

# Lifeguards show their skills during 'disaster'

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Staff Reporter

When 13-year-old Bradley Patterson was pulled lifeless from the Stouffville pool yesterday morning, it looked like the real thing.

As part of the Royal Life Saving Association's swimming program, town employee and lifeguard director Mark Emmerson, senior lifeguard Neil Peunte and watching parents knew that at exactly 10:15 a.m. two blows of a whistle was the signal that a mock disaster was in progress.

However, lifeguards Nicole Liadis, Deb Stewart, Erin Ticknor and Caroline Barker and about 30 children were lead to believe this was, indeed, the real thing. Brad Patterson was drowning.

Moments after Peunte found Patterson floating face down in the deep end, Ticknor assumed her position. In a quick, yet orderly fashion, Ticknor ordered all children to the shallow end of the pool. At the same time, Liadis tapped her life saving skills and helped Peunte pull the victim from the water.

Peunte had applied life-saving techniques while Patterson was still in the water. The techniques continued without interruption at the side of the pool.

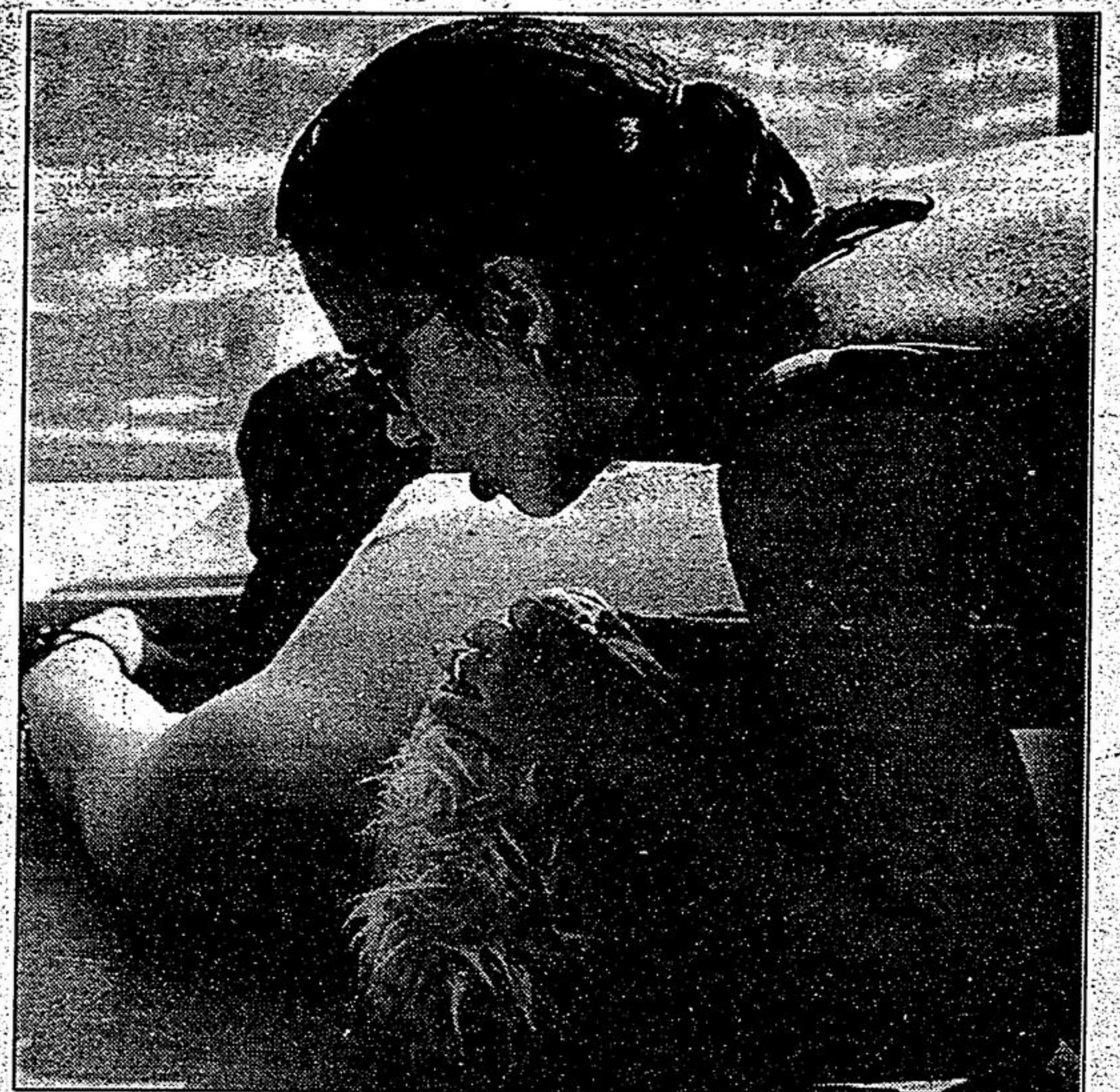
While this was going on, Stewart brought a first aid kit to the scene. At the same time, Barker placed a 911 telephone call to summon an ambulance.

Ticknor told the children to get out of the water, sit at the edge of the pool and to remain quiet and claim. All but one boy co-operated.

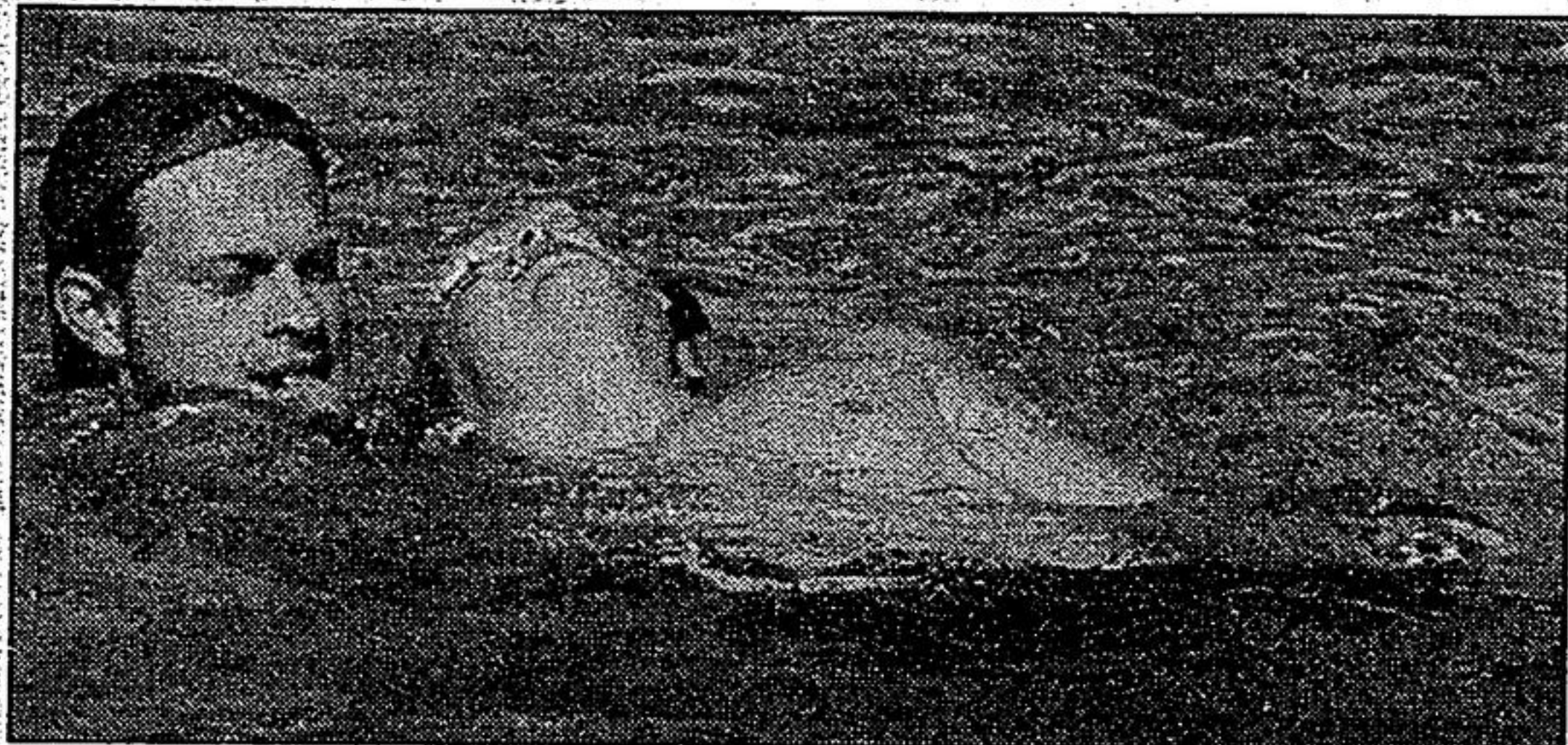
While concern and worry were evident on the faces of the children, with the exception of the one, the kids followed the directions without comment and without delay. Ticknor, aware that the one child was not responding properly, took immediate action. The boy was told to clean up his act. He did without issue.

Mock disasters are simulated in order to test the lifeguards and the swimming students. They passed the test with flying colors.

"This is a test of our staff on response time and accurate rescue procedures of a victim during an instructional situation," Emmerson explained.



**BREATH OF LIFE:** Lifeguard Nicole Liadis gives mouth-to-mouth resuscitation in the mock rescue to 'victim' Bradley Patterson, who splashed his way back into the pool to tell of his ordeal. Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE



**TOW TIME:** After whistling to inform others of a possible drowning, lifeguard Neil Peunte lifts victim Bradley Patterson's face out of the water and hauls him to the side of the pool. Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE

## Regional politicians pitted against Metro at GTA meeting

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The question was proposed by Ajax Mayor Steve Parish.

"We aren't going to win this fight with discussions with the province," said Parish. "It's a PR matter. Who have not been consulted? The people have not been consulted."

Over the past months, the GTA mayors and regional chairs committee has been requesting a meeting with Premier Mike Harris, but to no avail.

Still, the costs of downloading social services from the province to the municipalities — in order to cut the provincial tax bill — must be paid by someone.

"We have to find a way of financing that," said Markham Mayor Don Cousens, co-chair of the GTA mayors and regional chairs council. "The province has not looked at the numbers for downloading, so they are wrong."

Last Tuesday, Municipal Affairs Minister Al Leach announced that York Region, along with the other GTA regional municipalities, will be sharing Metropolitan Toronto's welfare tab. Now, welfare and social housing costs are absorbed by the province. As of Jan. 1, 1998, they are to be downloaded to municipalities.

York Region residents would pay on average \$200 more in property taxes when welfare, social housing and other downloaded services are transferred from the province to the region, according to a regional report.

The addition of these provincial

responsibilities to the region could cost York Region residents an additional \$17,600,000 more each year starting in 1998, according to the report.

Property taxes across the GTA are to be re-assessed by the province. Currently some residents' property assessments are based on figures from the '70s.

"I would feel much more comfortable if this concluded after assessment," said York Region chair Eldred King. "It's not an absolute refusal, it's an avenue."

Heated debates about downloading erupted between Metro and GTA politicians.

"There was an unlevel playing field," said North York Mayor Mel Lastman. "You can save \$10 million by moving your company outside of Metro. Metro is going to have to come up with \$300 million even with the pooling."

"We face the dawn of this notion of pooling, I do believe in equity

but my concern is, what say will we have?" questioned Richmond Hill Mayor Bill Bell.

Metro Chair Alan Tonks believes that Metro — or the new City of Toronto after amalgamation in the new year — is the economic engine driving the entire GTA.

"I would just like to remind you what the old core city is," said Tonks. "We are 200,000 jobs less, the jobs are gravitating to the regions outside of Metro and that's good. But that's not good for the old core city. I have never accepted that the old core city should be separated. To every extent we are becoming one economic entity."

### POLITICS

The pooling of social service costs across the GTA was one of the key recommendations made in Anne Golden's report — Report of the GTA Task Force.

"The transition committee never took a position on pooling services," Cousens said. "There was

no position taken on pooling by the Who Does What committee, no position by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and no position by Milt Farrow"

Farrow's report — another in a long chain of provincial reports recommending restructuring of the GTA — came out earlier this year.

"I can repeat that there was no discussion," said York Region's

chief administrative officer Alan Wells.

The GTA representatives also passed a resolution requesting a meeting with Harris to discuss the transfer of social services from the province to the municipalities.

"We must continue to state that property taxes are not the place for the delivery of social services," Jackson said.



**TUNNEL VISION:** Having fun with a tunnel toy, from left, Stacey Davis, 8, Lloyd Davis, 5 (top), Christina Davis, 11, and Carrie Marshall, 8, last week on Rupert and Charles Streets in Stouffville. Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

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