

After 20 years of service

Rural mail courier is calling it quits

By KATE GILDERDALE

When mail courier Barb Spinney hangs up her bag for the last time on Friday, she will be looking back on 20 years of faithful service at Stouffville Post Office.

During that time she has handled two major routes, spending 17 years on route one and transferring to route four over three years ago.

It's one of the largest rural route areas in the community, taking in the 5th, 6th and 7th Concessions, as well as Vandorf, Bloomington and Bethesda Sideroads and part of Highway 48.

She services 575 customers, driving a route of 50 miles every day, and she hasn't taken a break for almost four years.

"I'm here first thing in the morning and I'm not finished before 3:30 or 4. Lots of days I do 12 hours." No matter how long it takes, Mrs. Spinney doesn't leave until all the mail is sorted and delivered.

In the past year, mail has been pre-sorted in Scarborough and sent to Stouffville for delivery, but she still has to do part of the sorting herself.

"I enjoy my job very much," stresses. "I've given the best service I can. I'm not quitting because I want to, it's because of the cost."

Because the work is contracted out and she's not part of a union, she has very little bargaining power, she states. "I can't afford to keep going because of the wages they give me."

She tried to negotiate a deal she felt was fair, but her contractor was not willing to meet her requirements.

"I have to change my vehicle every two years, because if you keep a truck longer than that you start having problems."

If things get backed up, and she needs additional help, it's up to her to organize and pay for it. "We're supposed to have two back ups, but I don't have any."

Regular mail delivery is only part of her job. "On Wednesdays we put copies of the Sun into every mailbox. We also deliver flyers, but we don't get paid for that."

On some days, she says, there are as many as five flyers to drop off at each box, and the extra work makes her day even longer.

Mrs. Spinney started working as a back-up for a neighbor on route two. When route one became available, she was asked to take it over and she agreed.

"I've had quite an experience delivering mail," she smiles. On one occasion her daughter was helping to deliver the mail, and had just opened one of the boxes on her route.

"She went to put the mail in and screamed. She said there was a pig's head in there." Her daughter wasn't kidding; the box really did contain the head.

It turned out that a member of the household had just got married and some of the wedding party had 'delivered' it as a joke.

Another time, her daughter opened a mail box and told her there was "something bad in there." The smell was so bad, they couldn't deliver the mail.

When Mrs. Spinney checked the box, she found a dead cat inside. When she reported it to the

post office, the Humane Society removed the body. The homeowners were as shocked as she was when she told them what had happened.

Mostly though, her deliveries are uneventful and her customers friendly and appreciative. Several of them have

expressed their disappointment that she's decided to leave and one described her as "the best mail courier we have ever had."

Bad weather conditions and poor roads don't worry her. "I don't mind the winter driving," she insists. "I've been very lucky. Once I got stuck on route

one, and there was nobody around, but I always come prepared with sand and a shovel."

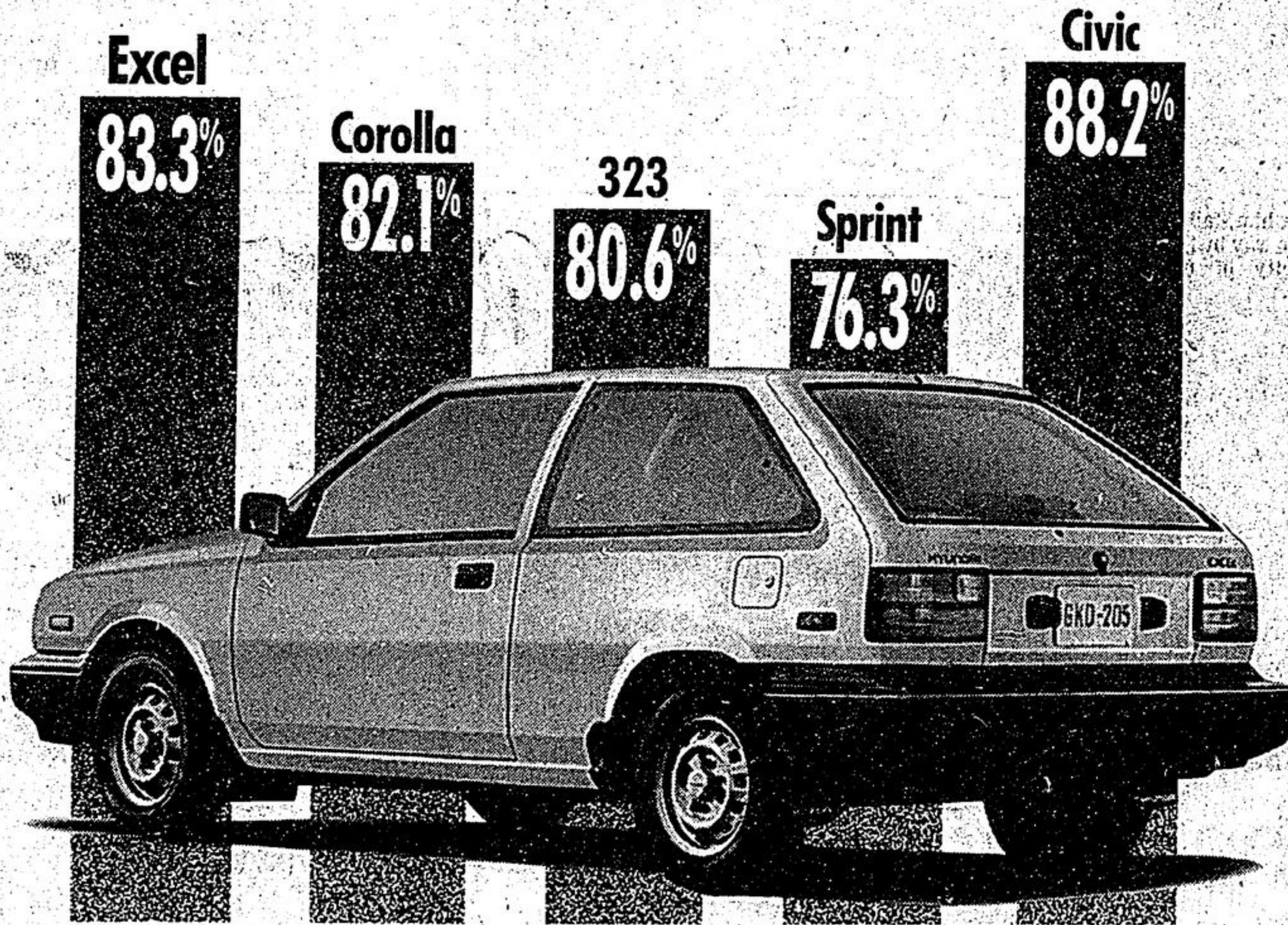
On the occasions she's had trouble, her customers have usually helped her out. "I've never had to call anybody." She's taking a well-deserved

month off before starting her new job, working for a catering company in Unionville. She'll miss her friends at the post office and the many customers she's got to know on her rounds. "I've put a lot into delivering the mail and giving good service," she concludes.



Barb Spinney has decided to give up her rural mail route after 20 years on the job. She'll miss friends at the Post Office and her customers, but she says rising costs are the main factor for her quitting. This is her last week on Route One.

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195 Eagle Street
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5829 Hwy. 7
Markham 471-0099

Rotom Hyundai
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Scarborough 752-4720

Jack Frame Hyundai
285 Old Kingston Road
Scarborough 283-7669

Venmar Hyundai
335 Rexdale Blvd.
Rexdale 748-2555

Editor's Mail Reader believes in J.K.

Dear Editor:
As a mother-to-be of a Jr. Kindergarten pupil at St. Mark's School in Stouffville, I wish to state my opposition (in the strongest possible terms) to your editorial (Dec. 14), re having this class withdrawn due to overcrowding.

I think you're implying (even saying) that it's a babysitting service. And you're partly right. But apart from this, the religious and social benefits (not to speak of the academic advantages), are associations no child should be denied.

The school board, I'm sure, is aware of the situation - in Stouffville and elsewhere. Yet, there's been no hint of abandoning Jr. Kindergarten because our building is 'bursting' at the seams. There's a reason for this. The trustees understand even if you don't.

Sincerely,
(Mrs.) Cecile Bewley,
R.R. 2, Stouffville

PROCLAMATION

The Council of the Town of Markham hereby proclaims the month of January, 1989 as "Alzheimer Awareness Month" in the Town of Markham.

Mayor A. Roman

MARKHAM



Ontario

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

TAKE NOTICE THAT a Public Meeting of the Liquor Licence Board of Ontario will be held at the SHERATON PARKWAY HOTEL, 600 HIGHWAY #7 EAST, ROOM 124, RICHMOND HILL, ONTARIO on THURSDAY, JANUARY 19th, 1989 at the hour of 10:00 o'clock in the forenoon, at which time the Board will hear applications in accordance with the Liquor Licence Act, and Regulations thereunder.

The following establishments have applied for a licence of the class indicated, and the applications will be entertained at the aforementioned location and time:

- Applications For New Licences**
- Buddle's Deli Cafe & Bakery
8362 Kennedy Rd., Bldg. A, Unit A1
Markham Village Centre
Unionville By-Pass #7, Markham
Dining Lounge Licence
 - Don Cherry's Grapevine
8362 Kennedy Rd., Markham
Dining Lounge Licence

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE that any person who is resident in the municipality and who wishes to make representation relative to the application, shall make their submission to the Board in writing prior to the date of the hearing, or in person at the time and place of the hearing. (Copies of written submissions will be forwarded to the applicant).

Liquor Licence Board of Ontario
55 Lakeshore Boulevard East
TORONTO, Ontario, M5E 1A4
MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AND
COMMERCIAL RELATIONS
THE LIQUOR LICENCE ACT