

MARKET MUSINGS: Outdoor Season wraps up Saturday

By Jan Freedman

The Aurora Farmers' Market and Artisan Fair will reach the end of the season this Saturday, October 27, after a great market season that began in May.

While the last day isn't a 'Special Event' day, it will be full of activities. Councillor John Abel and Music Aurora have planned a mini Music Fest with local musicians to help us end the season on an uplifting note. Also, students and some parents from Marquee Theatrical Productions will be performing the exciting and well-known Michael Jackson 'Thriller' dance twice at 10 am and again at 12.15 pm. What a great way to end our outdoor season.

The talented woman who began Marquee is Sheryl Thomas. Originally from northern Ontario, Sheryl moved to Aurora in 1976 where she attended both elementary and high school. In Grade Nine she discovered musical theatre when she joined Theatre Aurora. She is now a lifetime member.

After having two children and operating her own hair salon, Sheryl soon realized that the Arts were her passion. When she learned that her church needed to raise funds to build a new church, she and four friends initiated a project to mount a production with all proceeds going to the church fund. It was here that Sheryl learned how many people in the community wanted to perform and join together to benefit local initiatives. After another successful fundraiser for the church, Sheryl decided it was time to branch out and she opened Marquee on Industrial Parkway north in 2001.

Marquee gained not-for-profit status in June of 2003 and started summer camps for children in addition to adult cast productions. Then there were 15 children in each of the two programs. Today, Marquee is well known in York Region for their educational youth programs for ages 4-18 and they serve over 750 children each year.

Marquee is now a charity and will be producing *We Will Rock You* in November and *Mamma Mia* in May of 2019 with their adult casts at the Newmarket Theatre. They welcome donations to sponsor less fortunate children to attend their educational programs. A tax receipt is available for the full amount of any donation upon request.

Also on our last Saturday of the season, The Royal Canadian Legion, Aurora Branch # 385, will be at the Market to bring awareness to the importance of continuing the tradition of Remembrance to honour the fallen and thank all who served for Canada. Every year the Legion invites all Canadians to show their recognition by proudly wearing the red Poppy, the sacred symbol of Remembrance. Legion members will have poppies (by donation) and 'I will Remember' lawn signs for sale for \$10.00.

There are still some very important people to thank for their support of our Market. We wish to thank The Auroran for allowing us to have a column every two weeks during Market season which focuses on the Market and its vendors. In addition to thanking Brock for his generosity, we owe a debt of gratitude to Diane Buchanan for her creatively designed ads in the Auroran.

It is now time to let our sponsors know how incredibly grateful we are for their generous support which enabled us to advertize, hire musicians for Special Events and in general, pay for the many expenses of running a 6 months Market.

At the Gold level, we thank Home Hardware and Linda Stephens of Keller Williams Realty for their generosity. We also thank both The Town of Aurora and The Auroran for their sponsorship-in-kind.

At the Silver level, many thanks to the Rotary Club of Aurora, the Optimist Club, Salomons Landscaping and Maintenance and 'Dr. Dean' McClelland of Elevate Chiropractic for their support.

Before signing off for the season, I want to draw your attention to our Christmas Market on December 15 at the Aurora Cultural Centre from 9 am until 1 pm. Many of your favourite vendors will be there and it will be a great occasion to complete your holiday shopping. Some of us will be taking orders for the holidays which can be collected at the indoor market.

The Farmers' Market AGM will be on Thursday evening, November 15 from 7-9 pm in the Leksand Room at Town Hall. Everyone is welcome to attend.

See you at the Indoor Market!