

# Nature-loving son left us too early

It's not supposed to be this way. No child should pre-decease his parents. But, life isn't always fair. It happens. And it happened to us March 8. We lost our second oldest son.



## Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

Four days previous, instead of blowing out 47 candles on a birthday cake, Paul lay unconscious on life support in Markham Stouffville Hospital, the victim of a massive stroke from which he'd never recover.

Paramedics and firefighters did their best. So did doctors and nurses. So did his parents, his brother and sisters. But it wasn't to be. Paul left without even saying goodbye.

But, hopefully, he knew we were there, through the days and into the nights, continually whispering prayers of support during vigils around his bed.

It's a crisis no family should endure.

William Paul entered this world March 4, 1964, at York County Hospital in Newmarket. He was a robust child, full of energy and fun. He loved playing tricks on his siblings and did so at every opportunity. Hockey and softball were favourite sports.

None of us will ever forget a particular pee-wee play-off game in which he scored the winning goal. There was great celebration on his family's side of the rink.

Whatever he accomplished, both athletically and academically, represented a challenge. For, from an early age, his efforts were plagued by asthma, a condition requiring treatments in hospitals on both sides of the border. On two occasions, we came close to losing him. Fast action by firefighters and paramedics saved his life.

Thanks to drug prescriptions and diet restrictions, this medical condition improved until, except for seasonal setbacks, he was virtually asthma free. But he kept a portable puffer within easy reach.

While his participation in sports was somewhat constrained, interest in the NHL knew no bounds. He was a huge Maple Leaf fan. His hoots and hollers following every Toronto goal would almost raise the roof. He also loved the Blue Jays.

As with most teenagers, family trips, once anticipated holiday highlights, became a little bit tiresome. So, with his own money, he purchased a motorcycle. He and his Honda Nighthawk traveled thousands of Ontario miles.

But his greatest enjoyment was a simple past-time of walking in the woods. Almost daily, weather permitting, he trekked the trails through the Durham Forest in Uxbridge, continually keeping track of birds and animals along the way. When detections proved indecisive, he'd turn to his personal computer, and mine, for assistance. They never let him down.

Paul's wood walks also had hazards. On one occasion, he unknowingly ventured too close to a nesting hawk. The female, in a defensive mood, attacked, striking him on the head. This occurrence, frightening to some, only intensified his desire to learn more.

Paul returned to his Stouffville home at least once a week. His first words always were: "Had many birds lately?" I'd give him my list and he'd give me his.

Priority exchange gifts every Christmas were, you guessed it - bird seed.

These and other anecdotes were told and re-told during a family service at Stouffville's O'Neill Funeral Home, Sunday.

As a further tribute to Paul's naturalist affinities, a second celebration is planned this spring at a site in Durham Forest. We, as a family, can only hope some of his favourite birds and animals will be watching.

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

# - CORNED - BEEF PEARLS

We've made a good-size batch of our corned beef for this week. We buy large size beef brisket points to make these. We trim them lean, cure them in a savoury brine, and cut them to size. I love corned beef with cabbage. Not only will we have that dish available on the Ready-To-Go counter, we'll have recipes for you to take home - AND - we'll supply the cabbage FREE to go with it. (Minimum 2lb piece) It's a good deal all around!

Reg. \$5.99/lb

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

Thank goodness that there is another side to this world, otherwise we couldn't have these pears at any other time than fall. To me, and my rather spoiled-up family (only in a food sense), these are the pears to have. Part of the experience of enjoying a good pear is to plan the ripening, and to be sure that you are present at that key moment - not that your prize pear might fall into the wrong, but equally appreciative hands. From Argentina.

**99¢ LB THIS WEEK**

# - DRISCOLL - RASPBERRIES - PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND - MUSSELS

Life evolves, and so does the produce business. It wasn't that long ago that you could only get Chilean raspberries at this time of year. Fall and winter varieties are now available year-round - and, to me, the Driscoll variety is the best. We pay a bit more (sometimes a lot more) to get these, but I think that you'll find them really good value - and delicious too! From Mexico.

**\$2.99 CONTAINER**

These are cultivated (so no sand) and come fresh in 2lb bags. Although the customary way to cook these is to steam them in a broth, a beer broth works good too!

**\$4.99 EACH THIS WEEK**

# WHAT'S BLOOMIN'!

Gentlemen, when is the best time to give your lady flowers? Any woman will tell you, they appreciate it most when there's no reason at all! So NOW is the time to get those valuable "points"! With this in mind we'll be offering our premium quality roses for just \$20 a dozen this week. Last week our miniature phalaenopsis orchid special was so successful that we sold out. For those who missed out we have a new shipment of the same little beauties and they will be just \$10 again this week.



# WHAT'S COOKIN' AT THE DELI!

Firstly, we'll start with our weekly salad feature, and it is our Creamy Coleslaw. We slice up the cabbages, and shred some carrots in as well, then dress it all up to make it creamy and tangy. Regular \$1.19/100g

**1/2 PRICE THIS WEEK**

We'll be making a couple of stews this week, one in the traditional Irish style with lamb, and the other being a beef stew made with Guinness. It's what happens when your wife finds your stash of favourite beers when she's indisposed toward you. These will be available in the 4x5 foils, and they'll be featured at \$5.95 and \$7.95 each respectfully.

We'll be making a batch of Split-Pea and Ham Soup. It will be available fresh in the counter opposite the milk. (As I write this, I'm thinking that as we move shortly, you'll all have to relearn the layout of the new store soon - we'll keep you posted as the time approaches.) Anyway, the soup will be \$5.95 as well, and will serve at least two, and maybe three.

# FRESH ASPARAGUS

You know that spring is in the works when the asparagus is available from north of the equator - in this case, from Mexico. It's easy cooking that tastes great.

**\$1.99 LB THIS WEEK**

# BEEF BARLEY SOUP

Our feature frozen soup is Beef-Barley. I love the heartiness of this soup - it's got great flavour - and lots of beef brisket point. (In fact, that's the reason that we've got lots this week, because we make Corned Beef from the other part) Serves 3-4 Regular \$6.99

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

# - APPLE-ALLSPICE - SAUSAGES

These are made with our coarsely-ground Omega pork with a generous amount of apple cider as the moisture, some finely-diced apples, and finished with just enough allspice to notice. It's a really nice dinner sausage, perhaps served with our scalloped potatoes. Reg. \$4.99/lb

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

# WHAT'S BAKING - THIS WEEK -

This is the week that we go bananas, in a yellow sense, unlike the green sense that we and most Irish men (or would-be Irishmen) went last week. We'll be baking...

**Banana Cream Pies** - Made with our luscious custard mixed with sliced fresh bananas in a pastry shell. Topped with whipped cream and banana chips. We'll be making two sizes, \$5.95 and \$14.95

**Banana Bread** - We'll be highlighting two of our supporting characters in our banana bread cast - Blueberry Banana and Banana Date-Pecan. \$5.99 One size only, regular banana bread \$4.49

**Banana Cake 'Loretta'** - The bakery folk cringe a bit when they present new items, often with a name that reads like an ingredient list. I shorten it as a rule, just so it fits in the ad, and in this case it's named after the cute and cuddly Loretta who plays the bakery counter. It's made with three layers of rich banana cake filled with toasted pecans, caramel, and cream cheese icing. Further, it's finished with cream cheese icing and drizzled with caramel and the requisite chocolate. Two sizes will be available (unlike the real Loretta), \$14.95 and \$22.95.

**Banana Bran Muffins** - Made with ripe, sweet bananas, wheat germ, some whole wheat flour and bran - and naturally sweetened with honey. Reg \$1.69

**Mini Banana Cheesecakes** - Made with banana slices which have been caramelized with rum and brown sugar on a ginger and nutmeg-spiced graham bottom. They are then baked with, are you ready for this, a cinnamon-scented vanilla cream cheese mixture, then topped with ganache. Reg \$3.49

Now, all these items will be featured this week at...

**25% OFF THIS WEEK**

While They Last!

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY, MARCH 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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