

Local diabetes group is winning battle

A Markham Stouffville group has been helping local people afflicted with the third largest killer of Canadians — diabetes.

Murray Edmunds, founder of the Markham Stouffville chapter of the Canadian Diabetic Association said there are at least 5,000 diabetics in this area.

Some of these diabetics are affected not only by the disease but by other afflictions like heart attack, kidney disease, blindness and loss of limbs.

Mr. Edmunds said most effects of the disease are unnoticeable, but that people must be aware of the signs which give away diabetics.

Some common symptoms of the disease include, a dry mouth and unquenchable thirst, frequent urination, blurred vision and dizziness.

"If you have any of these symptoms, get to the doctor right away," he said.

"You can look like the healthiest person walking, but you can be faced with big problems," he added.

November is Canadian Diabetes Month and Mr. Edmunds hopes this will give the Markham Stouffville group a chance to educate the public as well as diabetics so that emergencies can be avoided.

He cited cases of a taxi driver who went into diabetic shock while driving and lost control of his car and of a man walking along a Toronto street who was assumed to be drunk but was in a diabetic coma.

These incidents shouldn't have happened,

but until diabetics understand their condition well enough to halt all emergencies like this, diabetes associations will carry on their education mandate.

Mr. Edmunds and his associates in the local association, which has been operating for two years, help others with diabetes to deal with their affliction. Meetings are held monthly at Markham District High School.

At the meetings members can learn from representatives of the medical field about the latest diabetes research. They can also discuss their problems as diabetics with people who have been there.

There is no cure for diabetes although insulin allows those afflicted to control the disease.

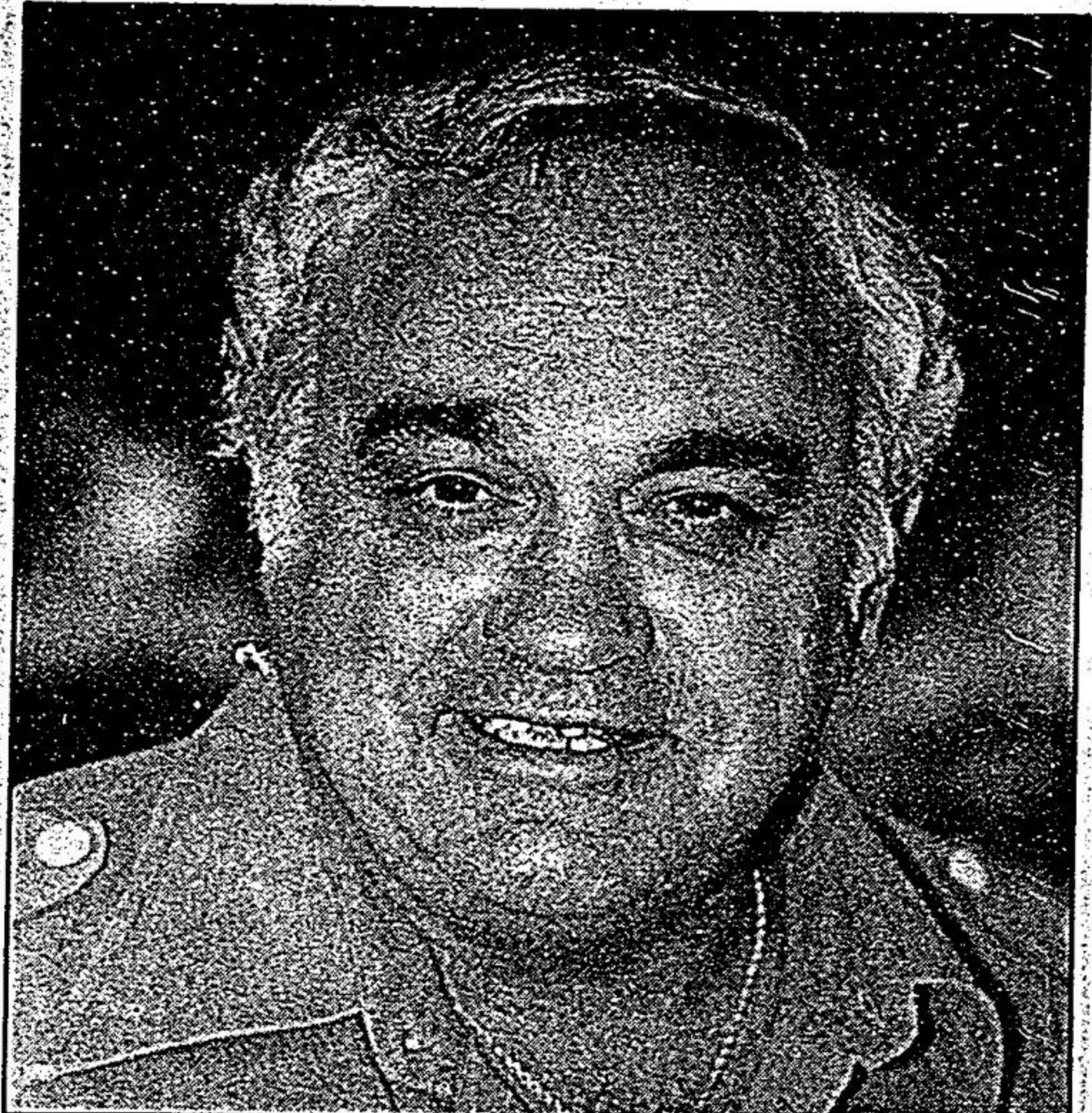
The association is also lobbying to have a diabetes clinic at the Markham Stouffville Hospital and is involved in fundraising for research.

Dates for upcoming monthly meetings are as follows, Dec. 8, Jan. 12, Feb. 9, March 9, April 13 and May 11.

Meetings take place in the school cafeteria and begin at 7:30 p.m.

For more information about the Diabetic Association contact Mr. Edmunds at 477-2156 or president Ken Smith at 471-4155.

Donations can be made to the Markham Stouffville Diabetic Association P.O. Box 522, Markham, Ont. L3P 3R1.



Unionville businessman Murray Edmunds was one of the founders of the Markham Stouffville Diabetic Association.

CANADIAN DIABETES ASSOCIATION

Markham/Stouffville Branch

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