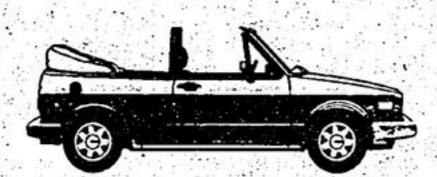




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Stouffville's Eldon Smith (above) is part of a threeman team which made wildlife history last February by capturing a rare Liberian mongoose. The team

was sent to West Africa by the Metro Toronto Zoo to study, and if possible, bring back to Canada one of these rare creatures.

Stouffville man brings back African mongoose

By KATE GILDERDALE

Correspondent Stouffville's Eldon Smith was one of a three-man team which made wildlife history last February when his group located

mongoose. The team was sent to West running water. Africa by the Metro Toronto Zoo to study, and if possible, bring back to Canada one of these rare truck from the port authorities, creatures. They set out from Toronto in early January and their flight took them through Amsterdam, Casablanca, Morocco and Freetown, Sierra Leone to country and did some camped on the north side of the

Liberia's capital, Monrovia.
"It took 26 hours altogether," he recalls, noting that the chance to adapt to a vastly dif- kilometres into the forest away temperature went from -19 here ferent culture. Although many to 25 when they reached their people lived in grass and mud destination. "A lot of people were huts without electricity and wearing toques and ski jackets water "they seemed to be very because they considered that to happy," he says. be really cold. The people we known it."

stayed in a guest house provided army checkpoints, sometimes

"The CIL compound was on times being waved through about 15 acres, with seven to nine without incident. ranch-style bungalows, similar to and captured a rare Liberian Unlike most dwellings in the previous expedition had found area, these boasted hydro and

> During their time in Monrovia, they obtained the release of their organized supplies and visited the Forestry Development Office. They also arranged permits Since the mongoose seemed to allowing them to work in the favor river areas, the team preliminary work with animals.

Those two weeks gave them a

From Monrovia, they travelled were staying with said it had 200 miles inland to a town called again, he notes. been cooler than they had ever Tappetia, where they stayed at The team spent about two. Authority's guest-house. During along river banks and streams, weeks in the capitol, where they this journey, they went through We would get up every morning

by Canadian Industries Ltd. being stopped and questioned about their mission, at other

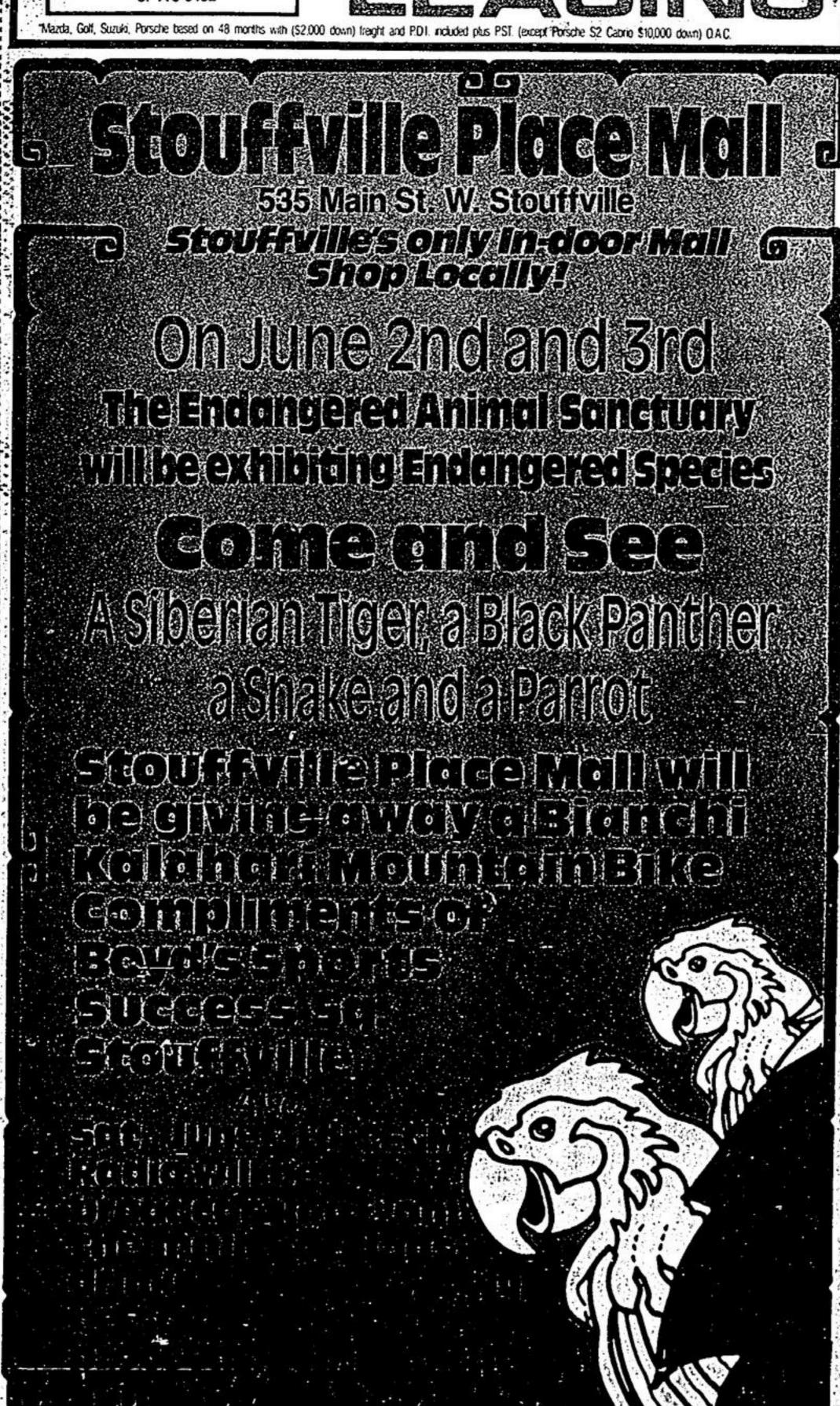
From their base they travelled ones at home," says Eldon. to Gobi National Forest, where a evidence of the Liberian

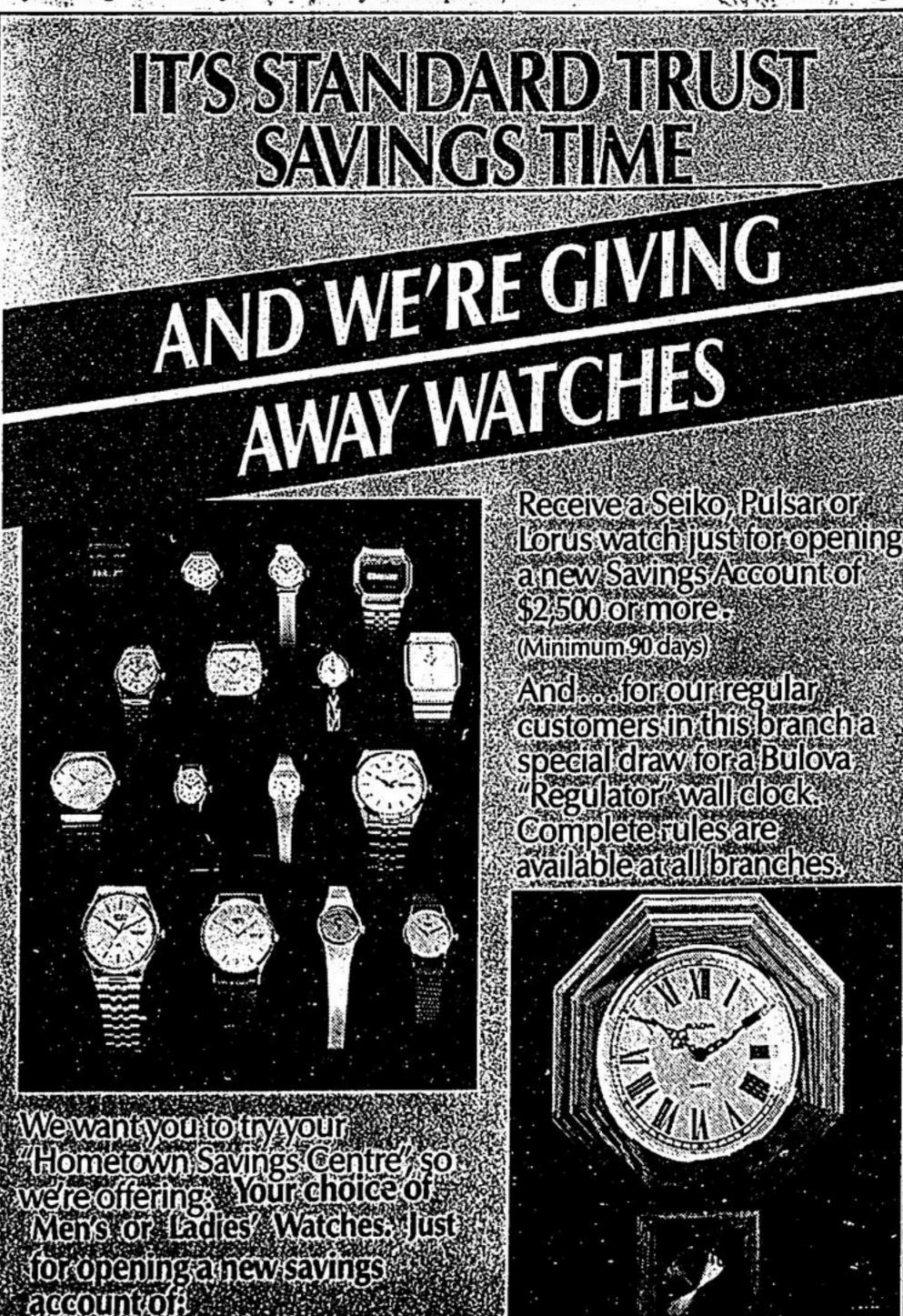
mongoose last year. "It seemed like the most logical place to start," remarks Eldon, adding that they found the skin and skull of another specimen when they arrived.

Cestos River. "We went back about 45 from everyone, but sometimes a Liberian villager would come out of the bush," he says. It was not unusual for a villager to walk for seven hours, see what was happening, and walk back to camp

The three men set up traps of the Forestry Development various sizes "on trails, roads,

NVI (See Zoo Page C-13)





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