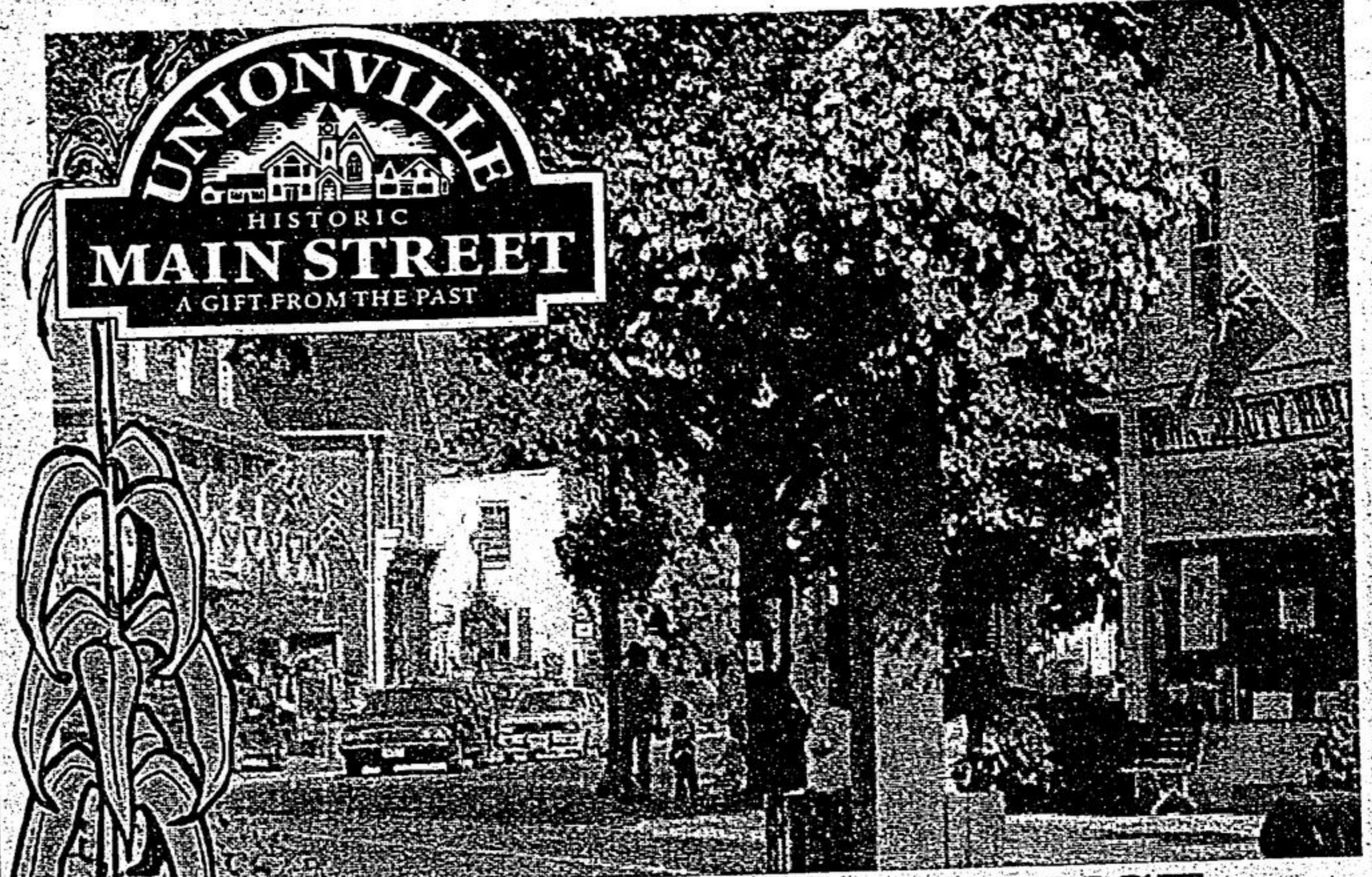
Then I make a mental note to try to remember to cough up a few bucks to those agencies that would reduce the hardships of victims of weather-related disasters.

And my list of things to be thank-

ful for continues to grow: A house that will be all ours in another nine years; a mini-van that will be ours in four; and the best deal of all — a loving wife with no monthly payments, but

a lifetime guarantee. Have a happy Thanksgiving. And don't forget to hug the kids, kiss your significant other and/or your mother, and give the dog a pat.

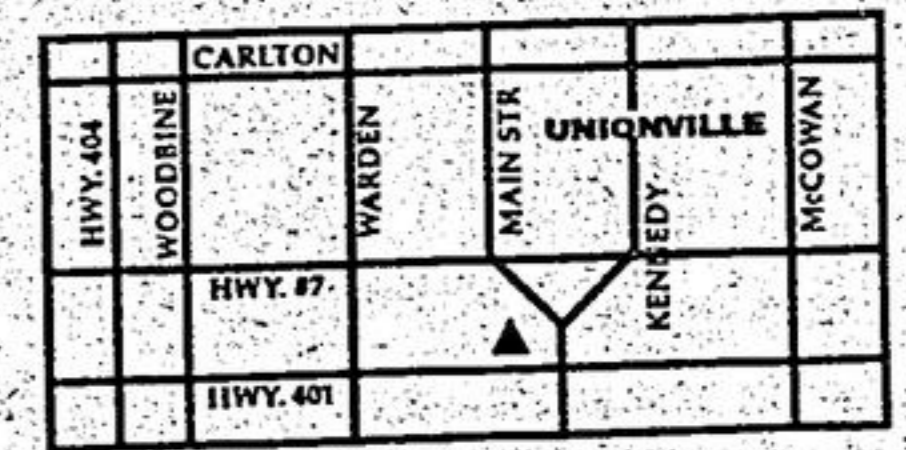
OPEN THANKSGIVING MONDAY



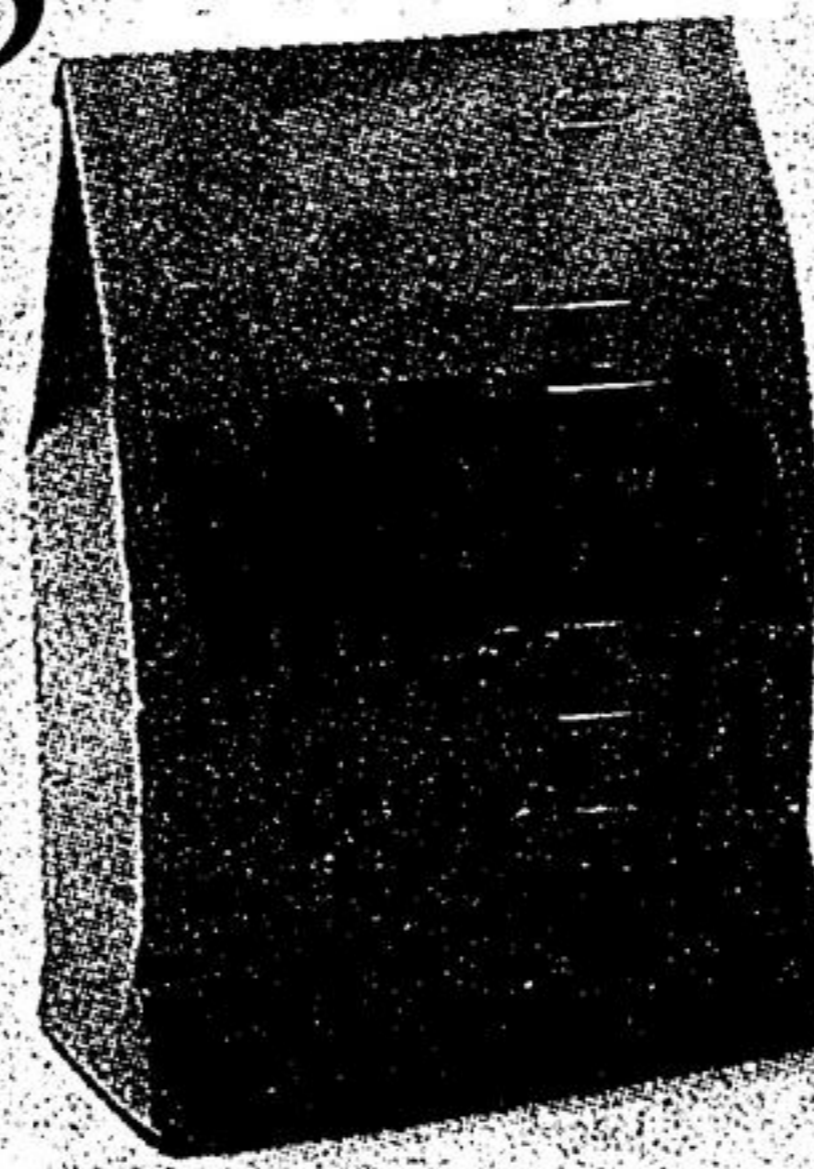
A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

Main Street Unionville will be open Thanksgiving Monday. With over 60 Shops, Restaurants and Services we offer a fun experience for Shoppers and Browsers alike.

Unionville Main Street is located just north of Hwy. 7, west of Kennedy Road.



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