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YOU'LL LOVE APRIL LOBSTERFEST

When the Corner House in Stouffville opened thirteen years ago, lovers of fine food were quick to appreciate their innovative menus and meticulous attention to quality and detail.

In addition to regular menu items, the Corner House also features special events throughout the year. "We've been doing a Lobster Fest in June, July and August since we opened and it's been our most popular special event," says Manager Jennifer Pennanen.

As always, live lobsters will be flown in from the east coast for the next festival, which runs April 25 - April 30 and for which reservations are strongly recommended. "We sold about 200 lobsters at the last event, in addition to our regular menu items."

This is something a lot of people seem to enjoy - they particularly like the fact that it's flown in fresh and cooked here.

"We cook it four different ways: steamed, broiled or in one of two sauces."

Lobster Bonne Femme and Lobster Thermidor." The restaurant also features periodic special events with the emphasis on international specialties including Italian, Cajun, Jamaican and Indian cuisine.

An Elizabethan feast, which is held each fall, attracts clients from a wide area. Outdoor barbecues are another customer favorite, and Pennanen and her staff once again barbecued a giant hip of beef at last year's Strawberry Festival. "The quality of food here is always well above average and our prices are reasonable," Pennanen said.

"We have a fully stocked bar and a good selection of wines from different countries and we've just redecorated and renovated the restaurant." Rich hues of blue and plum lend a touch of European sophistication to the ambiance, without detracting from the restaurant's country house charm.

The upper level features framed posters of jazz greats, while original paintings by area artists are displayed on the walls downstairs. "We're featuring different artists every couple of months and the paintings are for sale."

Pennanen is an attentive and genial host, stopping at each table to chat to her guests, ensuring that everything is to their liking and exchanging friendly banter. "I try to make it feel as comfortable as I can, because I want everyone to come back again."

To make reservations for the Lobster Festival, call 640-8494.



Manager Jennifer Pennanen shows off one of the lobsters as well as a wide selection of wine.

Chief wants fake gun ban

Bid to regulate sale of replica handguns not enough, Middaugh says

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

A bid to regulate the sale of air guns and starter's pistols doesn't go far enough, York Regional Police Chief Robert Middaugh says.

"There should not be such a thing for sale as replica guns, period," Middaugh said. "We know people will obtain them illegally and use them with illegal intent and they must be held accountable in a more severe manner."

There are no existing regulations surrounding the sale or purchase of air guns and starter's pistols, not even a minimum age. They can easily be converted into real firearms taking .22 or .32-calibre ammunition.

The replica guns — realistic, plastic copies of real guns including police-issue Glock's, .45 Colts, Heckler & Koch 9 mm, even AK 47s — are prohibited by federal law if they are unable to fire.

But those that discharge ammunition such as pellets or BBs that are sold for sport or as collector items can be bought at dozens of stores across the GTA, including at least four in Markham alone.

They sell for between \$40 and \$200 — but there are high-end models that retail for as much as \$1,000.

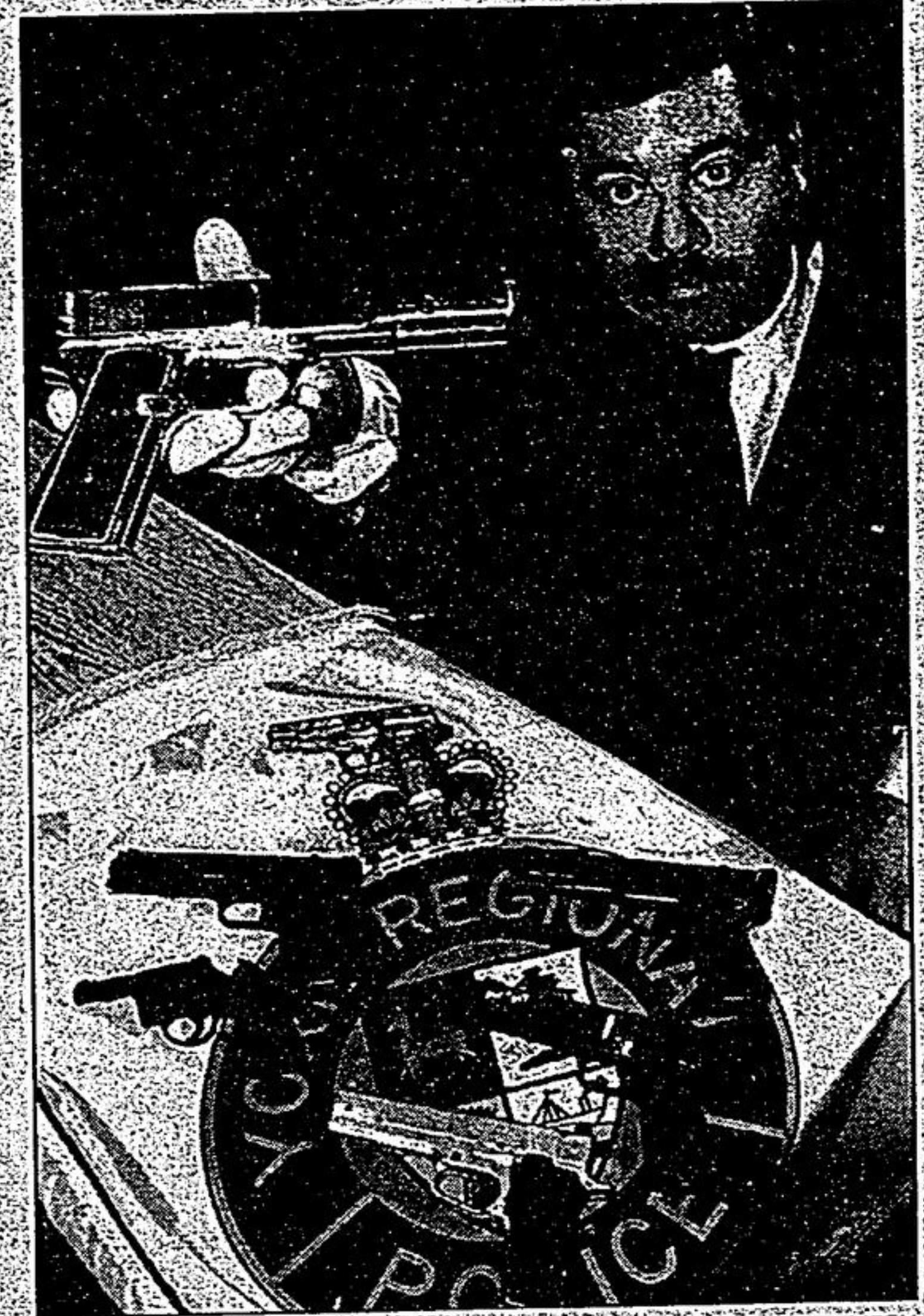
MPP Michael Bryant, the Liberal justice critic, announced last week he plans to table a bill in the provincial legislature that would restrict the sale of air guns and starter's pistols to adults only, with a sworn declaration about the guns intended use. The bill would also require criminal-record checks on those purchasing them and mandate store owners to keep sales records.

"You can buy phoney guns like candy from the corner store," Bryant said. "At the end of the day, it's a joke that ammunition is regulated but you can buy these guns with no questions asked."

Solicitor-General and Markham MPP Dave Tsubouchi initially dismissed Bryant's proposed bill, saying toughening up penalties under the Young Offenders Act would be more effective.

But in a later interview, he said he hadn't seen the bill and isn't sure if it "goes far enough."

"Anything supporting public safety, I'm in favour of," Tsubouchi said. "If there's anything in (the bill) that makes sense, we'll pursue it ourselves."



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Det. Sgt. Wayne Kalinski displays confiscated replica handguns.

Bryant wants to introduce the bill and move it to second reading as soon as possible.

"We can do that if there's support for it. The government can do two things, either the right thing and pass the bill, or they can play politics," Bryant said. "Police are terrified of these fakes — they have to treat them as real, they're designed to look real and it's a nightmare for victims and police."

Middaugh agrees with Bryant. "That's a tough judgment for our front-line officers to make," said Middaugh. "They have to treat them as real, they have no choice. They look real and generally you don't have time to debate whether it's real or not."



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