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MONDAY, MARCH 30, 1998 - 7:30 p.m.
440 ELIZABETH STREET, 4th FLOOR BIRCH / BALSAM ROOM

For further information contact:
Roberta Calderbank at (905) 639-5228, Ext. 8746
Toll free: 1-(800) 810-0000

Canadians "smug" about racial issues

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unfair because they assume that everyone who belongs to a particular group is exactly the same."

Sometimes Canadians are a little smug about racial discrimination, she said, because the country hasn't had dramatic and visible racial problems like in the United States.

"But we're not in a position to pat ourselves on the back just yet," she said. "And the way native people have been treated for centuries is certainly a stain on our reputation."

Much of Canadian history is a story of the way Europeans and their descendants stereotyped the first people of the country and what the costs have been, she said.

"Even today, hundreds of years after Europeans began arriving, aboriginal people remain the most disadvantaged group in Canada. Their opportunities are often limited, not by individual people's abilities, but by other people's discriminatory perceptions."

Canada's diversity is something that should be celebrated, not filled with discrimination, she said.

"All of Canadian society suffers when we fail to appreciate our diversity. In fact, one could easily argue that diversity is Canada's greatest asset."

But Ms Falardeau-Ramsay said she's optimistic that discrimination can be beaten.

"I see the things that are wrong with our society, but I believe we can change them."

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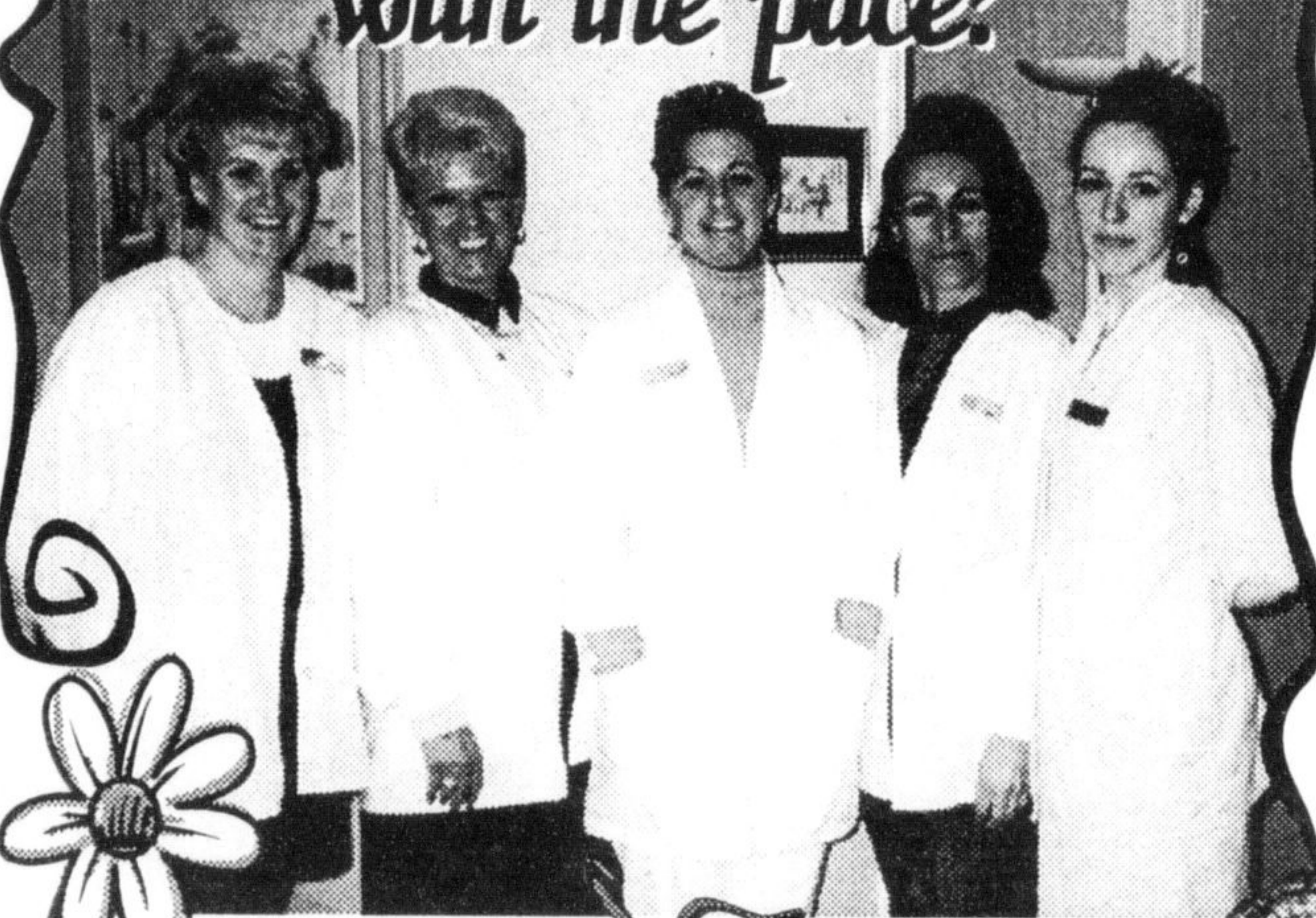
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Safety is important

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- Place heavy cement lids on wells and septic tanks.
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