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DIVERSIONS



Sheryl Greenspan

Notes on a Napkin

Name doesn't tell story at Desserts Plus

DESSERTS PLUS

Location: 3833 Hwy. 7, West, Unit 6, Woodbridge

Phone: (905) 856-5194

Type: Italian

Entrée Selection: Extensive

Price Range: \$8.50 and up

Hours: Open daily, reservations accepted and recommended for weekends

Desserts Plus — "Plus what?" you may ask.

Actually a better name for this authentic, family-style Italian restaurant would be "Great Italian Food Plus A Few Desserts." Owner Rocky actually inherited the name when he purchased the restaurant, which, at the time, featured more of a dessert/coffeehouse menu, although it did have brick oven pizza available.

The current restaurant has an unusual, although interesting, setup.

Remember the days of smoking and non-smoking sections? Well, Desserts Plus has a drinking and no-drinking section. Although children and families are welcome in either area, the no-drinking section does tend to have more younger children.

The food at Desserts Plus can best be described as what you would expect to find if you were strolling down a cobblestone street in some quaint Italian seaside town.

It is fresh, flavourful, plentiful and quite reasonable. The selection offers favourites, but also a selection of more authentic, regional Italian dishes includ-

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FAIR FARE BETTER THAN FAIR

Pigging out at the fair may not be healthy, but it's a great once-a-year treat

BY ROY GREEN
Staff Writer

Cotton candy, corn on the cob, candy apples, corn dogs, hotdogs, caramel corn, funnel cakes, elephant ears, cheese curds, ice cream and hamburgers smothered in fried onions.

All's fare at the fair.

Since 1807, when the first agricultural fair was held in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, we've been attending fairs to see the latest technologies, best livestock, 90-pound pumpkins, blue-ribbon baking, horse shows, tractor pulls and ferris-wheel rides.

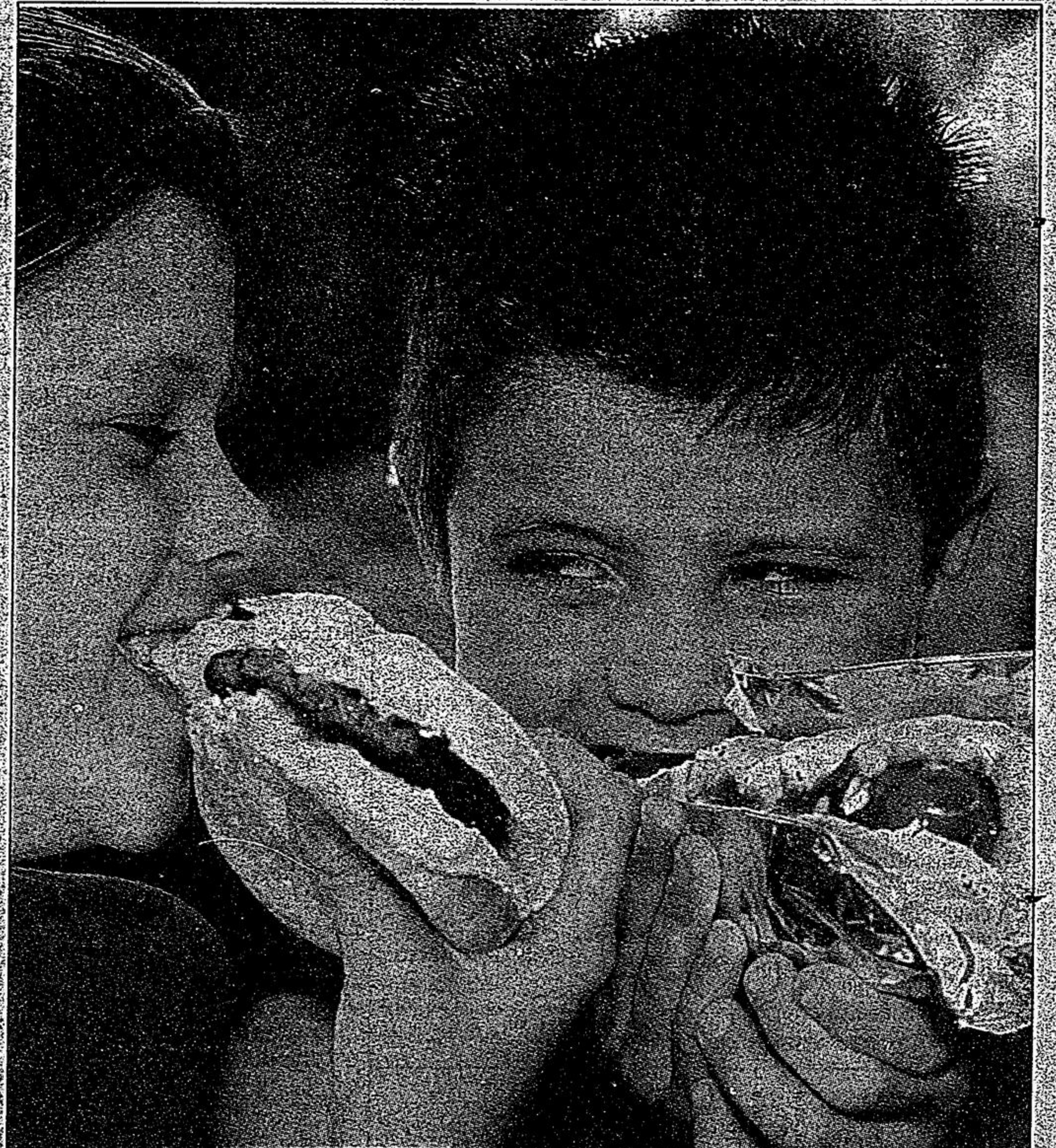
And, of course, to make complete pigs of ourselves with dripping, sticky, gooey confections.

After all, the word fair is derived from the Latin *feriae*, meaning feast, which also means, even back in medieval times, people thought of food when they thought of fairs.

True, much of this fare is not good for you, but hey, you only go to the fair once a year, right?

There are more than 230 annual fairs in Ontario and, in this area, we're singularly blessed to have one of the world's largest in the Canadian National Exhibition and what is surely — and proudly — the world's smallest, the Kettleby Fair.

The Ex, as it is known to Ontarians, began as a local agricultural exhibition in 1878. Even



STAFF PHOTO/SUSIE KOCKERSCHIEDT

Jessica and Cody Abreau of Keswick enjoy the traditional hamburgers and hotdogs at the Sutton Fair. To help farmers hit by the mad cow scare, Georgina Mayor Jeff Holec and his councillors cooked up Ontario burgers.

in its modern-day version, with air shows and monster midway, a visit to the CNE is still a ritual, a reminder of small-town fairs.

A fond memory for me has always been the hamburgers, awash in greasy fried onions, purchased on the midway. And watching them produce those teeny, tiny doughnuts in the food building never gets old.

Meanwhile, at the opposite end of the spectrum, in beautiful downtown Kettleby, they've started a new tradition in fair food — omelettes.

"They cook omelettes for breakfast. It's a fundraising event for the school," said Elaine Kitteridge, one of the organizers of the Kettleby Fair, known as the biggest, smallest, old-fashioned country fair.

They also serve a very Canadian treat, bacon on a bun. The fair takes place in the most picturesque village in King Township and usually attracts about 3,000 people,

which doesn't sound like much until you see just how tiny Kettleby is.

"People like it because it is small," Ms Kitteridge said. "It's a balancing act in how to promote it without making it too big."

The Sutton Fair, which wrapped up a week ago, selected its own food theme in 2003 — grade A Ontario beef.

After watching Canada's premiers promoting Alberta beef on television, Georgina Mayor Jeff Holec said, "I'd like to do that, too" and immediately made arrangements to use only Ontario hamburgers for the annual councillors' barbecue at the fair.

But for anyone straying too far from the well-worn food path, there is the cautionary tale of Gail Borden Jr., who lost his fortune when he introduced his own invention, a "meat biscuit" of dehydrated meat and flour, at the first Texas state fair in 1852.

It didn't catch on and he went bankrupt.

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