

MARKET MUSINGS

By **Jan Freedman**

Here we are, mid-way through February in a winter that is just barely a winter.

Most of us are tickled pink that the weather has been so mild, but I know many who love outdoor winter sports are suffering, along with the businesses which support them.

I haven't had the opportunity to talk to our farmers to see how this winter weather will affect their crops, but we all have read how food prices will be rising and when you factor in the low Canadian dollar, the rise may be quite substantial; all the more reason to buy locally grown food from the Farmers' Market.

Now I'd like to introduce a friend I met at a multi-cultural festival in Newmarket last summer when I admired the brightly coloured, intricately detailed beaded earrings her entire family were wearing.

Her name is Attefa Ayyoubi (Atti) and she was born in Afghanistan in the early 70's and grew up in Kabul.

When she was a child, Afghanistan was a peaceful, safe and happy country where the most beautiful fruits and plants flourished.

She remembers that she used to like to sleep on the roof so that when you looked up in the sky, you could see the entire Milky Way. She and her siblings would actually jump to try to touch the stars.

Atti remembers those years as times of great happiness and of respect and honesty.

Being a very intelligent person, Atti finished high school at the age of 14 and went to Sofia, Bulgaria to University to study journalism. After studying in Bulgaria, she moved to Germany for seven years.

As a result of living in a many countries, she speaks several languages.

When she was in Grade 8, Atti learned about Canada and dreamed that, one day, she would see the wild, rushing waters of Niagara Falls. At that time, she hadn't thought that she would end up immigrating to Canada. She then married and had two children, a son and daughter here.

Atti's interest in beading began at an early age. She would take any sort of bead, even seeds, and turn them into necklaces. In the early days, the pieces took a long time to make and were quite simple. She particularly admired the intricate beaded work of the nomadic Kuchi people of Afghanistan and tried to learn from them.

Atti's work is influenced by Mexican, African and Aboriginal cultures and you can see that reflected in both her colours and designs. She loves what she does and her passion is contagious.

She says that it is a hobby, but her children think of it more as a way of life.

Atti calls herself ?Beading Mama?, bringing cultures together, one bead at a time.

She will be at the next two Indoor Markets at the Armouries (February 13 and March 12), so I encourage you to visit her booth to talk to her and see her gorgeous beaded jewellery.

These are the vendors who will be at the February 13 Indoor Market at the Armouries from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The farmers will include 19th Avenue Farm, the Abbott Family Farm with meat, Oakridges Finest, Kind Organics, Pioneer Brand Honey, and Nature's Rainbow with heirloom plant seeds.

Among the food vendors will be Attilio's Olive Oil and Antipasti, Catharina's Kitchen, Cosmo's Smoked Meats Ltd., Green River Coffee, Nutmeg Bake Shop, Sasha's Sweets and Projet Christina Marie and John Abraham with his Fair Trade products and strudel. Our talented artisans will include the Bear's Den, Nancy Wood, Eva Nagy, Green Leaf Designs, Kibo Natural Body Care Products, Beading Mama and Michelle Zikovitz.

The Winter Blues Fest group of musicians will have a pop-up performance between 10 a.m. and 12 noon, so be sure to plan to visit us this Saturday, February 13, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

See you at the Indoor Market!