

# ETCETERA

## CONSTANT CRAVINGS

### IT'S A LIVING



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Admit it. You've always wanted to do just what Jeff Stewart does ... drive the Zamboni. Fred Simpson talks to Stewart about his rock-and-roll Zamboni rides.

### Making the ice clean and nice

BY FRED SIMPSON  
Staff Writer

It's highly unlikely that Jeff Stewart realized his future flashed before him the day he saw an ice-cleaning farm tractor lumber on to the ice at the Oak Ridges hockey rink in the early 1980s.

But it did. He ended up driving a Zamboni for a living. "I'm dating myself a bit," said the 27-year-old Stewart, "but I can remember seeing that tractor with its conditioner on the back, a blade and a water tank to lay the water on the ice."

His comments came as he climbed aboard his 2000 "tractor" for a turn around the Richmond Hill Elgin Barrow Arena, where he has been employed for the last 13 years.

This tractor happens to be a top-of-the-line Zamboni machine, costing between \$55,000 and \$60,000 depending on the bells and whistles.

Stewart has been driving a Zamboni for probably nine or 10 years and finds it a piece of cake. It's like driving a car, you just get used to it.

"There's really nothing to it," he says. Stewart, who was born and raised in Richmond Hill, recalls joining the staff of the Richmond Hill Arena Association right out of high school.

"I was hired as just a helper," he said,

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Where, oh where, are the apples in our shopping carts? Nowhere. We're stocking up on chunks of chocolate and sacks of salty chips. Give us junk!

BY DAWN LIERSCH  
Staff Writer

A juicy, succulent apple may have been the downfall of Adam and Eve, but for today's society, a rich, dark chocolate bar or salty sack of potato chips is the ultimate temptation.

After all, few of us would drive for miles in sleet or snow just to bear fruit, but some will do almost anything when the serpens Humpty Dumpty or Hershey are calling our names.

And it's no surprise a website boasting favourite snack foods describes the tantalizing treats as sinfully sensuous.

When it comes to snacking, the majority of Canadians would rather reach for a bag of potato chips than something low in fat and more nutritious, junking all the hoopla about healthy eating so prevalent today.

A recent national poll conducted by the Angus Reid group revealed that of the 81 per cent of Canadians who are snacking at least once a day, 65 per cent are opting for junk foods that are high in fat and low in nutritional value.

"There was a phase when the lower fat stuff was in, but now people are returning to the old favourites," confirmed Dave Verbakel, the grocery manager with Oak Ridges Food Mart, pointing out the top standbys include potato chips, chocolate and cookies.

Although food companies have tried to create lower fat versions of tempting treats such as



STAFF PHOTO/ROB ALARY

ice cream, cookies and chips, Verbakel stressed their notoriety has been short-lived.

*The big sellers in snack food have pretty much remained the same ... The low-fat items just aren't big sellers.*

For instance, when Oreo came out with a lower fat version of its famous milk-dunking cookie, sales of low-fat Oreos topped those of the original cookie, Verbakel noted. But when those sales tapered off as people dis-

covered they didn't quite taste the same, Oreo came out with a double-stuff cookie that is now a hot seller.

"The big sellers in snack food have pretty much remained the same," he said.

"The companies try new things but discontinue whatever doesn't sell. The low-fat items just aren't big sellers."

Kevin Foskett, the assistant manager of Dominion Plus on Davis Drive in Newmarket, said some people are trying out the growing number of organic treats in the store's new health and wellness section, but regular potato chips, chocolate and cookies remain the top snack selections.

According to a website called

Let's Talk Trash, the 10 most popular snacks include chocolate bars, potato chips and pretzels, cookies, non-chocolate candy, gum, filled crackers, nuts, mints, granola bars and crackers.

More than one billion bags of potato chips are sold annually in the U.S. and Americans consume more than three billion pounds of chocolate each year, making it the most craved food in the world.

Famous chocoholics range from Napoleon Bonaparte, who snacked on creamy nuggets of chocolate to boost his strength during battle, to supermodel

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