

YOUTH: Ontario Junior Citizen of Year award nominee



STAFF PHOTO/NICK IWANYSHYN

Stouffville's Alexis Xenophontos, 10, and Newmarket Global Pet Foods owner Domenic Campitelli check out the donations in a pet box, similar to a food bank donation box, dreamed up by Alexis. The donated items go to animals at the Ontario SPCA shelter.

10-year-old has drive for OSPCA animals

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Animals are just as important as people to Alexis Xenophontos.

Inspired by the boxes put out in grocery stores over the holidays, allowing shoppers to donate non-perishable food items to the local food pantry, the 10-year-old thought it would be just as appropriate to organize a similar drive for animals spending the holidays at the Ontario SPCA in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Alexis' work with animals earned her a nomination for the Ontario Junior Citizen of the Year awards.

The 12 recipients of the awards, co-ordinated by the Ontario Community Newspapers Association, will be announced Jan. 22. The awards, sponsored by TD Canada Trust and Direct Energy, will be presented in Toronto in March.

"I was thinking how I love animals so much and how they need a lot, too," the Stouffville-area resident said.

"I've heard of people not having stuff and the animals at the shelter don't have anything either."

She made it her mission to set up a box, with the permission of Newmarket Global Pet Foods owner Domenic Campitelli, so shoppers could donate anything from litter to food to toys and blankets for the animals at the local shelter.

To her surprise, the box at the Davis Drive location was filled with items in a matter of weeks.

"Animals can't take care of themselves, so we need to help," she said. "I want people to know animals are just as important as

humans."

The animal lover has two pets of her own — a cat named Sheba, that was adopted from the Ontario SPCA, and a bunny named Hopper, that the family began feeding in their back yard.

Her passion to help furry and cuddly creatures started when she and her mother, Victoria, paid a visit to the adoption centre in search of a cat. Her experience opened her eyes to the need of so many animals, her mother said.

"She saves all her pocket money and allowance and does extras around the house to buy things for the animals at the shelter," Mrs. Xenophontos said.

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Alexis has purchased blankets, food and toys to donate to the Ontario SPCA and has spent many afternoons with her grandmother sewing handmade blankets for the animals as well.

"I've collected a lot of stuffed animals for them to play with, too," she said. "I figure I love stuffed animals, so the animals will love to play with them, too."

The animal box program has been such a success at the Davis Drive location, Global Pet Foods will relocate the box to the Leslie Street site.

Goldfish company made splash in New York

Did You Know is a new feature in The Sun-Tribune. In it, we hope to share information on our home town. Some of it will be obscure and other pieces may be familiar to you. Any nominations for Did You Know? Contact editor Jim Mason at jmason@yrmg.com or 905-640-2612 ext. 23.

Readers have added to our story on Stouffville's goldfish plant printed Oct. 31.

Legend has it while transporting aquariums full of goldfish from Stouffville to downtown New York City, the driver lost the load on the street. Was this an advertising stunt or just bad driving? No one knows or is willing to say.

Another tidbit regarding the Goldfish Supply Company, which was located on Albert Street where the Testa Villa apart-

ments now stand? During the Second World War, the basement was utilized not only as a holding tank for thousands of goldfish, but also as storage of canned goods for the Campbell Soup Company.

Hartz Mountain Pet Supplies (Canada), bought the company in late 1958 or early 1959. Harley Ashton became the manager, his son, Rick Ashton, told The Sun-Tribune.

— Sandra Bolan

5, Stouffville Sun-Tribune ■ Saturday, Jan. 9, 2010

DID YOU KNOW?

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BOOKENDS: Music of Simon & Garfunkel – Friday, Jan. 15 / 8pm

A stirring journey through all the classic hits with two of Canada's most talented musicians – Kevin Fox & Patrick Allcock.

Tickets: \$35 regular / \$30 subscriber / \$18 student

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What do you get when you cross circus skills, science and wacky characters? You get this action-packed show about the science of motion!

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