

Helping comes naturally for kindergarten teacher

It was Saturday. I'd just completed an all-night concierge shift at AMICA, Swan Lake, Markham. And I was tired.

Adding to my fatigue, I'd walked 12 miles on a 200-delivery paper route. And I was tired.

"Why did I agree to a 3 p.m. interview? What a dumb idea," I muttered to myself.

Regardless, I decided to keep my date.

Hair disheveled, hands grubby, feet sore and shoulders aching, I trudged up the steps to the Stouffville home of Katie Sandiford, a young woman whose time was just as taxed as mine because she was preparing for her first teaching assignment.

"Sorry for the appearance," I said. "I don't usually conduct interviews looking like this."

"You're fine," she replied. "Thanks for coming."

She escorted me through the house to a back porch, be-decked with beautiful flowers. We talked for more than an hour.

She told me of growing up in Stouffville; of attending Orchard Park Public School; Stouffville District Secondary School; Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Windsor.

In a voice revealing excitement, she mentioned the fact that, come Sept. 6, she would begin teaching a class of kindergarten children at Silver Pines Public School in Richmond Hill.

"It'll be wonderful," she said. "I can't wait."

As fantastic as Katie's future will be, nothing could quite compare with the thrills received during a recent visit to a remote native village outside Dar es Salaam in Tanzania, East Africa.

Her purpose for being there was to see first-hand the benefits provided by an organization called Sleeping Children Around the World, or SCAW for short. It was founded in 1970 by Murray and Margaret Dryden, providing bedkits for more than 750,000 children in 31 developing countries.

But what was Katie's interest?

Her face glowing with pride, she told how her grandmother, Barb Schell, had, in recent years, donated \$30 every Christmas in the names of each of her grandchildren. These gifts of money were sufficient to purchase bedkits for several Third World families.

Katie purchased 10. And sure enough, on her arrival, there was a kit with her name visibly



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

inscribed. A photo is now part of a treasured album.

The bedkit presentations were made at six schools. It's not unusual for 500 to 800 units to be distributed daily, Katie said.

"I wanted to be there and personally see them handed out," she stated.

The boys and girls seemed a little shy and nervous, she noted. Although English is an official language, most spoke Swahili.

Katie said she'll never forget their bright teeth and beautiful smiles. Each boy and girl carried their bedkits home, on their heads.

"It was neat to see them wearing their T-shirts the next day," she said. "For me, this was very special."

Moma Wandoa, described by Katie as "highly respected", operates an AIDS clinic near where they visited.

Many of the children visited by the team were orphans, their parents taken by the dreaded disease. Forty-six per cent of the Tanzanian population is under 15.

Katie said she submitted her travel application two years ago, not knowing exactly where she'd be going.

With Sleeping Children Around the World, overhead costs are zero, she explained.

Katie praised the Drydens, saying Murray, prior to his death, had sold his Christmas tree farm north of Stouffville and placed the money in trust to help fund his project. The Dryden family home is now an office headquarters. Sons Ken and Dave Dryden, retired NHL goal-tenders, are still involved.

"They, (the Drydens), are legendary," Katie said. "Their wonderful work goes on."

And so will Katie's and her grandmother's. I was impressed.

Jim Thomas, a Stouffville resident, has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.

OUR BURGERS

What a better way to finish the summer than to have a burger cook-out. Its a great time, because, not only are the burgers big and juicy as usual (I've written lots in the past about them). We'll have local Spanish onions and great beefstake tomatoes as well.

1/3 lb. size

Reg. \$3.99 lb

— and we'll have a good supply of our great buns!

25% OFF THIS WEEK

MAC & CHEESE SALAD

This is one of the older-fashioned salads we make. We use chunks of our ham, chunks of cheddar, elbow noodles and some sweet green peas — topped off with a mild mayo dressing. A taste of the past, made at least twice daily.

Reg. \$1.29/100 g

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

LEMON MERINGUE PIES!

With the ease in the humidity, we'll be making a whole bunch of these for Friday, Saturday and Sunday. It would be my very favourite dessert of all time.

Reg. \$10.95 each 9" size

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' OUTSIDE!

We're getting a couple truck loads of Fall mums and grasses for your viewing (and buying) pleasure. Some are arriving today, others on Friday. Lots to choose from at great prices.

MUSKOKA LETTUCE!

We'll have a good assortment for this week, including some great red or gold sweet cherry tomatoes. No Romaine is to be had because when they weren't looking, it 'Bolted'. The availability of this lettuce should be good for another week or two.

BARTLETT PEARS

These are local from the Niagara region. They couldn't be called huge, but they're a good size. When you get them, they won't be ripe — but they will soon. You've gotta check your brood of pears every morning and plan your life around the pear's schedule — a real art! Very delicious when you get it right! (Just like life)

99¢ lb this week

TEXAN SAUSAGES

These are a fairly sparky pork sausage with enough bite to notice. We use coarse ground pork and we make them a little bigger than most others.

Reg. \$3.99 lb

25% OFF THIS WEEK

We'll Be Closed Labour Day Monday

WHAT'S FOR DINNER!

From our entree freezer we'll be featuring our stuffed chicken-breasts. We use air chilled chicken as you know, we stuff them with our homemade sage and onion stuffing, we slow roast them and pack them with a really nice Dijon mustard cream sauce. It's a great dinner. Serves 2 - 3. Reg. \$16.95

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S FOR DESSERT!

We'll be making a great assortment of our mousses for dessert. We start with fresh ripe fruit, the best chocolate, whipping cream and lots of enthusiasm.

The flavours will be

RASPBERRY, LEMON, STRAWBERRY, CHOCOLATE, ORANGE, WHITE CHOCOLATE, MANGO AND LIME.

We will be serving them in the white ramekins that we use for Creme Brulees — and like them, the ramekins can be returned for a 50¢ refund should your cupboard be overcrowded.

It's best to serve these at room temp for full flavour

Reg. \$3.99 ea.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 4TH

Hours:

Mon. 11:00-7:00 - Tues.-Thurs. 9:00-7:00 - Fri. 9:00-8:00

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

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