

Euchred before first hand is dealt

I love euchre. For those not aware, it's a card game usually played by four people, divided by two partners.

While rules differ, the scoring I know is one point for a win, two points for a euchre and four points for a lone hand. The team first acquiring 10 points is the winner.

Despite the fact euchre originated with the Pennsylvania Dutch, in some family circles it's still a no-no. While as innocent as crokinole, the game has long been associated with gambling, even murder should a reckless trickster be caught cheating.

While I've never heard of deaths or death-threats locally, I'm told these happened regularly during days of the wild west. But maybe only in the movies.

Risk-taking for me takes the form of 'going it alone' while holding only a trump ace, a nine and a 10. And being euchred.

I have permanent ankle bruises to prove it.

If looks could kill, I, too, would be dead.

I come by such perilous acts honestly. For my dad would seldom, if ever, 'turn it down'.

"I'm depending on my partner," was his usual excuse. More often than not his partner came to his rescue and they somehow managed to squeak through.

While many winter nights were spent playing euchre around the farm kitchen table, certain rules were strictly enforced. One of these was 'never on Sundays'.

Mother was the enforcer.

"You'll bring the wrath of God down on this house," was her ultimatum should someone as much as suggest a game.

Faced with so great a challenge, the tarnished deck remained out of sight and out of mind.

As it does in our home on the Sabbath.

But Christmas Day was different. With only two of our family present, the euchre stage was set - a son and his dad against a son and his mother.

We split a pair, each a win and a loss.

Great fun, so much so, Jean and I are seriously considering extending



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

our boundaries to include competitions elsewhere.

Locations contemplated are Lemonville, Claremont, Siloam, Uxbridge and Mount Albert. Some folks we know make the rounds regularly.

They win regularly, too, a consequence we tend to find intimidating. For we've travelled this route before.

At the last public euchre, the games moved so quickly I had no time to introduce myself.

Not that my partners really wanted to know me after I continually dropped cards on the floor.

When it came to shuffling, they snapped the deck.

The pass word was a knuckle-knock on top of the table and deals resembled rotating fans on a windmill.

My head was spinning just as fast. There was no time to talk and less time to think.

To self-protect, I tucked both feet and ankles under my chair. My mind was mush.

Trouble was, everyone I played with and against, wanted to win.

As if the grand prize was a pre-paid trip to Pretoria.

But I was there only for the fun. Unfortunately, for me, there was nothing fun about it.

Regardless, I'm willing to give it another go. Maybe, just maybe, a more agreeable atmosphere prevails at Lemonville, Claremont or Siloam.

I hope so.

However, to be on the safe side, I think I'll search out the basement for an old pair of shin pads. Undercover table kicks can prove painful.

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

P-BREADED-P PORK CUTLETS

We make these with slices of pork sirloin. We flatten them a bit to make them even (and thinner), and then bread them with crumbs which have been seasoned with French Herbs (Herbes de Provence). Fry them lightly; it won't take long before they are done. One cutlet is usually sufficient for a serving. Regular \$1.99 each

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

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

The first thing that we'll actually be cooking a lot of is our.....
Red Potato and Egg Salad. If I recall correctly, we've used this recipe for pretty close to 20 years, with great success. Of all the salads that we make, this would be number one in popularity with our customers, but not with our kitchen staff, as it's fairly laborious to make. Personally, I like it when it's just a bit warm on days like today, not only does it go down comfortably, it's at the peak of it's flavour. Reg. \$1.49/100g

1/2 PRICE THIS WEEK

We'll be making some **Grilled Atlantic Salmon Fillets** with a Citrus Butter Sauce, which is made with white wine, shallots, citrus, cream and butter. Regular \$19.99/lb These will be featured this week at

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

THANKS FOR A GREAT YEAR!

As of this Friday, we will have been in business for 24 years, and it has been quite an adventure! We just want to say thanks for your business.....and your patience with us over the Holidays. As you know, we work in very tight quarters and sometimes it's difficult to make everything happen as you'd like. The Hockey with Heart project has been a continuing success, and with the help of players, wives and families, over 240 Christmas Dinner Hampers, ...complete with the Turkeys, were packed and delivered to families in need. As well, our group will fund the Markham Food Bank throughout the year, as we have for the last couple of years, and we will continue to support B-STRONG and many other local endeavors.

Now, the info that many of you have asked about.....we have received a building permit to proceed on our new store, and we will be starting that very shortly. It will take about a year to build and outfit, all going well, and I'm thinking that if we are very lucky, we will be operating from our new digs for next Christmas. What I have learned though, is that luck has little to do with things of this nature, so it may be that we do one more festive season where we are. As the construction goes along, I will keep you all posted on our progress. We all hope that your New Year is happy, healthy and fun.

TILAPIA

You can get this really versatile fish this week either au naturel in fillets or with a lemon and dill seasoned stuffing. Tilapia is my little Waxer's fave meal at home, very much to his mom's delight. **\$7.95 LB THIS WEEK**

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

This week its **Beef Stroganoff** made with julienne strips of sirloin which have been browned and simmered in the amazing gravy that makes this dish. **25% OFF THIS WEEK** Reg. \$17.95

CHICKEN VEGETABLE SOUP

When I need inspiration to write about soup, I go to the ingredient panel on the back. There it says...chicken stock, onions, leeks, carrots, red peppers, celery, mushrooms, Yukon Gold potatoes, peas, cauliflower, zucchini, chicken, garlic, oregano, basil, salt and pepper. This sounds to me like the whole enchilada, without the enchilada though. Serves 3-4, Reg. \$6.49 **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

What's Bloomin! What is better in the depths of winter than a hint of spring? We have beautiful pots of tulips, hyacinth, daffodil and primula. Cut tulips are also available, and really nice this time of year. If you have yet to try our roses, this is your week! We only carry three varieties due to their exceptional quality and longevity. Vendula is by far our most popular. They're a gorgeous cream colour and have a vase life of around two weeks, which is the longest vase life of any rose variety available. Forever Young and Purple Cezanne are deep red and hot pink varieties with vase lives around seven to ten days. This week all of our fantastic roses are on special **\$19.99 a dozen.**

P-BARTLETT-P PEARS

These are the pear of choice at my house. We always have 2 or 3 in the communal fruit basket, in varying stages of ripeness. It's a fine art picking the right moment to strike - if you wait too long, someone else may snag that beauty. If you make your move too soon, it might not have that sublime flavour and juiciness that makes these so special. From Washington. **99¢ lb.**

HONEY GARLIC SAUSAGES

These are made with coarsely-ground fresh pork, lots of garlic, a good amount of honey, some nutmeg, pepper and salt. You'll find these pretty laid-back and mellow....a great sausage when a wide variety of tastes are to be considered, and especially so if your significant other is dining as well. Reg. \$3.99/lb. **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

BLUEBERRIES

I'm sure that there are drawbacks to having a country the shape of Chile, but one of the benefits is the progressive growing season as the climate shifts over the long, north-south stretch of land. What this means in this case is a long window of availability for these berries, which is far beyond ours. That's why we'll have these for quite a while at the peak of their quality. The bonus this week is that these are in FULL PINTS. **\$2.99 A PINT**

WHAT'S BAKING! -THIS WEEK-

This week it's Lemon Week in our little Bakery. The lemons that we get have been amazing, and this is what we'll be using them to make.....

LEMON CREAM PIES...we make a Graham crust for these, a Lemon-Chiffon filling, and then garnish it with fresh whipped cream and candied lemon peel. Regular..... **\$15.95 each**

LEMON CURD CAKES....we make these with 3 layers of white cake which are separated with lemon curd, then topped with a lemon buttercream icing. As I am writing this, I'm thinking, 'why not chocolate?'

Sooo, if you come in and see some chocolate ones, you'll know that I've been at my persuasive best. Anyway, we'll be making two sizes..... **\$14.95 and \$22.95 each**

LEMON POPPYSEED MUFFINS...these are our lemon muffins with poppyseed folded in and then lemon curd injected in before baking. Reg.... **\$1.99 each**

ANNE'S LEMON MACAROONS..... Anne (pronounced Anay) is one of those hard working elves in our bakery, and this is her recipe.....and very delicious it is! They are flourless almond macaroons sandwiching a filling of whipped lemon buttercream. Regular..... **\$1.99 each**

DOUBLE-ICED LEMON LOAVES....as I'm reading my notes here, there is a notion that these will be done 'under duress' by the bakery staff; this because when they told me that they didn't have time to do them, I volunteered to do them personally. The optics of me splitting these loaves and putting additional dollops of icing in the middle, (and spreading it evenly to all corners and sides) was too much for them, so relent they did. Regular **\$6.99 each**

LEMON BLUEBERRY LOAVES.....If you are allergic to the lemon icing that we use, you'll need these; we've held off on the icing in favour of a generous portion of wild blueberries. Regular **\$5.99 each**

LEMON-CREAM CHEESE TURNOVERS....these are made with our puff pastry, lots of beauty cream cheese and our lemon curd....totally delicious in my opinion! Regular **\$2.99 each**

.....all these items will be featured this week at..... **25% OFF THIS WEEK** while supplies last!

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY JAN 10TH

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