

Luke Soup

by Luke Anderson



I took the chance to really think about what has happened in my life over the past year just before ringing in 2004, as I'm sure many of you did.

I thought about the not-so-good stuff that has transpired but more importantly I tried to think of the good things. Some very exciting things took place last year for myself, my family and the entire Stouffville community.

The most exciting event in my mind's eye was the amazing fundraiser held on Nov. 7 at Markham Fairgrounds. I still can't find words to describe what a night it was, a night that brought a community together and made everyone realize this is a pretty darn awesome town. A big family.

I often catch myself wondering if I would ever have reconnected with certain people who were there had circumstances been different, had I not fallen off my bike. November 7 aside, I have touched base with many people from the past over the last year and a half. Some have been very easy to get up to date with and some have been painfully hard. The most difficult run-in with an old acquaintance occurred at a music concert last summer.

I was in my manual wheelchair and my friend Laura was pushing me to our seats when I caught a glimpse of a familiar face. I asked Laura to stop, turn around and push me up to the guy leaning against the railing in the distance. I greeted him with an enthusiastic "Hey man!" and in my excited state was completely oblivious as to how he might react to seeing me in a wheelchair.

He responded with a blank face, not knowing who he was looking at. I felt my heart sink and began to recognize the uncomfortable situation I had created. We stared speechlessly at each other for what seemed like centuries until he broke the ice and said, "You look so familiar".

I wanted to disappear. "I'm sorry but what's your name?" he asked. I continued to stare speechlessly until I snapped out of it. "It's... it's Luke". His jaw dropped. "##@& man, what happened?"

Once we got talking the scene lightened a bit and I could feel the blood returning to my face as I watched a transformation occur. Over

the course of a few seconds I had taken this person on an intense emotional ride from not even knowing who I was at first glance to realizing it was me and most importantly that I hadn't really changed at all. Heavy stuff hey?

Aside from real life encounters, I've had my fair share of electronic ones. Checking my e-mail is sometimes like opening a Jack-in-the-box but often when the weasel goes "Pop" there is a new Jack-in-the-box! The most interesting one occurred last month when I received a very unexpected e-mail. Let me tell you the story.

The year was 1989. My Mom, Dad, Logan and I were in Switzerland taking part in a year long exchange program whereby we traded spaces with a Swiss family. They came to live at our house, slept in our beds and drove our car while we did the same with their house, beds and car.

Logan and I attended Swiss schools where we quickly picked up the language and met new friends. My Mom was born in Switzerland and much of her side of the family still resides there, so we did a lot of touring around and I can recall my sister and me enduring a lot of cheek pinches.

At school I was teamed up with a classmate who helped me adjust to such a different place. Her name was Karin. She was very soft-spoken and had a magical way of making it easier for me to understand what was going on while I tried to learn the language.

Karin and I were desk buddies for the entire year and ended up becoming really good friends. We wrote to each other off and on after that year in Switzerland but eventually lost touch. I have often caught myself wondering what she was doing with her life; I guess you never forget the first girl you kiss.

Sometime in September I got an e-mail out of the blue from my teacher in Switzerland. Although she was no longer teaching, she had been in touch with one of the teachers that my dad had taught with, who had informed her about my accident. I responded to her message and asked if she kept in touch with any of the other students in my class and if so to forward my message on to them.

Out of the 20 or so students that I went to school with that year I think you can guess who responded. Yep... Karin. We have since exchanged a bunch of e-mails and had an awesome telephone conversation which saw Karin practising her English and me trying to scrape the rust off my Swiss-German.

Painful or not, my reconnection with friends and acquaintances from the past has truly enriched my life and helped reinforce the realization that our friends and family are the most important thing in this world.

Fine, rare artifacts up for bid at auction

Parkview Village Auditorium will host a live auction of antiques and collectibles on March 19 at 6 p.m. to benefit the Parkview Home Building Fund.

"We have received some excellent donations including furniture, quilts, glassware, sterling silver, original artwork and Royal Doulton china," said Joanna Reesor-McDowell, director of resource development at Parkview Services for Seniors. "More donations of suitable items are needed to make the auction even more successful as a fundraiser for the building fund."

The preview begins at 4:30 p.m. on March 19 and donors of items will be issued charitable receipts for the sale price on request. The event, which features some rare and fine pieces, is sponsored by Clarkson Auctions. For more information, or to donate an item, call 905-640-0714.



"GOING, GOING, GONE"
9 Appleton Avenue
Musselman's Lake \$159,900

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"RARE VICTORIAN"
19 O'Brien Ave.
Stouffville \$419,900

*Rare 4 bedroom + 2 bathroom Victorian style home *5 appliances incl. *Inground pool *60'x116' private yard *Great location, walk to everything *New pool pump, heater & filter in 2001.



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*Absolutely stunning 5 bedroom & 3 baths *Huge 3/4 acre intown lot *Full landscaping with mature trees *Wrap around deck with hot tub *Updated kitchen with granite counters *Cedar Gazebo *Updated baths.



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14 Dorman Drive
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*Upscale Fairgate 4+1 bedroom & 4 bathroom home *Approx. 2850 sq.ft. of exquisite living *Large eat-in kitchen with walkout *Central Air/Vacuum *Finished basement w/3pc bath *Tour of this property at www.kirkbnice.com.



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21 Balson Blvd.
Musselman's Lake \$194,900

*Updated 2+2 bedroom raised bungalow *Newer windows *New shingles in June 2003 *Separate entrance to basement *Large 80'x100' lot * Beautiful modern kitchen with open concept living area.



"VALUE +++"
110 Aspen Cres.
Stouffville \$354,900

*Clean 4 bdrm. + 3 bathroom home * Mature 50'x105' lot *Main floor fam. rm w/wood FP *Updated vinyl windows *French doors & ceramics *Upgraded 200amp service *Above ground pool *7 appliances included *Tour of this property at www.kirkbnice.com.



"GORGEOUS HARDWOOD FLOORS"
31 Rose Avenue
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"PERFECT STARTER"
35 Madsen Crescent
Markham \$259,500

*Spotless 2 storey *3 bedroom + 2 bathroom home *New roof in March 2003 * New furnace in October 2003 *New windows in 2000 *Strip hardwood on the main floor *Walk to GO Train & Markville Mall * Tour of this property at www.kirkbnice.com.



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Musselman's Lake

*3 bedroom + 4 bathroom gorgeous 2 storey custom home built in 1999 *Inlaw apartment with separate entrance *Premium 50x200' lot *Large cedar deck *Forced air gas furnace *Tour of this property at www.kirkbnice.com.

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