MARKET MUSINGS

By Jan Freedman

We just experienced another glorious fall day at the Farmers' Market for our celebration of Culture Days.

This year, the Market had a Soup Fest during which six of our Market chefs prepared a soup with ingredients sourced at the Market for the public to taste. We were extremely fortunate this year to have the use of a professional, stainless steel mobile kitchen, which was made available to us by the Markham Fair and was accompanied by Kim Empringham from the Fair.

We thank the Markham Fair for the use of the mobile kitchen and Kim for her cheerful help. As always, the food sampling was very popular, and we hope that many people were inspired to buy the ingredients at the Market and make the soups at home. For those who weren't present on Saturday, the recipes will be posted on the Farmers' Market website.

Now I'd like to introduce you to another of our very talented artisans. Lee May is the owner of Chalkboard Growth Charts. Her business sells custom chalkboards.

Lee May was born and raised in Oshawa. She graduated from the University of Toronto with a B.A. in Sociology and Psychology, which was followed by a Telecommunications Management programme at Ryerson University.

She is registered currently in a Health Science Degree programme at Thompson Rivers University. Clearly, Lee May has an interest in lifelong learning.

Her work experience includes sales and Partner Management at an early Internet Company called Netcom, at AT&T and at Microsoft. Her delight in working with technology solutions and with people led her to open the Chalkboard Growth Charts small business. She likes the way that chalkboards cultivate approachable dialogues.

Lee May was introduced to digital growth charts through a chance meeting with Krystal Sandler, owner of Impressions Design. Krystal's business offers growth charts as well as other products and design services. Lee May was so impressed by Krystal's talent that she wanted to offer Krystal's designs in her own business. Together, they are working on a growth chart mural printed on a repositionable, VOC free, peel and stick canvas made in the USA. This product can shine a spotlight on the fleeting moments in growth; a powerful way in which parents can demonstrate their love for their children.

A Quebec manufacturer supplies her business with the highest quality of chalkboards available in the marketplace. They feature a baked, porcelain finish with an additional quality feature of a magnetic surface. A back layer of steel adds durability and strength to the boards.

Since using Canadian products and labour is important to Lee May, A Bradford Master Carpenter mills barn wood and other wood types in crafting custom frames. She challenges herself to buy both local and unique which, in turn, strengthens our community.

Now living in Aurora with her husband and son, Lee May's business is in its infancy, having been registered in February 2015. She shares her booth with the Sewing Bear and can be found at the east end of the row of artisans, along the pathway to the playground. An example of her custom, porcelain finished chalkboard is in the window of Aurora's Baby in Gear. Or you can see her at the Aurora Farmers' Market on Saturdays. She welcomes customer suggestions as to how to improve her product. She can be reached at 416-570-3735 or through her website: https://www.facebook.com/chalkboardgrowthcharts

I have been remiss in not previously thanking the Mayor and Town Councillors who came to the Market on August 22 to help with our Community Corn Roast. Their participation and assistance was much appreciated by us all. Thank you!

Our next Special Event is our Pumpkin Fest on October 3rd when we will have all manner of pumpkin-themed activities and treats. You may even see the return of pumpkin bowling and there will be great entertainment from the bandshell. For those who commented on how much they enjoyed the fabulous young band who played on Culture Days, we will try to book them for a repeat performance when they are available.

See you at the Market!