

Kindness is a New York state of mind

By Kate Gilderdale
Stouffville This Month

When former Stouffville resident Samantha Wright, who is living in London, England, flew to New York recently, her timing could not have been worse.

"I have been working with two different theatre companies -- The Acting Shakespeare Company, which grew out of my post-grad program and with whom I did a production of *Measure for Measure* Off-Broadway in 2002, and Blue Inc. Theatre Company, which specializes in European-style physical theatre," explained Sam. It was her association with the

latter that led her to take an Aug. 14 flight to New York, where the company was appearing in a production called *The Tale of Rancor* at the city's Fringe Festival.

Everyone was booked on separate flights and planned to meet up in the city. "Three of us flew on Aug. 14 with British Airways, an hour apart. The first girl got re-routed to Philadelphia and then to New York on Friday morning, the second managed to land at JFK but spent the night there, and I was the third and last," said Sam.

"Another company member flew in on an American Airlines flight,

where apparently the captain's announcement suggested the possibility that terrorists were responsible for the blackout, which, predictably led to plane-wide hysteria." When Sam's plane landed, there was no loading dock available and the passengers had to wait two-and-a-half hours before disembarking.

"When we finally got word that there was a free dock, they had to use car headlights to light the runway so we could see where we were going." With only a debit card for cash, and all bank machines out of action, she was saved by a good Samaritan, who gave

her \$40 for a cab.

Sam had arranged to stay with a friend in Brooklyn, but when she arrived no one was home -- her friend was stranded in Manhattan -- and the cab driver left, explaining that he felt nervous in the neighbourhood, a well-known hangout for looters. "I spent 10 minutes ringing before a neighbour, a lovely Portuguese woman, let me in and let me sit at her kitchen table till dawn with my head on a pillow."

Early next morning, with just \$5 to her name, she hailed a cab, only to discover the driver did not take credit cards. He told her that with pumps no

longer working, 'entrepreneurs' were selling gas for \$100 a tank and cab drivers were having to charge accordingly, but he took pity on the young woman. "He took me to Manhattan and gave me his address and said to send him however much money I wanted. Throughout the whole terrible night I couldn't help but think there was an angel on my shoulder."

Her troubles were not over, though, because the phones were still down and she couldn't get in touch with anyone, "so I spent the day wandering around with my luggage and everything was closed, even restaurants." By the time

she arrived at her friend's home in Brooklyn, she had not slept for two days.

Despite her ordeal, Sam was overwhelmed by the kindness she encountered in a city better known for its tough veneer. Blue Inc. Theatre Company went on to perform *The Tale of Rancor* at the Philadelphia Festival of Contemporary Theatre before returning to London, this time without incident.

"The rest of the tour went well, we got some good reviews, and despite the fact that I didn't get an 'I survived blackout 2003' T-shirt -- which were on sale less than 48 hours after the blackout was over, there's New York for you -- I felt the trip was a success."



Mayor Wayne Emmerson and a dedicated group of fellow diggers took part in a groundbreaking ceremony Sept. 14 for Stouffville Missionary Church, which has outgrown its current Main St. location. The new church is being built just south of Stouffville Country Market, on land donated by market owner Norman Clements.

JIM PRIEBE - CANDIDATE FOR WARD 4



My goal is to be known as the Councillor who listens. Environmental issues are a priority. Committed to community in a growing town. Learn more about my ideas at: worknotes.com/on/stouffville/ward4 or e-mail me at: ward4@enoreo.on.ca

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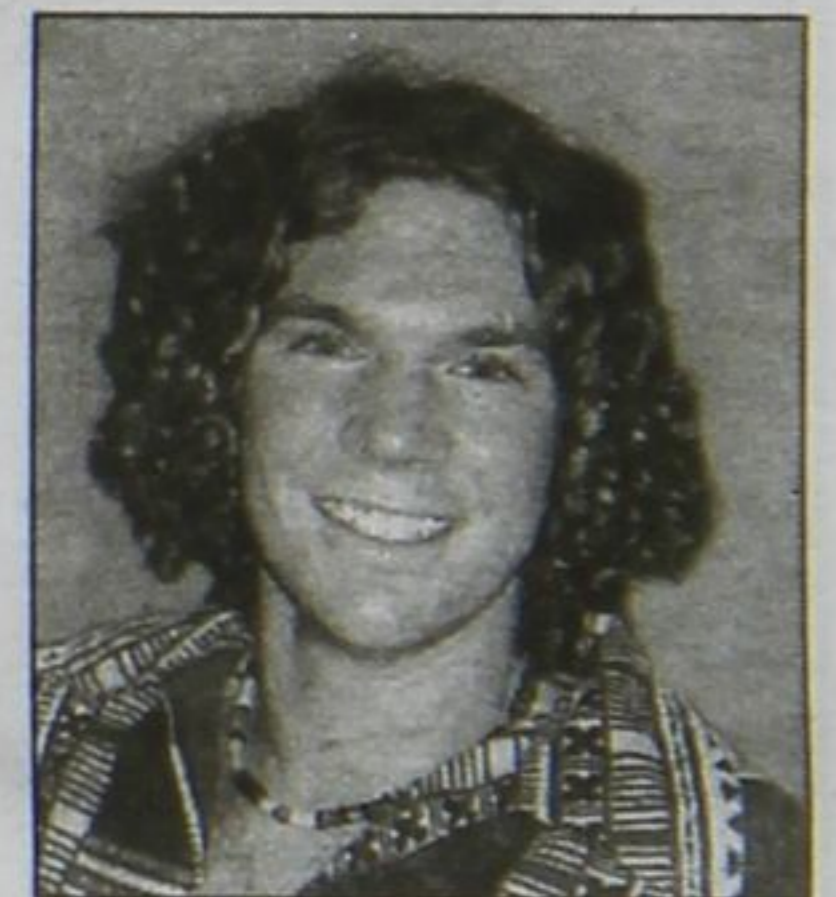
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Now that you have just read Luke Read This!!!

Bid & Bop for Luke



Luke Anderson is a 25-year-old graduate of Waterloo Engineering who suffered a tragic mountain bike accident in British Columbia on October 27, 2002. Luke is a quadriplegic as a result of his injuries and has undergone rehabilitation at Lyndhurst Lodge in Toronto. He has moved into assisted living in Toronto and is working towards his adjusted future.

You may know this handsome young man from his days at Orchard Park Public School, Stouffville District Secondary School or The University of Waterloo. Luke may have been a schoolmate of your son or daughter. He was class valedictorian, an Ontario Scholar and a gifted athlete during his time at SDSS. Your connection may be through his sister, Logan, or his parents, Chris and Bill.

Luke has spent the majority of his life in our great town and needs your help. While his spirit remains high, he and his family face an incredible financial challenge as they adapt to this life change.

A 'Bid & Bop for Luke' has been organized for Friday, November 7, 2003 at the Markham Fairgrounds. The event will include live entertainment, a live and silent auction, and a late night buffet. We are looking for sponsors for the event and items for the live and silent auction. Please consider how you might assist this wonderful young man.

Proceeds from the evening will go towards Luke's transportation requirements to provide him with much needed independence.

We thank you on behalf of the Anderson family. For more information or suggestions on how you can help Luke, please feel free to call (905) 640-4705 or check out Luke's website - www.lukeanderson.ca.

Please keep Luke and his family in your thoughts and prayers. Life throws some pretty tough curves. Luke Anderson is one of those individuals who will overcome adversity and make great contributions in the future. By assisting with his physical needs, we can all enable that to happen. This is an ideal opportunity to help "one of our own". Please consider being part of Luke's future.

We are looking for 5 large auction items as well as several smaller items for the silent auction. Anything you can do to help out would be greatly appreciated. Please call Gary at (905) 640-1323 to advise of your donation.

Sincerely

Gary Bouwmeister
Friends of Luke Anderson

Sharon Maude, Joe Cote, Don Reesor, Alan Percy, Sarah Chewins, Reagan Maude, Gary Bouwmeister and Sandy Schell Kennedy

