

Turning Back the Clock

Historic postcard submitted courtesy of Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum



ONLY IN VANDORF - Farmers in Whitchurch-Stouffville these days are justly proud of the quality and quantity of their produce, but how could they possibly hope to match the amazing apples shown in this 1910 postcard? The soil around here just ain't what it used to be. Postcard courtesy of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum.

Letters

Best Terry Fox Run yet: organizer

Dear Editor,

A phenomenal sight. Blue sky, warm temperature and the best crowd the Stouffville Terry Fox Run has ever seen. 762 participants and 70 volunteers combined to raise \$55,010.06 for cancer research in the name of Terry Fox.

We met our goal of \$500,000 in the history of the Stouffville Terry Fox Run. THANK YOU STOUFFVILLE!

Corporate teams included: Anderson Haulage, Grey Power Insurance, Tim Hortons, Schell Lumber, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, WS Library, Stouffville Dance Centre,

A&P, Tree O Marketing Inc., Industrial Roofing, and the Stouffville Spirit, who raised \$1200 at a car wash on Saturday.

Any organizations wishing to find out how they can get involved next year, contact Beate Barnett at 640-6884.

As for schools, Summitview, Orchard Park and Glad Park all held Terry Fox events last week. Glad Park raised an astounding \$9,000. St. Brigid's will hold its event in the coming weeks.

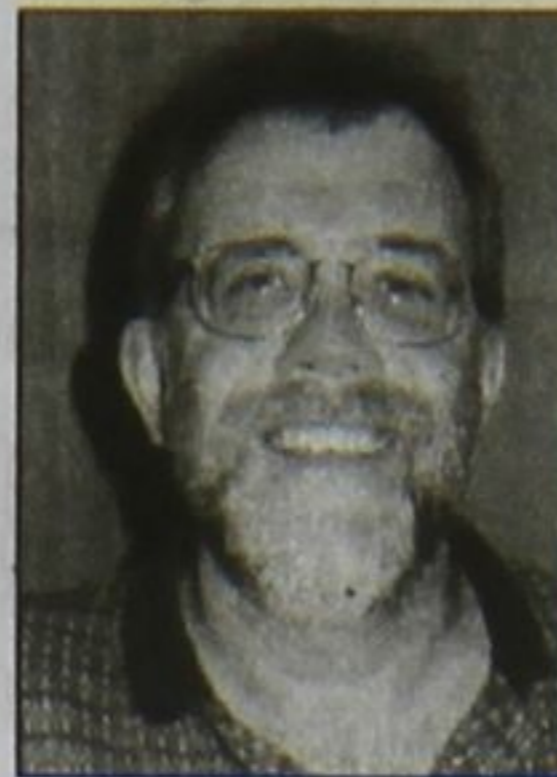
There was a great turnout from all Stouffville area schools at the community event in addition to events at their locations. School

revenue is not included in the community total.

We still have the Terry Fox Run 2005 calendar available for \$10. It is a wonderful pictorial of Terry and commemorates the 25th anniversary of the Terry Fox Run. Please call 640-4705 to secure a copy.

While all involved in the Terry Fox Run can take a rest until next year, cancer doesn't take a break. Please do your part to fight this dreaded disease and mark Sunday Sept. 18, 2005 on your calendar for our return engagement.

Sincerely
Sandy Schell Kennedy
Event Organizer



Con-fessions

My Pet Peeve
by Conrad Boyce

My good friends over on Balsam Street, have a little furball named Nicky. Of maybe it's Nikki, I never asked him. Whoever he is, he's quite probably the most irritating creature that ever existed. And believe me, in a world where small yappy canines seem to be proliferating exponentially, he has a lot of competition.

As I stand in the kitchen talking to my friends, Nicky comes charging into the conversation, not content to stay out in the living room - or down in the basement, or on some other planet - where he belongs, far away from me. He starts yapping, but when admonished by his master, he decides to make these disgusting huffing and snuffling sounds instead, all the time making these pathetic leaps at my feet, as if certain I am going to lash out and kick him at any moment. As tempting as that is, I am never cruel to animals; I prefer to capture a fly and release it to the wild rather than swat it. Mosquitoes are about the only creatures I find difficult to justify; if they became extinct, my mourning period would be brief. As for kicking Nicky, I would rather ignore him and carry on conversing; if I stop to insult him, my friends are usually affronted.

But Nicky refuses to be ignored. Once he decides I'm not going to kick him, he shuffles up to my sandalled feet and proceeds to lick, snuffle and drool all over them. If this is intended to win my affection, it has the opposite effect. Far from being "cute", I equate it with dipping my toes in a toxic pond. "Catch ya later," I say to my friends without trying to betray my revulsion, and flee home to soak my feet in an antiseptic bath.

A few millennia in the past, when Clem the Cro-Magnon decided it would be a good idea to domesticate whatever canine lived in his neighbourhood, I am quite confident that the companionship of Nicky was not exactly what he had in mind. In fact, companionship of any kind was not uppermost on his priority list.

Dogs, I'm sure, were originally intended to haul stuff, fetch stuff or scare stuff. Dragging sleds, retrieving

ducks, attacking marauders - these were the tasks of the family dog, and if along the way he became "man's best friend", it's only because he tended to be fiercely loyal and sycophantically tail-waggingly "friendly" to whoever was feeding him at the time.

All the great dogs of literature — Balto the husky who got the diphtheria vaccine to Nome, Lassie the collie who rescued Timmy every week on TV — have been working dogs. Saint Bernards, German shepherds, Dalmatians, Labs: all noble dogs with noble missions in life. Even the low-slung weiner dog is a "dachshund", bred to fit into burrows to help farmers eradicate rodent pests.

It is difficult to imagine Nicky harnessed to a dog sled; the rest of the team would fall down laughing. Ditto with the burglars who would be challenged by Nicky upon breaking and entering. Even if he could swim, I'm not sure I would feel confident in sending him after a downed pintail; he'd undoubtedly get distracted and start yapping at the first frog or dragonfly he saw. As for rescuing Alpine folk under an avalanche, the weight of the whisky flask alone would stop him before he began.

But I hasten to add that I do not blame Nicky or all the pugs, pomeranians and shitzus of this earth. They are what they are. Rather I blame whoever had the bright idea to turn domesticated animals into "pets". Doubtless it created a multi-trillion dollar industry. But with the possible exception of cats and hamsters, very few animals make good "pets", and even they would be happy to be returned to the wild. Hamsters would gladly return to their tunnels in the mountains, cats to chasing mice and being worshipped by Egyptians. The mind boggles, however, at what Nicky would do if my friends suddenly decided one morning to let him respond to the "call of the wild". Coyote food by lunch, I suspect.

The ultimate in ridiculous pets has got to be the family in Alberta recently featured on TV which regularly invites one of its herd of bison into the living room. Contributes to one heck of a carpet-cleaning bill, I'm guessing.

But at least it doesn't yap.

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