

Care & Share re-opens

From Front Page

ing people how to assemble school and health kits for young global neighbours in need, she said. "Care and Share Thrift Shop already has over 65 volunteers from the surrounding community, with representation from many local churches, ranging in age from students to seniors. New volunteers are heartily welcome."

Each year, MCC's thrift shop network in Canada raises more than \$3 million for international relief and development. "We're working at changing the old-fashioned view of thrift, that of being just for the needy," said Ms. Reesor.

Men can be maniacs too!

Despite the current vogue for male-bashing, Music Mania is seeking more men to perform in this year's event, which takes place at the end of April.

To participate in Whitchurch-Stouffville's popular variety show, a fixture on the community calendar for more than 40 years, all you need is enthusiasm and a sense of fun. With a number of long-time stalwarts having moved away in recent months, the show would love to bring in new blood, said public relations director Cathy McNaught.

"It's a really good way to meet people and to fill those long winter nights. Proceeds go back into the community and it's an opportunity to be part of a big local tradition."

For more information call 905-852-5280.

Environmentally Sound

by Jim Priebe

Local Stores Offer A Growing Selection of Organic Produce

Whenever I buy organic, I feel good.

Organic products are, after all, by definition grown without pesticides, fertilizers, antibiotics and growth hormones. Instead, farmers use methods such as crop rotations, soil enrichment, and preventative insect and disease control. I know that when I am buying an organic product I am purchasing something that is grown in harmony with the environment.

Non-organic products, however, use a great deal of chemicals in their growing. And that is a problem. The World Wildlife Fund says on their website that "a growing body of evidence shows that many pesticides used in Canada today can cause cancer, fertility problems, and abnormalities in newborns; pesticides are harming both people and wildlife, and therefore threaten the well-being of the entire planet." Children are the most vulnerable to the side effects of pesticides.

These pesticides are not only in

the environment. They are also on the non-organic food that we eat. For example, David Suzuki, on the Canadians Against Pesticides website, estimates that "an apple may be sprayed with up to 16 different chemicals before it reaches the consumer." 16!

Fortunately, the retail market for organic products is, according to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, growing at about 20% per year. The market is still small, though. Farm cash receipts from the organic industry reached about \$600 million in 2000, representing about 1.5% of agriculture's total receipts.

Organic foods also have other benefits. Benefits that I was not aware of until I sat down for a chat with Farid Wassef, Houstons Pharmacy owner and pharmacist. Farid says that organic foods are more nutritious. They have higher ratios of vitamins and minerals. My wife tells me that this is because the soil used in organic farming is much richer.

C.O.L.A., the Canadian Organic Livestock Association, lists four reasons why you should support the organic livestock industry: 1) It is good for the consumer; 2) It is good for the animals; 3) It is good for the producer; 4) It is good for the land.

I have found three places around town that sell organic goods: Houstons Pharmacy, A&P, and No Frills. At Houstons look for healthy snacks, brown rice, rice flour, pancake mix, sugar, peanut butter alternatives, jams, spaghetti sauce, olive oil, seasoning, soup, juice, tea, and even BBQ sauce. No Frills sells eggs, apple juice, cereal, tofu and coffee. A&P has a number of good products too, including produce (when in season), Soya sauce, soy milk, cereal, tea, and crackers.

I have also noticed that the selection is growing. It seems that every month or so I find a new organic product. This is a great trend. Support it next time you are at the supermarket or drug store.

You are cordially invited to the

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Child Care Centre

OPEN HOUSE
Sat. February 16th
1:00pm - 4:00pm

Please join us!

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