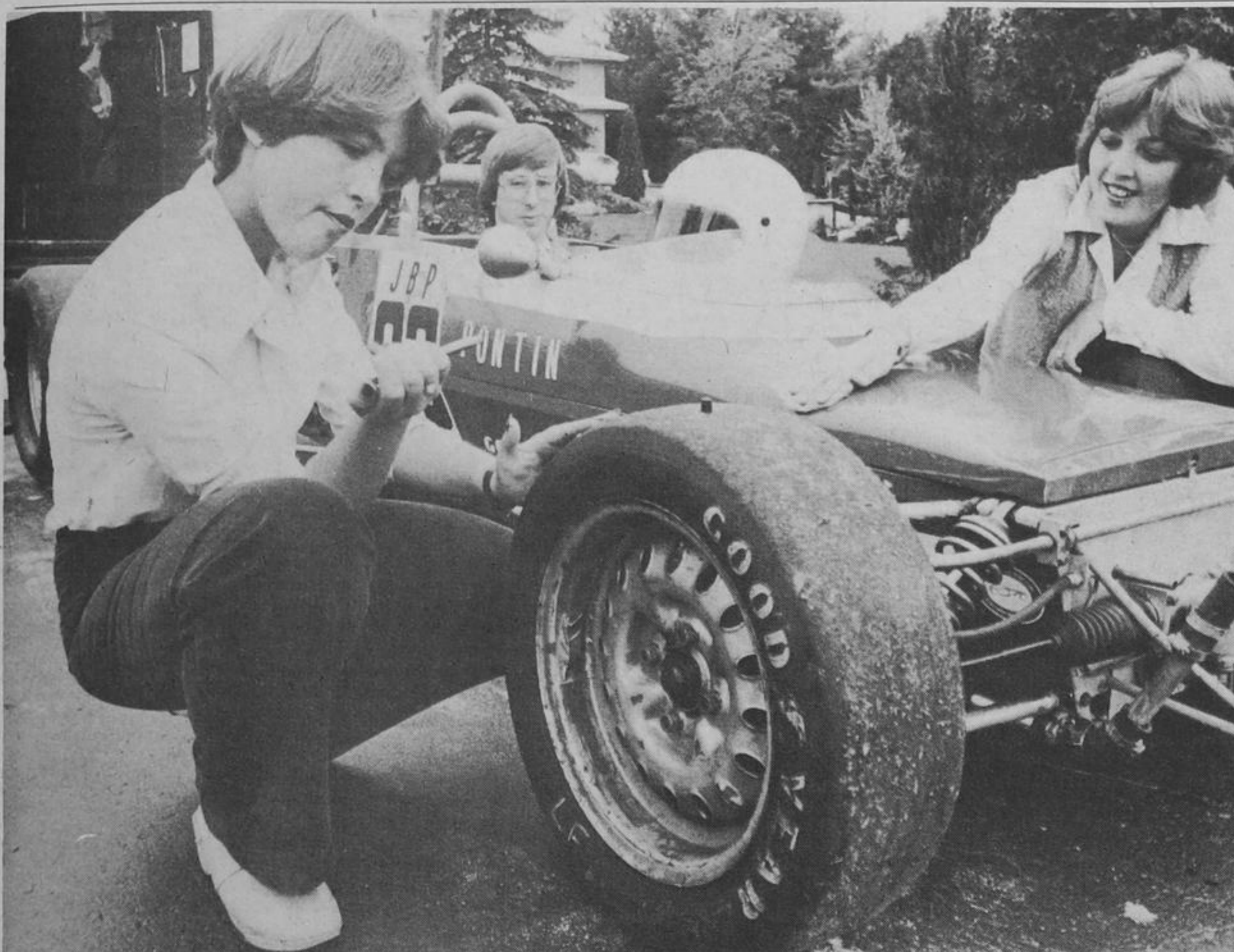


Thunderbirds open Friday night



With a pit crew like this you've got to be a winner. Bob Pontin of Richmond Hill readies his Formula Ford "Crossley" for another big race while Nancy Morreau (left) checks the tire pressure and sister Debbie Morreau cleans the wind screen. Like wow. (Photo by Hogg).

Watch the road

He's no backseat rider

By FRED SIMPSON
Twenty-five-year-old Bob Pontin of Richmond Hill got tired of being a back-seat driver at Formula Ford races.

So he did the next best thing. He climbed over the seat and got into the action himself this year. "I've always been interested in car racing," he said. "I followed the cars around the circuits. Last year I suddenly decided I could do as well as or better than some of those guys out there."

Pontin put his money where his thoughts were and went out and bought a second-hand Formula Ford "Crossley" last November for \$4,000. A new one would have cost him around \$11,000 but "right now that's way out of my financial league."

PINTO ENGINE
"It's only got a Pinto engine in it," he said, "with a 1600 CC displacement and 105 to 110 horses but its lightness compensates for its lack of power." It's also

'souped' up, as they say. Pontin's Pinto proved to be a respectable competitor, in this year's first outing against more powerful machines although first place was a very elusive goal.

"The best I've done was a fourth place finish," said Pontin, "but that was like being first for me when you consider the number of experienced drivers I was competing against. I'm quite happy with the results."

EXPERIENCE KEY
And experience is the key word to driving success according to Pontin.

"That's the key to it all," he said, "A powerful machine won't get you far without it." This was the major lesson pounded into him when he attended the Motorsport Racing School in preparation for his new-found hobby.

"They taught me the basics there of rounding corners at 90 to 95 miles an hour, how and when to head for an opening, and

just general things on how to handle your car.

"It's not like driving a normal vehicle on the highway. When you're seated you're only a foot from the ground and there's absolutely no play in your steering wheel. Just a simple little tug at the wrong time and you're off the track."

CONSERVATIVE
Pontin describes himself as a fast but "conservative" driver at the moment for an obvious reason.

"I can't afford to get into any situation which would result in damage to my car. I just haven't the funds."

For example: "Most of the regulars have their engines rebuilt after every three races at something like \$500 or \$600. I've had mine rebuilt once this season." By himself.

SPIN-OUTS
Pontin answered the usual question put to racers by timid writers who have to psyche themselves to even drive

on highways.

"I never think about the hazards of racing. When you're out there you're too busy handling your machine. I haven't had any crashes but I've spun out a couple of times." Nothing to it.

Pontin says the biggest danger with Formula Ford driving is the fact "your wheels aren't covered. There's no fenders on them."

"If another car runs you from behind he could hit those wheels and spin right over you." You got to be careful.

COWBOYS
Pontin has to cope with the usual "two or three cowboys you're confronted with in any race. Types that cut in without even looking in the rear view mirror or do it anyway."

"You get to know them and you watch for them. Even a bad driver is predictable. He always makes the same type of move."

RABBIT'S FOOT
Pontin didn't mention

anything about toting a rabbit's foot with him for luck but he probably doesn't need one.

He's got girl friend Debbie Morreau, also of Richmond Hill, with him and what else kind of luck do you need? Debbie travels with Pontin and handles the pit job.

"I work with the pit crew and do such things as waxing and shining the car, putting air in the tires, and timing him when he's on the track."

Does she worry about him when he's racing? Naawh.

"Bob's a dynamite driver. He's always in control."

Also in the pit-crew with Debbie are his sister Joan and her sister Nancy along with mechanic Nick Jztrab. A great team.

He's also got an ex-racing driver helping him out now in the person of Don McKnight of Toronto.

"I do most of my racing at Shannonville," states Bob, "which is near Belleville. I've also raced at Motorsport a couple of times."

Being a Formula Ford racing can be a rather expensive hobby.

"You average about \$100 to \$120 a weekend for racing," he said. "That's for gas for the car and your food, entry fees and other such things. And there are no money prizes. Formula Ford is strictly an amateur sport."

Bob is hoping to find a sponsor for next season and he also figures "it takes at least five years to get into the top bracket of racing."

BASKETBALL
Basketball play saw St. Robert's losing to Thornlea 27-26 with Lauri Andrejicka the leading scorer with 12 points.

But, in the meantime, his number one goal is first place in Formula Ford racing.

The Thornhill Thunderbirds split two exhibition games last week as they prepared for their regular season Central Ontario Junior B opener this Friday night at home to Brampton.

They downed Markham Royals 5-4 Tuesday night of last week and lost 7-4 to North York Flames. Both teams are members of the Metro Junior B loop.

"We've a very young team," said Thunderbird coach Al Morris after the latest exhibition games, "and we'll take our lickings in the early season but we'll be in the playoffs."

THE WINNER
Returnee defenceman Jamie Kennedy was the hero of the night in the North York contest scoring the winning goal at 17:15 of the final period.

Kennedy dashed into the North York zone, stole the puck, and slapped an ice-hugger into the corner of the net.

Thornhill's Mark Steele opened the scoring at 12:38 of the first period from Paul Howson.

Markham's Gord Miles got that one back seconds later and took the lead at 14:44 of the second on a goal by Bruce Kinsmen.

GET GOING
Thornhill got rolling after that and scored twice to lead 3-2 going into the final 20 minutes. It was Bruce Clatworthy from Maurice Delfabro and Kurt Pearson at

15:51 and Bob Hunter from Mike Egli at 16:21.

Markham's Len Dix opened the scoring in the third and Glen Tatum followed with another one to put their team in front 4-3.

Then it was Egli tying it at 16:21 on an unassisted effort to set the stage for Kennedy's winner.

STRONG GAME
Thornhill goalie John Morris played a strong game particularly in the second period when he was tested frequently by Markham.

It was just too much Dern Gushue for the Birds in the game against North York as he scored four goals and the line he played on contributed six of the winners' seven goals. What's in a name?

The North Yorkers led 2-0 at the end of the first period and 6-2 going into the third.

Thornhill got on the scoring sheet for the first time at 12:39 of the second on Bruce Clatworthy's goal from Mark Wiltshire.

Paul Howson then scored at 17:48 from Wiltshire.

Thornhill got the final two goals of the game in the third period with Al Delfabro clicking from Clatworthy and M. Delfabro; and Clatworthy from Al Delfabro and Paul Howson.

Coach Morris is particularly happy with the pre-season play of

Kurt Pearson who played minor midget last season and is the team's leading scorer to date with five goals and four assists.

Morris' line-up still has some gaps heading into the 8 p.m. opener against Brampton.

"We're still in need of a couple leftwingers and two centre-men," he said, "but some other teams still owe us some players and we expect to fill those positions soon."

As of writing the Morris-led Thunderbirds have signed 17 players, all from Thornhill and area.

SIGNED
They are: Goal, John Morris and Jamie Davidson. Defence has returnee's Rob Browning, Mark Steele and Al Delfabro (Richmond Hill) plus Mark Wiltshire (Thornhill Minor Midgets); Doug Heron, (Thornhill Juveniles); John Thompson (Thornhill Juveniles); Steve Mallet (Thornhill Minor Midgets).

The forwards consist of returnees Bob Hunter and Jamie Kennedy, Bruce Clatworthy and Mike Egli. Newcomers are Kurt Pearson (Thornhill Minor Midgets); Rick Seeley (Thornhill Minor Midgets); Dan Kennedy (Thornhill Juveniles); Mike Davidson (Thornhill Midgets).

Bad day

Wishin' but no fishin'

TRAILBLAZERS
Ever heard of the Pukaskwa River, Widgeon Lake or Fox River?

I didn't until a fishing buddy of mine told me about the monstrous brook trout they have up there in God's country. There is an official government book that tells of 17-inch trout in a hole in the Fox River.

It didn't take much to convince me that I could get a trophy brook.

Little did I know that the fish would turn out to be a new record, but I will tell you about this one later on.

The three of us left on Friday night. We used Gene's brand new \$11,000 four wheeler, my canoe and Bart's encouragement. The distance to Wawa was covered by Saturday morning but from there on we needed a top map to go by.

There is no road into Canada's newest national park, the Pukaskwa, but there is a hydro line and boulders as large as a house. Then there are swamps and rivers without bridges.

STUCK
We travelled the first ten miles in six hours, then we got stuck in a mud puddle, at least that's what it looked like until we found out it was a swamp.

Once we winched our way out of this one, we found that one of us had forgotten to bring most of the food. This was quite all right with Bart though as he had forgotten to bring his plate and fork anyway. From here on we got stuck only once and that was in the middle of the Pukaskwa River.

By nightfall we were only half a mile from Widgeon Lake . . . half a mile as the crow flies — there was no portage. We cut one by morning and dragged the gear and canoe into the lake. By lunchtime we were well on our way to a campsite.

SUCKER
We set up camp on Widgeon Lake and looked

for a portage into Fox River. The problem was, we found two, so we checked both of them. Fishing this damned creek for miles, we never even raised a sucker. The hole with its 17 inches eluded us, so we decided to return to the lake and fish there.

Upon returning to the lake we ran into a party that flew in. They had all kinds of fish but were mad at us, or I should say, at the outfitters, as we told them that it was possible to drive to the lake. They wouldn't tell us where they got their fish!

That night we had frost; the tent was covered with ice and the lake with whitecaps. We gave it one try by mid-morning with no results. Lowering myself to

fishing with worms, I was fighting the wind and hunger pains, and I had had enough.

SUCCESS
Then there was this fish as I pulled my line out to give up. I don't know when he hit but he was 14 inches long and about 2 pounds. A nice speckle, the only one we would see in Widgeon Lake.

It was even colder that night and we packed up by morning. After building a bridge over the swamp we made it out. By nightfall we were out of the lake and set up by a little lake.

It was a typical northern lake, a pike at every cast. As we decided to leave, Bart decided to take one last cast.

OOOPS
It wasn't a bad cast, it was just too bad my

graphite rod and expensive reel were in his way. With a tremendous splash my rod and reel disappeared under water.

Once again we scraped the ice off the tent in the morning and I spent breakfast time building a grappling hook. Dragging an unknown lake can be fun and we found the gear, the first luck I had so far.

We made it out to the highway just in time to see the price of gas increased to \$1.08 a gallon and it was my turn to fill up the 26-gallon tank!

Oh, yes, the record fish It weighed two pounds. Now if you add up \$60 for gas, \$20 for food and some tackle, that's \$40 a pound.

If that's not a new record, what is?

St. Robert's busy for sports

The St. Robert's High School junior soccer team of Thornhill is on its first win streak ever.

They've won two games in a row by 2-0 over Thornlea Secondary School and Richmond Hill High.

The Thornlea triumph saw two cousins, Peter Delgrosso and Peter

Delgrosso (that's right) scoring a goal each. The second game saw Peter Delgrosso (the other one) scoring one and Paulo Gulo the other.

David Brubacher got the shutout in both games.

The St. Robert's team is in its second year of operation. It lost all eight

games last season. Other St. Robert's sports saw:

GOLF
York County Golf tournament day at Westview saw the St. Robert's boys team have a rough day finishing eighth overall.

The team's two top players, Graham Peterson and Chris Andrejicka shot an 84 and 88 respectively to finish 11th.

Chris redeemed himself in the Georgian Bay finals when he got it together and fired a 77 for a second place finish. The team finished 12th overall.

Kirsie Scullion of St. Robert's had a fine day in the York County Girls

golf tournament finishing in first place with a 46 (they only play nine holes).

She went on to the Georgian Bay finals and finished fifth.

TENNIS
Tennis action saw Paul Beck of St. Robert's winning the junior boys singles as he went undefeated. Avril McKenna defeated the same in the girls singles. She'll represent York County in the Georgian Bay finals this week.

BASKETBALL
Basketball play saw St. Robert's losing to Thornlea 27-26 with Lauri Andrejicka the leading scorer with 12 points.

Want hockey coaches

The Thornhill Minor Hockey League is badly in need of conveners and coaches for this season.

If you have an interest in working with kids and you like hockey, you might consider a spot in one of the five divisions still open: novice, ages six and seven; minor

atom, eight-years-old; bantam, 14 years-old; midget, 15 and 16; and juvenile, 16-19.

There are about eight coaching positions in each division and one convener is needed for each group also.

Please contact Jim Sandham at 889-4223.

NOTICE TO THORNHILL RESIDENTS

THORNHILL PARK DEVELOPMENT & THORNHILL OUTDOOR POOL RENOVATIONS

SEPTEMBER 28, 1978 (THURSDAY) AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE EAST ROOM OF THE GALLANOUGH LIBRARY, 1 BROOK ST., THORNHILL, ONTARIO.

The Vaughan Parks and Recreation Department invites your attendance and comments concerning any future development of the Thornhill Park (facilities etc.) as well as limits and extent of renovations to the Thornhill outdoor swimming Pool and change house.

Should you be unable to attend the meeting your comments in reference to either the Thornhill Park Development, the Thornhill Outdoor Pool, or both are welcomed.

Comments related to this matter may be referred to:

Brenda Campbell (851-1151)
c/o Vaughan Parks and Recreation Department
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Maple, Ontario
L0J 1E0

MEETING

RICHMOND HILL MINOR BALL ASSOCIATION

GENERAL ELECTION OF EXECUTIVES

TO BE HELD ON THURS. OCTOBER 19th, 1978

BLUE FLAME ROOM
CONSUMERS GAS COMPANY
ELGIN MILLS ROAD RICHMOND HILL
7:00 p.m. - 10:30 p.m.

Any motions to make amendments to the Constitution must be submitted in writing 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

TO MRS. MARY ROSS, SECRETARY
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