

# Selling our fair to newcomers

**H**i-ho come to the fair. Markham Fair.

The big show, largest of its kind in Canada, swung wide its turnstiles this morning, welcoming a hoped-for 60,000 people during a four-day period.

While those on the outside have little knowledge of what's required to create a production this size, and those within fulfill volunteer responsibilities with little fanfare, I, as a barely visible bystander, am totally amazed at the enormity of the task.

Markham Fair doesn't just happen. Committed people make it happen, a selfless example of cohesive continuity unequalled anywhere.

While togetherness is obviously a key to the fair's success, it takes more than holding hands and united hurrahs to produce this all-encompassing achievement.

First and foremost, aside from a competent manager and a dedicated board of directors, the society annually enjoys contributions from excellent juniors, some of whom will climb the leadership ladder.

Second, organizers have worked energetically to retain the roots of agriculture and, at the same time, provide original attractions to keep pace with an ever-changing community.

And herein lies the crunch.

Markham is no longer a bustling little village surrounded by extensive farm properties plus pockets of sleepy Anglo-Saxon neighbourhoods.

Whitchurch-Stouffville, although spared the rampage of urbanization seen all-too-close to its southerly border, has changed considerably also. With more changes to come.

But, true to tradition, the fair continues to host such agriculturally-tuned events as calf, sheep and goat competitions, rabbit, pigeon and poultry shows, horse and tractor pulls, old-tyme fiddler contests, hotdogs, hamburgers and bacon-on-a bun.

All top-flight entertainment and taste-bud treats. Country benevolence at its best. Let's not lose the flavor.

However, Markham, like it or not, has long since lost its country character. The town's now growing houses and shopping centres rather than corn and cabbage. Once productive farmlands have succumbed to slabs of cement and ribbons of asphalt. Few currently come to the fair to see old friends. Most don't even know their nearby neighbours.

Such is the agony of growing pains.

While the face of the Markham area has changed, so have faces within. To a



## Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

lesser extent, the same can be said of Whitchurch-Stouffville. The face of this community is rapidly changing. And so are faces within.

Prominent among newcomers are Asians. They now comprise a large percentage of the Markham-Unionville populace. So what's the fair board doing to accommodate their interests?

First, the directors must discover what interests our Asian friends.

Such was the purpose of a letter sent to Stouffville's Yang and Diana Poon, retired educators originally from Hong Kong.

What, I asked, could be featured at Markham Fair that might prompt Asians by the thousands to descend on the site?

Their responses were direct.

Yang and Diana admitted Asians have little basic knowledge of farming.

"This doesn't mean they're not interested in it, only that they don't understand it," Diana said. This includes aforementioned events such as tractor pulls, horse shows, cows, pigs and sheep.

These attractions aren't to their liking. So what is?

Producing back yard vegetable gardens, said Diana.

"Remember," she said, "many Asian people have never seen a seedling grow let alone know how to care for it."

"The fair should arrange a basic garden demonstration for beginners," she said.

Imagine the result - a magnificent floral masterpiece with the Markham Fair insignia as a superlative central theme.

Husband Yang suggested it would be in Markham Fair's best interests to add Asian singers and dancers to its entertainment format.

"Asians love to see and hear their own people," he said. "These artists would attract large crowds."

Last, but not least, first-generation Asian immigrants enjoy reading newspapers printed in their native language.

Sound reasonable? Maybe worth a try. At least two people will respond. Maybe ten thousand.

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

# C - OUR - BEEF CORNED BEEF

Corned beef? It must be autumn. There's no better time to enjoy this cool-weather dish than now. We make our corned beef here - using only centre-cut brisket points. We trim them lean and cure them in a savoury brine with an edge of nutmeg and allspice. It's a slice of old-fashioned heaven - but that's not all. Not only have we reduced our price this week, we'll give you the recipe for corned beef 'n' cabbage - and we'll give you the cabbage free!

(Minimum 2 lb. piece).  
Reg. \$5.99 lb.

**4<sup>99</sup>**  
Lb.

# UP-SIDE DOWN CAKE

This cake will need to be bought in pairs (sorry for the pun), one for you and one for everyone else ...

I took one home last night and couldn't bring myself to share it with anyone! (I didn't finish it at dinner - some survived till breakfast, but no further.) It's an amazing, sublime pairing of texture and subtle flavour - you'll need to get one.

**12<sup>95</sup> AND 18<sup>95</sup>**

# WHY BUY OUR HAMS?

The story is this. We are heavily into the ham business - but in the old-fashioned way. To many folk nowadays, ham is ham; if you've tried one, you've tried them all; that is, unless you are old enough to remember what ham originally tasted like before the process of making them became mechanized.

Machines? Yes, that's right. Nowadays, almost all hams (including spiral honey-baked hams) are put through a process called "tumbling". It's like a giant dryer, but with the opposite function. This machine boosts 'yield', which means hams grow in weight during the process - just read the 'protein added' part of the label to find out how much it has 'grown'. The good part (for the manufacturer) is that: (a) you have more ham to sell because they've all 'grown' and (b) all the little bits of pork can be put through this process as well because it glues it all together in the shape of a ham (\$1.99 lb. supermarket ham). The bad part (for the customer) is that gone for good is the texture, tenderness and flavour that made ham famous in the first place.

At our store, we make ham in the time-honoured, pre-mechanical way - by hand. Come pay us a visit - we'll restore your faith in ham!

- Oven-Roasted Maple Sugar Ham - \$6<sup>50</sup> lb.
- Boneless, whole or half .....
- Hardwood Smoked Black Forest Hams - \$6<sup>50</sup> lb.
- Boneless, whole or half .....
- Traditional Bone-In Hams - \$2<sup>99</sup> lb.
- Whole or half .....

It's best to order early!

**905-940-0655**

# RACK VEAL CHOPS

When I was down at one of the meat plants picking our beef today, I noticed quite a few veal racks - and when I inquired, I was told I could have them if I wished.

I did wish to have them - you can't always get as many as you'd like - so if you want one of those large, thick, frenched veal chops for dinner this weekend, we've got you covered. B.B.Q'd is good, cooking them in your ribbed, cast iron pan and flambéeing them is great.

Serve with spaetzle!  
—Limited Supply—

**20%**  
OFF THIS WEEK

# OUR CHEDDAR SAUSAGES

These are a thrill from the grill. They are made with nicely-seasoned coarse ground pork and lots of grated old cheddar. You may want to let them cool just a touch before digging in because cheddar retains more heat than you might think. Delicious!

Reg. \$4.50 lb.

**25%**  
OFF THIS WEEK

# FRESH TILAPIA! - FILLETS -

This is a very versatile white-fleshed fish from South America. Any recipe which works with roughie, cod or haddock will work well with this.

Reg. \$9.95 lb.

**25%**  
OFF THIS WEEK

# FREE-RANGE TURKEY

We've sold these amazing turkeys now for 22 years. Although the farm has changed hands from father to son, it's the same growing and processing technique that produces what we - and others - feel are the best turkeys available.

What makes them so good?

It's simple, really. Firstly, they eat lots of grain and corn - as much or as little as they want, because they run loose. Add to this a gentler de-feathering process which leaves more of the natural flavour (and the odd feather) with the turkey, and you'll have a bird which exceeds your expectations without the aid of the artificial enhancement that Butterballs and pre-basted turkeys receive. Ours are moist (naturally), tender and full of flavour - and they cook a bit quicker as well. Although we have pretty much any size above 14 lbs. available, I would be picking one from 16 to 20 lbs. - they seem to have the best meat - and lots of it.

Ready to roast!

— Also, should you wish parts of turkey, including breasts which are boneless (either plain or stuffed), they'll be available.

**2<sup>99</sup>**  
Lb.

# LOCAL SWEET POTATO

We'll have a good supply of great Sweet Potatoes from now till Thanksgiving. They're grown in South Western Ontario, they're a good size and look great.

**\$79**  
Lb.

# SWEET RED PEPPER SOUP

What I like most about our soups, apart from the flavour for sure, is that the ingredient panel is straight forward reading - it makes me hungry just reading it, and that's long before it's hot in a bowl looking me in the eye!

Reg. \$6.99  
Serves 3 to 4

**25%**  
OFF THIS WEEK

# WHAT'S COOKIN' AT THE DELI ...

Crisp, fresh, crunchy with sesame seeds, fragrant with sesame oil, juicy with ripe grape tomatoes - that's our sugar snap peapod salad. It will be our salad feature this week.

We'll also be making a five-spice crusted grilled Atlantic salmon fillet, which is topped with chive crème fraiche. You will also find a good assortment of roasted root vegetables to put you into an autumn mood, if you're not already.

# WHAT ELSE IS BAKING? THIS WEEK ...

We'll be making ...

**WILDBERRY CUSTARD FLAN** - Which starts with a shortbread crust, blackberries, raspberries, blueberries and apple, with custard baked in, finished with a dust of icing sugar.

Reg. .... \$18.95 ea.

— and lastly, our pans of lemon-coconut, date and pecan squares will be made in quantity and sold at a feature price.

Reg. .... \$5.99-\$8.99 ea.

Watch for our Thanksgiving repertoire this Saturday!

**25%**  
OFF THIS WEEK

**VILLAGE GROCER**  
QUALITY FOODS

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