

Dog bites man: carrier's dilemma

I can see it now — a Pat Wheeler cartoon in an upcoming issue of The Sun-Tribune, portraying a terrified newspaper delivery guy, high-tailing it up Stouffville's Maystone Court, papers flying in all directions, with an aggressive yellow Lab in hot pursuit.

Since cartoonists are permitted to sometimes embellish reality, only part of this descriptive is true.

Yes, I was terrified. And yes, an aggressive yellow Lab had me in his sights. But I didn't run. I held my ground, knowing that, in a foot race, four legs would double the speed of two. Especially speed generated by an 83-year-old.

The result, a badly shredded mailbag and a tooth indentation on my thumb. Otherwise, excluding frayed nerves, I escaped unscathed.

Feb. 9, the date of the attack, was the worst delivery day this winter. Following a heavy snow storm the previous Friday, most residential entrances had yet to be cleared, including porches and steps. The entire eight-hour delivery was definitely a labour of love.

I commenced the route march at 8 a.m. and finished at 4 p.m. Maystone Court was the final leg of my journey with 20 of 150 drop-offs still to go. Then came the sudden "interruption".

The dog, not of an aggressive nature according to its owner, spotted me entering the driveway of a house some distance down the street and uttered a couple of "woofs". I accepted these as welcomes but soon learned they were warnings — warnings of what was to come. The minute I returned to the road, he galloped towards me, his teeth bared for battle.

"Back off," I yelled. He didn't.

"Stop," I hollered. He didn't.

Since the newspaper bag was a lone means of defense, I dropped it past my ankles knowing from previous experiences, one or both would be targets. They were. However, instead of biting into bone, he ripped into fabric, tearing a gaping hole in the sack.

Not satisfied with a mouthful of cloth, he lunged for a protective left hand, chomping through a new cowhide glove into a thumb. By then, the dog's master was on the scene. He apologized profusely and escorted the animal home, leaving me shaking in my shoes.

Most folks, to whom I've related the story, tend to dissect some kind of bizarre humour from my ordeal. "Was it dog bites man or man bites dog?" was the question heard more than a dozen times.

Such, however, was not the response from town bylaw and animal control officers. They took the matter seriously, offering several options, all of which I declined. I bare no grudge against the owner nor do I wish the family pet put down, even quarantined. Like some people, the dog was undoubtedly having a bad day.

That said, what's one's defense in such a situation? What should I do if it happens again?

My personal preference is a discharge of pepper spray. Unfortunately, I was told this means of protection, while permitted in the United States, is illegal in Canada. However, I also learned an investigating officer may consider leniency if the carrier can prove he used only "reasonable force".

"So, what would you suggest," I asked Denise Stephenson, a local animal control officer.

"A big stick", she advised.

"And what if I swing and miss?" I asked.

"Don't miss," she replied.



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

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

THIS WEEK is the continuation of Family Week for us and I am totally fortunate in that two of my kids (actually no longer kids) are helping me with this ad. It's reading week at university, so Thomas is home and it's now 'writing' week for him — little did he know! There are a few family faves of his in the store and now in this ad! The other help is from my daughter Kate, and it's her artwork as well as lots of guidance about her favourites. So ... it's family week, the sequel!

AUNT CAROL'S CLAM SAUCE

My aunt Carol's recipe for an old-time favourite that we've grown up with. Luscious, red and filling with just the perfect hint of garlic. We'll be packing the sauce in 500ml containers for your convenience all week. Bring it home with a package of our Rustichella linguine: you have my word, it won't disappoint! It will be available at the deli self-serve area. Featured at \$4.99/440ml container.

FILLETS OF PICKEREL

Whenever I think of Pickerel, I have a picture of my late aunt Lela in mind. We used to spend our summers at her large country home on the Sturgeon River, just downstream from Sturgeon Falls. She ran a campground on her farm that had river frontage which seemed like a mile, and when all her many chores were done she'd go out on the river and fish for pickerel. I think that she single-handedly depleted the river — no fish was safe! Pickerel was our meal of choice as she was a master in the kitchen as well. Nowadays, these mostly come from either Winnipeg or Lake Huron, since there are none left in the Sturgeon River! **Reg. \$17.95/lb.**

25% OFF THIS WEEK

TURKEY, RICE & VEG SOUP

Just before the Christmas break I was bedridden for a week with the worst bout of flu I've ever suffered through. Traditionally, chicken noodle soup gets all the glory when it comes to nursing the sickly back to good health, but that whole week it was this hearty soup which I relied on. I was almost contented to be sick, lying in my bed consuming this delicious soup with a can of gingerale every couple of hours. It's available frozen and it serves 1 sick person about 3 times! **Reg. \$7.95 each.**

25% OFF THIS WEEK

MAC & CHEESE

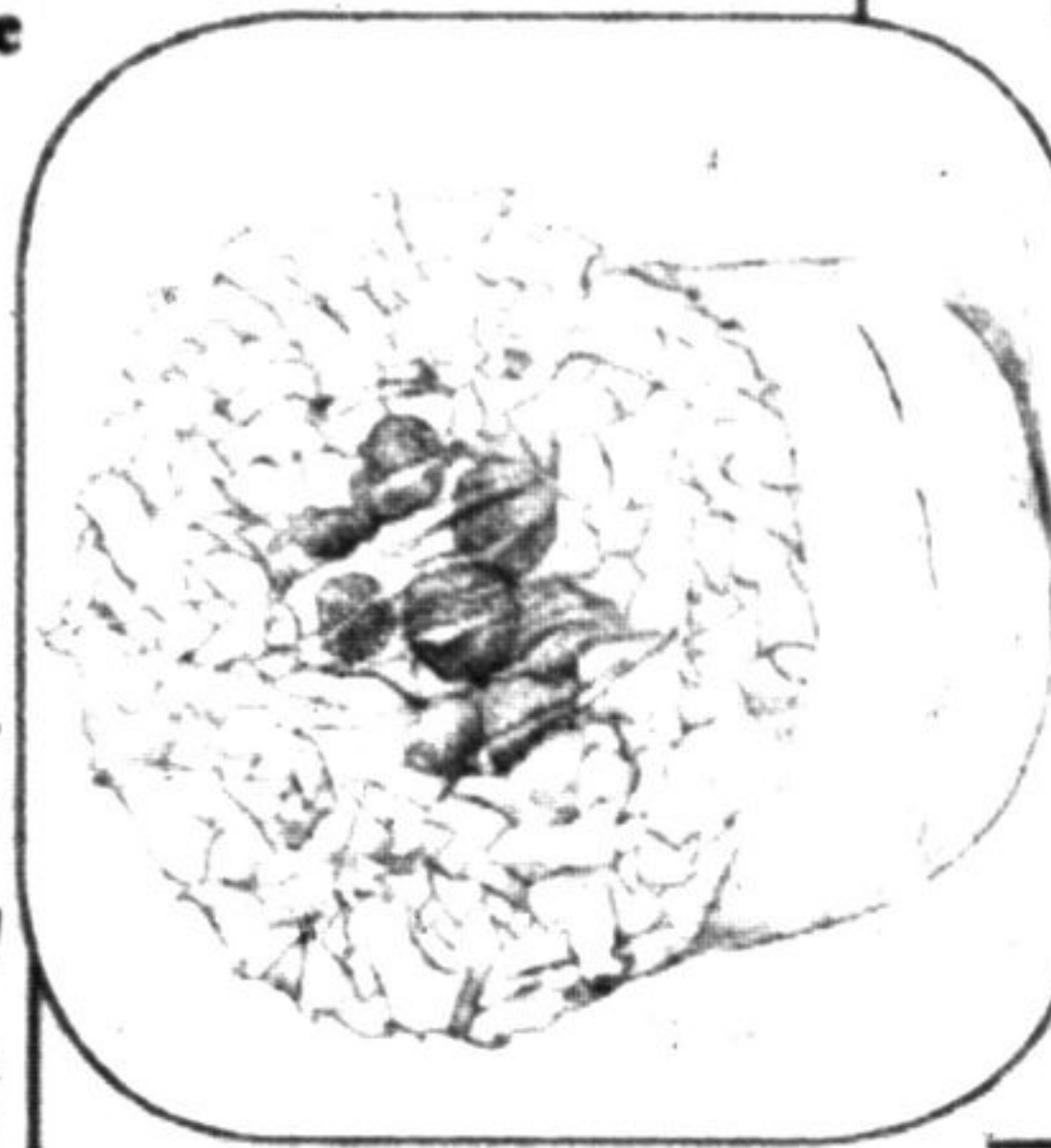
As a university student living on my own, I find that not enough can be said for convenience when it comes time for a meal. Every time I go back to school I load up on every frozen entrée I can lay my hands on before my mother inevitably proclaims, "You're going to have to pay for that!" The mac and cheese is the quintessential comfort food in my mind. Rich, creamy and divine, you'll find it doesn't last too long out of the oven before it's consumed. Thank heavens it's available in a larger size too! **Reg. 11.95.**

25% OFF THIS WEEK

CHILEAN BLUBERRIES

These are the full pints and they are at their best as we move further south with their summer wares — and our spring is about to get going. While supplies last.

\$1.99
This Week



NADORCOTT CLEMENTINES

Just like the apple crops, there are early and late varieties of clementines and they all have differing characters. This is a late variety, similar to the Noors, and it's sweet, rich and when taken straight from the fridge, a bit tart, but this abates as they reach room temperature. I have some of each in front of me here and it's hard to choose between them. A delicious family fave at our house. 4lb crates.

\$3.99
This Week

MARINATED CHICKEN BREASTS

A perennial favourite of mine from our meat counter, these breasts never last very long in our house before they're devoured. Available in 4 flavours: Teriyaki, Hyatt BBQ Sauce, Lemon and my personal favourite, Maple Mustard. I'm not even a big mustard guy, but with the sweetness of the maple and the inherent juiciness of the breast itself, the whole flavour profile just works. I prefer to bake these as I believe it's the best way to keep the chicken moist and also gives you the opportunity to baste them once or twice to really lock in that flavour. **Reg. \$10.95/lb.**

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S COOKING AT THE DELI

As usual, we will start with the soup course, in this case Salt-Free Chicken, Vegetable and Rice. I should say 'no salt added' because almost any food item has naturally occurring salts. We use chicken stock, carrots, celery, sweet onions, rice and of course 'spices', but no salt! **Reg. \$7.95.**

25% OFF

— AND NEXT —

We'll have Salmon Salad. I think the rest of the food world gets theirs from a can, but ours is Atlantic Salmon. Baked, then skinned and boned, prepared with diced sweet onions, diced celery, fresh lemon juice, mayo and 'spices'. **Reg. \$2.29/100g.**

25% OFF

— AND NEXT —

There will be two main courses — the first being a Vegetable Lasagna which is 'ready-to-bake'. It contains almost all the vegetables known to man but you'll have to finish up the cooking. It will be in 8x5 foils, featured at \$11.95 each and should serve 2-3 people. The second item is Chicken Kurma, a creation of Chef Kulam, that is served to wide acclaim at the cafe. I find this dish totally delicious and I usually have it with rice for lunch. It's made with chicken leg meat, sweet onions (we go through a lot of onions at the V.G.), garlic, ginger, coconut, lemon juice, mustard, rice flour and 'spices'. It's not 'hot', but is full of very exotic flavour! This will be in 4x5 and 8x5 foils, feature priced at \$7.95 and \$18.95 respectively.

NEWCASTLE SAUSAGES

If you've ever had the pleasure of tasting our famous Guinness sausages, you'll find these to be a pleasant variation on a classic. Even after visiting Ireland last summer, I've never been a fan of Guinness, so when I found we were doing our sausages with Newcastle, the famed English brown ale, I was delighted. Try it for yourself and taste the difference. **Reg. \$4.99/lb.**

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S BAKING THIS WEEK?

Every year we buy thousands of pounds of Whittamore's fresh raspberries so that we can make pies and such all winter long, until the next local raspberry season. This week we are doing a whole lot of baking with RASPBERRIES.

RASPBERRY PIES — The other night Cathy (my wife) ate half of a 9" raspberry pie after dinner. She offered the other half to me but I said I was too full. However, I started to nibble on the pie and after a while the remaining half was gone too. That is how good our raspberry pies are! Cathy says it's her favorite pie, and she prefers streusel topping on all the pies, so we'll be making some with a streusel topping also. **Reg. \$12.95.**

CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY PIES — Along with the regular raspberry pies, we thought we'd go a bit crazy this week, and make some of them with chocolate! Before filling the pie shells with the raspberry filling we'll add some chopped dark chocolate. This should be a big hit! **Reg. \$13.95.**

RASPBERRY CHOCOLATE CHUNK MUFFINS — Customers and staff love these muffins! White cake batter studded with chocolate chunks and raspberries. **Reg. \$1.89 each.**

RASPBERRY BUNDT CAKES — Rich, moist chocolate cake with raspberries baked in. After baking, the cake is soaked with a coffee syrup spiked with brandy, and the cavity is filled with ganache, more raspberries and caramel. Topped with caramel, chocolate curls and raspberries. **Reg. \$17.95.**

RASPBERRY DANISH — We make a delicious danish dough (even Grethe, the Dane, approves!) and fill it with cream cheese and cooked raspberry filling. **Reg. \$2.99 each.**

RASPBERRY-APPLE CUSTARD CAKES — Yet another version of our mixed berry custard cake. Raspberries and spiced apples are baked in the cake batter, liquid custard is poured in halfway through baking. The whole thing is finished with a cooked raspberry topping and brandied apples. **Reg. \$15.95 and \$24.95.**

RASPBERRY WHITE CHOCOLATE CRÈME BRÛLÉE — Rich, melt-in-your-mouth concoction of cream, eggs, raspberries and white chocolate. **Reg. \$4.50.**

25% OFF THIS WEEK

Featured at

While quantities last!

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY, FEB. 24th

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

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

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