

\$200 reward

Howard's home

By STEVE HOUSTON
Staff Reporter

Markham's Lillian Beckett thought she might be seeing things last Wednesday afternoon when she spotted a large, colorful bird resting amongst a chorus of chirping sparrows.

She didn't know that Howard the macaw had taken wing and flown away from home three days before.

Quick thinking and fast hands on the part of her son Ross earned the family a \$200 reward for the bird's safe return to owner Gary Van Dorp.

"I was sitting on the lawn and ready to come into the house when I heard this awful squawk," recalled Mrs. Beckett on Thursday at her 16th Ave. family farm. "I didn't know what to do — and neither did the other birds."

Howard escaped from Mr. Van Dorp's Woodbine Ave. nursery last Sunday afternoon where he has been a longtime resident. A story appeared in Wednesday's Economist and Sun telling of Mr. Van Dorp's plight.

Ross Beckett, unaware that a reward had been offered for the bird's safe return, took chase on a mini-bike as Howard made his way north from tree to tree at the 200-acre farm.

Someone informed him during the chase for the elusive bird "that he was worth \$200 bucks."

"I figured someone would be

looking for him anyway," said Mr. Beckett. "I finally found him on a stalk of corn."

He said that when he saw Howard in the corn only an arm's length away, he grabbed him "because he looked like he was getting ready to take-off again."

For his search and rescue efforts, he received a nasty pinch on the hand from an ungrateful Howard but laughs it off. Half the fun was chasing the bird.

"We're glad he's back," said Mr. Van Dorp, owner of Plant Paradise. "I figured he wouldn't get too far but..."

He spent much of Monday looking for his friend in the Rouge River area but didn't spot its colorful plumage anywhere. On Tuesday, he began to worry.

He estimated the macaw's worth at \$1,500 and said Howard had worked up a hunger during his sojourn north.

Now, he's glad Howard is back where he belongs and can lay to rest the worries of local kids fretting about his well-being.

The Beckett family is \$200 wealthier and stopped by to visit Howard at home on Thursday in his greenhouse aviary. They agree that at least some stories have happy endings.

"At first I didn't know what he was or where he came from," Mrs. Beckett recalled with a grin. "I thought he was a big hawk or something."



Two-car collision

Ontario Provincial Police investigated a two-car collision on Hwy 7 near Warden Ave. Thursday night. According to police, a westbound vehicle driven by Mario Greco of Woodbridge was struck while making a left turn. The second vehicle was

driven by John Mounsey of Unionville. Police said Mr. Mounsey and a passenger in the Greco car received minor injuries. Mr. Greco was charged for making an improper turn.

— Bill Lanning

Task force studies dangerous goods

Transportation of dangerous chemicals in York, Toronto and other regions will be examined in a two-year feasibility study conducted by Transport Canada.

Ted Legg, spokesman for the Toronto Area Rail Transportation of Dangerous Goods task force, said Thursday "anything is possible" in recommendations coming from the study.

Mr. Legg said the task force has a three-part mandate in the study that includes consideration of laying new track, rerouting trains hauling dangerous goods, and improving

safety requirements for those trains.

He also said rerouting could include travel through less populated parts of York Region.

He defined dangerous goods as chlorine, hydrogen sulphide and sulphuric acid. To a lesser extent, the military occasionally transports weaponry, he said.

"There is the possibility that something may be feasible but not implemented," said Mr. Legg, referring to York routes, and added that the public will be informed of the study's progress.

To that end, public meetings have been tentatively scheduled

in mid-1987 to discuss findings and receive input from affected citizens.

According to reports, Canadian Pacific rail had 103 derailments in the fiscal year in 1985. None occurred in the Toronto area.

"We're looking at all aspects — technological, topographical, environmental and operational," said Mr. Legg. "We have to recognize that rail systems go from Halifax to Vancouver and we're a part of that system."

A final report on the task force findings are expected in March 1988.

Markham firm charged

Rouge River aptly named

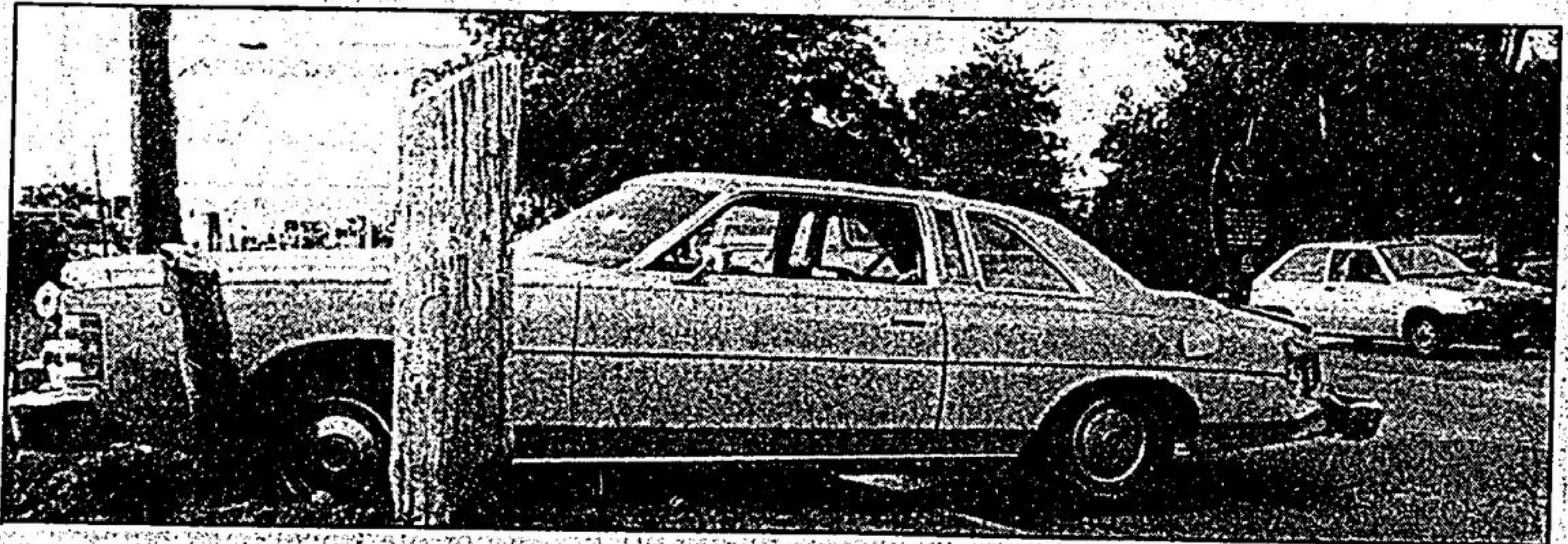
After eight months of investigation, a Markham firm has been charged with polluting the Rouge River by the Ministry of Environment.

CIP Inc. Container Division on Bullock Dr. was investigated after a purple substance was found in a tributary of the Rouge River

last November.

Charges were laid by the ministry after red ink and waste water containing soluble red ink was dumped into a creek which runs through the Bullock Dr. industrial area.

Company officials are to appear in court Aug. 29.



Vinegar dip

This Ford Custom 500 ended up sideways on Hwy 48 Wednesday evening after colliding with a Chevrolet Caprice just south of Hwy 7. The accident occurred at 6:50 p.m. when according to police, the driver of the vehicle swerved to avoid the Chevy which had

stopped to make a left turn. The Ford incurred \$2,000 damage in the mishap. The driver of the Ford, Markham resident Frederick White, 76, has been charged with careless driving. No injuries were reported.

— Rob Donnelly

Ed and Claudette



J. AIRD/86

As for you, a three-month licence suspension for teaching her how to drive.

Drinking, boating don't mix

Every holiday weekend the number of deaths due to motor vehicle accidents increases. Of these, a substantial percentage are caused by drunk drivers.

The Markham chapter of Arrive Alive reminds residents to be responsible for their drinking.

Please don't drive your car or boat if you are impaired. Drive sober and arrive alive.



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