

Ideas, ideas and more ideas for downtown

Put your money where your mouth is.

That, in effect, is what Ward 4 Councillor Susanne Hilton said after, in a recent column, I attributed a deficiency of shoppers in Stouffville's downtown, to a deficiency in shops.

Under the heading Facelift Not Enough to Boost Downtown, I said:

"Stouffville's downtown must first have attractive retail stores and shops. If and when it does, patrons will return. Right now it doesn't and they won't."

I added: "Stouffville's inner core will never again see the glory days of the 1940s and '50s as long as the commercial base consists of banks, insurance offices, pizza parlours and hair salons."

I concluded: "Major commercial housecleaning is required. A new retail look is needed. Provide it and they will come."

This written rant raised a few hackles, prompting a protest call from Ruth LeBlanc, manager of the Stouffville Business Improvement Area.

Just what I wanted, a sure sign I'd caught someone's attention.

However, Ms Hilton took my stance one step further.

"If you have something to offer, put your suggestions down on paper," she said, or words to that effect.

Again, just what I wanted, a sure sign I had her attention.

Recommendations follow:

- Establish a permanent active volunteer downtown improvement committee;

- Direct would-be store owners away from invisible back street sites to visible downtown locations;

- Eliminate the business tax on all new downtown stores for two years;

- Dust off and enforce the commercial standards bylaw;

- Hold a contest to select a more viable, visible symbol from which an attractive theme can be created;

- Obtain brochures from flourishing downtowns such as Simcoe, St. Mary's, Meaford, Elora, Elmira, Unionville, Port Perry, Port Hope, Meaford and Kleinburg;

- Have the committee visit three of these, or other towns that compare favourably to Stouffville's size to see first-hand what each has to offer;

- Establish a weekly business evening in downtown Stouffville, where all stores remain open until 10 p.m.;
- Close the downtown to traffic during this business evening, so Main Street is



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

transformed into a giant outdoor mall;

- Have local and guest musicians perform in the Lions gazebo on business evenings during the summer months;

- Organize other attractions like classic car shows, children's rides, etc., on the north side of Main Street in front of the Care & Share Shoppe;

- Invite clowns and magicians to entertain;

- Embark on an advertising program, both newspaper and radio, supporting the downtown's business evenings, emphasizing what Whitchurch-Stouffville has to offer;

- Re-string coloured lights horizontally across Main Street, from Mill and Market Streets to Park Drive. Change the bulbs to green and red during the Christmas season;

- Have easy-listening music played continually during downtown shopping hours;

- Install clarion bells in the clock tower, timed to ring on the hour every hour;

- Have the chimes in the United Church tower ring again Sunday mornings;

- Re-open the old town hall to local and guest artisans;

- Re-install the whistle on the heritage train;

- During summer months, establish a farmers' market in the clock tower square.

- Organize a Sunday afternoon Easter parade, utilizing the boardwalk between Main and Burkholder streets;

- Hold a volunteer work bee and clean up Duffin Creek.

Believe it or not, I could go on, but that's a start.

My thanks to Councillor Hilton for prompting these positives.

I'll thank her even more if she transforms these fantasies into facts.

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

Our PEAMEAL Bacon

I have a friend who owns a produce market in Orillia and he also owns a condo in Ft. Lauderdale. Whenever he returns from his sojourn South, he's on the phone discussing his pet project for he and I - specifically, making this bacon in Florida (or shipping it from here) for the snowbirds who crave, in his opinion, the best peameal in Canada. I've explained to him many times that we could never supply enough. Ever! But why is it so good? A few reasons, starting with the fact that we use centre cuts. Secondly, we use a low-salt brine to cure it. Thirdly, we don't pump it with brine to the extent that it becomes watery. Fortunately we don't 'extend' the product using the 'protein added' trick and fifthly, we trim it really lean.

So if peameal is on your menu this week, get your knives out, sharpen them up and come to see us because the Peameal Deal is back!

Reg. 4.99/lb

P.S. If your knife is really dull, bring it along, we'll sharpen it too!

2.99 /lb
By the Piece

SWARM-SMOKED SALMON

We've been making this salmon in the same manner for about 16 years now - and we still get the same amazing response everytime we serve it. We use Bay of Fundy (Jail Island Farm) Salmon, we bone it completely, season it and then slow-smoke it over oak to a temperature which also cooks it. What you get rather than slices are flakes - moist and delicious, and a suitable size to adorn a cracker.

Reg. 3.99/100g

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

Our frozen dinner entrée this week is Pot Roast in Gravy. These are made with blade eye roasts, sliced and packed with enough gravy for your mashed potatoes - the natural accompaniment, it seems to me. This entrée will serve at least 3 and quite likely 4.

Reg. 13.95 ea.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

CREAM OF ASPARAGUS SOUP

This is made with fresh asparagus, chicken stock, Spanish onions, celery and white wine. It's yummy!

Reg. 5.99 Serves 4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

Prime Rib SANDWICHES

These are our most popular lunchtime hot sandwich. It's our prime rib, oven roasted, piled a 1/4 lb. high, with either horseradish or gravy (or both) on a bun of your choice.

They'll be the lunch feature today, Friday and Saturday!

2.99 each

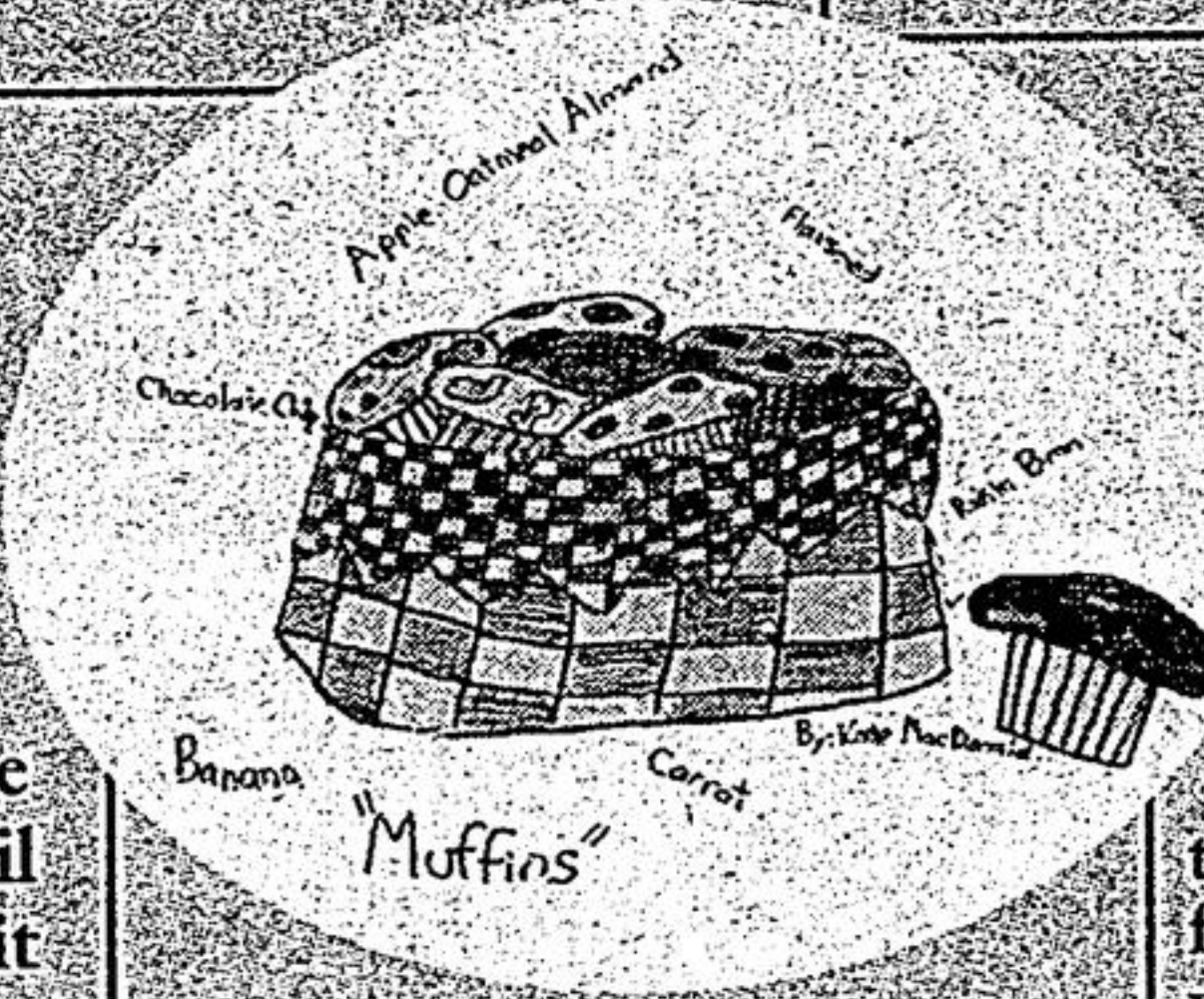
SPINACH DIP!

Back when we started making this, we were the only one. Now we are one of many - but I've tried them all and I'll challenge you to find a better (and a fresher) one. This is Doreen's recipe, made at least three times a week, except this week when it'll be made three times a day.

Befriend a cracker!

Large size Reg. 5.49 ea.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK



Muffin-MANIA

We'll be making a hitherto unimagined assortment of muffins this week in uncharted quantities, too! Although we'll do our best to have the full assortment available all the time, be patient with us - your favourite may not be ready right then when you desire it.

Our assortment will be carrot, (with or without my favourite cream cheese icing), bran with either blueberry, cranberry or raspberry and apple, apple-oatmeal-almond, peach streusel with custard, pumpkin, lemon-blueberry, low fat banana bran with no sugar, orange-cranberry, chocolate chunk, maple pecan with maple glaze, gingerbread with icing, flaxseed, raspberry chocolate chunk, apple pie with spiced apples and custard, caramel pecan with caramel on and in it, chocolate banana, lemon poppyseed with lemon curd, raspberry cornmeal and lastly, dark chocolate with white chocolate chunks.

As if that isn't enough, we'll have some savoury ones as well, those being cornmeal with peppers, black olives and corn and lastly,

bacon and cheddar cheese.

Reg. 1.25 to 1.99/ea.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

Del Monte SUPERSWEET PINEAPPLES

We've promoted these pineapples often in the past because we think they're the best pineapples available. They come in standard size boxes with either 4, 5, 6, 7 or 8 of these inside. We generally buy size '5' or size '6' depending on which looks good and what price they are - and they have been expensive. This week we have some size '5's really big and super-sweet.

2.99 EACH

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY NOVEMBER 13TH

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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