

First-prize Grinch no Christmas thief

This wasn't the Grinch that stole Christmas. This was the Grinch that created Christmas — Stouffville's Christmas parade.

Kyle Walls, in a main character role, not only captivated his audience but also the judges as he rode the Betz Pools theatre float to the mayor's Best in Show award.

It was the firm's third parade prize in three years, repeating what they achieved in 2010-plus a Best Theme accolade in 2009.

Describing the entry as "a team effort", staff design expert Sharon Bauder credited Carol-Ann Betz with the Grinch idea.

"It was a product of her imagination," she said. Construction was undertaken by chief elves Keith Betz and Al Irwin.

Planning for the float began immediately after Halloween, as soon as the parade theme was announced. However, the truck and trailer couldn't be pressed into service until the 11th hour because it was needed on the job. Having it cleaned and polished was a last-minute effort, she said.

No, winning the best in show award wasn't the company's main objective. "We wanted to excite the children," Sharon said.

They did just that — and the judges, too.

Brass band has openings

Whitchurch-Stouffville has its own brass band — a brass marching band.

It's an off-shoot of 707 Marion Orr Air Cadet squadron, sponsored by Stouffville Branch 459 of the Royal Canadian Legion. The squadron's commanding officer is Captain Scott Harvey. The Band Officer is Ronald Chan. His assistant is Petty Officer Maggie Birch. Thousands welcomed the 11-member group during the Dec. 1 Kinsmen Santa Claus Parade, their gleaming instruments backed by uniform blue, playing Christmas carols that everyone knew.

Cheers and applause resounded along the route for the boys and girls, aged 12 to 18 years.

"We're looking for more," said Captain Harvey, "particularly girls." Practices are held Mondays from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at Harry Bowes Public School. Instrumental familiarity isn't a prerequisite.

All instruments are provided thanks to a donation from The Trillium Foundation plus support from the Department of National Defense, the Air Cadet League of Canada and fundraising.

"We try to keep costs as close to zero as possible," said Captain Harvey. The annual registration fee is \$25.

Initiated just over a year ago, the band took part in a recent Remembrance cemetery service. There's talk of participation in the Strawberry Festival.

While most band members live in Whitchurch-Stouffville, there's no boundary restriction, with some coming from Uxbridge, Claremont and Mt. Albert.

The band has instruments for 18.

He voiced praise for assistance provided by Branch 459 of the Royal Canadian Legion.

"The executive said yes; a general meeting said yes, and that was it," he said. "They've been wonderful."

Captain Harvey also paid tribute to the town.

"This is an amazing community," he said, "we're proud to be a part." In his many years of cadet leadership, he's never experienced anything quite like it.

The reception accorded 707 squadron and its marching band Dec. 1 echoed the compliment.



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

PORK BACK RIBS

We'll have our Back Ribs on sale this week at the meat counter, and hopefully we'll have enough! I say this because we've run out of the meat feature a bit early the last couple of weeks. What makes our back ribs so good? First, we buy very marbled pork — that streakiness makes the meat more tender and juicy. Secondly, we don't have the insipid little tail hanging from the one end (you would normally pay full price for it if you shopped elsewhere). Thirdly, our pork is not 'seasoned', which means that it's not cut from pork loins which have been injected with water and phosphate to make them juicier (just imagine the thinking behind that); and lastly, our price is very competitive because we cut our own pork. So think ribs this week, perhaps with our own Jack Daniels B.B.Q. Sauce, or any other. We have lots to choose from! Reg. \$7.95/lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

ELEGANT HAMPERS

These abound now and they can be tailored to your particular needs — both for individuals or corporate clients. See either Robert or me in the store and we'll look after your needs. To see examples, click on our website www.thevillagegrocer.com

WHAT'S COOKING AT THE DELI

We'll start with soup this week, and it's Clam Chowder, New England Style, with cream, chopped baby clams, sweet onions, carrots, celery, white wine, potatoes and 'spices'.

Reg. \$9.99/container. **25% off this week.**

— AND —

We'll follow that with a salad, in this case Black Bean Couscous. We use lots of black beans of course, crumbled feta, zucchini, pine nuts, lemon juice, red peppers and 'spice'. This is a lighter, and yet refreshing, salad. Reg. \$1.89/100g.

1/3 off this week.

— AND NOT DONE YET... —

We'll be making some Breaded Grey Sole Fillets. These have a crumb and egg coating, salt and pepper and are fried golden. You'll be able to get them at the prepared food counter, featured at \$2.99/100g, or for Friday lunch at the Café.

\$2.99 / 100g

— AND —

Our frozen soup feature will be Cream of Cauliflower. This is made with local in-season cauliflower, Yukon potatoes, cream, white wine, celery and 'spices'. Reg. \$7.95/ea.

25% off this week.

— AND —

We've made our Champagne Dressing available for shrimp. My hockey buddies love these shrimps as a change room 'après game' dish, if you can visualize that! Use this to marinate your shrimp, maybe with a wedge of lemon, and you'll be outside the shrimp sauce box — and they're delicious!

\$2.99 / 250ml

— AND, LASTLY —

...and you'll be wondering what to do with your left-over shrimp sauce; here's what I do: Put a teaspoon of it in your Caesar (that's the drink) and it'll be jacked-up to a new level!

ORGANIC NAVAL ORANGES

These are size '72' seedless navels, which would make them 'medium'. They are a good eating orange and are certified organic. Product of U.S.A.

99¢ lb. THIS WEEK

BAKED BRIE

These will be available starting this weekend and right through to New Year's Eve. They can be had either already baked or ready-to-bake. Flavours are Brandied Cranberry, Caramelized Onion, Candied Nuts, Mrs. Ball's (peach chutney) and Apple Cinnamon. We use our own puff pastry and 454 gram brie, and voilà!

\$22.95 each

CHEESE PLEASE 1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

We'll be featuring our English White Cheddar with Caramelized Onions. This cheese is great as a nibble or sliced on a roast beef sandwich, or ... whatever! Reg. \$5.89/100g.

CHRISTMAS BAKING UPDATE!

The complete list of what will be available is on our website

www.thevillagegrocer.com

and there are a couple of notes to help with your ordering!

WHAT'S FOR LUNCH?

Grethe and her troop will be making Lox Ness Monster Sandwiches! These are bagels with smoked salmon, fresh cream cheese, organic baby spinach, cucumber slices and sweet red onions. They can be had with either Pacific salmon, or my fave, smoked Atlantic salmon.

Pacific salmon will be **\$6.99 each**

Atlantic salmon will be **\$7.99**

...and if you'd like to supersize it with amazing soup ... add **99¢**

What a lunch!

WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

We're doing Shepherd's Pie for dinner from the frozen section this week. These are the 8x5 foils that usually serve 3 or 4, and to me, this is comfort food at it's very best! Reg. \$12.95 each.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

CHRISTMAS CACTI

We'll be having a number of these in hanging baskets; a format that is easily transferred to a planter or more permanent pot. We will have care instructions for these as well. What makes it a Christmas Cactus? It's because that's when they usually come into flower! 10 inch size.

\$9.95 each

SMOKED TURKEYS

We make amazing Smoked Turkeys — probably because we start with our amazing fresh turkeys. These are becoming increasingly popular, especially with our Asian customers. It seems that we always make a few less than what we need, which causes a few problems. If you would like one, it must be ordered in advance — before Dec. 18th — because it takes a week to get them ready. Secondly, be sure that you specify "smoked turkey" otherwise it goes on the list for regular turkey. It's easy, really! **Order deadline is December 18th.**

FREE RANGE TURKEYS

We've sold these amazing turkeys for the last 26 years — and I've written all that can be written about them. So at risk of boring you folk who have read this for the last 20 years or so, there are a couple of points that I'd like to make to our newer customers. Firstly, our turkeys eat lots of grain and corn — as much or as little as they want, because they run loose. Add to this a gentler de feathering process which leaves more of the natural flavour and the odd feather with the turkey, and you'll have a turkey that will exceed your expectations for flavour and moistness, without the aid of the artificial enhancement that Butterballs and some other pre-basted turkeys receive. They come with a little 'pop-up' thermometer as well, just so you know when they're done, which is often a bit quicker than you might expect. They range in size from 14-20 lbs, then from 23-28 lbs... and just so you know, the difference between a 'Hen' and a 'Tom' is more than just size. The better-eating turkeys are the larger 'Hens' which are usually 17-20 lbs. In fact, a 'Hen' of this size will usually have more — and better meat — than a smaller 'Tom'. They are...

\$34.99 lb.

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY, DEC. 16th

Hours: Mon. — Fri. 8:00-8:00

Sat. 8:00-6:00 — Sun. 9:00-6:00

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