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## Ainsley learns what makes cars tick

By BRUCE STAPLEY

What does a girl do after looking at her class schedule for the school year, realizing she needs one more course to fill her roster, and finding the choice is limited to english, woodworking or introductory auto mechanics?

If you're Ainsley Card, you say 'why not' and plunge into finding out what makes an automobile tick.

"I thought, hey, I've got my license. I might as well learn how to fix my own car," recalls the 17-year-old, Grade 12 student at Stouffville District Secondary School.

The class, part of the school's applied sciences program, is taught by Carl Roberts. It's comprised of 20 students, five of whom are girls.

"I haven't really had any of the boys say anything to me about it, except when I first walked into the class. Then they just snickered a little," Ainsley says.

### Changed tire

However, it didn't help matters when she and her class working partner, Tia Patrick, tried to change their first tire.

"We were really struggling with it," she says. "We hit it with a hammer a few times, and it still wouldn't come off. Then Mr Roberts came up to us and suggested we loosen the nuts. We went about our work very quietly after that."

During the first classes, Ainsley wondered just what she had gotten herself into.

"I was a little afraid at first when they started talking about camshafts and crankshafts," she said. "But it all comes together once you figure out what they're doing."

As time went by, she became more comfortable with the idea, and is now quite at home in the school's auto shop. She was almost proud of herself when she succeeded in taking out her first valve, without incident, after being warned repeatedly by a senior student of the danger it might 'shoot' out, damaging people or property.

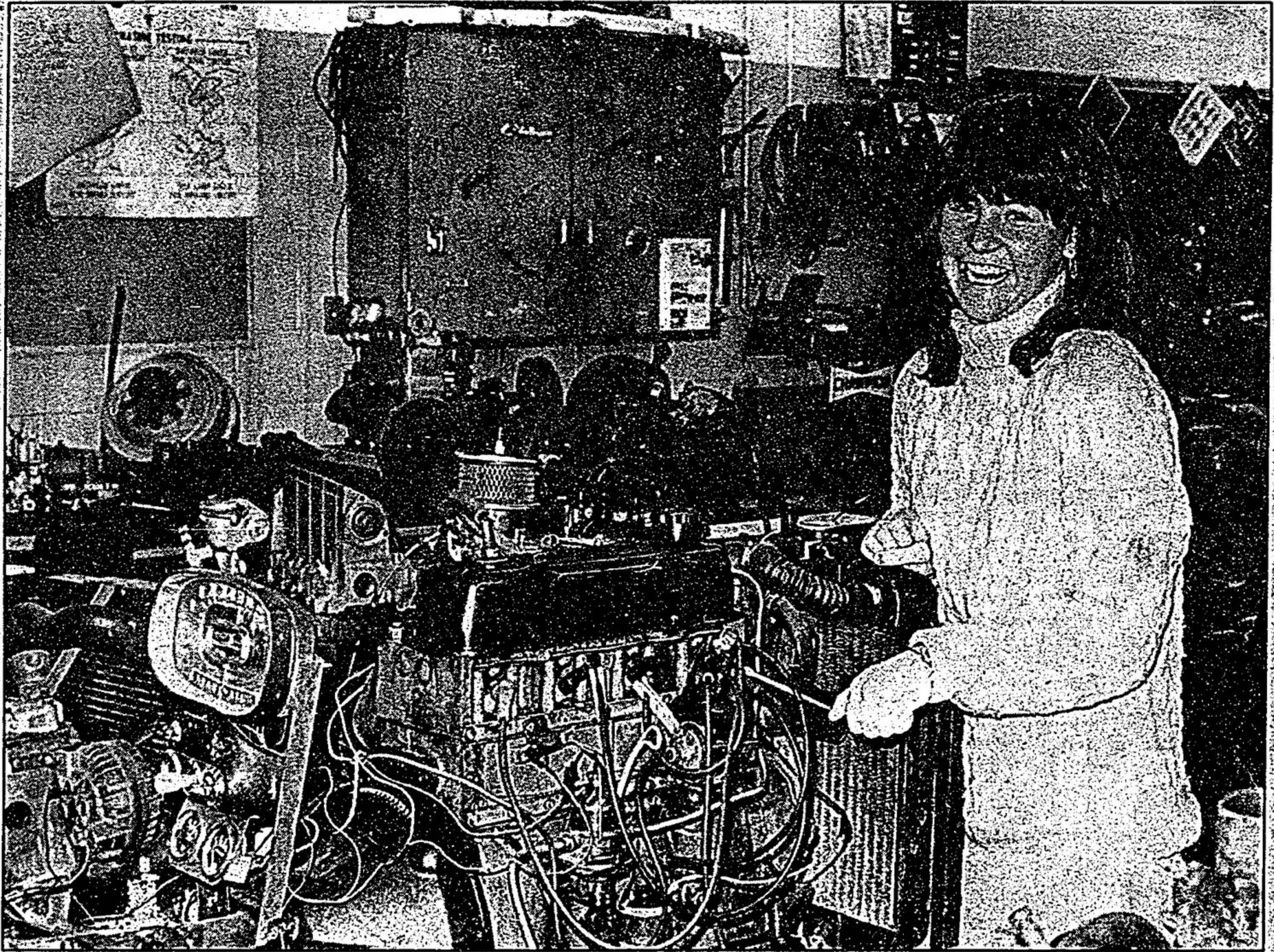
### Theory and practical

The course is a combination of classroom theory, and shop application.

"You're allowed to work at your own pace in the shop," says Ainsley. "And when you've finished one practice job, you go back and get another one."

While not claiming to have become an instant Class A mechanic, she feels she now has an idea of what goes on under the hood.

"I think by now, if I was driving



### Keeping engines humming

Stouffville's Ainsley Card gets a kick out of the auto mechanics course she's taking at Stouffville District Secondary School. She decided on

along and had a problem, I'd notice it, and could at least try and do something about it," she claims.

The course, she feels, would be beneficial to almost anyone. She also appreciates the break it gives her from academic classes.

"You don't just sit there," she says. "You get to do things. And the teacher makes it interesting."

Being an introductory course, it doesn't go far beyond the basics. Students learn the value of preventative maintenance, and become familiar with various parts of the engine. Some even bring in their own cars to work on, allowing them to save money on maintenance.

In other cases, cars are provided for the students to work on.

the course when her choice of a final credit was narrowed to wood-working, english or auto shop.

Recently, a York Region auto dealer donated a Toyota Magic Wagon to the auto shop.

The class consists of either two or three 75-minute periods a week, with various tests throughout the year. Ainsley says the course has held her interest more than she originally anticipated.

"I can change a tire now, and also tell you where the oil and

antifreeze go," she said. "I couldn't do that before."

And does she know the difference between a camshaft and a crankshaft? "I do now," she says with a smile.

In an age of Renaissance ladies performing functions unimagined by previous generations, Ainsley Card is doing her bit to ensure women are liberated about their cars.

— Denise McDonald

## Circus comes to York

Tickets went on sale Jan. 4 for the Big Brothers of York's newest fundraising venture.

Dedicated to providing friendship to boys from father-absent homes, this non-profit community service agency will host the Garden Brothers Circus for at least 11 shows during the month of May, at the Newmarket Recreation Complex.

"This is an extremely credible outfit which has been associated with the York Regional Police Force for the past two years, in an arrangement similar to ours," reads a press release from Community Relations Coordinator Christopher George.

Because the Big Brothers of York receives no funding from any level of government, nor any umbrella group such as the United Way, it must depend entirely upon support received from the community through fundraising initiatives.

"From this venture, there exists the possibility of receiving funds comparable to those brought in by our other major fundraising efforts, such as our annual Bowl-for-a-Boy campaign," adds the press release. "This money is much needed as your fundraising efforts for this year have fallen considerably short of projection."

Community calendar  
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What's On  
 /C-19