

Grizzled town hall seems to get the best of everyone

Whitchurch-Stouffville's old town hall is a cantankerous old broad.

It doesn't matter who tries to dress her up, she insists on looking like a tired, worn out Plain Jane.

As for personality, the old town hall has one: She's mean spirited and spiteful.

I don't know about you, but I'm getting just a little tired of this old gal.

If anybody needs therapy, it's her. The old town hall's suffering STSMS (Small Town, Small Mind Syndrome).

The first time I walked into the Whitchurch-Stouffville old town hall, you could cut the air with a knife. Nobody said, "Hello." Nobody said, "Welcome to Whitchurch-Stouffville."

The day before I'd covered my first Uxbridge council meeting where Mayor Gerri Lynn O'Connor introduced me to her council. Mayor O'Connor pointed out I'd been around the newspaper business for quite a while.

She then reminded Uxbridge council how important it was to the community to be open, honest and available to the media.

By comparison, in Whitchurch-Stouffville I got the Big Chill. I sat in an overheated room at the old town hall that was far too small for council business and I was given the worse chair I've ever had in my life.

A while later, Whitchurch-Stouffville's chief administrative officer (CAO) — who, incidentally refused to speak to me about anything — announced the old town hall was in such bad shape it was about to be condemned.

For safety reasons, everybody had to vacate. In the interim, council meetings were held in local churches.

Eventually, Whitchurch-Stouffville's municipal headquarters were established on Sandiford Drive.

While the move to the west end of town was a public relations disaster, it was the right thing to do.

The new headquarters work and they work very well. Any talk of relocating



Joan Ransberry

the town offices back downtown would be foolish.

A small number of artsy people, a mobile transit group and later a newspaper moved into the old town hall.

Bless their hearts, they've learned to get along with the century-old gal.

And nobody seems to notice the building is about to cave in. A few did notice, however, when the Chicken Little CAO was fired.

A while ago, a group decided Whitchurch-Stouffville is in dire need of a theatre-arts complex and the appropriate place for it is the old town hall.

Since this building has a burr in her paw, it didn't take long before things turned nasty. People didn't waste time.

If you didn't agree with the theatre-arts proposal, you took a hit to the jugular. The old town hall plays dirty.

When a private architectural-engineering group showed an interest in moving into the top floor of the hall on a condominium lease agreement, I wondered how long it would take before the hall would start to hiss.

After all, the plan made too much sense. It would generate too much money for the public purse. It didn't take long before the firm backed off.

Throughout the squabble, Mayor Wayne Emmerson took it on the chin more than once.

This mayor knows who's minding the store. And he knows the old gal better than most.

Last week, it was announced maybe the building would be a good home for a seniors' centre.

The old town hall is in her glory. Let me tell you: There's no fight like an old fight — off with the gloves.

OUR SHEPHERD'S PIE MUSHROOMS!

From our frozen section this week, we're featuring our Shepherd's Pies, which to some is comfort food at it's finest. We use sautéed Spanish Onion, our medium round chuck and freshly peeled Idaho or P.E.I. potatoes — mashed. You just need to warm it.

Reg. \$10.95 ea.
Serves 3 - 4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

It's the time of the year to take walks in the forest, enjoy the Fall colours — and pick Forest Mushrooms. But me, I've always been leery of picking my own because I've always had this feeling of uncertainty — what if I'm wrong?

No fears this week — we've got a sizable shipment of wild Forest Chanterelles from British Columbia. Get your cookbooks out and have something wild for dinner!

GINGER COOKIES!

This is a great selling cookie from our repertoire of many. I challenge you to eat just one — in fact, I've found that the best plan is to buy two packs, one to share and one to stash for yourself!

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

Reg. \$5.95 pkg.

GRAPE TOMATOES

These little tomatoes come in an overfilled pint pack. They have great flavour and they'll kick any salad up a notch!

1.99 lb.

Reg. \$2.99 ea.

NEW ZEALAND ORANGE ROUGHIE

We ran this item the week before Thanksgiving. I explained that it's the meal to have if you're planning an indulgent meal — such as Thanksgiving. We ran out of fish very early that week — I guess most of you were planning big meals, (and desserts, judging by our cake & pie business). We've replenished, and we're re-offering the Orange Roughie deal, which was

SAVE 4.00 lb.

MINESTRONE SOUP

I used to think that the literal translation of "Minestrone" from Italian to English meant "everything but, and sometimes including, the kitchen sink". It's like you open your fridge and start creating. That thought returns to me as I'm watching this soup being made. It has a lot of different ingredients — but they all lend a hand in the flavour — it's really delicious — and it's low fat for sure.

Reg. \$5.49
Serves 3 - 4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

TEXAN SAUSAGES

Contrary to myth, Texans eat things other than beef. These sausages are an example. They're made with pork. Like most things from Texas, they are bigger, they're a bit sparky and they're Bar-B-Que flavoured. Lasso yourself a few this week and have yourself an old-fashioned cook-out.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

Reg. \$3.99 lb.

ALL OF OUR BANANA BREADS AND THAT'S NOT ALL!

We'll have all three of our delicious Banana Breads on sale this week. There's our regular, our date, raisin and pecan combo and our chocolate. Not only do you have to choose the type, you must choose the size — regular or large.

Reg. Price \$3.49 to \$4.50 for regular \$5.95 & \$6.95 for large size

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

— AND MORE! WE'LL HAVE OUR LEMON-BLUEBERRY CHEESE CAKES

as well. These are made with blueberries which have been simmered with lemon and swirled through the cheesecake with lemon curd. Its then glazed with lemon & blueberries.

Looks good, tastes great!
Reg. \$12.95 & \$20.95 ea.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

YOU COULD WIN OUR HUGE PUMPKIN!

As we've done for a number of years, now we'll have a huge pumpkin from the Simcoe County Fair. If you are under 12 and guess the weight (or are the closest to the correct weight), you could win it. We'll deliver it — and pick it up later if you wish. It's Big!



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Sat. 9:00-6:00 - Sun. 10:00-5:00

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