

## our two cents

### One small step

Councillor Pat Mikusa and her hardworking Trails in the Valley committee, along with all the amazing volunteers from the Lucy Maud Society, the Optimists, the Rotary Club, OnStage Uxbridge, the York Durham Railway and the many other organizations, businesses and individuals who slaved away on a summer weekend to make "100 Years of Anne" a resounding success, richly deserved the kudos they received from Township Council Monday. The Mayor singled out for praise local writer and MC extraordinaire Ted Barris, who it seemed never left the Brock Street stage to eat, drink or respond to the call of nature for hours on end. Ted is simply the very best at what he does, always being thoroughly prepared for the event, and luckily for us he's not very good at saying no.

Even before the weekend began, people could be heard musing that an annual "Lucy Maud Festival" was the logical seed for a blossoming tourist industry in Uxbridge. However wonderful the unique Foster Memorial or our rich Quaker heritage might be, they are, for the most part, things for tourists to discover once they get here. It only makes sense that our most famous resident, a writer who is loved worldwide, should be the foundation of our self-promotion.

The weekend proved that a number of elements are present to make such an annual festival work: a soapbox derby down the Brock Street hill is brilliant, Leaskdale is a charming place for walking tours, the Historic Church holds promise as a performing venue, the Heritage Railway is a natural link to bringing tourists here and taking them back. The promise is great, the possibilities limitless.

Mayor Shepherd mused Monday that if such a festival is to really get on its feet, it can't rely so heavily on volunteers. He suggested that the Township should be the chief organizer. We agree that paid staff are a long-term necessity, but who is there at Town Hall to do the job? Almost from Day One of the Cosmos, we've been urging the Township to hire a public relations professional to not only carry the tourism portfolio, but to undertake other vital functions like physician recruitment, media relations or communication with the voters (such as managing the web site). Our suggestion has fallen on deaf ears. To take full advantage of the potential of a "Maud Festival", we can't afford to go without such a person much longer, whether they work for the Township or the UMMSO.

There are other significant barriers to the progress of such a festival. Chief among them is the absence of a hotel or motel anywhere in the Township. If we want to attract hundreds or thousands to a "Maud" celebration, where will we put them?

Councillor Mikusa's Culture and Tourism Advisory Board needs, in addition to the cultural experts, some aggressively-minded individuals with some meaningful experience in the

## THE STORY OF UXBRIDGE STATION

A DOCUMENTARY  
SAT. JUNE 21<sup>ST</sup> UXBRIDGE MUSIC HALL 7:00 PM



## Stemp's Stew by Harry Stemp

"And a child shall lead them"

Twice a day there is a large contingent of vehicles dropping young students off at the Uxbridge Public School parking lot. It was while I was dropping the grandchildren that I thought of the above saying.

Decorating the chain link fence was a number of hand-painted signs produced by students from one of the classes. Although there were different designs, each poster had the same message.

pull it off but I am sure those involved are all proud of a job well done.

Although Cavendish, P.E.L., claims the rights to Lucy Maud and *Anne of Green Gables* there was no way Uxbridge and Leaskdale were going to take a back seat. Volunteers and businesses joined forces and made sure residents and visitors alike were aware that eleven books in the "Anne" series were written while Lucy Maud filled the role

c e r .

Whether it is being a victim and conquering the disease, or losing a family member or friend, we have all been touched.

The relay calls for one member of the team to be on the track over a 12-hour period, which began at 7 in the evening. Sounds tough but the 12 hours went amazingly fast and the fellowship between cancer sur-

