

## Readers Write

### Studio Tour organizers thank supporters

To the Editor:

We wish to thank all the people who helped to make the Seventh Annual Whitchurch-Stouffville Studio Tour such a tremendous success.

To the visitors, both local and from afar, we thank you for coming into the homes and studios of our participating artists. All were friendly, encouraging and voiced their enjoyment with the tour.

To our sponsors, we acknowledge your generous financial support. Thank you for taking the opportunity for your services and products to be promoted along with the tour, with the tour guide and website. We thank our sponsors: Amaretto's Fine Dining, Annina's Bake Shop, Barthau Jewellers, Chic Thrills, Country Stop Burgers, Cindy Gordon and Gord Moorey at Sutton Group, Debbie and Len Powell at Royal LePage, The Earl of Whitchurch, The Fickle Pickle, JVK Life & Wealth Advisory Group, Latcham Gallery, Lindy's Floral Boutique, Luv A Pizza, Magnum Print Management, Main Street Bistro, Patti-Lynn Interiors, Purple Onion Cuisine, Reid's Antiques, Shoeless Joe's, Stouffville Fine Furniture, Stouffville IDA Pharmacy, Stouffville Picture Framing, Tempest In A Teapot, Villa Italian Bakery, The Workshop and The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville. And a special thank you to our sponsor For the Love of Joe Coffee House for hosting our "Preview Tour" exhibition and for exhibiting many of our artists' works throughout the year.

Thank you to the *Stouffville Free Press* for the comprehensive coverage. And finally, thanks to all the artists who worked diligently all year, not only to organize the tour, but to keep a high standard of craftsmanship in their creative endeavours. See you next year!

Ray McNeice • Stouffville

(on behalf of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Studio Tour)

### Historic Photo



A Courtly Halloween

This knight in shining armour and his elegantly attired sibling are seen at the old public library in 1988. They have since swapped chivalry, swords and round tables for cozy cubicles in the big city.

### MONTHLY MALAISE

Stouffville Veterans, Igoma Partnership, Junior Achievement at (the new) SDSS. I'm proud to be part of such a sharing, giving community.

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## Vintage Whine

### MY TANK RUNNETH OVER



By Kate Gilderdale

"But if the while I think on thee,  
dear friend,/All losses are restored and  
sorrows end." William Shakespeare.

When all else fails, it's friends who make life worth living. A recent trip with three of my closest pals brought this home to me in buckets, if not spades. An essential part of my life for several decades, they spirited me off on a magical mystery weekend in honour of yet another depressingly significant birthday.

We set off early one sunny Saturday. After a few traffic jams and a slight detour, the result of too much chatting and not enough map reading (not my fault for once, since I had no idea where we were going) we arrived at a lovely house in Collingwood, belonging to another, absent friend.

My pals set about unpacking enough food for a three-week siege, along with several bottles of the fermented grape with which to wash it down. After a jaunt into town for massages and retail therapy, we repaired to our haven for a celebratory evening.

We were halfway through our first beverage when strange sounds began to emanate from one of the closets. A quick peek revealed that the overflow pipe on the water tank was merrily divesting itself of a steady stream of hot water directly onto the concrete floor. Further investigation of the closet disclosed a neatly stacked array of sturdy cardboard storage boxes, stretching back under the stairwell as far as the eye could see.

My fearless friends turned off the water valve and organized a help line, the kind you see in B-movies where the house is on fire and buckets are being passed from hand to hand. Only instead of buckets it was boxes. After about the twentieth box, with no end in sight, we decided to throw in the (extremely soggy) towel for

the night.

As the light faded, the designated chef started cooking dinner. Suddenly the smoke alarm, which like most of its ilk was more volatile than the relationship between Jean Chrétien and Paul Martin, commenced an ear-splitting wail. By this time the table had almost disappeared under a pile of boxes, the railing outside was festooned with damp towels and you got a sinking feeling whenever you put a stocking foot on the wall-to-wall carpet.

The next morning we tried summoning the customer service troops. We called building management, but it turned out they were only responsible for attending to the exterior of the house. We called the gas company, but they explained that, thanks to the wonderful world of deregulation, the water heater was serviced by a separate entity and it was not their job to send out a repair person.

Spreading the burden of responsibility between companies allows so-called service providers to play a sophisticated game of customer ping-pong, in which the company with the most effective voice mail loop wins and the customer, of course, always loses. After all, think of the extra money companies could distribute to shareholders if people stopped bothering them with their petty emergencies.

Eventually we got hold of a human being and arranged a service call. And despite the fact we spent our morning mopping up instead of strolling along the beach, we had a wonderful weekend together. As I read somewhere, a friend is someone who helps you move; a good friend is someone who helps you move the body.

Or maybe a friend is just someone who cleans out the closet, cooks you a fabulous dinner and makes you laugh when the tide rolls in.

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