

Weekender

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Stephen Oldham

Stouffville crash victim aiming for home

TRACY KIBBLE
 Staff Reporter

Stouffville teen Stephen Oldham has defied the odds and is battling back in a Toronto rehabilitation centre this month after a near-fatal motorcycle crash April 1.

Stephen, 18, a Stouffville District Secondary School student, is doing "extremely well" at the Riverdale Rehabilitation Centre, says his mother, Janine.

And the teen says he's "picking up every day" on all the exercises he's doing and expects to be home for good later this month.

The youth spent several weeks in critical condition at Sunnybrook Medical Health Science Centre following the early morning motorcycle crash on Millard Street.

Stephen consequently had his left leg amputated below the knee as a result of irreversible muscle tissue damage. He also spent several days in a coma.

But now he is "doing great" at the Riverdale centre and his mother says the therapist is extremely pleased with his progress.

Although Stephen comes home on the weekends, he returns during the week for daily therapeutic exercise to strengthen his muscles, she says.

He was fitted with a prosthesis "just for the sessions" before he will be permanently fitted with one, says Mrs. Oldham.

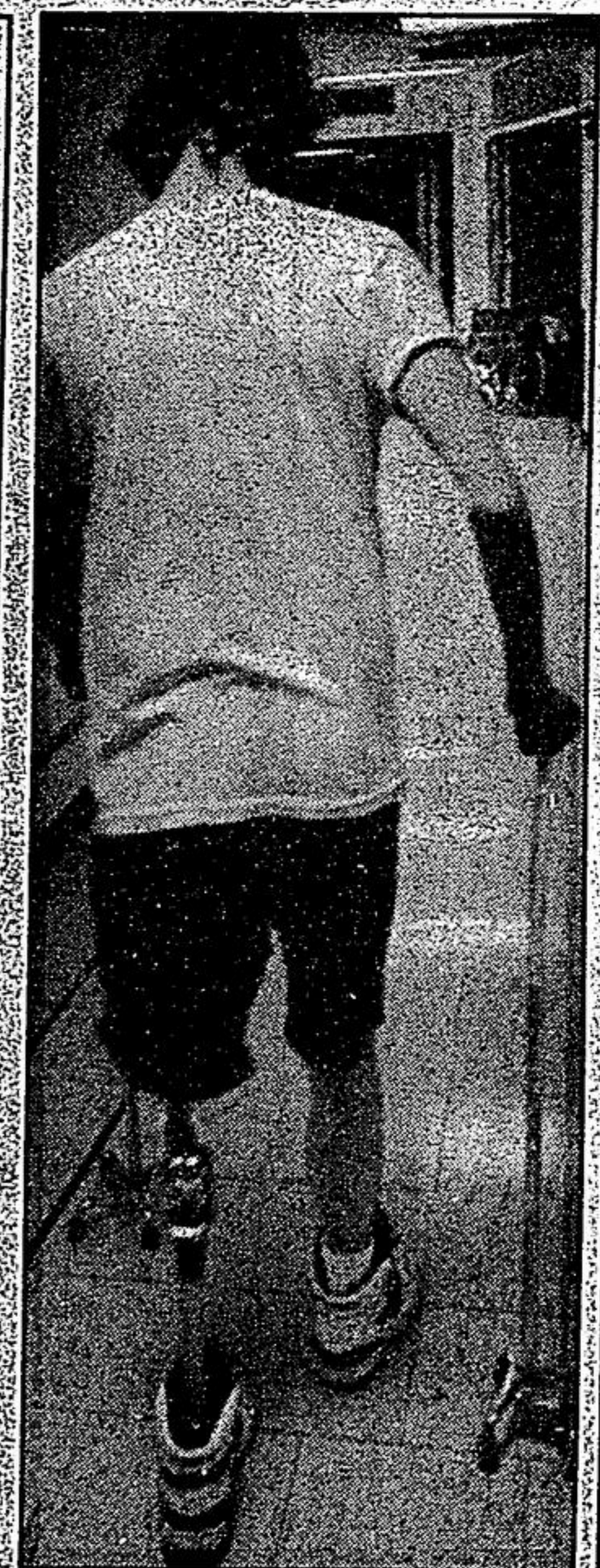
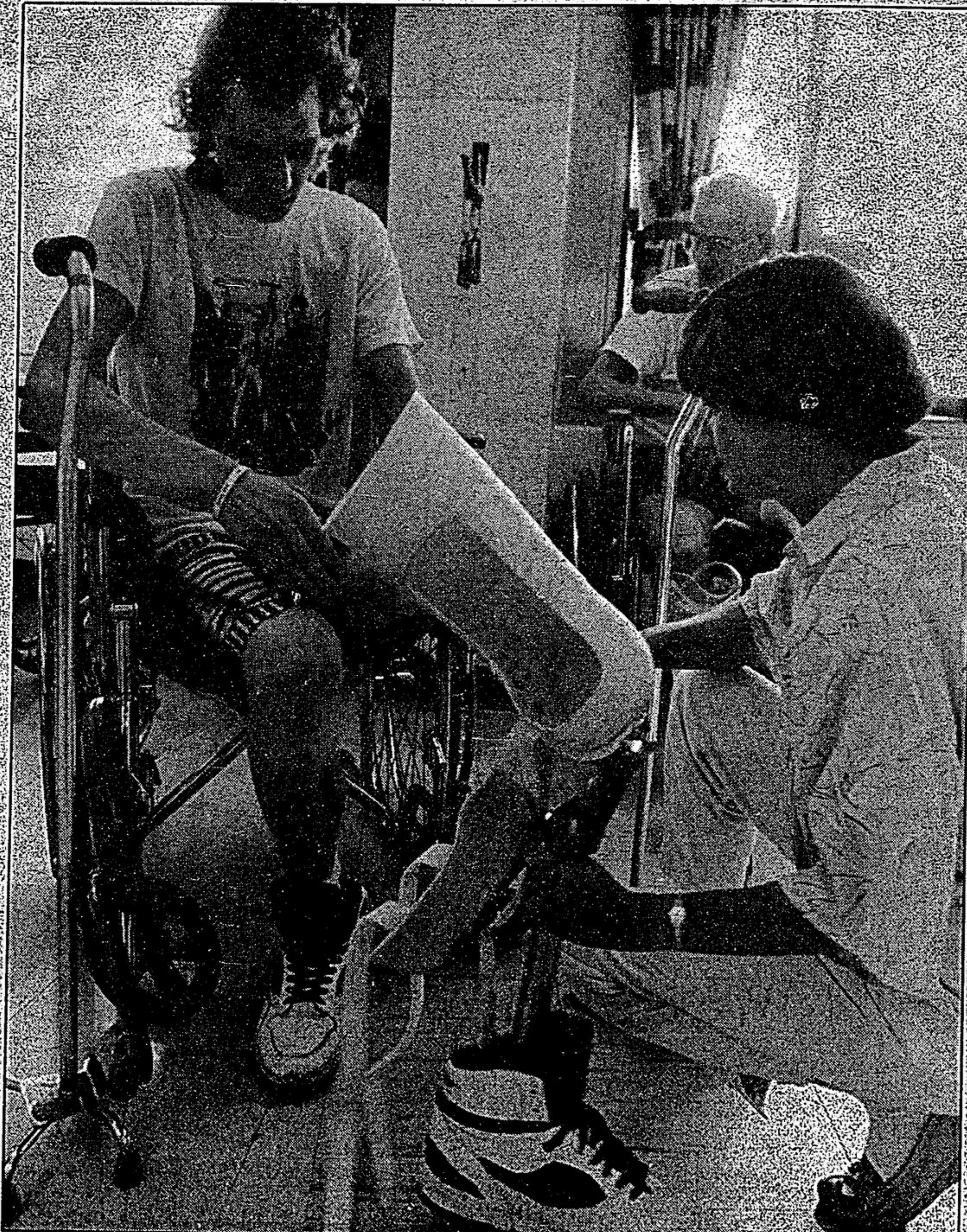
At first Stephen was tested on the parallel bars for stability and strength, but did so well on those that the therapist moved him onto bigger and better things - a walker.

"His girlfriend has been there many times" and although I haven't seen him yet, she says he is doing extremely well with the walker, Mrs. Oldham says.

And Stephen, too, is pleased with his recovery.

"I'm on canes now," he says. He believes his progress is probably better than average.

He still experiences some phantom sensations, a phenomenon common to amputees, but says



Stouffville teen Stephen Oldham is hard at work these days at the Riverdale Rehabilitation Centre in Toronto, learning how to walk with a prosthetic leg after it was amputated by doctors in April following a near-fatal motorcycle crash on Millard Street. The teen is seen here being fitted with his prosthesis (left photo) by physiotherapist Jane Tammage and (above) learning to walk with the use of canes. Officials at the centre say Stephen will likely be released late next month, but he remains optimistic and hopes to be home in two weeks.

he'll get used to it.

"It's a tingling and itching feeling. Sometimes it's painful, but not usually," Stephen says.

The Riverdale therapist working

with the Stouffville teen told him he would be leaving July 27, but Stephen is confident that "in a couple of weeks I'll be gone."

Meanwhile, the Stouffville com-

munity and Stephen's peers have been busy working to help him.

An SDSS accounting class recently banded together and raised money in Stephen's honor to help

with his post-operative recovery.

For that, he's grateful.

"I think it's really great," says Stephen. "It makes me feel good to know everyone is behind me."

A LOOK INSIDE

- Comment..... page 4
- Letters..... page 5
- Entertainment pgs 10-13
- Real Estate..... pgs 15-32
- Sports..... pgs 37-38
- Religion..... pgs 35-36
- Classified..... pgs 40-47



MICHELLE WRIGHT
 from the country

Parking spots dangerous: bank

A local credit union wants to eliminate a parking space on either side of its Main Street building, but some local officials are concerned about losing much-needed parking space for shoppers.

Markham-Stouffville Community Credit Union Limited mortgage officer Beverly Smith wrote Council last month to request elimination of two parking spaces, based on safety concerns.

"Presently, vehicles park right up to the exit and it is our understanding that there should be at least 20 feet of space on each side of the driveway. There has just recently been an accident at this location," Ms. Smith wrote.

But Ward 2 Councillor Ron Robb wants to know why the parking lot in back is always full and said the Town needs as much parking space as it can get.

That parking lot is full, an awful lot, in fact it's usu-

ally cramped. But here we are talking about deleting two more parking spaces when we're crying we don't have enough," Councillor Robb countered.

He suggested the credit union would have to provide two additional spaces if those two were eliminated.

But Ward 4 Councillor Wayne Emmerson suggested restricting parking in the two spaces to certain hours. However, Public Works Director Paul Whitehouse said a restriction won't stop people from parking there.

"This is a safety concern. It's a dangerous situation there and restrictions won't deter people from using them," he said.

Councillor Robb still wanted to know who was parking in the lot.

"Where are all those cars coming from?" he inquired. Committee voted to have staff prepare a report that would outline various other solutions.