A thick skin and self reliance two keys to her career success

By KIM ARNOTT

Special to The Champion

As director of membership services for the Canadian Professional Golf Association (CPGA), Alice Strachan works in a world dominated by men.

"They're the ones who mostly have the time to golf," she explains jokingly.

The association has more than 2,800 members and only 147 of them are female.

"Unfortunately, in the world of golf, I think the female role is what some people would call traditional, and what I would call out of date," Ms Strachan told 200 of Halton's Grade 8 girls at McMaster University in Hamilton recently.

Succeeding in a non-traditional career requires self-confidence, motivation and a thick skin, she told the students. And sometimes, it requires forgetting you are a

woman.

"I don't do my job as a woman, I don't do it as a man, I just try to do my job," she said. Ms Strachan was the keynote speaker at a weekend conference titled The Future is Ours '98, organized by the Halton Women Teachers' Association.

students from across the region together with a dozen women currently working in non-traditional career fields.

Along with Ms Strachan, the conference featured women employed as pilots, computer animators, jockeys, veterinarians, sheet metal workers and zoo curators.

Students also had a chance to hear from Ontario's only female fire marshall, a CBC executive and an investigative reporter.

"We're hoping today will give the girls a real sense of empowerment and let them

know that women can do whatever they set their minds to," said Alynne Solway, one of the conference organizers.

As the students prepare to head into high school in the fall, Ms Solway said the teachers hope to convince them to consider a wide range of career possibilities before The event gathered senior elementary making the course selections that will begin to determine their future.

The conference, which included students from all the middle schools across Halton, also gave the girls a chance to network, added Ms Solway.

Ms Strachan urged the students to work toward whatever career interests them and told them that the most important lesson she has learned is one of self-reliance.

"If I wanted to get somewhere, the only person who could get me there was me,"

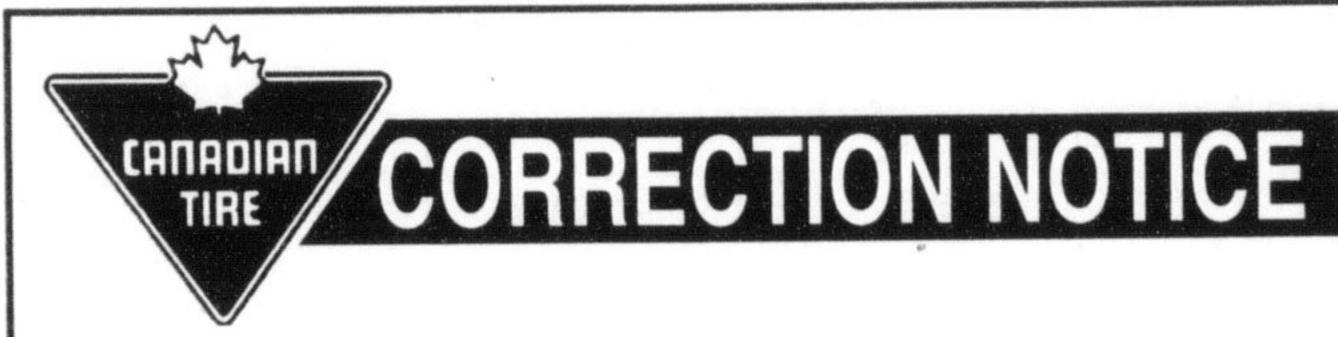
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Along the way, the individual spent time damaging cars. Using a sharp instrument of some kind, the suspect gouged the paint on four vehicles. One was a pick-up truck that had its tailgate etched.

The balance were cars that had their hoods scratched.

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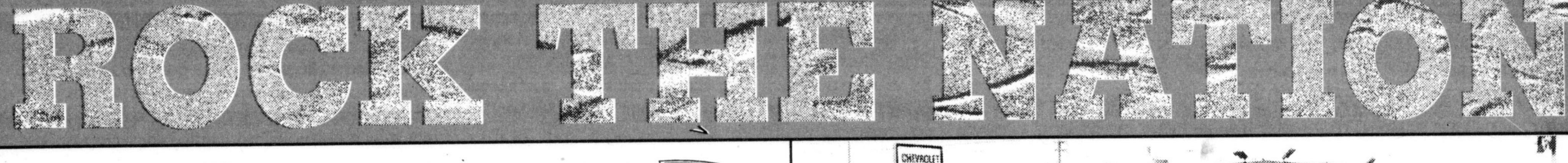
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