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**8** Few turn out to protest plan to make York Region smoke-free. More meetings slated.

**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**EVENT:** Bowl for Big Brothers  
**WHEN:** Saturday, call 727-1251  
**WHERE:** Stouffville Bowling Centre



**18** Just how far will parents go to give their child a birthday they won't forget.

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# Stouffville Tribune

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THURSDAY, FEB. 17, 2000

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## Hospitals eye cash from local coffers

*\$80 million needed for expansions*

BY JENNIFER BROWN  
Staff Writer

Whatever York Region's future boundaries look like, the bottom line is hospitals need the support of the local municipality now to go ahead with their \$200-million expansion plans.

Talk of amalgamation and plans to dissolve the region have prompted concern among some hospital officials who have been lobbying for funding to help pay for their capital projects.

But amalgamation aside, the reality is hospitals need to come up with almost \$80 million locally over the next four years to complete expansion plans needed to address demands of growth.

"Whatever the boundaries, the issue is the same — the hospitals need to grow and develop," said Frank Lussing, president of York Central Hospital, who feels there should even be a long-term commitment for growth funding.

"However we organize ourselves geopolitically, whether it is regional council or another council, there is a need to come to the table."

Newspaper headlines hinting that municipal leaders are aligning themselves with proposed new structures under various amalgamation plans made the hospitals nervous at first, but they feel in the end, funding will come through.

See PROVINCE, page 7.

## FILLING THE TANK TAKES A TOLL ON TRUCKERS AND SUV DRIVERS

# FUMING OVER GAS PRICES

BY MIKE ADLER  
Staff Writer

When filling your Ford Windstar with regular costs \$56.76, it's time to worry.

"Oh my gosh," a surprised Thornhill resident said as the price of the gas flowing into her van's extra-large tank climbed past her usual \$45 tab.

"It's a necessary evil," the

Windstar owner, who would not give her name, said yesterday at a Hwy. 7 Shell station in Richmond Hill. "I need a large vehicle, so I have no choice."

At a pump nearby, North York plumber Jeffery Porter estimated that compared to last year, gas prices have added \$40 a month to the cost of using his Dodge Caravan for work. "It's ridiculous."

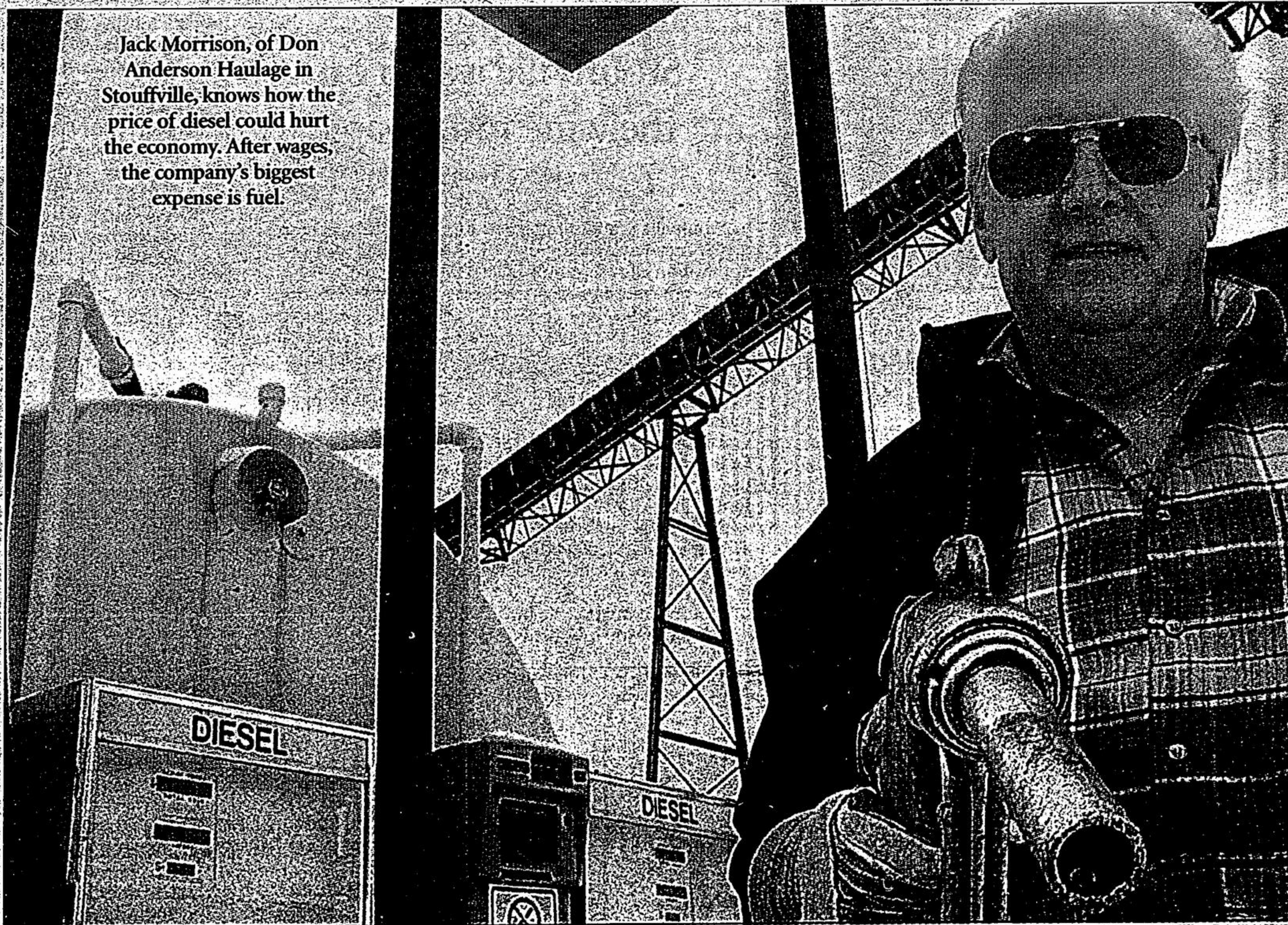
But the fuming from ordinary drivers — going from under 50 cents a litre last summer to 68.9 this week at most York Region stations — is nothing compared to the strain on users of diesel fuel, like the trucking industry.

Diesel, once cheap and stable, has shot up to record levels, above even the price of gasoline. Compared to one year ago, the

Ontario Trucking Association told a panel of Tory MPPs this week, the rack price of diesel has gone up 147 per cent.

"It's hurting a lot of guys," said Mike Skelton, operations manager of Skelton Truck Lines in Newmarket, who enjoyed a base price last year of 21 cents a litre and now buys for 62 to 65 cents,

See LACK, page 2.



Jack Morrison, of Don Anderson Haulage in Stouffville, knows how the price of diesel could hurt the economy. After wages, the company's biggest expense is fuel.

STAFF PHOTO/ROB ALARY

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