

Shriners bringing rodeo to York

For the first time in more than a decade, the RAM Rodeo Tour is roping in York Region with its 2011 championship in East Gwillimbury.

Rameses Hillbilly Shriners — including 12 from Whitchurch-Stouffville — are behind the event.

The bucking, broncing and bull-riding excitement starts Oct. 16 for a three-day show at the Royal Canadian Riding Academy.

The show will feature more than 200 cowboys and cowgirls competing in seven traditional rodeo events, including bull riding, saddle bronc riding, team roping, bareback bronc riding, steer wrestling, calf roping and barrel racing.

There will also be special performances, including pole bending, junior races and ladies breakaway roping.

And don't forget about the rodeo clown and trick riding show.

The championship will feature the best competitors in Ontario who placed at the 14 competitions leading up next month's event, RAM Rodeo producer Ross Millar said.

"There is a lot at stake here," he said. "There are several degrees of danger. This is the best way to see the athleticism of the bulls, broncs and horses. And the power of a bull is fierce. It is like getting hit by a truck."

East Gwillimbury, just north of Whitchurch-Stouffville, is an ideal location, he added.

"This is a gateway to the farming community. Ontario has the fourth-largest horse market in North America, so this makes sense."

Proceeds from the event will support the more than 20 Shriners hospitals for children.

THINGS TO DO

Purchase your tickets in advance and receive a free child's ticket.

For more information or for tickets, visit ontariorodeo.com

—Amanda Persico

Food, coats collected today

Today's the day to give, Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The community's third annual Thanksgiving Family Food Drive is on.

The collection of food and money for the Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank is taking place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the new municipal offices on Sandiford Drive, just south of McDonald's.

Volunteers are also collecting used adults and children's coats in good condition.

The clothing drive was the brainchild of Mayor Wayne Emmerson, who also launched the food drive in 2009.

The coats will be distributed to the needy by area agencies.

The food bank relies on the drive to fill its shelves with canned and dry goods for the winter season.

Donations of cash, which can be turned into fresh food, are also appreciated.

—Jim Mason



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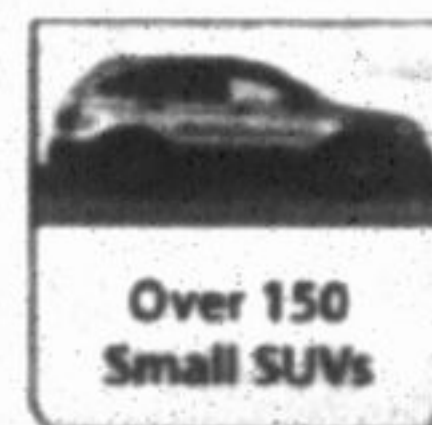
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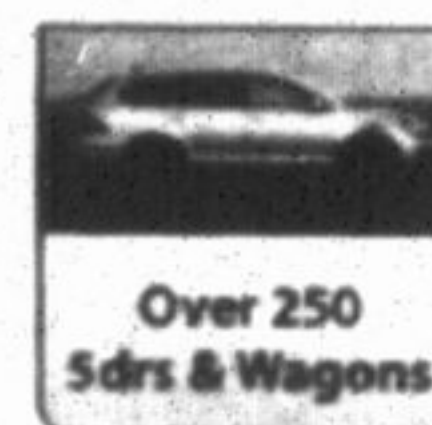
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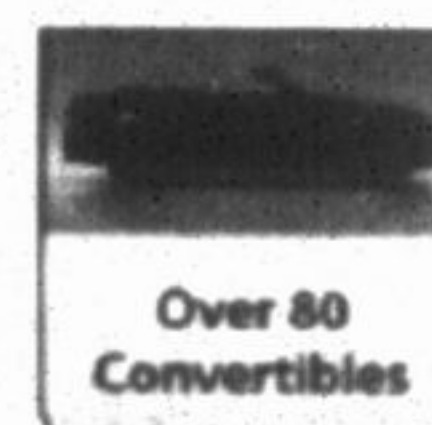
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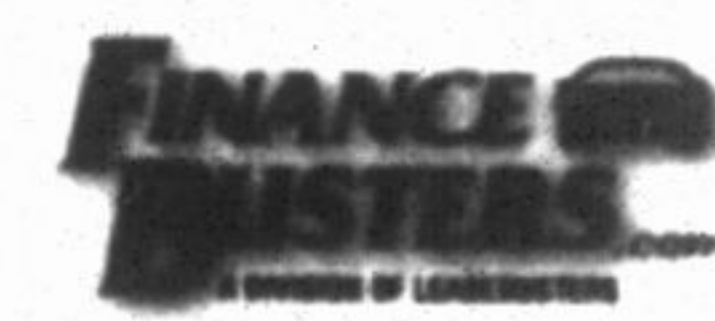
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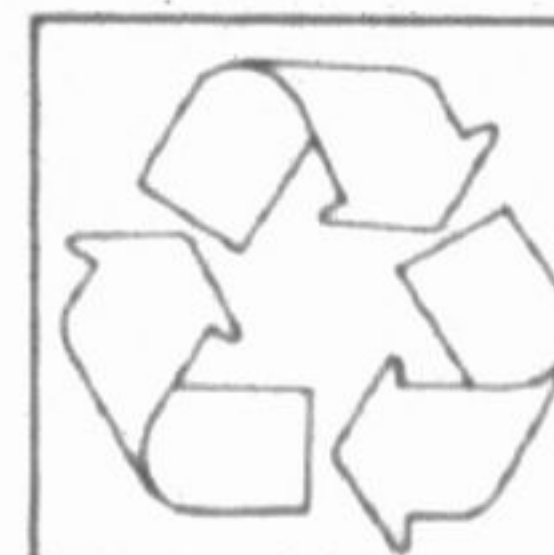
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