

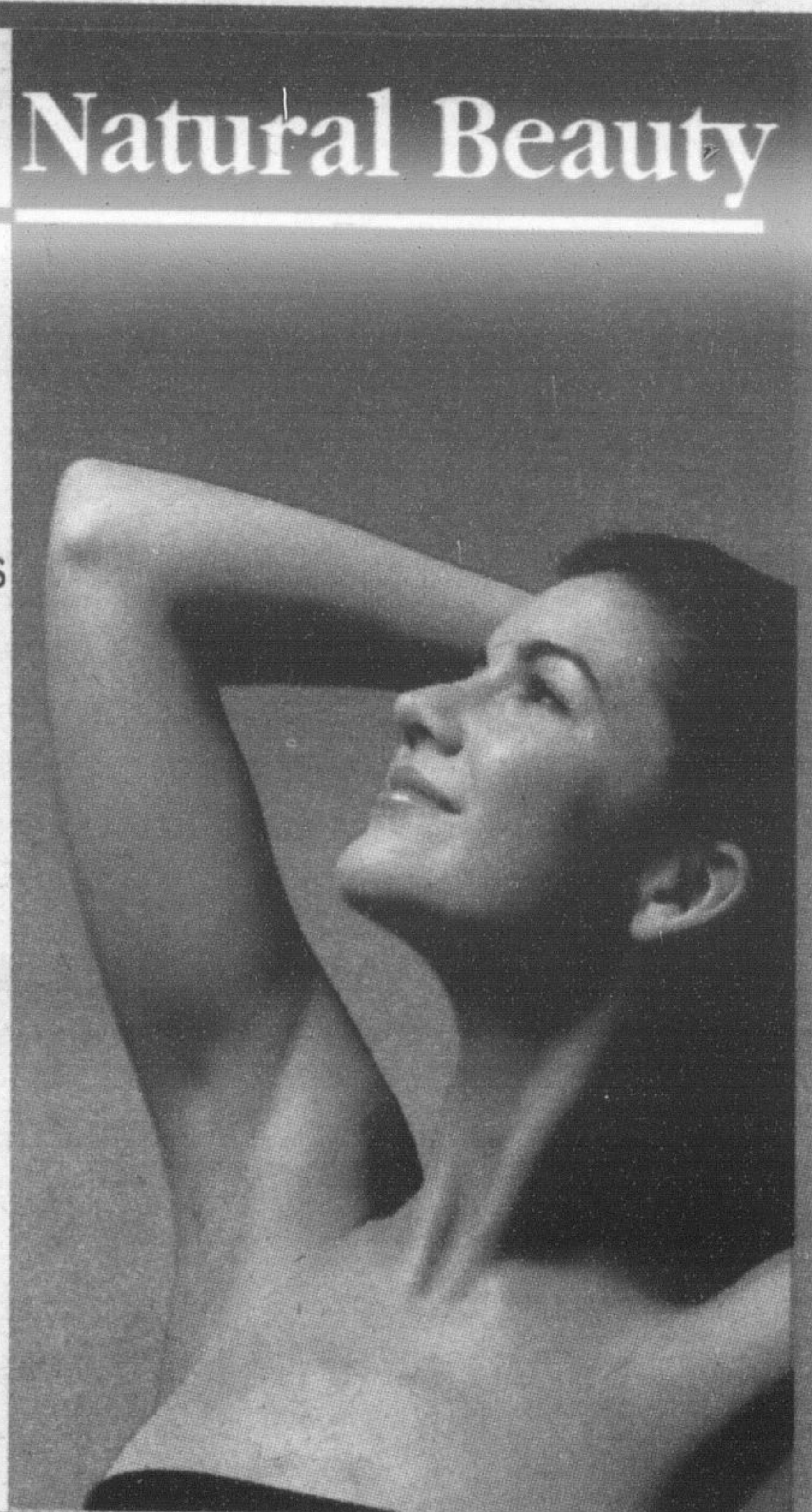
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Full blood study report expected to be made public in near future

• from RISK on page 4

"We are doing our own follow up," she said, noting it would include an evaluation of physical and mental health.

Dr. Elliott hopes to have the results compiled and ready for public release early next summer, when the West Nile season typically starts.

The point of the blood study was to find how many residents in two postal code areas in Oakville contracted West Nile. It was chosen because it had the highest rate of infection in North America last year.

Of the 1,505 residents who provided a blood sample, 46 tested positive, or 3.1 per cent, for virus antibodies.

It produced a ratio suggesting that between 670 and 1219 of the 30,467 residents living in the sample areas were infected.

In that area, there were six cases of encephalitis (all hospitalized) and five cases of meningitis (one hospitalized). Eight people also

had West Nile fever (one hospitalized).

Generally, the Oakville number of 3.1 per cent was comparable to the number infected in New York at 2.6 per cent.

The Oakville study found most, or 65 per cent, of those testing positive for the antibodies were over 50 years of age.

Behavioral patterns studied

The study also looked at behavioural patterns mainly to see what people did to protect themselves against getting West Nile.

Two-thirds of those surveyed had containers with water — known mosquito breeding sites — on their properties; a quarter had door and window screen tears; nearly two-thirds rarely or never wore insect repellent outdoors for 30 minutes or longer; and half of those surveyed rarely or never wore long-sleeved shirts and pants.

More than half did nothing to stop from being bitten, despite most saying they had received

information on how to avoid mosquito bites.

Dr. Elliott said she was astonished to see the lack of protection from the public against West Nile.

"This is just startling to me," she said.

Dr. Bob Nosal, Halton's Medical Officer of Health, said the report takes into account data from last year and not this year, but concludes that residents need to take precautions against West Nile.

"It reaffirms all our public health messages," he said, noting regional polling results this year show that 82 per cent of residents removed standing water on their properties within seven days.

The full blood study report was expected to be released by the McMaster researchers to the Province yesterday and should be made public soon.

Jason Misner can be reached at jmisner@miltoncanadianchampion.com.



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An Open Letter to Halton Residents and Friends and Family of Allendale Long-Term Care Facility:

Recently you may have read media coverage or heard about Halton's plan to move to an 'alternative service delivery' approach at Allendale, Halton Region's long term care facility in Milton. There has been some inaccuracy about these plans, which is creating undue angst and stress for the residents and families of Allendale. Halton Region would like to set the record straight.

At Halton, we believe strongly in long-term care. Halton Region is currently building two new facilities in Oakville and Burlington respectively, and plans are being made to bring these two facilities on board at the end of next year as publicly funded, operated and managed long-term care centers. It is a matter of public record that approximately 180 - 200 new positions will be required for our expanded commitment to long-term care.

As part of our normal business practice and in preparing to transition to these two new additional long-term care facilities, the decision was made to have hairdressing and foot care provided by outside service providers. The same level of service will continue to be provided on Allendale premises. This approach has been successfully implemented in many other long-term care facilities with no adverse impact on residents.

The four unionized employees who are affected by the change to foot care and hairdressing services are being offered all possible options under their collective agreement of remaining with Halton, including retraining and necessary support during the transition.

With respect to the delivery of non-care related functions, no decision has been made. You can be assured that these services will be reviewed and considered with input from staff, residents and families, and will be communicated in a timely way over the next several months.

I wish to assure you that I would never put forward any change that would compromise the care of the most vulnerable in our community. We offer care to the most hard to serve seniors. We plan to continue, in the proud Halton tradition of excellent care, to understand the needs of our residents and continually work at enhancing their quality of life.

Sincerely,

Adelina Urbanski

Adelina Urbanski
Commissioner, Social and Community Services

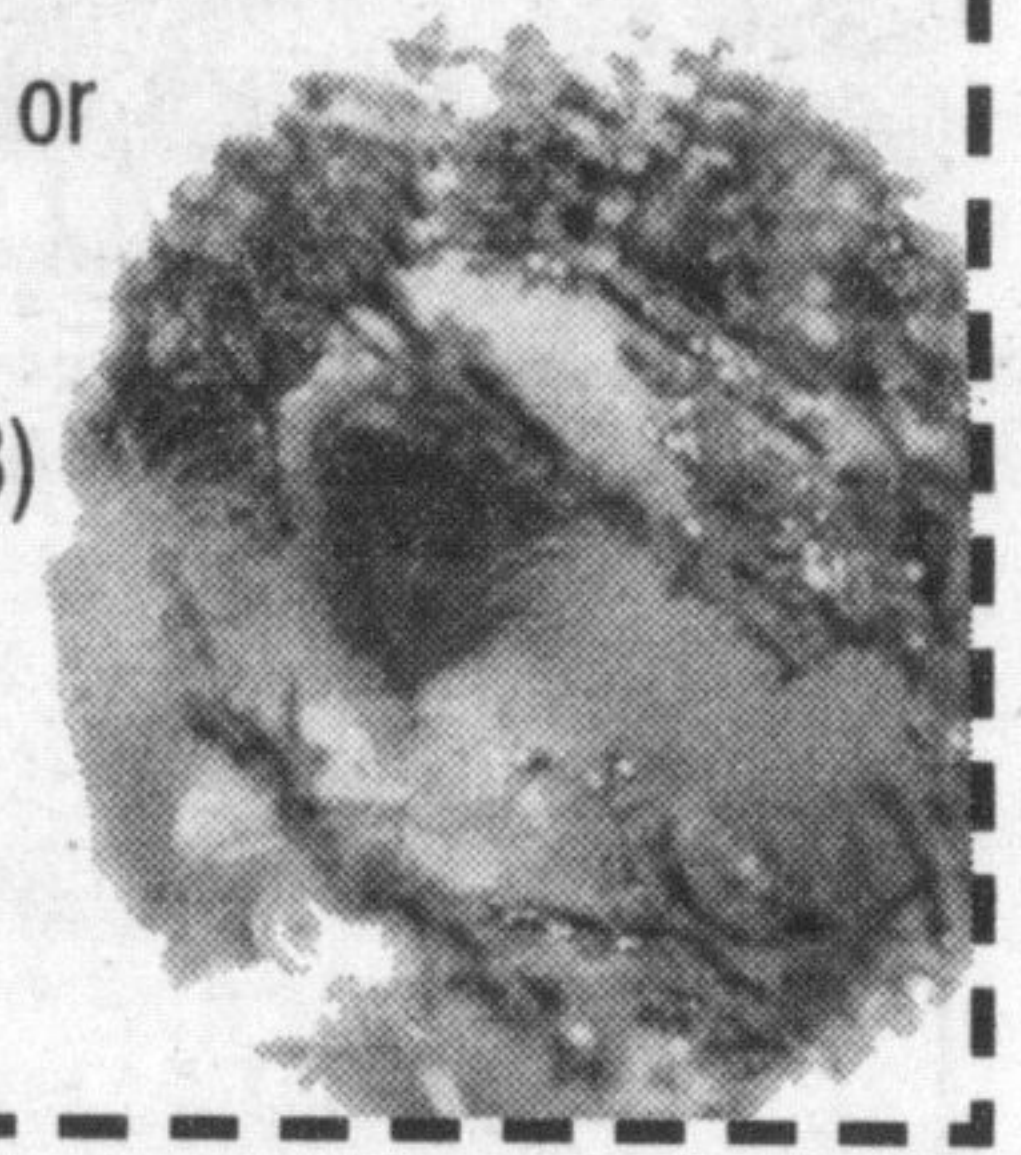


Correction Notice

In Tuesday, November 11th's edition of the Champion, the Country Depot ad should have read

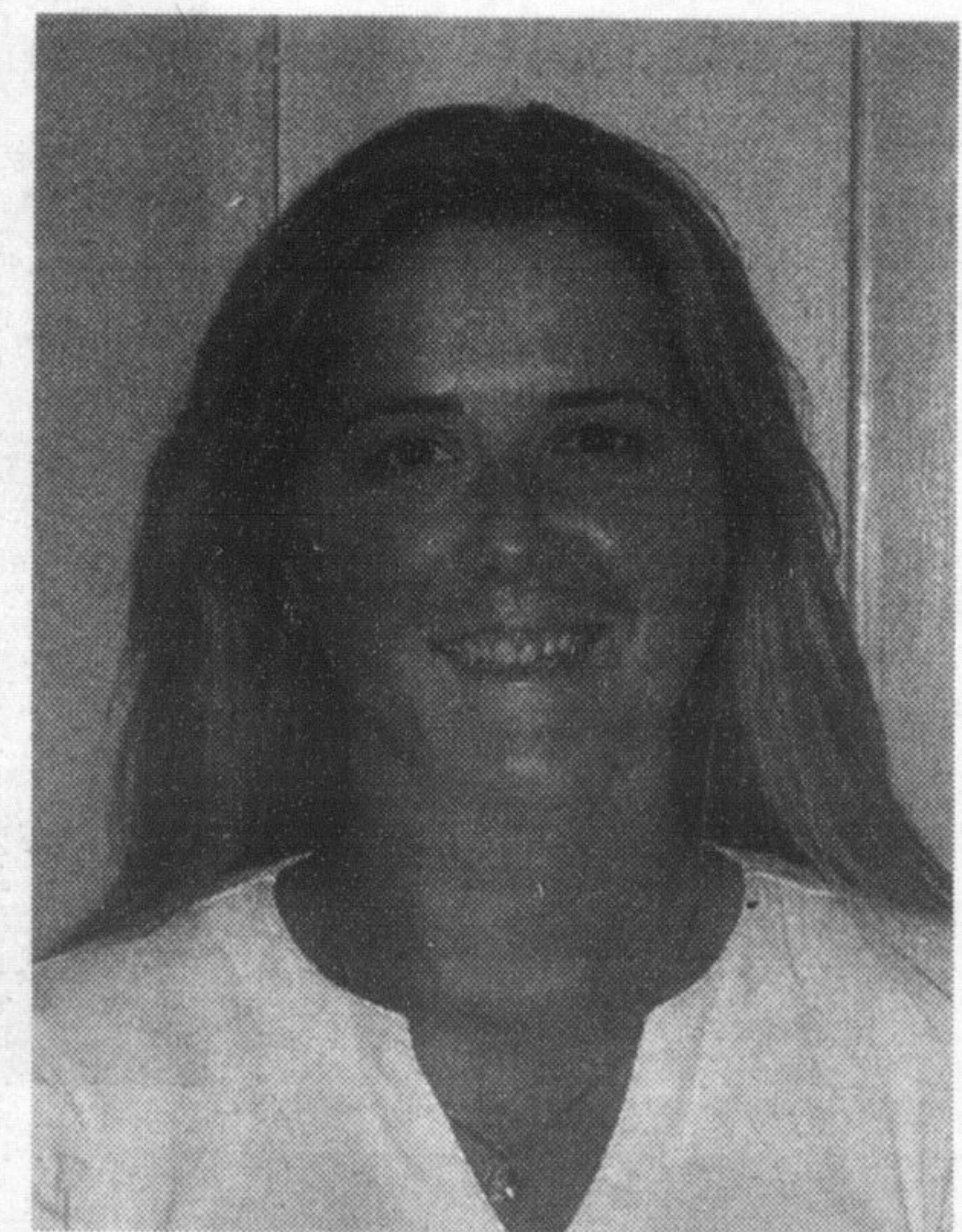
- "\$5.00 off your next purchase of \$25.00 or more towards Christmas Decorations (excluding greens) on the day of the United Way House Tour (Sat. Nov. 22/03) & is not to be used with any other coupon or discount."

We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.



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