

MARKET MUSINGS

By Jan Freedman

Here we go!

On Saturday, December 6, the Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair will be having an Indoor Market at the Armoury Building for the first time.

This will be a trial run for both the Market and the Town to see how well the Farmers' Market will work in this historic location, which the Town recently purchased from the Government.

Keep in mind they will be using the building 'as is' on this occasion as it needs considerable updating and some T.L.C. We hear that the Town will be doing significant renovations to the building in 2016. At that time it is expected that they will upgrade the electrics and install a proper kitchen.

In the meantime, we will make the very rustic environment work for us and we are very excited to be able to host this holiday Market there this Saturday. Do plan on dropping by to see your favourite vendors in this wonderful venue.

In my last column I mistakenly listed a new vendor, Plaid Raspberries, among the food vendors, having not been told what they make. Well, my bad! They make gorgeous wool mittens and were so gracious about my error that their story follows.

Alex Kirkham was born and raised in Chatham, Ontario. She and her husband and their two sons moved to Aurora about two years ago. She is a stay at home mom, looking after her two sons ages 2 and 5. Apparently there isn't much reason for the name of the business, but Alex told me that she chose the name so she wouldn't be limited as to what she could make? sounds good to me.

She started sewing as a child, both by hand and by machine. She still sews everything on her Grandma's old Kenmore sewing machine, bought in the 60's. It's not fancy, but is reliable and sturdy and she likes the sense of nostalgia that using that machine gives her.

She is an inherently crafty person and her craft supplies threaten to take over the house. Her mom was also crafty and her Dad was the photographer in the family and Alex figures that she takes after both of them.

The walls of their house are covered in crafts made by the children, art made by family and friends and photos of family. While she has made and sold everything from aprons and stuffed animals to beaded and crocheted jewelry, she enjoys making mittens most of all.

Alex describes her mittens as upcycled sweater mittens. The term 'upcycled' refers to taking something that might go to waste and making something better and useful out of it. In her case, she takes tired, outdated or even ugly sweaters, shrinking them down and making them into mittens. They are very warm and are lined in arctic fleece. It is important to Alex that they are both durable and beautiful.

Because they are made from upcycled material, the mittens are made in small batches and it is rare to find two pair that are exactly the same. She loves the idea of having mittens that no one else has and she enjoys watching to see which ones people choose: whether they want to match their coat or go for the colour and pattern that they are drawn to, regardless. They come in three sizes and are for both men and women.

When she does shows, it is usually a family affair with her husband helping to set up and tear down and the children under the table colouring and occasionally peeking out from under the tablecloth.

Alex has done a few local shows but is delighted to be a part of our Indoor Market this season. She is a big supporter of buying local and buying handmade and feels that the Market is a perfect fit. Look for her and her beautiful handmade mittens at the Armouries on Dec. 6th.

Here are the vendors you will find at the Armouries Market from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.:

19th Avenue Farm, Breezy Ridge Farm with their lamb, Howard's Farm, Oakridges Finest, Pioneer Brand Honey, Snowden Farm and Kind Organics.

Food:

Catharina's Kitchen, Gabriel's Café, Jan's Country Pantry, Nicole's Cakes, and Rob's Good Food. Sass Tea and Green River Coffee will provide beverages. Rustic Breads will be on hand with her delicious homemade bread Cathy's Composters will be there.

Artisans

The Bear's Den, CADA, Captain Ted's Knick-Knack-a-Thon, Carrie's Creations, Catch My Drift, Elderberry Boutique, Eurasia Jewellery Design, Eva Nagy, Green Leaf Designs, Limitless Jewells, Out of My Mind, Plaid Raspberries, and SDD Flags.

We will also host Resting Rock Landscapes who will have Christmas trees and greenery with the proceeds going to YR Children's

Aid.

The Armouries are located at 89 Mosely Street at the edge of Town Park.

See you at the Indoor Market!