

True to his roots, 90 years later

For more years than he may wish to remember, Stouffville's Leonard Ramer has been plagued by arthritis.



Roaming Around
with Jim Thomas

The problem was first detected in a left knee, a complexity later remedied through surgery. He now feels the pain in his left shoulder. And while it restricts his mobility, it doesn't get him down. He moves about, sometimes aided by two canes, other times assisted by a walker.

But he never stops moving, a determination that amazes friends and family.

"There are others worse off than I," he says.

On Jan 18, Mr. Ramer celebrated his 90th birthday.

Born in Markham, one of six in the family of Martin and Annie Ramer, Leonard recalls how his grandfather, Daniel Ramer, constructed the majority of buildings on the farm.

And while they all shared the same house, "we ate at different tables", he remembers, a common practice back then.

Leonard feels fortunate to have five family members still living, a brother, Alvin, two sisters, Elsie McDowell and Grace Ramer of Stouffville, and a brother Sidney at New Hamburg. An older brother, Jonas, died in 1987.

Leonard received his elementary education at Mt. Joy Public School, now at the Markham Museum. As at present, it was a two-level building with the junior room on the bottom floor and the senior room above.

A junior room photo, dated 1925, is a prized possession. The teacher was Gertrude Wideman.

HORSE AND BUGGY

Traveling to and from school was, in itself, a difficult chore, particularly in the winter. Most times, he walked. However, on occasions, he would make the two-km trip by horse and buggy or horse and cutter when the snow was deep.

Leonard never attended high school. After completing Sr. Fourth, he stayed home and assisted on the home farm or hired out with other farmers.

Helping milk his father's jersey herd was an arduous job, Leonard recalls, because jersey cows' teats were small.

The task was made somewhat easier when Mr. Ramer Sr. purchased a hand-operated milking machine.

At age 15, Leonard went out to work. This farm property was located

on Steeles Avenue. He vividly recalls riding a bicycle from Cedar Grove to Wideman church, chalking up as many as 1,600 km in a single summer.

When the Second World War broke out, Leonard proclaimed himself a conscientious objector. He was required to work in several distant places, including a year spent in British Columbia.

MET AT CHURCH

Leonard and Annie (Hoover) were married Oct. 3, 1959. Annie had previously resided at the Hoover homestead, east side of Hwy. 48 and south of the Elgin Mills Road. They had formally met while attending Wideman Mennonite Church.

Following marriage, Leonard and Annie lived near Greenbank, then Stouffville and later King City. Leonard then switched professions, taking a job at the Stouffville Bakery where he remained 18 years.

In 1965, Leonard and Annie purchased a home on the Tenth Line, south of Main Street in Stouffville. Mrs. Ramer passed away in 1988. A son Paul and wife Jane operate a farm on Reesor Road in northern Markham. Two adorable granddaughters, Rebecca and Hannah, are "apples of their grandfather's eye".

For two years, Leonard resided at Parkview Apartments on Rupert Avenue in Stouffville. He now lives in Parkview Village.

Despite several moves, Leonard has never forgotten his roots.

He attends service regularly at Wideman Church where he once served as secretary-treasure of the Sunday school. John and Florence Reesor willingly provide him transportation.

It was here, Jan. 18, that a wide circle of family and friends, some from a distance, gathered to celebrate his 90th birthday.

With wishes for more happy birthday years to come.

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

MACARONI & CHEESE

This is, as you know from the past, one of my fave at-home dinners. Long ago, it used to be Kraft Dinner, but as life evolves, I graduated to my mother-in-law's version of adult KD, but on a higher plane in a culinary sense. In my easy chair (if my kids aren't in it), by the fire watching a Leaf's game.... and this. It's all you'd want! It's all done, warm it and life is good.
Reg. \$10.95

25% OFF THIS WEEK

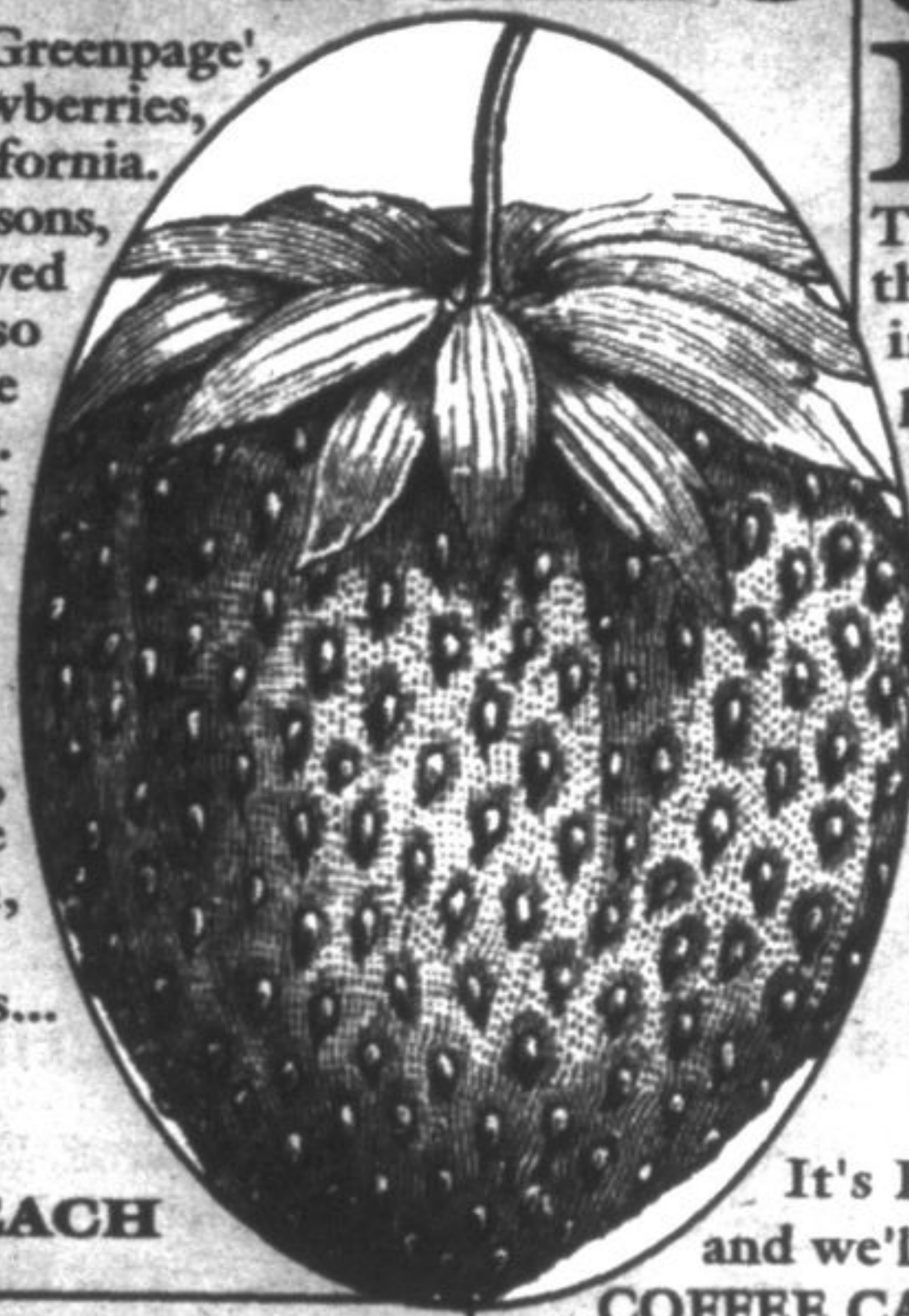
CREAM OF BROCCOLI SOUP

We buy large amounts of local broccoli in season and make lots of this soup at that time. What you get is that great summer flavour for days (like today) when it would be really good if the sun came out. The base of this soup is our chicken stock; we use lots of sweet onions, carrots, celery.....another take on vegetable soup, but with an outstanding part played by broccoli.
Serves 3-4. Reg. \$6.49 each

25% OFF THIS WEEK

FLORIDA STRAWBERRIES

If you have been a longtime reader of our 'Greenpage', you will know that my preference for Strawberries, other than our own in season, is from California. I've been eating my words for the last few seasons, as well as a lot of berries, as they've improved greatly in quality and flavour.....so much so that it is very difficult to tell these from the best mid-season berries from the far coast. I am always amazed that when I visit Florida (like right now), the berries that they send to us are both fresher and better quality.....and less expensive, than those in the sunshine state. Further, we always try to put a picture in our ad to spruce it up, but we had difficulty today to get the picture and its border in the correct proportion, but no big deal I thought, because it's indicative of the way that we fill the quarts... they bulge out.



From Florida **\$2.99 EACH**
OVERFILLED QUARTS

WHAT'S COOKIN' AT THE DELI

We're cooking a couple of beautiful Pasta Dishes for feature this week. There will be Penne with Chicken and Shrimp in a Tomato Basil Sauce and also Linguine with Strip Loin and Shrimp in a Demi-Cream Sauce....a version of Surf and Turf. I'm thinking. We make these in the 4"x5" foils; you just need to warm them at home....in your oven! Reg. \$7.99 each.
On special this week at.....

\$5.49 EACH

LOU'S CREAMY COLE SLAW, made with local cabbage, a few sweet carrots and dressed up nice.
Reg. \$1.19/100g

1/2 PRICE THIS WEEK

SMOKED TURKEY DRUMSTICKS

I'm sure you've all read my story about us selling lots of turkeys throughout the year.....in fact even more than all the holiday times put together. The result is large numbers of these beauties which we cure and slow-smoke. The ultimate result is a big handful of Neanderthal proportions—the dinner or lunch that you won't forget. We've got lots this week!

99¢ Each

PORK BACK RIBS

We'll have our back ribs on sale this week at the meat counter and hopefully we'll have enough. I say this because we've run out of the meat feature a bit early the last couple of weeks. What makes our back ribs so good? First, we buy more marbled pork — that streakiness makes them more tender and juicy. Secondly, we don't have the insipid little tail hanging from the one end (you would normally pay full price for it if you shopped elsewhere). Thirdly, our pork is not 'seasoned', which means that it's not cut from pork loins which have been injected with water and phosphate to make them juicier (just imagine the thinking behind that); and lastly, our price is very competitive because we cut our own pork. So think ribs this week perhaps with our Montgomery Inn Sauce — or any other. We have lots to choose from!

25% OFF THIS WEEK

CHEDDAR SAUSAGES

These are made with coarsely-ground fresh pork, a few mild spices and lots of grated old cheddar. They have a beautiful and long flavour but be a bit careful, because the cheese holds the heat a bit more and they can give you a jolt if they come right from the grill.
Reg. \$4.50/lb

25% OFF THIS WEEK

ORANGE ROUGHY

This will be our feature from the fish counter this week. Roughy doesn't require a lot of introduction these days; it's become very popular because it cooks so nicely, it takes many seasonings equally well, and it's really lean fish.
From New Zealand **\$10.95 /lb THIS WEEK**

WHAT'S BAKING THIS WEEK

It's Pecan Week in our little bakery this week, and we'll be making.....

COFFEE CAKE 'ANDREA'..... this is a new item from the bakery, Andrea's in fact. She's normally the strong silent type.....and very creative. To make this, we use fresh pears, toasted pecans, cinnamon and ginger, with a layer of vanilla custard baked in, topped with pecan streusel and candied ginger. Two sizes.

Reg..... \$14.95 and \$22.95

PECAN PIES.....this is an old fave from the bakery. We make the 'regular' version as well as a chocolate rendition, both great, but give me the chocolate one.

Reg..... \$12.95 and \$14.95

PECAN-CARAMEL CHEESECAKE.....this has a made-by-hand shortbread crust, homemade caramel and lots of our candied pecans...something that's hard to put down if you get a handful!

Anyway, we make two sizes here, reg..... \$14.95 and \$22.95

CARAMEL PECAN COOKIES..... looks can be deceiving here. I sometimes grab a pack of these to munch on during my early morning market sojourns and what looks like 'a-piece-of-cake' to finish up, takes a lot longer than you might think, (not that I'm slowing down but because they're fairly rich and you've got to pace yourself a bit).....and they are VERY delicious.
Reg..... \$9.95 container

PECAN CINNAMON BUNS.....these are the nutty version of our stellar buns.....I'm a bun guy in case you were wondering. Reg..... \$6.99/pkg

BANANA PECAN LOAF.....these are sweet and moist with dates. Reg..... \$5.99 each

And you may already have imagined, all these items will be featured this week at.....
PS.....we are working feverishly on our Valentine's Day repertoire: watch for major announcements shortly.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY FEBRUARY 1ST

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

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