

Award-winning volunteer can't wait to get back at it

BY SHANNON WALTER
Special
Manickampillai Velauthapillai has just been

honoured by the province for his volunteer work. Trouble is, the Markham senior can't do any volunteering right now.

Velauthapillai, 72, was one of 24 recipients of the Ontario Senior Achievement Awards for seniors who have made significant volunteer

contributions to their communities. Unfortunately he's currently sitting at home recovering from triple bypass heart surgery.

"I'll be returning in about a month and a half to the groups I volunteer for," Velauthapillai said.

And he definitely volunteers for a lot of groups. Velauthapillai has been secretary, treasurer and director of the Senior Tamils' Centre. Currently he serves as the director of friendly visits and tele-assurance for more than 1,000 members.

Velauthapillai is also active in the Society in Aid of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) Minorities, which helps newcomers settle into their community. On top of that, he works with the Canadian Diabetes Association, participating in several fundraising events in his neighbourhood.



MANICKAMPILLAI VELAUTHAPILLAI: Recovering from heart surgery, he was honoured by the province.

sible for bringing a dress code into effect at the school, putting the Armadale billboard out front of the school and diverting a TTC bus route along McCowan Road and Elson Street to Markham Road to facilitate access to transportation to the residents of Armadale Community," said friend and current president of the STC, Sam Jeyatheva.

Velauthapillai, a Markham resident for five years, was happy to be nominated for the award, but even more surprised when he received the phone call telling him he won.

"Last year we nominated someone for the award, but he didn't win," he said. "So I was really surprised when I won."

Velauthapillai was also grateful to the staff at the awards ceremony who were courteous and let him take his time accepting the award so soon after his operation. "The staff was very cooperative. I really enjoyed it."

"While in office, Manickampillai was responsible for bringing a dress code into effect at the school, putting the Armadale billboard out front of the school and diverting a TTC bus route along McCowan Road and Elson Street to Markham Road to facilitate access to transportation to the residents of Armadale Community."

Finally, Velauthapillai held the office of treasurer, vice-chairman and chairman of Armadale Public School Council for the years 1999, 2000 and 2001, respectively.

"While in office, Manickampillai was respon-

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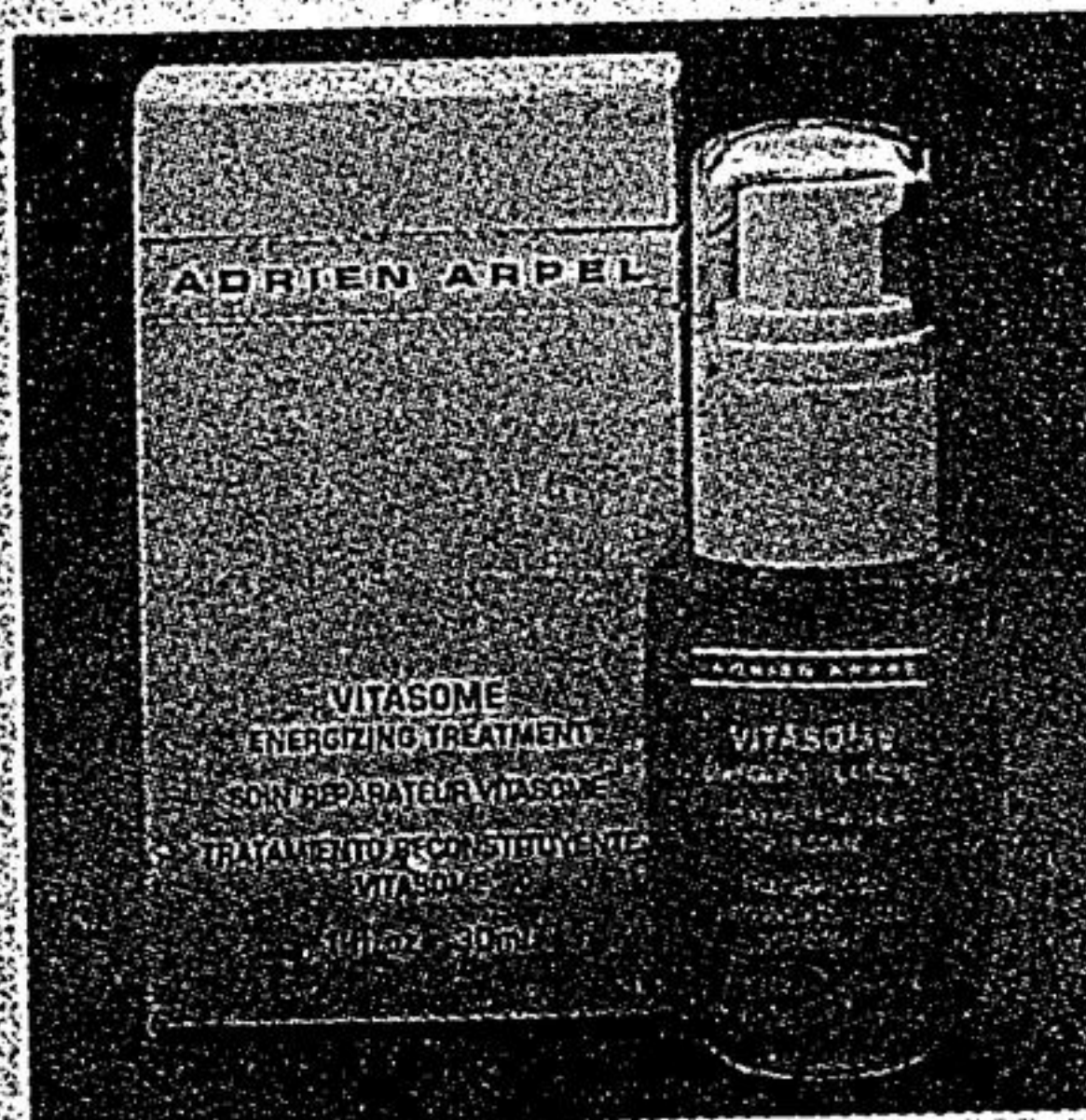


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