

# Back to future at church auction

Are auctioneers a dying breed? Is auctioneering a vanishing skill?

The answer is "no". That is, if interest and enthusiasm displayed by Stouffville's Ken Prentice are indications.

"I love it," he says.

So did members of Lemonville United Church, June 5. They loved it - an auction sale at the local community centre that, when proceeds are tabulated, will exceed \$7,000.

Part of the earnings included an original Stouffville-Bethesda crank telephone that sold for \$1,000, a batch of Dee Miller's butter tarts that brought \$200 and 12 apple pies donated by Florence White that added \$170 to the coffers.

"It was wonderful," said Marion Wells, a committed project supporter. "Community involvement at its best."

No one was happier than auctioneer Ken Prentice along with associates, Keith Pike and Clare McGuckin. For it reminded them of fun and frolic linked to 'the good old days' when auction sales posed pure entertainment.

Yes, back then some people came to buy, recalls Ken, whose great uncle, John Henry Prentice, started the family tradition, but others attended only to be entertained.

And entertained they were, later by Ken's uncle, Ken Prentice, and soon-to-follow Clarke Prentice, Ken Jr.'s father.

Now 56, the younger Ken, a financial planner and stockbroker with Dundee Securities, says he follows the auction route more for pleasure than a profession.

"For me, it's as much fun working as it is for people watching."

While delivering his customary spiel, he always wears an open-road Stetson hat and carries the consummate cane, both hand-me-downs from his dad.

A graduate of Markham High, Ken went on to receive his BA in economics from the University of Western Ontario and a master's degree from York.

It was, however, while still a boy and attending sales with his father and



## Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

uncle, that he was bitten by the auction bug, an interest that prompted enrolment in the Western College of Auctioneering in Montana.

"I learned more from my dad and from that college than I ever did from university," he said.

But auctioneering's not for everyone, Ken insists.

Each bid-caller must have his own lingo plus a good understanding of values. A quick wit helps, he adds.

"If it was all talk, a parrot could do it," he said.

The highs and the lows of the profession Ken vividly recalls. He remembers huge crowds attending sales at the George S. Henry and Carman Wesley farms. He also remembers stories during the Dirty Thirties of his uncle Ken begging for bids and customers paying with promissory notes.

On one occasion, an irate husband accosted his dad following a sale saying if he sold his wife one more item, he'd sue for divorce.

The years have taken their toll, Ken admits. There are few farms left in Whitchurch-Stouffville and even fewer farm auctions. Also, garage and yard sales have eaten into the auction market.

Even age-old antiques, once commanding huge prices, are virtually ignored.

"If it can't be put in a microwave or a dishwasher then it won't wash," he says.

But once in a long while, the hands of time reject the trend. The June 5 auction at the Lemonville Community Centre was one such occasion. Everyone went home happy, including the guy with the crank telephone.

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

# TEXAS BEEF CHOPS

This is the one week of the year that we feature these rather Neandretal Steaks. I have no idea what the proper technical CFIA name would be for these, but there are one or two of these cut from the blade end of each Prime Rib, one bone thick (about 2") and they are all trimmed except the eye of meat (rib eye) and the rib bone... which allows you a handle on these, more or less. Are they good? Well, they are cut from the more tender end of the rib, and they are cut from beef that I have personally picked at the meat plant for tenderness and flavour. How to cook them? There are a couple of ways; the first would be to start them on a pretty hot 'que and really singe them, turn the heat down a bit and cook them altogether about 20-25 min, depending on how thick your particular steak is. The other is to start them hot as previous, but put them into a preheated oven to finish, allowing you to free-up your grill for your veggies or the next door shrimps or whatever else you have happening. Either way will be real good. One can either serve one or two, depending on your appetite. These are a Fathers Day tradition at our store, and it might be best to reserve some if you have them in your plans.

# T~ALBACORE~ TUNA

This is not the big, thick Yellowfin cut into steaks, but filleted pieces more like chunks of salmon in size. Cooking is similar to Mahi-Mahi or Grouper and probably grilling is best. We will have 3 or 4 recipes from my James Beard Fish Cookbook.

**\$17.95 LB THIS WEEK**

# PRIME RIB ~STEW~

We make this old-fashioned stew with the meat that's between the bones of a prime rib. As far as I am concerned, its the best possible meat to use - and the proof is just how good it turns out. I like this stew served with either spatzle or the Cipriani pappardelle noodles. It's a great dinner! Serves 3-4

**25% OFF THIS WEEK** Reg. \$15.95

# S~HONEY GARLIC~ SAUSAGES

These are made with our Omega Pork, (the seasonings are the same as previous), they are on the mild side with an absence of heat, but a full rich flavour made better by a generous edge of garlic. Reg. \$4.99/lb

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

# 99¢ PRODUCE SALE

We'll have our beauty Hydroponic Vine Ripe Tomatoes and our English Cucumbers on Sale this week, for 99¢ per pound and 99¢ each respectively. These are what you'll need to make Grethe's Danish cucumber and dill salad, and the recipes will be available. These are Ontario grown, and as fresh as can be.

# WHAT'S HAPPENIN' OUTSIDE!

Summer is definitely here and we have everything you need to brighten up your home inside and out. We still have a good amount of hanging baskets and planters in every shape and colour you can imagine. Evan's gardening tip for this week is to remember to rotate your hanging baskets to help keep them growing and flowering evenly. We've just got in fresh rosemary and flat leaf parsley to bolster our nice selection of herbs, we're also expecting some coriander by the weekend. We've got some gorgeous 6" pots of Krossandra. It is a relatively new (new to us anyways) species of flowering plant native to Sri Lanka. It has long lasting orange/peach blossoms and is cared for much like a hibiscus, a tropical indoor-outdoor plant that can last many years. This week we have a couple of things on special. We have impressive large (4 foot) ivy topiaries in several varieties of ivy that will be on special for \$49.99 perfect for an easy urn solution or simply as an elegant accent on its own. Our Phalaenopsis Orchid sale has been a huge success and we're getting a fresh shipment this week. At 2 FOR \$19.99 or \$11.99 each it's easy to understand why it's a popular deal. If you're craving something savory you'll appreciate a pot of sage on special for 99¢ it's perennial and is a fantastic herb to use with chicken, turkey or pork. Be sure to drop in this week and see what's fresh and blooming.

# S~JUMBO~ SHRIMPS

I've been part of a couple of presentations with the ladies from the QUEENSBRIDGE MILL lately, and one of the items that I demonstrated were these jumbo shrimps. I call them Bonfire Shrimp, and the reason for that will be apparent. These are raw shrimp in the shell, so you will need to take a sharp small knife or a pair of kitchen shears and cut up the back of them to remove the vein, being careful to leave the shell on. You then make a marinade in a steep-sided bowl so they actually swim in it. The marinade I use is olive oil, lemon juice, hot sauce, garlic, salt and pepper. I usually let them marinate for a few hours, or even overnight if I can plan that far ahead. To cook them, place them out on the BBQ grill in a fairly close formation, and then pour about 1/2 the marinade over them...and stand back. An inferno will ensue which will rid you of most of your facial hair if you are not careful. When the fire goes out, gingerly turn them over and repeat the process with the remainder of the marinade. When this second bonfire dies down, they will be cooked...or pretty darn close to being cooked. You'll need to shell them when you eat them, so have a small bowl at hand. Reg. \$26.95/lb

**\$19.95 LB THIS WEEK**

# DAD'S ROOT BEER

I'm thinking that there is no better time to have a deal on Root Beer, and why not Dad's? This is old-time stuff, a lot like most dads; this according to my kids. One thing that I know is that old-time dads like Root Beer Floats, just as much as the new-time kids that hang out at my house. I'm thinking that you'll need a lot of this. It disappears fast. Case of 24.

**\$29.99 THIS WEEK**

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

NAPPA SALAD.....to make this we use shredding Chinese Cabbage (Nappa), some chopped green onions, toasted California Almonds, toasted Sesame Seeds, some dried chow mein noodles, all dressed up with a sweet and sour rice vinegar and soya dressing. Reg. \$1.89/100g

**1/2 OFF THIS WEEK**

ALSO..... COCONUT SHRIMP...these are medium sized shrimp, breaded in the coconut style, and deep fried. They will be

**99¢ EACH THIS WEEK**

AND..... The Kitchen Cooks tell me that we'll have lots of fresh Halibut on the go, lots of Quiche for the men who eat whatever they want, and a good selection of Beef Tenderloins in a Mushroom Demi-glaze which will be available. We should have you covered if you don't want to spend too much time in the kitchen.

# WHAT'S BAKING! THIS WEEK

We all know that dads usually appreciate a fave dessert, and I think we've got most of the bases covered here at the 'Grocer'. A couple of things that we're making extra this week are.....

BANANA CREAM PIES.....these have a homemade pastry crust, real vanilla custard (not from powder), freshly sliced ripe bananas and fresh whipped cream. 9" size. Regular.....\$14.95 each

CHOCOLATE BANANA CAKE.....this is a bundt cake that is a swirl of chocolate and banana with chocolate chunks and a chocolate glaze. 8" size. Regular.....\$17.95 each

RASPBERRY PIES.....we get the beauty Royal Raspberries from Whittamore's Farm during the height of the season and freeze them right away so that we can do stuff like this. These are the 9" size, with a pastry, either baked or, if you like the aroma at home, frozen but ready to bake. Regular.....\$13.95 each

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

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY JUNE 20<sup>TH</sup>

Hours:

Mon. 10:00-7:00 ~ Tues.-Thurs. 9:00-7:00 ~ Fri. 9:00-7:00

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

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