

THE TRIBUNE

Vol. 110, No. 39

Tuesday, May 19, 1998

20 Pages .50¢ (GST incl.)


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Even Kate 'Sein'ed off



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'Gas busters' say Ottawa gouging fuel consumers

MIKE ADLER
Staff Reporter

MPP Dave Tsubouchi stepped back into his role as crusader against gas-pump price gouging this week, in time for the first long weekend of summer.

Ontario's consumer affairs minister, Tsubouchi, announced a gang of fellow MPPs — nicknamed "gas-busters" — had toured Greater Toronto to snap pictures of the prices on gas station signs Thursday.

Tsubouchi's ministry said staff would follow up on Victoria Day weekend, taking pictures at the same stations.

"We're gathering evidence to

continue the fight against the price-gouging of Ontario consumers," Tsubouchi said, adding he doesn't understand why prices tend to go up before long weekends, "but I do know that consumers are getting a raw deal."

Tsubouchi repeated the province's demand, first made last year, for a federal special investigator into gas pricing and for stronger protection against "anti-competitive" pricing.

"We're continuing to press the federal government to take action and to impress upon the oil companies that this kind of thing just isn't acceptable," he said.

MPP Doug Rollins (PC-Quinte), one of four "gas-busters" and Tsubouchi's parliamentary assistant, insisted that "there's no

logical explanation" for long-weekend price jumps.

But gasoline industry spokesperson Brendan Hawley said the big leaps up are "normal market pricing at work" and charges of gouging are "clearly untrue."

"Gas stations are forced by intense competition, because consumers pay extremely close attention to prices, to keep discounting their gas until they are selling at or below cost," he said.

"What this creates is a pattern of price volatility," because the stations, although they try to cushion themselves by selling other products, can't keep gas prices down at that level. Eventually, a "price correction" must happen, and the same cycle starts again, said Hawley.

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CHARLOTTE'S BABIES: Charlotte Willett-Lord, 5, poses with the three little squirrels she and her mom Lorraine rescued. The tiny creatures had no mother and are being nurtured back to health.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Squirrel saviour

JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Reporter

Three baby squirrels owe their life to a five-year-old Stouffville child.

When Charlotte Willett-Lord first laid eyes on three newborn squirrels, it was obvious: Mother Nature needed a helping hand. With no mommy squirrel in sight in the Claremont woods, the baby squirrels were lying on the ground. They were cold, crying and very dehydrated.

Charlotte's dad Eric Lord knew the mother squirrel was not coming back. The babies would die soon. Eric scooped them up.

■ Please see page 3 ■

@random

Learn more about ADD

■ One of Canada's leading researchers into Attention Deficit Disorder will share the latest findings on ADD this

Thursday at Markham Stouffville Hospital.

Dr. Umesh Jain, a child and adolescent psychiatrist at Toronto's Clarke Institute of Psychiatry, will be at Markham Stouffville's auditorium at 7:30 p.m. for the two-hour free talk, which is sponsored by the Attention Deficit Resource Network.

More information is available at 416-969-0152.

Special train runs May 26

■ The York-Durham Heritage Railway will have a special train running on Tuesday, May 26.

The train will be departing from Whitchurch-Stouffville at 10 a.m. and making a return run from Uxbridge at noon.



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