

COMMUNITY: Pilot forced to land helicopter in field on Kennedy Road

Student makes emergency landing

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

A student helicopter pilot made an emergency landing in a field on Kennedy Road, south of Vivian Sideroad late Wednesday, much to the relief of area homeowners.

"We could hear him circling around and knew there was something wrong," said Elsie Menzies, who lives on Kennedy Road.

"The next thing I knew, the pilot was ringing our door bell and asking for help. He needed to use the phone. He'd landed it in an open field next door."

Using Menzies' phone, the student pilot called Canadian Helicopter Ltd. at Buttonville Airport. The helicopter was one of six owned by the company.

Canadian Helicopter chief pilot Al Collins said the student followed procedure to a T.

"He did as he was supposed to do — he landed it." When a red warning light came on, it indicated a potential oil problem, Collins said.

The pilot circled around until he found a suitable landing spot. He made a "safe, precautionary" landing.

On Thursday, Collins, accompanied by mechanics, checked the aircraft and determined that it was an instrument problem and not an oil problem.

The helicopter can fly, weather permitting. "As soon as the weather clears up, we'll dig it out and fly it out of there," Collins said.

This helicopter, owned by Canadian Helicopter Ltd. at Buttonville Airport, was forced to land in a field behind Elsie Menzies' home on Kennedy Road in Stouffville, Thursday. The student pilot circled the area in search of a landing spot after a red warning light came on. The company will dig the aircraft out when the weather clears.

STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE



PEOPLE: Stouffville resident joins 89 other Canadians in ceremony

Alex Barris earns Order of Canada

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
CORRESPONDENT

A prominent Canadian broadcaster and author who has called Stouffville home for nearly four years has been named to the nation's honour roll.

Alex Barris was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada Tuesday. He is one of 89 Canadians who are to be presented with the Order of Canada insignia at a ceremony at Ottawa's Rideau Hall in April.

Barris, 76, was recognized for his contributions and accomplishments in the mass media category. He has a lengthy and illustrious career as a journalist, broadcaster, author, and radio and television scriptwriter. His books include a work celebrating the 25th anniversary of *Front Page Challenge* in the early 1980s, and *Days of Victory*, an account of ordinary Canadians during World War II, which he co-wrote with his son, Ted Barris.

Alex spent nine years each with the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Telegram* after moving to Toronto from New York in 1948.

"I have written just about everything," Alex said in a *Tribune* article in August, 1995.

While Alex was unable to be reached for his reaction to the

award, Ted Barris said his father was extremely pleased.

"He said it was a terrific honour," said Ted, from his Uxbridge home. "He was really delighted."

It was Ted and his sister Kate Barris who set the wheels in motion to have their father honoured. "This all started a few years ago when Kate and I wondered if we should see about getting dad nominated," Ted said.

For someone who spent most of his time writing, working and thinking about other people in the business, it's great to see him recognized.

The pair had retired *Globe and Mail* theatre critic Herb Whittaker, a longtime friend of Alex Barris and himself a member of the Order of Canada, officially nominate their father.

"Herb was the first person my father met when he came to the *Globe and Mail* in 1948," Ted said. "They became such good friends that he became Uncle Herb to us."

Ted said the focus of the nomination was on Alex's continual support of Canadian show busi-

ness. The nomination was backed by various prominent Canadian media personalities including Vicki Gabareau, Robert Fulford, and Tommy Banks.

Barris said his dad had no idea of what was being done on his behalf.

"He didn't know anything about this at all."

Alex, who still writes a column for a magazine published by the Canadian Association of Retired Persons, was honoured in recent years with the Margaret Collier Life Achievement Award.

The award was bestowed upon him by the Association of Canadian Television and Radio Actors (ACTRA).

Barris has written 500 radio and TV scripts, and has always been a booster of the Canadian TV and radio scene.

Ted said it was fitting that his father's efforts be acknowledged.

"For someone who spent most of his time writing, working and thinking about other people in the business, it's great to see him recognized. It's very satisfying."

Ted said the entire Barris family will be on hand for his father's investiture in April.

"We're all looking forward to it already. We think the world of him."

Boy, 5, buried by flying snow from plow

Principal to educate students on safety

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

A five year old Musselman's Lake child was rescued by passersby, yesterday, after being buried by plowed snow.

When St. Mark Catholic School student Riley O'Connor was spotted on Elmvalle Boulevard after school, all that was visible was "his nose and part of his hat", Elmvalle resident Wendy Reaume said.

Neighbour Teresa Drew, also of Elmvalle Boulevard, said she heard a faint noise after getting out of her car.

The noise turned out to be the muffled cry of help from the boy.

"He was pulled out and cleaned off. He wasn't hurt, but it was scary," Reaume said.

"The driver buried him, and didn't even know he'd done it," Drew said, who helped dig the frightened boy out from under the snow.

Parents need to teach their children to stay clear of all snow removal equipment, Drew said. "And, maybe the plowers could keep an extra eye open for children."

Riley's mom, Marie O'Connor,

said her son was walking along the side of the road beyond where the plow could reach him, but snow sprayed up and covered his body anyway.

St. Mark Principal Mario Sacco was alarmed to hear of the incident when contacted by *The Tribune*.

He said he would contact the York Regional health department and ask staff to help him put together an educational package for the younger students regarding the dangers of roadside equipment.

Sacco said he would be sure to educate his students in the next few weeks on the dangers of plows and other seasonal emergency equipment.

Meanwhile, Old Man Winter ran out of steam by the time he touched down in Stouffville Thursday night, public works director Paul Whitehouse said.

While the City of Toronto called in the army to help with emergencies there, it was business as usual for Stouffville.

"I don't think it really hit us. We didn't bring in extra staff. I don't even think we ran all night," Whitehouse said.

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