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Growing up poor

Education is great equalizer

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Alcohol expansion

Wine for sale on region grocery store shelves

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HOT TUB BLOWOUT SALE!

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Steve Somerville/Metroland

Maple Porter-Balaz of Aurora, with husband Fred Balaz, have been caring for foster children for 14 years. York Region Children's Aid Society has a critical shortage of foster families.

CAS faces 'critical' foster families shortage

BY LISA QUEEN
lqueen@yrmg.com

To the four dozen young boys cared for in their elegant and welcoming Aurora foster home for the past 14 years, they are Miss Maple and Mr. Fred. Removed from their homes by York Region's Children's Aid Society because of abuse, neglect, conflict or financial hardship, they have found a safe haven, often for years, in the loving home of Maple Porter-Balaz and her husband Fred Balaz.

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Both immigrants, Porter-Balaz and Balaz wanted to give back to Canada. "What better way to do so than fostering. Taking children in your home, looking after them, showing them a different way of life, lov-

ing them, caring for them, I just thought that would be just wonderful," said Porter-Balaz, adding she and her husband chose to take in boys, usually between the ages of five and 12. "Sometimes, kids are coming from very, very difficult situations and they come into your home and some of them may act up or whatever but after a little while, they settle down because they can see that you care about them. There is love everywhere and you look after

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