

Far from speechless in Lemonville

I don't profess to be a speaker. Not a public speaker.

Sure, I can carry on a conversation about issues of personal interest like hockey and baseball, even politics, but when it comes to expressing myself in front of a live audience, I grow weak at the knees.

This dilemma could possibly be solved by joining Stouffville's Toastmaster's Club. I'm told this organization has produced many outstanding orators.

Might be worth a try. Strange isn't it how some individuals can debate topics of profound intensity around a table at Tim Hortons, yet wilt like violets when placed behind a podium.

We've all heard solutions to this dilemma - convince yourself you know more than your listeners, look out over everyone's head or pretend those in the audience are all in the nude.

So far, none of these has worked for me.

In all honesty, I envy speakers with the ability to stand up, even at a moment's notice and deliver addresses without notes.

World leaders like Winston Churchill and John Kennedy could do it. President Barack Obama can do it. So could John Diefenbaker. So can Stephen Harper.

It's a skill few people possess.

Including me.

It was with this menacing shadow hanging over my head that I hesitatingly responded to an invitation last month from former town councillor Margot Marshall.

"We'd like you to come to Lemonville and speak at a meeting of our United Church Women," she said. "The date is Feb. 9 and the time is 1:30 p.m., or whenever you can make it."

The request caught me off guard, so much so, I struggled to think of excuses.

However, the additive "whenever you can make it," left me little wiggle-room.

"I'm a school crossing guard," I spluttered, "my noon-hour shift ends at 1:05 and begins again at 2:40. Considering the drive over and back, this



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

doesn't give me much time. I can't be late."

Margot, having heard all the tall tales in her stint behind the bench, refused to let me off the hook.

"We're flexible," she said, "we'll stop our meeting when you're ready to start. You can speak as long as you like, as short as you like and leave whenever you wish."

"It's an honour," I replied, perspiration dripping off the end of my nose, "thanks for asking."

But what should I talk about? My growing up years? My first job at Eaton's? My second job in a car wash? I finally settled on the only thing I know anything about - journalism. It was a risk I had to take.

On this day of destiny, the weight of responsibility rested heavily on my head. This condition wasn't lessened by the numbers of cars parked outside the church and the large contingent of women seated inside.

This, in itself, was quite amazing. Here in a little country hamlet of 250, were 25 people, one-tenth of the community's population, gathered together on a Wednesday afternoon to hear someone who, two weeks previous, had no idea what he was going to say.

"They're surely expecting Stephen Harper," I said to myself.

They weren't. But the warm welcome did include a presidential hug that not even our prime minister could have anticipated. Plus generous applause at the end.

I may take me on the road!

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 60 years.

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

Just like the soup, there will be two choices of "What's for Dinner". The first is from the Unionville Public School Cookbook, and it's 'Everyone's Favourite Macaroni and Cheese'. This recipe is supplied by the Worrall family, and will be ready-to-go when you are, from the deli.

The second choice is from our frozen section, and it's our Lamb Curry. What we use to make this are chunks of lamb shoulder that have been floured and browned, then long-simmered in a fairly mild curry sauce which is made with some mango chutney, as well as other 'spices'. Serves 2-3

Regular \$19.95

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 the reason that we'll have these for quite a while at the peak of their quality. The bonus this week is that they are in full pints, and that they are organic.

RAINBOW TROUT FILETS

These come fresh, and are sold au naturel, or in a marinade that has canola, lemon and dill - and black pepper. These are great either raw, fried, baked in foil, or poached in the micro. Be on the lookout for the wee bones, they are easily removed once you get the hang of it. What will go well with these is some of our new crop mini potatoes, perhaps with a bit of butter.

Reg. \$9.95/LB

25% OFF THIS WEEK

S-CHEDDAR SAUSAGES

These are a thrill from the grill. They are made with nicely seasoned coarsely-ground pork and lots of grated old cheddar. You may want to let them cool for just a bit as the cheese retains a little more heat than you might think. Delicious!

Reg. \$5.99/LB

25% OFF THIS WEEK

SOUP'S ON!

We'll have two soups on feature this week; the first being a fresh one made at the store, using Roasted Red Peppers and Tomatoes. The cast of supporting characters is... sweet onions, potatoes (pureed), garlic, cream, chicken stock and 'spices'.

1 Litre Size
Reg \$7.99 ea.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

From the frozen section, we'll have our Corn Chowder. To make this, we use chicken stock (once again), the corn of course, sweet onions, potatoes (pureed), celery, red peppers, our bacon and 'spices'. It's a pretty hearty soup.

900 ml size
Reg \$6.99 ea.

25% OFF THIS WEEK AS WELL

BREADED 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 \$2.49 each

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

SINGAPORE NOODLE SALAD

We make this with vermicelli noodles, some chopped fresh green onions, diced red peppers, some oyster sauce, a bit of curry and a spark of hot sauce. It is regularly \$1.29/100g, but this week it's...

1/2 PRICE THIS WEEK

ROAST BEEF

Most folk like a nice roast beef sandwich, and this week it will go down just a bit easier. We start with inside rounds of beef, we square them a bit so they'll cook evenly, we trim them clean, and slow roast them till they are on the rare side.

Reg. \$2.99 /100g

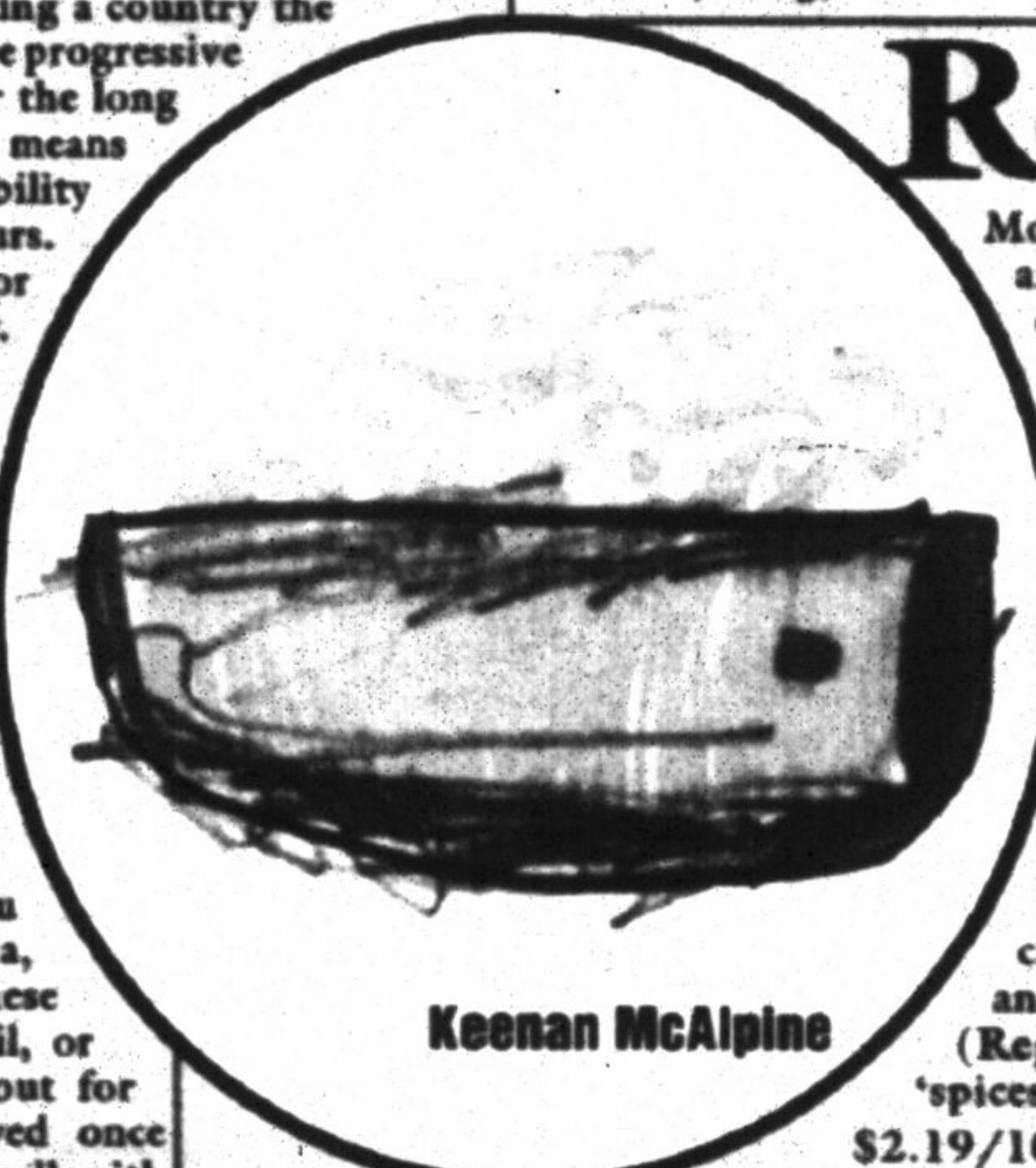
1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

SUNDRIED TOMATO HUMUS

We make this in our little kitchen using chick peas of course, sun-dried tomatoes, and a generous amount of Parmesan (Reggiano) and 'spices'.

\$2.19/100g

25% OFF THIS WEEK



Keenan McAlpine

WHAT'S BAKING THIS WEEK

Lemon; refreshing, beautiful lemon - more especially those items that use lemon curd as the most important flavour-enhancing ingredient. Now, except when I am on holidays, it's me (Evan) that writes these ads. To do this accurately, and tell the whole, truthful story, I rely on the notes of others, and in this case Jaana. Sometimes her notes are a bit vague, and I usually fill in the blanks, or even change things up a bit if I get going on an item. In her defense, she now writes very detailed notes; in fact, so detailed, there is very little wiggle room - so today, I will just publish her notes, and they are...

"We use a lot of lemon curd in our baking. It takes a lot of work and expense to make. First, you have to zest and juice a lot of lemons, then separate a lot of eggs for the yolks and then cook it gently and for along time on a double boiler. Last but not least we add an obscene amount of butter (the expensive part, but we only use butter for most things in our baking). If you worry about calories, when using lemon curd, a little goes a long way. Lemon juice and rind gives an item fresh taste. But I like to use lemon curd in addition, to give depth and richness in these items.

Evan's Soft Lemon Cookies - These are made from the same batter as lemon loaves, with lemon curd swirled in. We then dip them in dark chocolate and pack them in our octagon containers or in pretty bags tied with ribbon (great for gift giving) Reg \$7.95 container

Lemon Curd Cake - Light white cake layered with lemon curd and lemon butter cream. Reg. \$14.95

Lemon Curd Pavlovas - Light, airy meringue shell, crispy on the outside, soft and marshmallowy inside (also fat-free) filled with lemon-curd spiked whipped cream and diced strawberries. Reg. \$4.99

Lemon Mousse Cakes - Lemon mousse layered with lemon curd and white cake, topped with a cloud of refreshing light lemon mousse. Reg. \$22.95

Lemon Cheesecakes - My all-time favourite. Smooth and delicate. Freshness of lemon combined with the richness of lemon curd. In a shortbread crust, topped with lemon glaze, candied lemon peel and (a) couple of strawberries. Been making the same recipe for 35 years (yikes!) Reg. \$22.95 (large only)

All these items will be featured this week at...

- Bravo Jaana! -

25% OFF While Supplies Last!



SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH

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

548 Carlton Road, Unionville

940-1770

www.thevillagegrocer.com

