

Good, bad and some ugly in '12

It's that time of year — an opportunity to reflect on the good, the bad and the ugly over the past 12 months. Our choices follow:

The good

- The illuminated walkway from Stouffville's Main Street to the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment — Nineteen on the Park.

- Improved busyness of Stouffville's downtown.
- The colourful Freedom of the Town ceremony hosted by Oak Ridges-Markham MP Paul Calandra.

- The unique street re-alignment plan linking Park Drive to Hoover Park Boulevard and Burkholder Street.

- Favourable weather that saw 75,000 people trek through the turnstiles at Markham Fair.

- The locked-door policy at Summitview School, a practice existing before the Newtown tragedy.

- The major refurbishing project at Card's Appliances and Televisions, Stouffville's former fire station.

- Success of community fundraising events organized by MP Calandra.

- Stouffville's enhanced exit/entrance between Hwy. 48 and the Ninth Line.

- Karen Cockburn's brilliant trampoline performance at the London Olympics.

- The mayor's charity golf tournament that raised thousands of dollars for town programs and projects.

- The Pillars event honouring six Stouffville-Markham physicians.

- Stouffville's 2012 Terry Fox Run led by Sandy Schell-Kennedy that raised more than \$140,000.

- The community Christmas lunch at EastRidge Church.

- The Springvale Boys, recipients of the 2012 Music Town, Ontario award.

- Matthew Eeuwes, recipient of the 2012 Student Music Scholarship award. Participation by Glad Park and Harry Bowes public schools that permitted the annual concert to proceed.

- O'Neill Funeral Home's December memorial service.

- Our long-overdue York Regional Police station.
- Ongoing community activities within Branch 459 at the new Royal Canadian Legion hall.

- Added parking spaces for GO train commuters.
- Stouffville-Markham area recipients of Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee medals.

The bad

- Too few bungalows in new developments.
- Failure to observe yield signs at roundabouts.

- Failure to install automatic doors and auditorium railings at Nineteen on the Park.

- Noncompliance with reduced speed limits in school zones.

- Street names that change on road extensions.
- Lack of traffic lights at Main and Church streets.

- Demolition of the open-air swimming pool, a once-treasured gift to the town by Arthur Latham.

- Lack of a major grocery store downtown.
- Imposition of a two-year freeze on teacher salaries by the province and the discreditable reaction to the teacher salary freeze by their unions.

- Removal of the Memorial Park toboggan slide.
- Failure to erect safety barricades around Stouffville's several lagoons.

The ugly

- Stouffville's rat-infested Co-op building, considered by some to be a heritage site.



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

A BIG, GIANT HEARTFELT THANKS

What a year it's been for us; with the first full year operating in our new digs, and now with 27 years under our belt, it's been an amazing adventure. To be sure, we are still doing the odd job around the store, to revise and modify some of the initial construction work — and admittedly, some of our 'best ideas' didn't work that well — but all that is largely behind us now.

The first change that you'll see in our store is a fresh pizza operation as part of our deli and cafe. The plan here is that you can order when you arrive and it will be ready to go when you leave, either fully done or ready-to-bake at home, and you'll be able to get slices (or whole ones) at the cafe for lunch.

The second change will be our new meat counters, which are now ready to go. We'll have to close the department for a day to get them installed and adjusted and we'll be retiring our old ones after 20 years of very hard labour.

The third change will be a reconfiguration of our frozen entrée section to become more like it was in the old store — and at the same time we'll get another of those multi-shelved dairy counters which will help out with more ready-to-go space. With these changes, we will be moving the store management office down onto the main floor — our feeling here is that we need to be a bit more accessible. By the time all this is done it will be plant season again outside — always a fun time for me!

The big thanks is for your patronage throughout another year and most definitely for all the kindness that you have extended to the charity adventures we embark upon. As you can imagine, we get quite a number of folk from the trade perusing our store and our 'business model' and inevitably they ask about community involvement and charity. They are usually somewhat surprised that there is not a big 'decision' or 'formula' that we use — we help out for selfish reasons really — it just feels good to us.

And lastly ... the most frequently asked question of the year, "How has _____ affected your business?" In answer, I will say that they are a very big company and for a reason. What they do has resonated with a certain segment of the North American market and they are good marketers. But, for the most part, they don't do what we do, and very often, they can't do what we do. It's the combination of things that we do — the whole experience — that sets us apart — and I am really glad to see that you appreciate this as well — so, a really heartfelt thanks from our big family here!

TILAPIA FILLETS

If you are headed south for a break and your bikini is looking like it shrunk a bit, get some of this fish. It's a low-fat fish and depending on how you prepare it, it could be part of a low-fat dinner. We'll help with a couple of recipes but you'll need to do the rest!

Reg. \$10.95/lb. **25% OFF THIS WEEK**
P.S. Have a wonderful trip!

HONEY GARLIC SAUSAGES

This is actually a fairly mild sausage with a long and smooth flavour, especially if you like garlic. During these winter days it's not always possible to find your BBQ under the snow, so these can be roasted in the oven and served as a dinner sausage — or even cut into a pasta or stir fry.

It's all good! **25% OFF THIS WEEK**
Reg. \$4.99/lb.

FLORIDA STRAWBERRIES

After what already seems like a long winter in the berry business, we've got some pretty good ones coming from Florida. On any of my golfing trips to Florida, I invariably check out the food stores, and I NEVER see good berries on the counter — and the ones they have cost way more than what we sell them for. This week we've got their good ones, yet again, and the price is better than theirs, that's for sure! Clamshells!

\$1.99 THIS WEEK

CITRUS SALE

This is a great time of the year for citrus. Although it's available pretty much year-round now through shipping, I think the product from North America is just as good as it gets, and it takes a lot less time to get to us. Not only do we have nice, premium-size Navel Oranges, from California, we've also got my family's fave, Cara-Cara Oranges, also sweet and colourful, from California as well. Further, Moro Oranges, which are blood oranges and like the originals, are a bit tart. Tangelos, which are a more pear-shaped orange with a looser skin, very juicy and pretty darn sweet. In addition to this, we'll have some nice 32 size Florida Grapefruits which we've been enjoying at home.

All these will be on sale at **99¢/lb. THIS WEEK**
MIX & MATCH — Also, we will be expanding our fresh-squeezed repertoire to include these varieties.

MACARONI & CHEESE

To me this is Comfort food with a capital "C" — the adult version of K.D.! Our secret here is my mother-in-law, whose recipe this is. There's nothing like a farm girl in the kitchen if comfort food is on the menu. From our frozen kitchen we supply about 50 other stores around Ontario (and one in Quebec) and we publish a 'Top 20 List' for their ordering convenience. Our Mac & Cheese is #2 on the list, which won't surprise you once you sit down to a bowl of this.

Serves 2-3. **25% OFF THIS WEEK**
Reg. \$11.95/container.

WHAT'S BAKING THIS WEEK?

Christmas is over, but to cheer you up, we are baking with CHERRIES!

CHERRY PIES — We buy a lot of sour cherries when they are in season and freeze them to use in pies through-out the rest of the year. We used to make only lattice top cherry pies, but because of Cathy's love of streusel top pies, we have now started to make them too. Available freshly baked, or frozen ready-to-bake in our freezer, lattice or streusel top **\$12.95 each**

MINI CHERRY CHEESECAKES — Given the amount of cheesecakes we sold this Christmas, we thought maybe everybody is "cheesecaked-out", so we are making mini ones this week. These are sublime little morsels of goodness - graham crust, cheesecake, cooked cherry topping. Maybe you better get two, because they go down really easy. **\$3.99 each**

CHERRY LOAVES — Our ever-popular lemon loaf with an addition of dried cherries **\$5.99**

CHERRY MOUSSE CAKES — Rich chocolate cake layered with cooked cherry filling and a light cherry mousse. Finished with chocolate shavings and ganache. **\$22.95**

CHERRY TURNOVERS — Our beautiful, puff pastry filled with our cherry filling **\$3.49**

All these items are ... **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY, JAN. 6th

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8:00-8:00

Sat. 8:00-6:00 - Sun. 9:00-6:00

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