

Custom-designed firetruck expected to be in service by middle of March

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

The town's \$513,000 custom-designed fire truck is under construction and remains on schedule, said fire chief Bill Brown this week.

The chief said he regularly corresponds with the truck's engineers and has recently returned from a trip to Red Deer, Alberta to go over specs with the builders.

"Everything appears to be on schedule and there are no problems so far," Brown said.

Brown's visit out west last month involved a four-day conference with Superior Emergency (SE) engineers to discuss the design.

"I went over the details very specifically; went through every line. They told me the specs are fine," Brown said.

He expects the dual-rig truck will pull into Stouffville's Main Street fire depot next January - just ahead of schedule.

Brown said the truck won't be ready to serve the residents until March, however, because it will be subject to 60 days of extensive tune-ups and servicing before it's ready to go.

SE is the world's largest manufacturer of fire and emergency equipment, and is a division of Federal Siren and Signal, a traffic warning light company.

Based in Chicago with plants in Alberta and Ocala, Florida, SE remains a Canadian based entity.

Portions of the truck will be built in Canada, while the ladder and mechanisms will be constructed by independent engineers based in Florida.

Stouffville's truck will have tower-water capabilities to protect adjoining buildings such as attached dwellings and will more effectively provide a safer working environment for firefighters manning the machine.

Novopharm lobbies MP to help fight drug patent bill

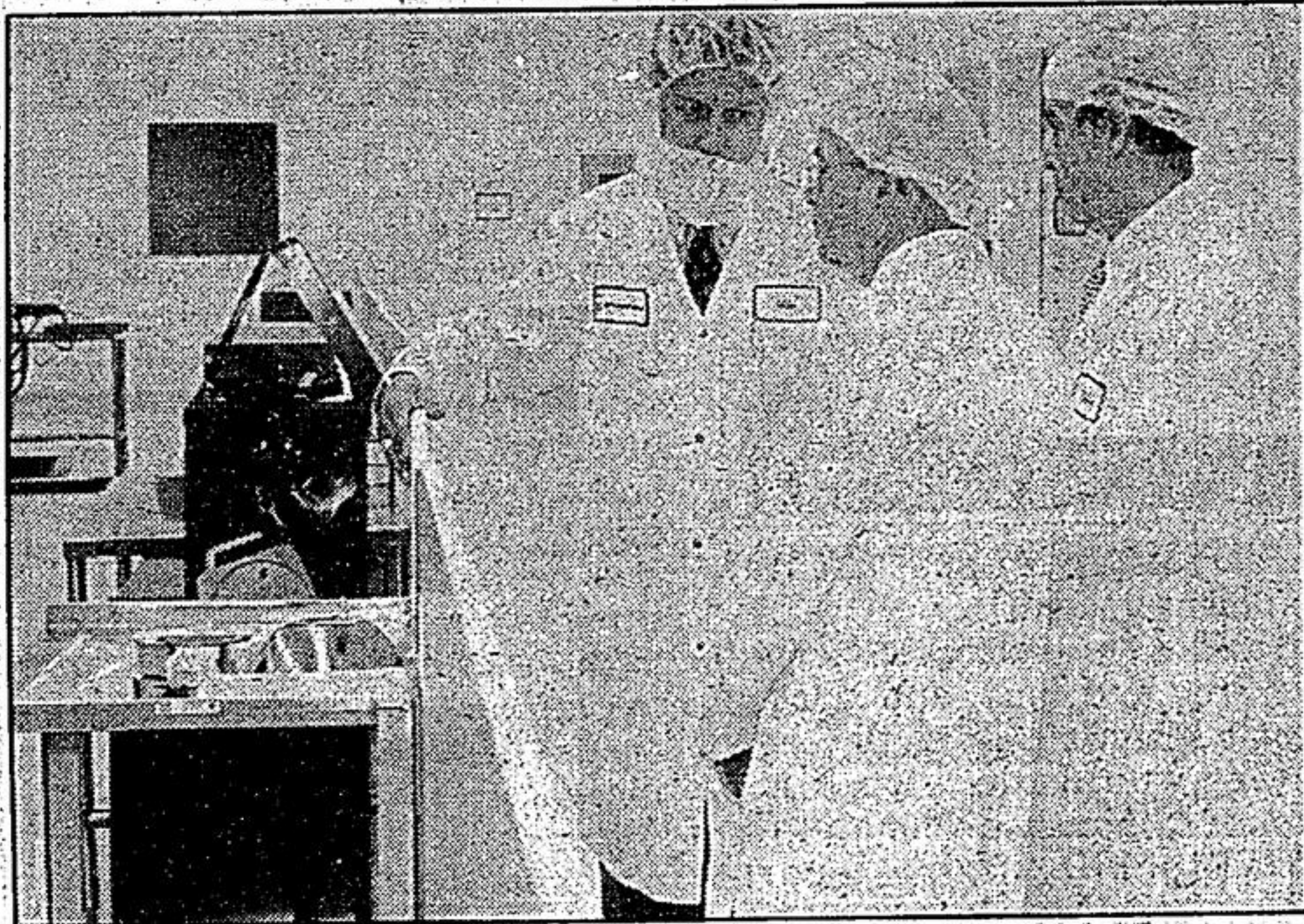
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One of Whitchurch-Stouffville's largest industries is asking Tory MP Bill Attewell to assist in its bid to keep drug prices affordable.

Novopharm, one of Canada's most productive generic pharmaceutical manufacturing industries, wants Attewell to call for an amendment to a bill which extends the patent life on brand-name drugs by seven years.

Bill C-91, passed in the legislature last February, extends the life of a brand-name patent from 10 to 17 years, which cripples Novopharm's ability to create an effective, cheaper replica, company officials say.

"We believe inventors of drugs should be protected and awarded but we are against excessive rewarding. And seven or eight years is more than enough," Novopharm president, Leslie Dan told a press conference at the Stouffville plant last week.



PHOTO/ALAN SHACKLETON

Mike Karpowicz, left, explains procedures at Stouffville's Novopharm pharmaceuticals plant to Markham Whitchurch-Stouffville MP Bill Attewell, centre, and company president Leslie Dan during a tour of the building Friday morning.

Dan is hoping Attewell, after taking a tour of the local operation, will send a message to Prime Minister Kim Campbell that the bill should be changed.

"Bill C-91 is not a good bill and it's not a consumer-oriented bill and it prevents the public from receiving pharmaceuticals at competitive prices," Dan

said. Novopharm makes more generic pharmaceuticals than any other drug manufacturing company in Canada; employs 63 people locally; 1,400 people throughout the country and has 130 people working on research and development.

"There are more prescriptions filled with Novopharm than any other name in Canada," said Brenda Drinkwater, president of the Canadian Drug Manufacturers Association.

But Bill C-91 "stifles our growth and slows us down at public expense," Dan said.

During a plant tour last Friday, Novopharm representatives pointed out several areas of industry expansion including a \$1 million high-tech, high-speed fluid bed granulator machine - the first of its kind in Canada.

"Novopharm now makes more pills in one hour than any other

company - making over three billion a year," Drinkwater said.

But Bill C-91 seriously jeopardizes its growth both nationally and locally, Dan said.

"Changes are needed and the sooner the better," he added.

Attewell, whose government approved the patent bill six months ago, said he had tried to pass an amendment to the 17-year patent life, but was unsuccessful.

Drinkwater said if the government refuses to acknowledge the escalating price of drugs in the next federal election, the fate of the country's health system will seriously be jeopardized.

"Canadians have been largely insensitive to pharmaceutical costs in the past, but many are losing their benefits. Drug costs are now becoming a big health care issue," Drinkwater said.



PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Fun at the beach

From left, Carol Bannan, Laura Ryckewaert, 4, Paul Bannan, 6, and Thera Ryckewaert enjoy the water at Bruce's Mill Conservation area last week. Residents can find lots of ways to beat the heat, but one of them won't be the town pool which is closed this week.

Markham Fair entry books now available

If you're gearing up to enter that pumpkin, that quilt or that unique craft in this year's Markham Fair, a visit to *The Tribune* office will set you on your way.

Local residents can now pick up the 1993 Markham Fair homecraft and general exhibits

booklet and entry forms at *The Tribune* offices at 6244 Main St., free of charge.

There are a huge number of categories to enter, ranging from photography to livestock. This year's Markham Fair runs from Sept. 30 to Oct. 3.

Obituary

Church a focus for Elmina Wideman

Long-time Whitchurch-Stouffville resident Elmina Cressman Wideman passed away at Parkview Home on Sun., Aug. 22.

She was in her 85th year. Mrs. Wideman was born Jan. 24, 1908 in New Hamburg, Ontario, daughter of Osiah and Annie Cressman.

She married Willis E. Wideman on Sept. 2, 1941 and became the mother to 11 children. She was later blessed with 32 grandchil-

dren and 26 great-children. She is predeceased by her husband Willis, two grandchildren, one sister, Selina Shantz, and four brothers.

Wideman's Mennonite Church was the centre of her married life. The Christian heritage that she cherished was passed on to her children and to her grandchildren through Bible reading, prayer and storytelling.

Relatives, friends and mis-

sionary contacts were top priority with Mrs. Wideman and were kept current through numerous letters.

Sewing circle and participation in the Care and Share Shoppe in Stouffville became her focus in later years.

Parkview Home provided such special care during her last weeks that she maintained a joyful time of gratitude for a place and staff so dedicated to her.

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