



Staff Photo by Rob Bientona

Local television star Suzanne McGillivray says she's just a regular 11-year-old. But few youngsters her age have the polished savvy of the seasoned actress who has performed in commercials and stage productions since the age of four. McGillivray can be seen Saturday mornings on CTV's children's show *Don't Stop Now*.

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Sweet strains of success haven't changed local star

By ANTHONY REZEK
Media stars are often perceived as egotistical and desperate to impress. But those preconceived notions are quickly put to rest when that star is

Mississauga's own Suzanne McGillivray.

Suzanne, 12, says she's like most girls her age. She goes to school at Allan A. Martin Public School, enjoys playing soccer and basketball and has a penchant for the Beach Boys.

But what sets her apart from her peers is she is also the host of CTV television's children's show *Don't Stop Now*, currently aired on Saturday mornings.

She has also been an actress and model since age 4, and has worked with such well-known people as hockey great Bobby Orr and the zany cast of SCTV, including John Candy, Andrea Martin and Dave Thomas.

From a meagre start doing commercials, her acting experience began to blossom at age 6, when she appeared in a number of musicals including *The Sound of Music* and *Showboat*.

She then went on to perform in several CBC dramas including *Strange But True* and *I Married The Klondike*.

Suzanne says it's a real treat to be a youngster working among so many older professionals.

"The treat you real well. When I did commercials they used to take me to these big elegant restaurants and stuff me."

But the highlight of her short career came this past summer when she was selected to co-host the 13-part children's magazine show.

Taping took place in a hectic seven days of shooting which included at least one close call when she had to share a washroom with CTV news anchor Gail Smith and found herself locked out at a most trying time.

"I just had to go out and do the show," she says.

Suzanne says she's more than pleasantly surprised by the success of the show, based on a large positive response from viewers.

"It turned out a lot better than I thought. I didn't know people woke up that early on a Saturday," she says.

Meanwhile, as acting jobs are scarce for youngsters between the ages of 13 and 17, Suzanne says for now she'll concentrate on her studies and Highland dancing, in which she's won several awards. But she hopes to pick up on her career in the future.

Despite her success, Suzanne's mother still calls her "a regular kid."

She may be regular, but Suzanne displays an endearing self-confidence and modesty that promise success.

"I wouldn't like to think I'm a big star, snobby and all that," she says.

"I just want to entertain people — not show off."