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All in the family

Husband, wife and son face prostitution charges

By Kim Arnott
 SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

An Oakville businessman, his wife and his son are facing a number of charges, following a joint police probe into prostitution at strip clubs in southern Ontario.

Darivoj (Darko) Vranich, the owner of Oakville's new Holiday Inn Express, along with his wife Erika Vranich, 42, were arrested at their Greeneagle Drive home on Thursday.

Police say the couple were involved in bringing women from Hungary to Canada, holding them against their will and forcing them to work as prostitutes. They are both facing charges of forcible confinement, living on the avails of prostitution and keeping a common bawdy house.

Vranich's brother, John, and his son Denis are also facing charges in relation to the case.

Vranich, 57, who lives in a multi-million dollar home

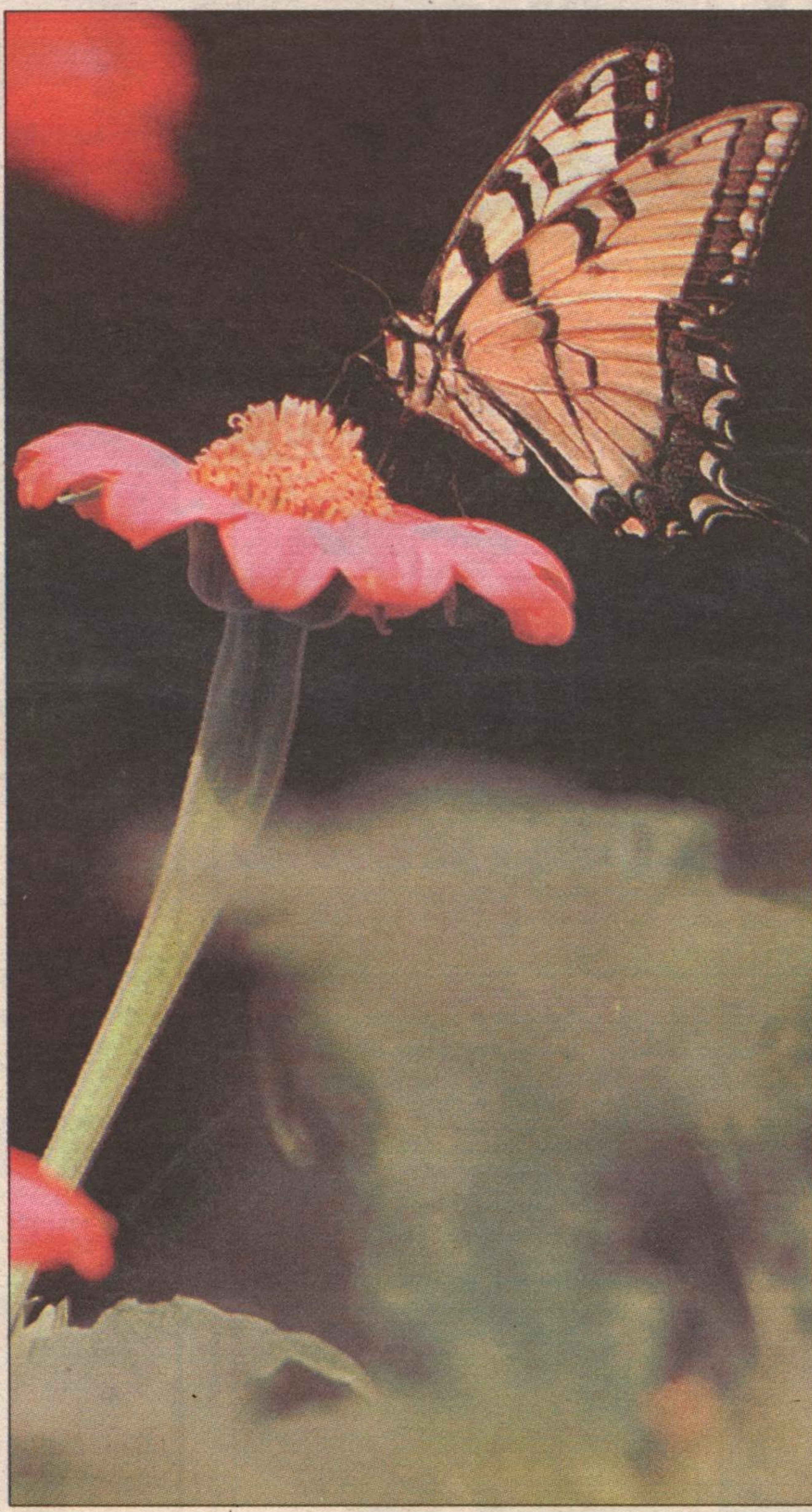
backing on to Glen Abbey golf course, owns and operates the Solid Gold strip club in Burlington, Pure Gold strip club in Mississauga and Solid Gold II strip club in Etobicoke.

Police say people associated with Solid Gold II travelled to Budapest, Hungary to recruit women to work in Canada as exotic dancers. The women were allegedly given false promises about the nature and condition of their employment.

When Canadian immigration authorities rejected requests for work permits for the women, they were flown to Toronto anyway, where they claimed refugee status.

According to police, the

(See 'Strip' page 4)



Ambitious butterfly project needs support

By Scott MacArthur
 SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

If everything goes according to plan, Oakville could have a nationally recognized tourist attraction to call its own by next summer.

The Bronte (Business Improvement Area) BIA, with the help of corporate and individual donations, is proposing to place a butterfly park at the mouth of the Bronte Outer Harbour at Heritage Park, south of Ontario Street.

The park, which will cover nearly three acres of land, will feature different attractions based on the season.

In summer, various gardens spread over the land will surround a waterway in the shape of a butterfly, allowing both locals and tourists the opportunity to view different species of butterflies and enjoy the weather in an attractive setting.

Winter will turn the waterway into a paved skateway, and there is hope that winter butterfly migrations will settle in the park.

"What we're trying to create is a year-round attraction that will not only attract locals, but draw American tourists and others as well," said volunteer Lou Bernard, whose wife, Lee, is chair of the Bronte Butterfly Project. "It's also important to bring the butterflies back. Many years ago, the harbour here would be a stop on their migratory flights, but because of the growth on Lakeshore Road, they no longer had any place to stop."

Oakville company G.K. Bell & Associates will begin testing the Heritage Park site within the next 10 days for the depth of bedrock and degree of compaction that exists on the site. The work should take no more than two days and will not disturb residents of the area.

(See 'Donations' page 3)

Photo by Barrie Erskine
 The Bronte Butterfly Project hopes to attract butterflies such as the one above to a butterfly park at the mouth of the Bronte Outer Harbour at Heritage Park, south of Ontario Street.

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