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29 A rewarding experience for Judy Kennedy in the equestrian circles.

ARTS & CULTURE CALENDAR

EVENT: *A Lamb's Tale*, Christmas Musical
WHEN: Sunday, Dec. 13, 10:45 a.m.
WHERE: Stouffville Missionary Church



26 'Tis the season to rent those timeless classic Christmas videos for the whole family.

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Parents call for end to teacher strikes

Parent councils want end to labour strife

BY JENNIFER BROWN
STAFF WRITER

After three years of strikes, working to rule and, most recently, lock-outs, York Region parents want an end to labour strife in their schools.

During the public elementary teachers' lockout, a group of parents got together and decided they'd had enough. They plan to pressure provincial politicians to prevent any further interruptions to their children's education.

"For three years in a row we've had job action, and it has been very disruptive to families," said Connie Spark, a parent at Unionville Public School.

Spark and a group of other parents from York Region school councils, including Ballantrae public, have begun a fax campaign called Put Our Children First, asking people to fax their MPP, leaders of all provincial parties and the Ministry of Education.

During the strike, frustrated parents like Spark got together to air their concerns and determine what they could do.

"Whenever we read anything about the strike, you would read the union's comments and the board's. But there's never a spokesperson for the parents of the kids," said Spark, whose three children have all been affected by strikes.

"At a meeting one night we had 30 schools represented, and everybody thought we should do something, but we didn't know what," she said.

See UNIONS, page 6.

ENVIRONMENT: *Four hundred trees to fall as conservation authority thins out forest*

In the name of forestry

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

In the name of proper forestry, the axe is about to fall on 400 trees in Stouffville's Pangman Springs conservation area.

Adjacent property owners in the Warden Avenue and Aurora Sideroad area have been notified that the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) is about to carry out a thinning

program by removing 400 trees spread over a 20-acre site in the regional forest. Most of the trees in the 240-acre forest are sugar maple.

While a contractor has been hired to do the work, LSRCA forester Graeme Davis will oversee the cutting, expected to begin in the new year.

LSRCA's thinning program follows a principle of Mother Nature

— by removing a few you give many a healthier and longer life, Davis said.

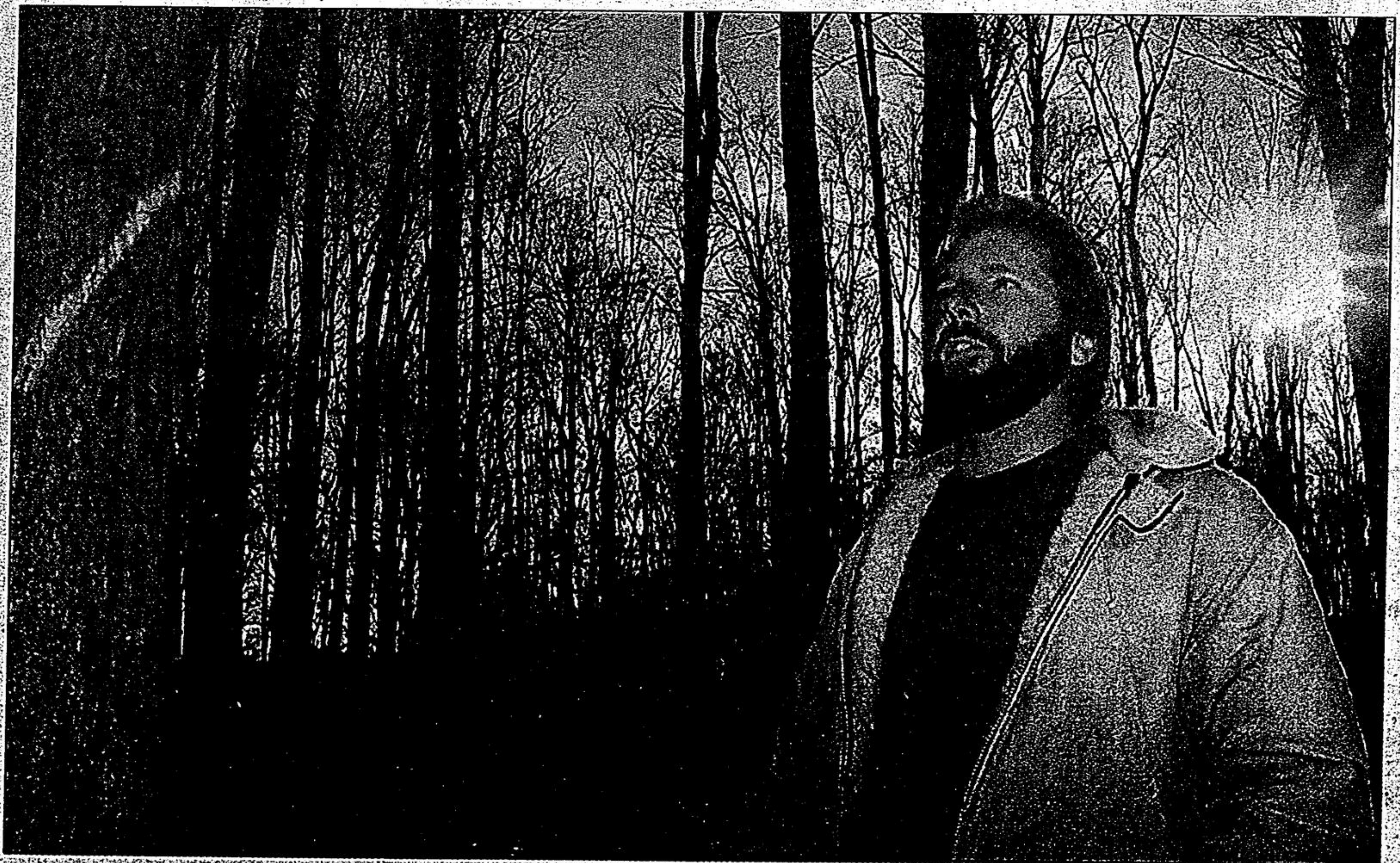
"By selectively removing mature, unhealthy or other selected trees every 10 to 15 years, the natural process of regeneration is imitated," Davis said.

"This system maintains a healthy and diverse, mature forest with a wide range of species of different sizes and ages," he added.

In the mixed hardwood forests of southern Ontario, the trees actually depend on such natural disturbances such as lightning, fire, wind, or disease to remove individual trees or groups of trees and make way for young trees to grow, Davis said.

Each tree facing the axe has been assessed and tagged by

See TREES, page 3.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation forester Graeme Davis says the authority's thinning program in Stouffville's Pangman Springs will allow younger trees the space they need to grow. Here, Davis finishes marking a tree with a yellow line, meaning it will come down.

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