

MARKET MUSINGS

By Jan Freedman

The outdoor season of the Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair ended October 25 on a high note.

The day was unseasonably warm and sunny, until noon at least; the mood was happy and celebratory, and the Market was bustling with shoppers.

We were entertained by numerous talented performers from Marquee Theatrical Productions who were all excellent and very well received by the large group assembled in the Town Park to watch them perform.

Our annual pumpkin carving contest among the vendors was popular with both vendors and customers and drew over 100 votes.

Congratulations to Jan's County Pantry, 19th Avenue Farm and Family Kitchen for their winning entries.

We now move indoors to the Aurora Cultural Centre for four dates throughout the winter. The following are the dates when you can find us at the Cultural Centre from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: the Saturdays of November 22; January 17; February 21 and March 28. We look forward to seeing you there.

This column will now appear monthly throughout the winter in the week preceding each indoor Market, in which you will learn which vendors you can expect to see there.

For the past two seasons at the Market, we have been privileged to have Kiersten Vizzacherro with us as our Market Manager.

During that time we have all grown to love, admire and respect her. She has established an excellent rapport with both vendors and customers and we will all miss her greatly next year.

During this last year, Kiersten began a full time job with Free the Children and Me to We and has relocated to Downtown Toronto. Over the winter, she trained to become a Trip's Facilitator. During her training, she learned how to keep kids safe and healthy while travelling in a developing country where they would be learning new things rapidly.

Upon completing her training, Kiersten was given the opportunity to travel to the Maasai Mara in Kenya for two weeks with her first group of students.

They flew to Nairobi in March, happy to leave the bleak Ontario winter behind. After a day of touring the city, her group of 16 teenagers and 2 teachers from Winnipeg arrived. They left Nairobi and drove four hours into the beautiful rolling hills of the Mara. They stayed in a community called Olelethwa where they worked with community members to build the foundation for a new classroom at the all-girls Secondary School, funded by Free the Children.

They worked at the site daily, moving bricks, mixing concrete and other physical labour. Along the way, they learned about the daily life of the members of the community in the Mara. They spent one afternoon gathering water with one mother named Cecilia and learned how truly lucky Canadians are to have unlimited access to clean and safe drinking water. Kiersten's group fell in love with the positive, joyous attitudes of the Kenyan people.

During the late summer, Kiersten travelled again, this time to India with 25 students from across North America, on a food security focused trip. They stayed in the region of Rajasthan, 2 hours outside of Udaipur. The sights in India were unlike anything Kiersten had ever seen before.

Despite the pervasive poverty, there was amazing beauty and an unwavering devotion to the millions of gods that enrich Indian culture. While the students experienced culture shock, they fell in love with both the people and culture of India. They spent many hours there laying bricks and building walls for a school garden, which will enable students in the Kalthana community to have access to nutritious food.

There isn't enough room to thank all the people who were responsible for this past wonderful Market season, so I will offer some general thanks. Thank you to our dedicated vendors, our loyal customers, our amazing market staff of Kiersten, Joanna and Aaron for their hard work, our intrepid Chair, Anna, assisted by the Market Committee, our entertainers all season, our generous sponsors with whose support we could not operate and to Brock and The Auroran for hosting Market Musings.

Soon we will begin working on developing another exciting and event-filled season for 2015.

In the meantime, remember that we will be indoors at the Cultural Centre on the Saturdays of November 22, January 17, February 21 and March 28 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

See you at the Indoor Market!