

Water bottle poses dangers

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North Americans, with their fancy central heating and their strange insistence on eliminating drafts and insulating walls.

Across the pond, an electric blanket is considered a hedonistic luxury. It does not build character or supply sufficient stiffening to the upper lip.

A hot water bottle, although undeniably nambypamby, heats only a small percentage of the body at a time and is therefore slightly

more acceptable.

It can also spring a leak at the most inopportune moment, affording a bracing air of danger and the potential for extreme discomfort when you least expect it.

Your correspondent can attest to this fact, having experienced it first hand in a trailer in Scotland when I was a scant two years older than my son is now.

I was awoken from a deep sleep by icy water at my back. Naturally there was no heater and no spare blankets were supplied, so I had to

endure my discomfort until the following day.

Last weekend, my son and I hit the stores and purchased warm clothing, then repaired to the old homestead to select a nice woolly blanket, a refurbished heater and his fleece hat.

So far I have resisted the temptation to call him whenever the mercury deeps below zero, but the last time I saw him he was wearing a sweater and a pair of sensible socks.

Now I'm feeling nice and warm again.

Green gift giving possible

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tax deductible donation to UNICEF (using VISA, American Express or Master Card).

You can make a donation or purchase cards by calling UNICEF toll-free at 1-800-567-4483. With or without a postal disruption, card orders will be filled by alternative delivery services.

The most environmentally responsible gifts are ones that create little or no waste, save resources and endure. Practical gifts that promote energy efficiency such as energy efficient light bulbs or shower

heads, water heater blankets or ceiling fans are good examples. Other green gift ideas include refillable fountain pens, recycled note pads, reusable coffee cups and lunch bags for the office workers on your list.

Out-of-town relatives and students away at university would appreciate a gift of recycled paper stationery, complete with stamps, or a long-distance gift certificate. New parents might appreciate form-fitted, reusable cloth diapers or a gift certificate for free baby-sitting.

If someone on your list travels a lot, consider a gift certificate for pet or plant sitting services. Disorganized friends would delight in a gift certificate for a free closet make over. Any seniors or disabled persons on your list would appreciate gift certificates for free snow shoveling or window cleaning.

To give of yourself, whether it be with a handmade present or a gift of your time, reflects the real meaning of the season. And for those you love, there's no better way to say, "Merry Christmas."

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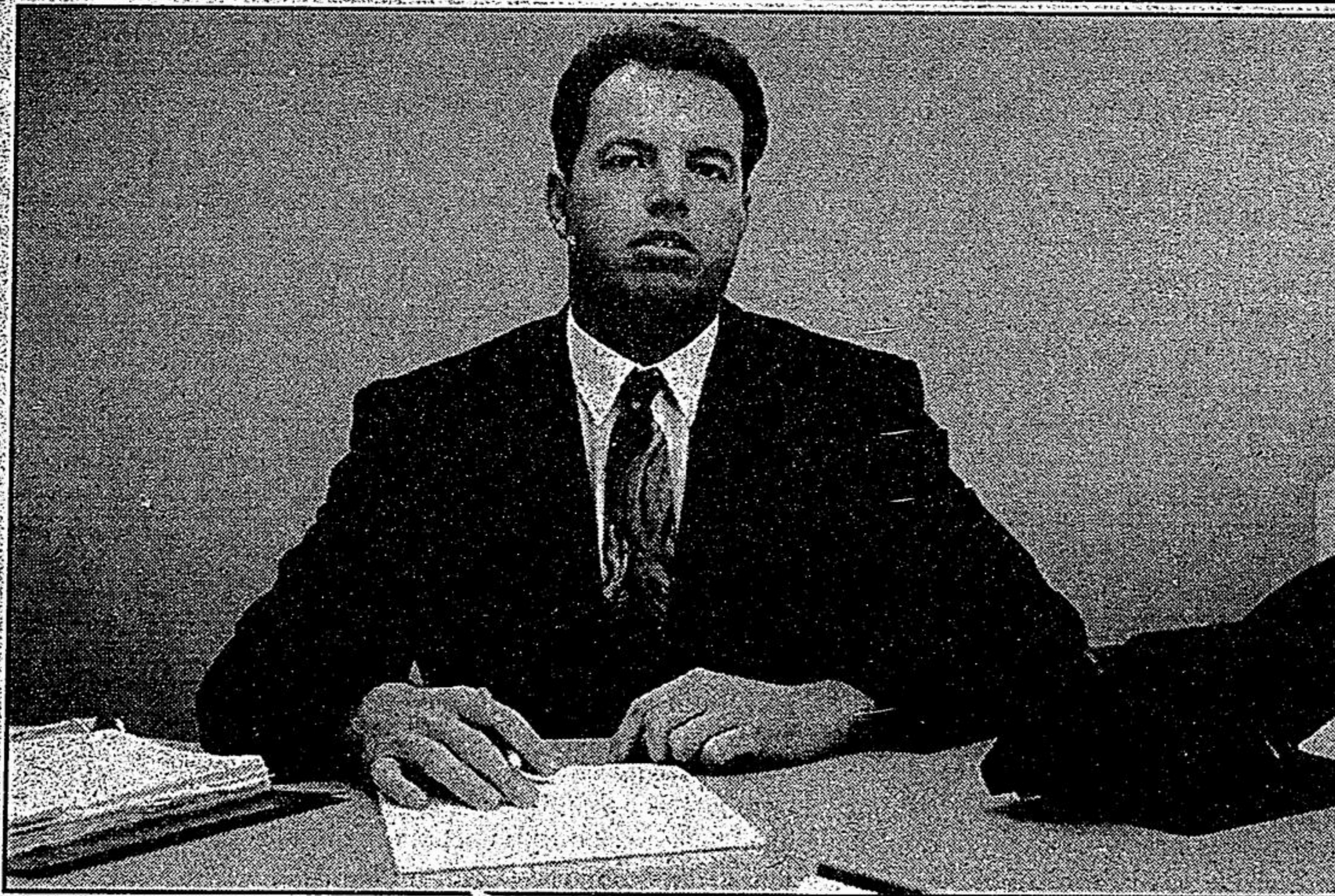
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Randy Porter is an ex-York Region police officer and owner of Traffic Ticket Experts in Markham. His goal is for you to beat your traffic ticket and he will go to court to do it.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Don't pay that traffic ticket

Traffic Ticket Experts help clients beat their tickets

People who have ever received a ticket for any traffic offense know that it costs - both initially and when it comes time to renew their insurance.

Which is where Traffic Ticket Experts steps in.

Traffic Ticket Experts will provide professional representation in traffic court for the client.

Run by three ex-York Region police officers, the goal of the largest independent traffic agency in Ontario is to represent the client in court and beat the ticket, said Randy Porter who owns the Markham Traffic Ticket Experts.

There is a Traffic Ticket Expert office in Thornhill and Woodbridge as well.

Each ex-police officer has at least 10 years of traffic experience and are able to consult with one another on their cases.

Porter encourages everyone who gets a ticket to call.

Whether it is no points or six, any mark on a driving record means a hike in insurance, said Porter.

They should come to us to have a free evaluation of the ticket. An ex-police officer will overview the ticket to make sure they have been properly charged and then provide an opinion

and options on what to do."

The consultation can be done in the office or at the client's place of business or home.

Traffic Ticket Experts guarantee their service. Their main goal is client satisfaction and winning the case.

"Our success rate is excellent."

Porter can be contacted at any time to answer questions and address concerns.

Often the cost of the increase in insurance rates is double the fee for Traffic Ticket Experts service.

"It is well worth it if you get a ticket to take advantage of a free consultation and receive professional advice from an ex-police officer," said Porter.

Porter's office also provides service to the Asian community with the assistance of a translator.

So, before you pay, call the Traffic Ticket Experts.

For details, contact Randy Porter at the Markham Traffic Ticket Experts office at 905-940-3000. The office is located at 4418 Hwy. 7 E. in Unionville on the second floor.

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