

A Virtual Visit To The Library

By Catherine Sword

Jane closed the door of Ben's bedroom. Story time had gone on late. It was almost 9 p.m. and the library would be closed. She didn't feel like driving there to return the family's books so she booted up the computer and put the kettle on.

She could hear her husband tinkering with the lawn mower in the garage and asked him if he would like some tea. He answered with a low grumble that was unintelligible. Apparently the repair was not going smoothly. Jane saw large bolts and springy wires lying on the floor and felt a sense of panic. It looked like they'd need to buy a new mower.

At the computer, Jane typed www.whitchurch-library.on.ca. Clicking on her account, she renewed the material that was due that day. Then she looked up the book her friend had recommended. She couldn't remember the title but her search brought up a short list and she recognized the author. The book she wanted was signed out, but she saw that it was due back shortly, so she clicked the reserve button.

Next she checked her favourite author, but found nothing new. Then she remembered NoveList. A click to the library's homepage, a link to electronic resources and the list appeared.

Jane noticed that there were three new databases including one for small engine repairs. She saw that they were on trial for 30 days so the library would be seeking feedback from users.

NoveList Plus looked very much like the original version but the new database included nonfiction and suggestions for teens and children. Jane was excited to see links to discussion guides and

articles describing various genres. She might yet convince her book club to try reading a science fiction novel.

She was so absorbed she didn't hear her older daughter come into the kitchen and jumped when Sally spoke. "You're at the library website, too. I'm working on my assignment. Between the Gale and EBSCO databases, plus the books we got last week, I think I'm going to ace this assignment. Be prepared to make a cake when I get that A."

"I'll bake a cake for a B+ too." Jane joked. "I notice there's an EBSCO health database that has drug information," said Sally. "You could check that new drug the doctor gave to Grandpa. You said he's having trouble with it?"

"My friend has just been told she has diabetes and I showed her this database. She's taking some of the articles to her doctor so they can discuss it. Maybe it'll help you with Grandpa."

"Thanks, dear," said Jane. "I'll look into it."

After an hour of exploring databases, Jane went to the garage to ask her husband if he could tell her the model number of their mower. "Why?" asked John.

"The library is testing a database. It has information on how to repair snowmobiles, tractors, motorcycles and lawn mowers." Ten minutes later, John had a printout that would make sense of the jumble on the garage floor. He kissed his wife. "Thanks. That really helps."

As Jane shut down the computer she smiled. She would pass on his thanks to the library staff, but she'd keep the kiss for herself.

Catherine Sword is coordinator of public services at Whitchurch-Stouffville Library.

A Voyage Around Our History

Whitchurch-Stouffville is participating in Doors Open 2008 after a one-year hiatus.

Downtown attractions include 19 Civic Avenue, built in 1896, which is undergoing restoration to become a community arts, culture and entertainment centre; and the clock tower in Civic square, which was erected in 1931.

Further west, on Edward St., the location now occupied by Schell Country Depot originally served the lumber and coal trades, before being home to a seed business and co-op.

Walking tours will set off from Summitview Public School at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., and explore Stouffville's first subdivision, which was registered in 1858.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum in Vandorf includes a number of historic buildings and is located on a beautiful rural site beside Vandorf Park. The Toronto Region Conservation Authority will host an archeology display at the museum, with a sneak preview of recent excavations at the Lewis site, an early 1800s Euro-Canadian pottery house situated at Bruce's Mill.

Also on the rural portion of the tour are the 1875 James Lemon House, built on the Oak Ridges Moraine with spectacular views of the city, and Lionel's Farm, with a fabulous collection of 160 wagons, carriages, buggies and sleighs dating from the early 19th century to the 1920s.

Railway buffs are in for a treat at Richmond Hill Live Steamers, 15922 McCowan Rd. in Newmarket. Visitors can take a train ride and learn how railways operated in days gone by.

Doors Open Whitchurch-Stouffville takes place June 7 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Admission is free. For more information visit www.doorsopenws.ca or call 1-888-290-0337.



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Community Mennonite Voices

Contributed by Geralde Reesor-Grooters

GOD'S EARTH CAN STILL SUSTAIN US BUT WE MUST ACT NOW

Global warming, contamination, air quality advisory... these are words of today. All is not well with God's creation. Its current state warrants great concern. Depletion of the ozone layer, disappearing rain forests, melting polar ice caps, and - much closer to home - rapidly disappearing farm land. And these are but a few examples...

When asked how God is revealed to them, many Christians will mention "nature". If God speaks to us through His creation, why do we not take better care of it? Is it not our Christian responsibility to be good stewards of our earth? No matter how you interpret the creation story, the environment started out in perfect balance. In Genesis we read: "God saw all that He had made and it was very good". God then entrusted people to take care of the earth, but they soon started doing things their own way, often at the expense of God's good work.

Today, we do not live in harmony with creation. In our disposable society, we build up landfill sites faster than they can break down, our need for bigger houses swallows up farm land. Convenience is our biggest enemy. We are sold on the idea that everything should be effortless, regardless of the environmental or financial cost. We have become so far removed from nature that we cannot see the impact of our actions. Our waste is picked up weekly or goes down a big pipe. Out of sight, out of mind... Would we make different lifestyle choices if we had to throw our waste in our backyard, between the water well and the children's swing set?

Even today, the earth is able to sustain all people in the world, but not necessarily our lifestyle. Or, in Ghandi's words, "There are sufficient resources on earth to satisfy everyone's need, but not everyone's greed".

Greed can be material, but also immaterial, such as time and effort (convenience). We need to determine where, in our life, need stops and greed begins.

Fortunately, there is a positive side to this story. Carbon neutrality, renewable energy and sustainability are also words of today. We need to focus on these positives, and realize that Mother Earth can heal herself, but not without our help.

This year, several members of Community Mennonite Church formed an Environmental Action Committee, in a desire to take some concrete steps to address climate change. The first focus has been to explore the viability of solar energy. As a pilot project, one family will have solar panels installed on its home and sell the energy back to the grid. A second initiative, on using geothermal energy, is in the information gathering stage. In the future, we hope to promote alternative energy sources in the Stouffville area, to help families reduce the size of their ecological footprint and perhaps save money in the process.

Since not everyone can install solar panels tomorrow, we must remember we can start small and still make a difference. Whether it is rechargeable batteries or natural cleaning products, a small vegetable garden or postponing that errand until you have to drive into town anyway. Every little effort has an accumulative effect once it becomes a habit.

If you would like to join our Environmental Action Committee, please contact us and we will welcome you into our discussions.

Let's accept the invitation to be caretakers of this beautiful earth.

**We would love to hear from you.
Contact us at 905-640-9730,
community-mennonite@hotmail.com
or check out our blog at
www.communitymennonitevoices.blogspot.com**

**COMMUNITY MENNONITE CHURCH
12184 Ninth Line, Stouffville
905-640-9730**

10:00 Sunday Schol • 11:00 Worship Service



Geralde Reesor-Grooters