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## Have your say on smoking

It's one of those issues that draws strong public response — whether smoking should be banned in public places.

York Region's no-smoking task force is giving residents and business owners a chance to express their feelings at a series of public meetings starting next week.

The task force is hoping to convince York's nine municipalities to prohibit lighting up in public spots by Jan. 1, 2002.

The local bylaws would amount to a region-wide ban — something that died two years ago when fewer than half the municipalities supported the policy.

But some members of the task force hope that resistance was due to the fact the bylaw would have been controlled by the regional government.

They believe more councillors will support the ban if local municipalities have the power to monitor businesses in their communities and lay charges.

However, some business owners warn they could face bankruptcy if a smoking ban drives their customers away.

On the other hand, others support the prohibition. For example, a group of students called Youth Fighting Tobacco hopes to lobby politicians into adopting bylaws.

The meetings will take place next Tuesday in the Newmarket council chambers, Feb. 17 at the Elgin Barrow arena in Richmond Hill, Feb. 22 in the Whitchurch-Stouffville council chambers and March 9 in the Georgina council chambers.

The meetings run from 7 to 9 p.m.

### Volunteers needed at REENA

REENA is a non-profit, social service agency supporting people with developmental disabilities.

Some of the volunteer opportunities include PAL-unteers, a direct service with volunteers working one-on-one with people with a developmental disability; Home-Buddies, where people would visit and assist in one of REENA's many group homes; The Battle Family Developmental Centre, which needs volunteers to help with program activities such as art, music, sports and computers; administrative volunteers, needed to share their office skills by assisting in the REENA administration office; and committee volunteers, who will help in policy making and planning in a variety of areas that include communication, literacy, finance and funding development.

For more information becoming involved with REENA, contact Arlene Margolese at 889-6484, ext. 2229.

### Businesswomen's breakfast

The York Region Women's Entrepreneur Networking Breakfasts will be taking place March 14, April 11 and May 9.

The network is a non-profit organization providing businesswomen the opportunity to build relationships, share information, receive moral support and exchange leads. For more information, call Jeanie Yu at 886-0277.

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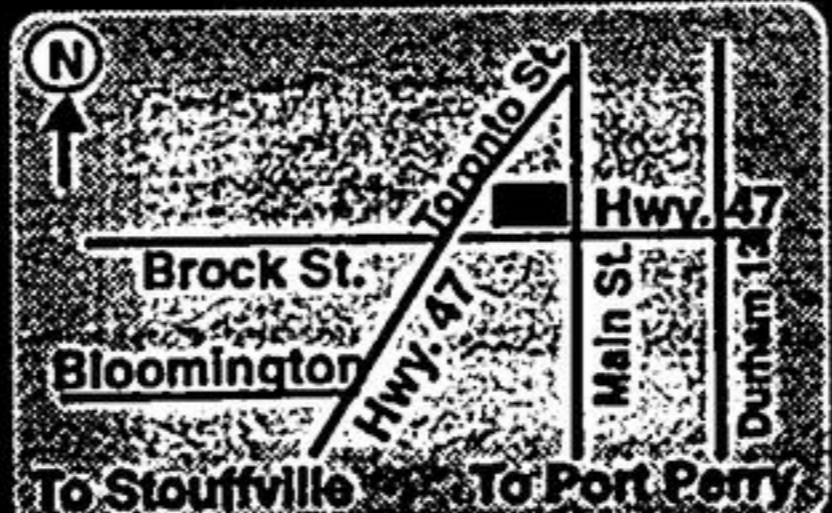
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