

MARKET MUSINGS

By Jan Freedman

We were extremely fortunate to have a lovely sunny and warm day at the Farmers' Market on Saturday, given all the rainy days we have experienced this summer.

We also had an embarrassment of riches with two buskers performing on the same day, due to a scheduling error. It wasn't our busiest day, but business was steady.

Walking around the Market, I saw some new produce now available: Wild Blueberries at 19th Avenue Farm along with small yellow plums, raspberries at Oakridges Finest, raspberries and corn at Willowtree Farm and our cherries at Coopers Farm. There were beautiful peas and beans at several of the farmers' tables.

This is the time of the season is when so much of what we grow in Southern Ontario begins to appear at Farmers' Markets, so it's a very good time to drop by on Saturday mornings before you go on to other activities.

The next new vendor I'd like to introduce is Denise Voth, who may not be at the Market for much longer. She has been living in Aurora for the past 15 years and is new to us this season.

Born in 1969 in Toronto to a young couple from Nova Scotia who had moved to Toronto for work, she and her parents then moved back to the Maritimes when she was five.

She remembers her early years as being spent fighting pirates on an old wooden ship that had been left as a play structure at her elementary school.

In the early 80s, her family moved to Edmonton where she managed to get herself into some trouble. At the young age of 12, she began drinking and smoking at bush parties, where teens brought their boom boxes, wore leopard print tops and hung feathered roach clips in their hair.

Fortunately, when she moved back to Nova Scotia for high school, she began attending church. She found comfort and confidence in the message of God's love, which gave her peace and enabled her to turn her life around.

After graduating, she became most interested in work that involved caring for others, and has since worked in group homes with special needs children and supporting seniors by providing in-home care.

In the nineties, her work and marriage to a man from Ottawa brought her back to Ontario.

A few years ago, Denise learned how vulnerable young women in neighbourhoods across Canada were being forced into prostitution by traffickers who controlled and manipulated them with threats and violence.

She decided that raising awareness of the crime of trafficking was the best thing she could do to help. She was inspired by a quote she had heard: "If you see an injustice, shine a light on it until it becomes so uncomfortable that it cannot continue."

That is the goal of the human trafficking information display she has created.

She has also turned her sewing skills toward creating hand sewn bags from beautiful repurposed fabrics as a fundraising campaign for the project.

Funds are used to pay for display space at trade shows and community events where she talks about the ills of human trafficking with anyone interested, gives out literature on the signs to look for and the Crimestoppers telephone number. Do come by next week to see Denise, her bags and to discuss her important work.

Our next Special Event is next Saturday, July 22, when we'll celebrate our Community Appreciation Day with the usual children's crafts and a draw for a market bag.

Our entertainment will be provided by Lawrence Moule and his new partner and their band, "Take Two", renamed from "Jazz Two". See you at the Market!