

Historical society wants 'old' left alone

When sprucing up downtown Stouffville, the old need not be forgotten. In fact, buildings that date back decades can add much to the character of any downtown, stressed Fred Robbins of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Historical Society. Last week, Robbins and representatives of the provincial Ministry of Culture took part in an all-day workshop put on by the Business Improvement Area (BIA). About 50 business people, some from as far away as Windsor attended. Economic development officer Eric Lismanis pointed out that as we sit on the threshold of a new century, the historical value of the community is indeed important. It is the BIA's plan to revitalize Stouffville's downtown, historical building will play a key role. As well, the agenda to get rid of eye sores and pretty up Main Street from Highway 48 to the Tenth Line is continuing. Recently, a BIA committee visited 53 busi-

ness owners and encouraged them to join the beautification plan which includes planting trees, flowers and shrubs. Business owners were also asked to consider new lights, appealing signs, awnings, fencing, some painting and lots of spit and polish. "If we want business to come, we have to make it happen," stressed local Mayor Wayne Emmerson. The economic reality is: Stouffville's downtown will "struggle for a year or so yet," said Lismanis. "But that will change in the future." Recently, York Region gave its blessings to Whitchurch-Stouffville's Secondary Plan, paving the way for the Big Pipe to come to town. The Big Pipe should be here within two years, said Emmerson. Once it's in place, it's expected to trigger development in Stouffville. Existing business owners are being reminded of both the individual and community benefits of adopting a "pride-in-property" philosophy. Not only does it enhance property value, it attracts business.

Historical Society member Fred Robbins makes a point to a group of society members last week on Main Street about saving the town's older buildings and how they should play a key role in a downtown Stouffville beautification plan.

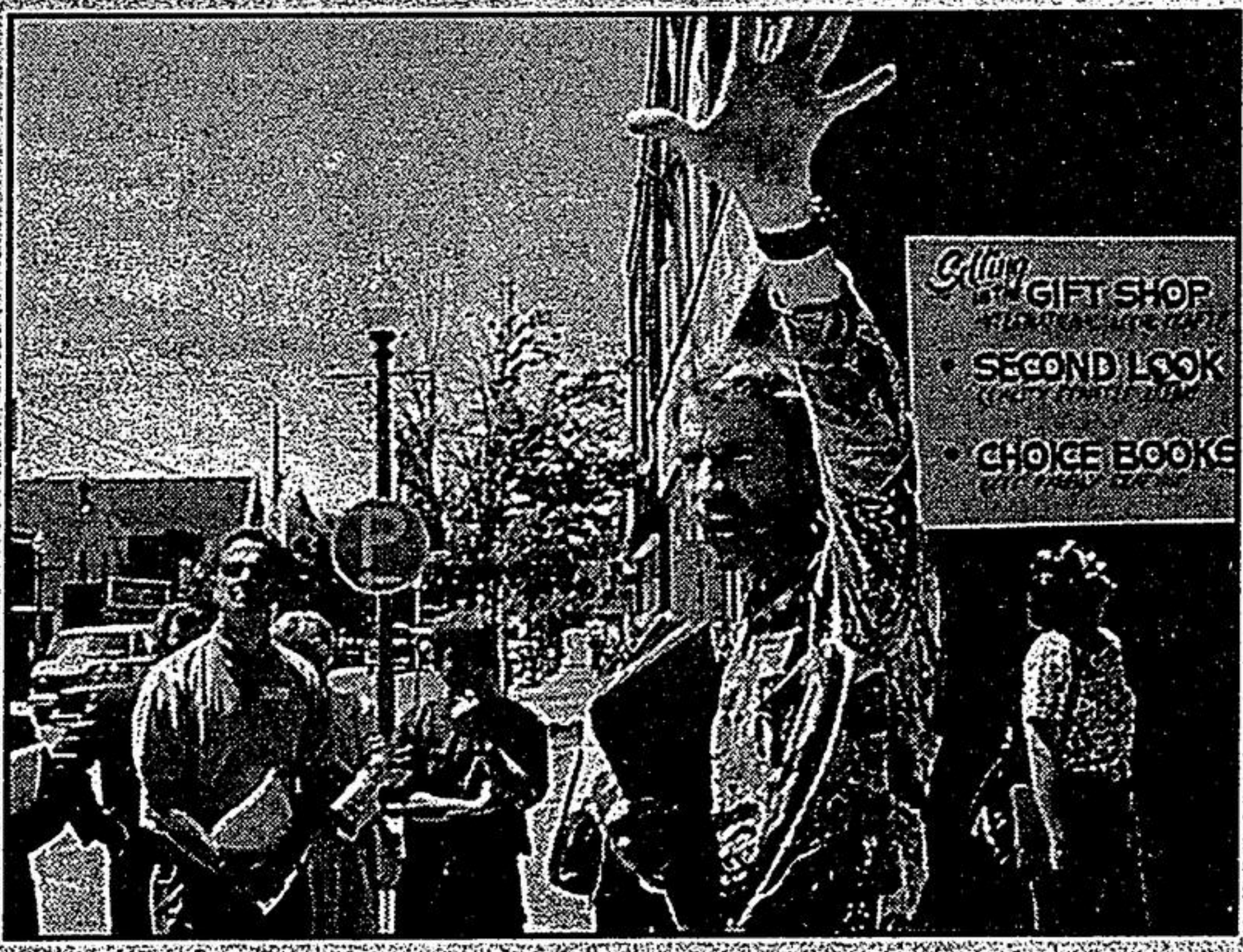
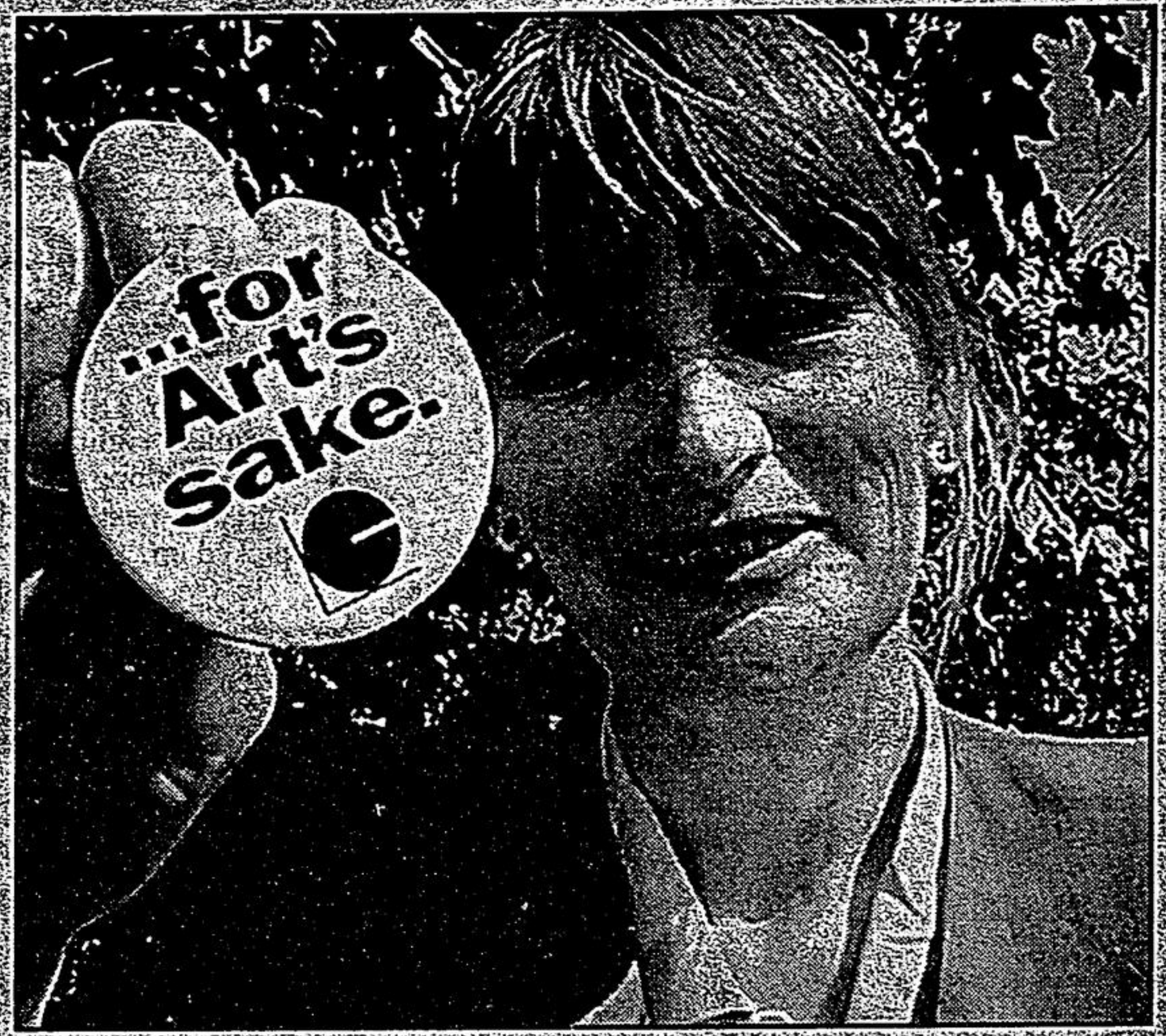


Photo by JOAN RANSBERRY



GET PINNED: Sharon Maude holds up one of the For Art's Sake pins which are available to anyone buying a Latham Gallery membership.

Photo by JOAN RANSBERRY

MPP questioning weekend gas hikes

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ley, a vice-president of the Canadian Petroleum Products Institute. A recent industry campaign admitted "there's a greater chance that prices will be discounted when demand is lower, on weekdays and in winter." "We've lost that element of brand loyalty that used to exist," but consumers benefit from the pricing wars, Hawley argued. The alternative to such tough industry competition — which drastically reduced the number of gas stations in the last 10 years — is provincial price setting. But Hawley said in Prince Edward Island, where retailers can only ask to adjust prices every two months, average prices are one to two cents higher than elsewhere in Canada. "You're dealing with an artificial situation because the market isn't dictating the prices," he warned.

After Ontario's Conservative government demanded federal action last year, Ottawa put together a Liberal committee on gasoline pricing, with local MP Bryon Wilfert (Lib - Oak Ridges) serving as vice-chair. The committee will release its "very, very detailed" report May 25 and the federal government will take action, promised Wilfert, whose riding includes Stouffville and north Markham. He said the group may advise the government to strengthen the federal Competition Bureau, which investigated complaints of price-fixing last year but found no evidence, find a way to stop independent gas stations from disappearing. He noted two stations have closed this year in Stouffville alone. Wilfert also said he's surprised Isubouchi accused his government of inaction. "Snapping photos, I don't know what that does," he added.



LOVE LIFE: Susan Henderson, one of the walk co-ordinators for the upcoming (May 23) Canada Osteoporosis Walk in Claremont, shows off her milk leggings in support of the event. The walk begins at 11 a.m. at Claremont United Church.

Photo by JOAN RANSBERRY

Girl's life revolved around adopted 'babies'

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Charlotte took the little creatures home to Stouffville, where her mother, Lorraine Wilfert, put a Save-the-Squirrels plan in motion. Lorraine made formula suitable for baby rodents. She then taught Charlotte how to feed them by using a hypodermic needle with a tiny nipple attached. For the next three weeks, the five-year-old's life revolved around her adopted babies. While Charlotte soon found out that a mother's job is quite demanding, her squirrels thrived on a mixture of proper nutrition and a little

girl's TLC. Lorraine kept an eye on things — She was aware that Charlotte was growing quite attached. Knowing a little girl's heart could be broken, Lorraine emphasized that under the laws of nature, the squirrels must eventually return to the wilds. "I kept telling her they will soon become real squirrels," said Lorraine. This past weekend, Charlotte said good bye to her little friends. The furry trio were taken to a nearby Lori Welsh's animal rehabilitation centre. There, the squirrels will be slowly reintroduced to their natural habitat.