

## New Beginnings

### Slow and Steady

By Kinjal Dagli-Shah

For Eranga Dewalegama, it wasn't love at first sight as far as Stouffville, or Canada was concerned. Rather, it was the slow and steady kind of affection that's probably more long lasting.

After all, she had already lived in a beautiful Swedish town called Linköping before she moved here. "Our benchmarks were high. We were used to high daycare standards because they were non-profit. Medical care was of an excellent quality. Higher education was free and so were school lunches," explained Eranga, who moved to Canada with her husband Asanga and daughters Nimansa and Ranya.

"The work environment in Sweden too is family oriented and there is never a problem getting time off if it concerns your children or family."

Sounds like a utopian world, but Eranga and her husband have also seen their share of strife. Originally from Sri Lanka, the couple had applied for residency in Canada eight years ago. "The 2004 tsunami changed the immigration scenario because several people claimed refugee status to come to Canada. That delayed our application," said Eranga.

"We wanted to move here because the war in northern Sri Lanka had led to a lot of political instability. We were in Colombo so we weren't greatly affected but there were many incidents of suicide bombing."

Eranga recalled an incident where her mother, who travelled by train every day, survived a bomb that went off in the compartment next to hers. "I was studying in university at the time but it was very frightening. Now the situation is much more peaceful."

After a couple years in Sweden, the family

decided that despite the top notch quality of life, the language barrier was omnipresent. "My daughters learned a bit of Swedish and I did too but it wasn't enough. It was like starting life all over again. Moreover, one tends to get isolated because it isn't very multicultural. The immigrants there are mostly from East European countries as well as Iran and Iraq. They can speak Swedish more easily because the sounds are similar to their native languages."

That's where Canada, and Stouffville, stepped in to make the Dewalegamas more comfortable. "We don't like city life too much. We travelled across many towns and liked the natural surroundings that Stouffville had to offer. Our home is close to the library and my daughters attend good schools," said Eranga.

Her husband and she both have to travel to the west end of Toronto to get to work but after a year in Stouffville, they find it's still a good bargain.

Write to Kinjal at [kinjal.dagli@gmail.com](mailto:kinjal.dagli@gmail.com)



Eranga and Asanga Dewalegama with daughters Nimansa and Ranya

## You ride. We protect.

For some, the highway's fine. For you, it's all two-lane – and you wouldn't have it any other way. To protect your ride, go for the best all around performance for your money – State Farm® Motorcycle Insurance. Let me tell you about our great rates and custom service.

Call me today for a quote. Or better yet, take a ride over.



### Sandy Mackenzie Ins Agcy Inc

Sandy MacKenzie, Agent  
6336 Main Street  
Stouffville, ON L4A 1G8  
Bus: 905-642-4546  
Mon-Fri 9:00am to 5:00pm  
Evenings & Saturday by Appt.



statefarm.ca\*

State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company • Aurora, Ontario

## STOUFFVILLE'S ONE STOP DOGGIE CENTRE

**Spring Puppy Daycare Special**  
Save \$134!

**PUPPIES 6 MONTHS AND YOUNGER**  
Get 10 Days for 1/2 Price\*



\*Must register in May 2012

**Agility For Fun!**



**THURSDAY EVENINGS**  
Starting  
End Of May

- Try something new that's fun for you and your dog
- Great exercise and a great confidence booster!

**Fabulous Furry Fridays!**

**MAY SPECIAL ~**  
Customer Appreciation  
**\$10 OFF a FULL DAY**  
of DAYCARE every  
**FRIDAY in MAY**



Retail Store • Dog Walking • Pet Sitting  
Holistic Pet Food • Training Aids

**Doggie Daycare & Obedience Training**

6389 Main St., Stouffville • 905-642-8289 • [www.k9sinkahoots.com](http://www.k9sinkahoots.com)