

OPINION

Our kids are all right, Ontario residents

Today's not Christmas or my birthday, but it's in the area code.

I'm scheduled to be in Toronto, shuttling between the financial district and Queen's Park, hanging with some new young friends and their families for the day.

In my books, they're bigger celebrities than Sunday night's Oscar winners. More worthy of our worship than any Maple Leaf, Blue Jay or Toronto mayor.

They're this year's Ontario Junior Citizens of the Year. Twelve of them, aged eight to 17.

No Justin Bieber in the group, and not just because he's too old.

These are leaders, role models and local heroes in communities as near to us at Thornhill and Nobleton, and as distant as Sault Ste. Marie and Brockville.

Some live with a physical or psychological limitation. Others performed acts of heroism or bravery. The rest have done major league acts of goodwill back home.

They've accomplished more for their communities in a couple of years than 50-something guys like me will ever be able to account for.

I get the humbling and inspiring honour again this year of introducing the starry crew during a luncheon 54 storeys atop the Toronto-Dominion Centre.

We'll then head to David Onley's place, also known as the Lieutenant Governor's Suite, for another round of well-deserved presentations and photo opps. And perhaps wander down the hall to visit Premier Kathleen Wynne, if she's not putting out a figurative fire.

The Sun-Tribune is one of more than 300 members of the Ontario Community Newspapers Association, which manages the awards program. Corporate sponsors are TD Bank Group and Direct Energy.

Sorry, Chapters and Amazon, it was always a better read than the hard covers I received those Christmases.

I was a junior citizens judge for five years that spanned the turn of the century. That meant camping out in our basement during the holiday season and reading the amazing life stories of more than 200 Ontario youths each year.

Sorry, Chapters and Amazon, it was always a better read than the hard covers I received those Christmases.

Then Whitchurch-Stouffville residents Debra Surman and Justin Hines, the touring singer-songwriter, were junior citizens back in their day.

There are no local recipients this time but three Stouffville District Secondary School students — Jennifer Connelly, Chelsey Tan and Garima Jindal — were worthy nominees.

I'd like to introduce a local kid or two next March. For more on the program and how you can nominate a candidate, go to ocna.org/juniorcitizen



Off The Top
with Jim Mason

Jim Mason is editor of The Sun-Tribune. Follow him on Twitter @stuffeditor

... ALL MY FAVES!

We are generally known for doing 'theme' ads to promote our store, and many in the industry have asked me about this. There is no magic really; we just get together in our ad meetings and explore different topics, some timely, some just by chance. This week it's easy, because it's my birthday and I get to pick all my faves. It was interesting to watch some of my cohorts wince as I got the chance to promote stuff that I don't often get permission to. So here goes...

My first fave will come from the bakery, and it's **Lemon Meringue Pies**. You may have seen this, and some other items lately. But no worries; every week would be just fine with me. What makes this special with us is that it's made totally from scratch — the very genuine article, and it's worth a trip across town to get it because there is no place else that does this, period! (Available from Friday to Sunday.)

While we're in the bakery messing around, we're going to do a couple more items too; the first is **Butter Tarts**. These also are made from the beginning, and the shells are even pressed on one of my gizmos from my workshop. While we're at it, we'll do the cranberry ones as well — really nice with white chocolate drizzle.

The third item is **Banana Bread**. This was the first bakery item that we made in our little store so long ago — my amazing mother-in-law Doreen was the one who did it back then. And it's still phenomenal today — and since it's so good, and 'feels' good, it will be the larger size only this week. All these items will be promoted at...

25% OFF THIS WEEK

This done, now we are headed to Kulam's kitchen...

The first item from Kulam's kitchen will be **Napa Salad**, which I sit and enjoy every other day (but sometimes daily). It's a totally refreshing salad using Chinese cabbage (Napa) with snipped green onions and fried noodles (really), dressed-up with a rice wine vinegar dressing. This was my sister-in-law Carol's recipe and is the fave of many. Since it's my birthday party, I'm thinking 1/2 price, just for the week.

1/2 PRICE THIS WEEK

Next, we'll be in Kulam's soup kitchen making **Curried Squash and Apple Soup**. I think back often to the day when the meat guys would share cooler space with the cooks, and pots of this would be in there cooling! It smelled so amazing. Your kitchen can smell amazing too, as you warm this. It will serve 3 or 4, and I'm thinking, since it's a party...

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

Next, for dinner we're going to have **Lemon Chicken**. This is my version of 'Chinese food', and truthfully, we used to get this from 'The Chinese Gourmet', a little Chinese take-out that is located next to the old 'Dante' location, just off Yonge, south of Hwy. 7. This place is a Cuban-style time warp in every way — even the food hasn't changed for years — or the people — which is good in this case. I coaxed Kulam into making this long ago, much to his dismay, and the rest is complete bliss on my part. I'm thinking that you'll love it as much as I do. And this Saturday, it will be available as a warm lunch at the café. There will be a special price. Reg. \$4.29/100g

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

...And now, to the meat counter. We'll start with **Sausages — Sage and Onion** actually. These are on the mild side. But with a lot of flavour — plump and juicy too. How about 1/3 off this week; we'll go crazy for the occasion.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

While we're at it, how about **Sirloin Roasts**? These are sirloin steak pieces (not sirloin tips) made into roasts, or if your 'Q' is in the open, you can have them cut into centre-cut steaks. These will be featured at...

25% OFF THIS WEEK

... and don't forget the fish this week; it's **Arctic Char Fillets**. This is a milder Canadian delicacy that has subtle but still rich flavour that would be best baked. I'll scare up a couple of recipes to go with it so that it comes out great. How about ...

25% OFF THIS WEEK

— WHAT'S FOR LUNCH? —

Most of you who really know me know that I'm a bit indecisive — confronted with a lot of choices, I dither... and that's what happened here. Bottom line, there are **THREE** of my faves on offer, and they are: **Brie and Pear Sandwiches** on Manoucher's baguette with sea salt, fresh cracked pepper and balsamic glaze — and some greens. Next choice is sweet **Italian Salami with Jarlsberg on a Croissant** — with greens too (it's my fave colour), and the third is warm **Roast Striploin on a Kaiser** (Thursday and Friday only) with caramelized onions, aioli sauce — with greens as well. They will all be featured at...

\$2.00 OFF
Regular price

Sunday Brunch will be my **Curried Squash and Apple Soup**, a choice of either our version of **Pasta Carbonara**, (using our bacon of course), **Roast Turkey Breast with Stuffing and Gravy** or my old Aunt Minnie's **Meatloaf with Peas**, and these come with a choice of either rice or mashed Yukons, tea or coffee with a token dessert, all for...

\$10.95

Served from 11:00 a.m. till 2:00 p.m.

FLEUR DE SEL SEA SALT

I use sea salt a lot at home, probably because it appeals to my Piscean senses. I use it with most all that I eat, but especially with room temp roast beef and my grilled asparagus. My brand of choice is 'Fleur de Sel', which is a French grey salt from La Rochelle, half way down the French Atlantic Coast — a very pretty area of the country. 125g size Reg. \$10.95

25% OFF THIS WEEK

FRESH ASPARAGUS

One of my faves is grilled asparagus — but if you haven't taken the proper steps, your 'Q' might be marooned in a snowdrift, like mine... winter snuck up on me. The consolation is that this can be broiled as well, or even cooked in a thick-ribbed fry pan. The asparagus now comes from Mexico, and the premium product comes in 'wood' — wooden crates.

How I like this is grilled, as I have said, then sprinkled with sea salt (featured elsewhere), and drizzled with balsamic vinegar, in this case, the **Brunello Organic Balsamic Vinegar** — 250ml size, which I get from my bud Socar, who just happens to share my B-Day. We'll have a 1/3 OFF SALE for the asparagus — and the vinegar too.

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

MIMOSA WEEK

"International Women's Day" is celebrated annually on March 8th. It is a day to focus on love, respect and appreciation towards women and to celebrate their economic, political and social achievements. The Mimosa flower has been the international symbol of this celebration since 1946 and was chosen for its bright colour, beautiful fragrance and full bloom in early March. Bring home a bouquet of Mimosa flowers and show the women in your life just how much you appreciate them.

\$9.99
A BUNCH

Featured at...

SPECIALS IN EFFECT FROM THURSDAY TO CLOSING SUNDAY, MAR. 9

Hours: Mon. — Fri. 8:00-8:00

Sat. 8:00-6:00 — Sun. 9:00-6:00

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