

Citations honour tireless efforts of local residents

BY ASHLEY JOANNOU
Special

Dr. Bill Murphy assumed he would be recognized for his twenty years of service to the Canadian Cancer Society when he was asked to attend an award ceremony on Dec. 13.

Little did the Markham dentist and Stouffville resident know he had actually been chosen as one of nine people from across Ontario to be honoured with the Canadian Cancer Society's Citation of Merit.

This national award recognizes volunteers who have exhibited leadership skills and made significant contributions to the CCS.

Murphy, a 21-year survivor of rectal cancer, was thanked for introducing CanSurmount into Markham and Stouffville.

A one-on-one support and personal visiting program, CanSurmount aims to help current cancer sufferers deal with the many emotional difficulties the disease can create.

"After going through all that I did in dealing with cancer, I felt I had so much information to share with others," Murphy said.

He was not the only York Region resident to be awarded a Citation of Merit. Markham resident Marjorea Roblin was also recognized for her 35 years of service to the Society.

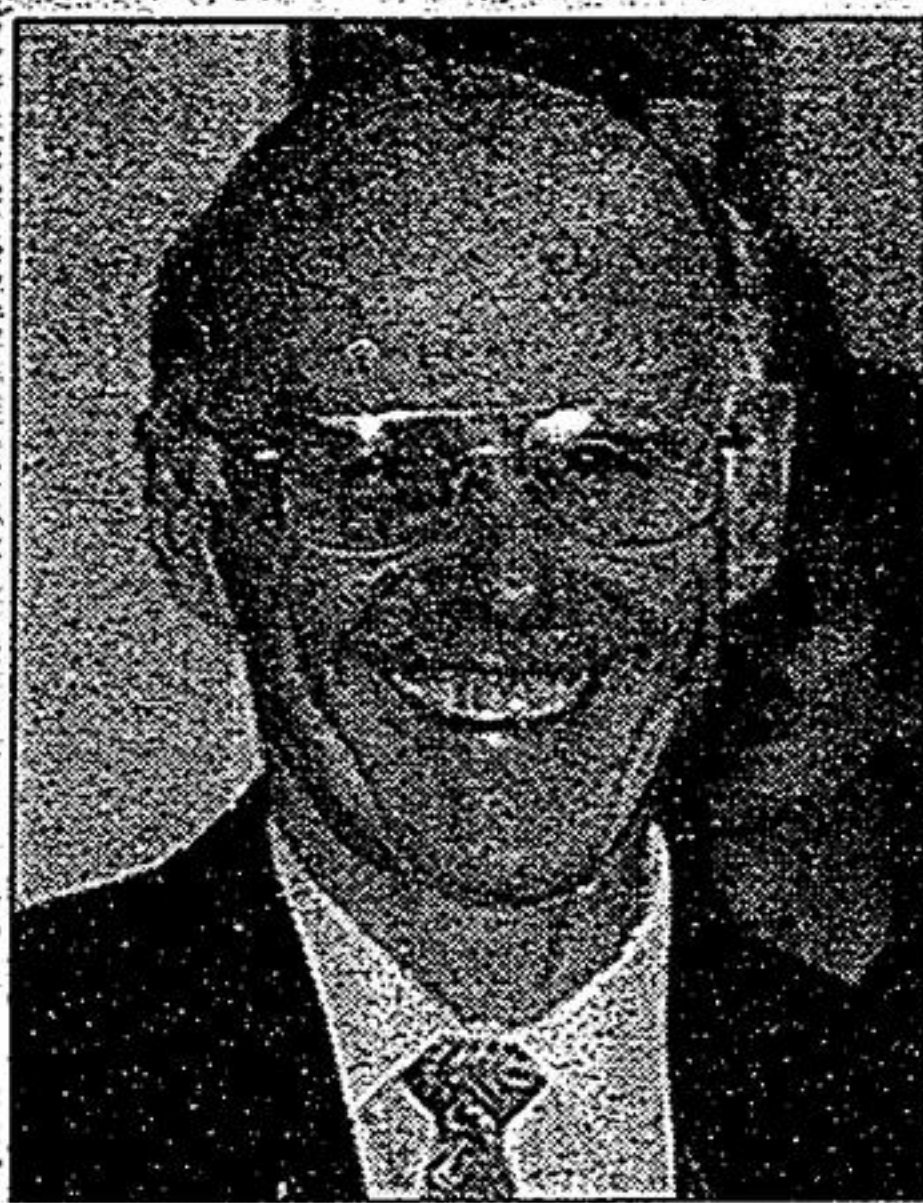
Roblin started her work with the CCS because of her skills as a teacher and with children.

"I started out helping at the health fairs that the Cancer Society used to put on in schools and stayed because there was always something that needed to be done," she explained.

First diagnosed with breast cancer 16 years ago, Roblin battled again with the disease two years later but is now in remission.

A past regional president for the Cancer Society, Roblin is the current regional treasurer.

She also works as a driver, taking patients to and from cancer treatments at the Princess Margaret Hospital, and is active



BILL MURPHY: Recipient lives in Stouffville; owns business in Markham.



MARJOREA ROBLIN: 35 years of service to the Canadian Cancer Society.

in the Reach to Recovery program, where she provides emotional support for people who have breast cancer.

"Although I had worked with the Cancer Society before I was diagnosed with cancer, I think having dealt with the disease makes me even more sympathetic to others, because I have been there and understand better what they are going through," she said.

"I go out to different events representing the Canadian Cancer Society and I am much better able to answer any questions people may have."

"I think I have been in Markham longer than most of the other volunteers in the area

"I am an institution of information," she joked.

The same night Murphy and Roblin were honored for their work, two recognition awards were handed out to acknowledge special contributions.

Sandra Pazienza's experience with cancer happened long before she became involved with the Canadian Cancer Society. Her father is a three-time survivor of prostate, bone and thyroid cancer.

"This is how I realized how important the work the Cancer Society does is," said the president of Visualinx Communication Inc., a marketing communications company.

Her small company, of only nine employees has donated advertising for many of the Canadian Cancer Society's events and programs. This includes the Man to Man prostate cancer support group, The Great Ride 'N' Stride to Beat Cancer fundraiser and Pazienza's brainchild, the annual Winter Wish fundraiser.

That dinner and auction, for women only, has been held at The School restaurant for the past three years and has raised a total of \$35,000.

Visualinx is responsible for promoting the event as well as creating, among other things, the invitations.

All this is done at no small cost to the company.

"The Winter Wish costs us about \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year. I can't even begin to estimate the total cost of everything we do for the Society."

"I believe every company has a responsibility to its community, to help in any way it can, no matter how big or small it is," Pazienza said.

And she shows no sign of slowing down.

"I have no intention of stopping my support of the society," she said. "I am very committed to continue working with it."

The other recipient of a Special Recognition Award, Joseph Lebovic, could not be reached for comment.

Free transit New Year's Eve

BY ASHLEY JOANNOU
Special

Planning on having just a little too much fun partying this New Year's Eve? Then get yourself a free — and safe — ride home on York Region Transit (YRT).

Free rides will be available on New Year's Eve for any YRT or TTC routes north of Steeles Avenue operating after 7 p.m.

YRT is also extending service hours on some routes until 3 a.m. on New

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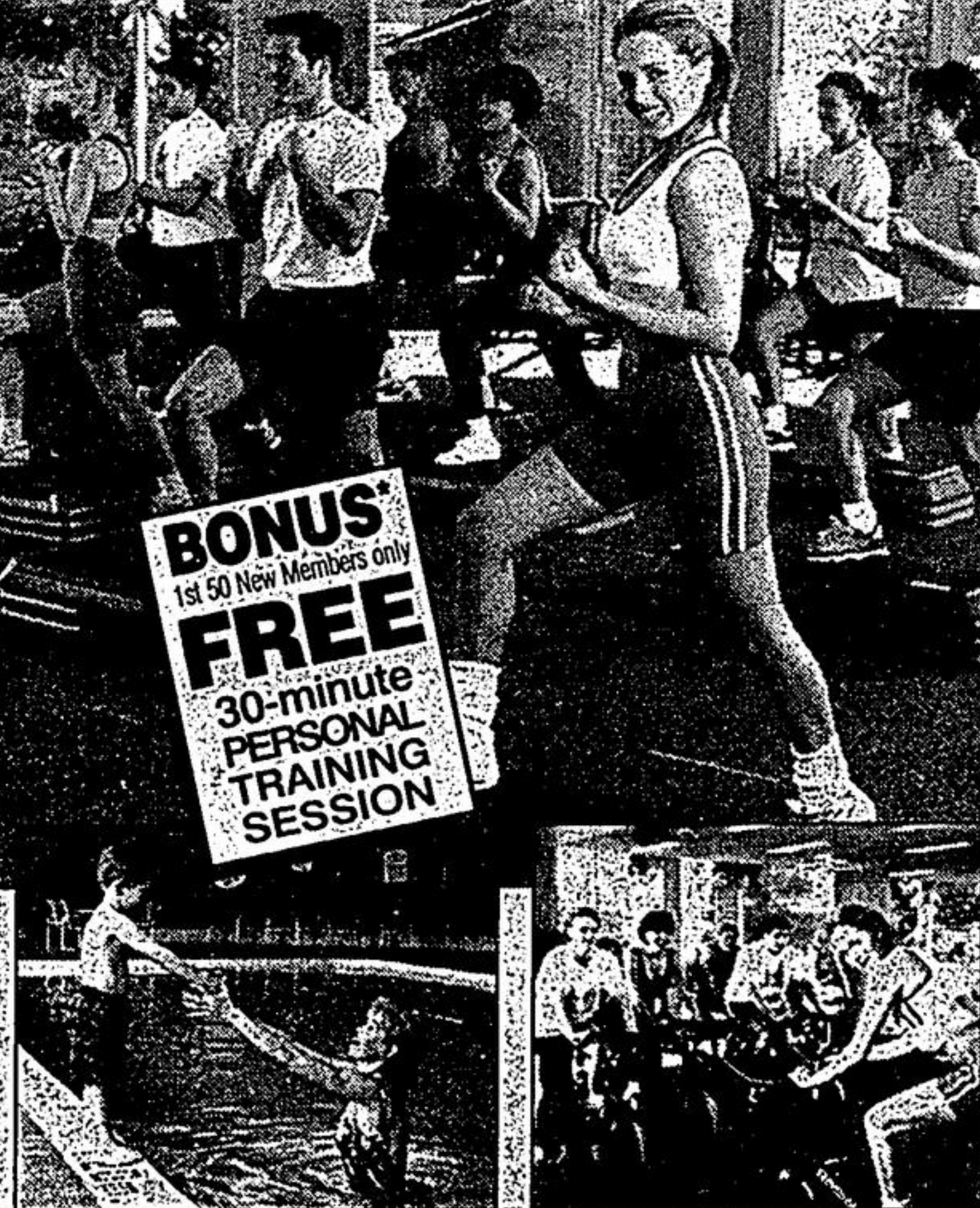
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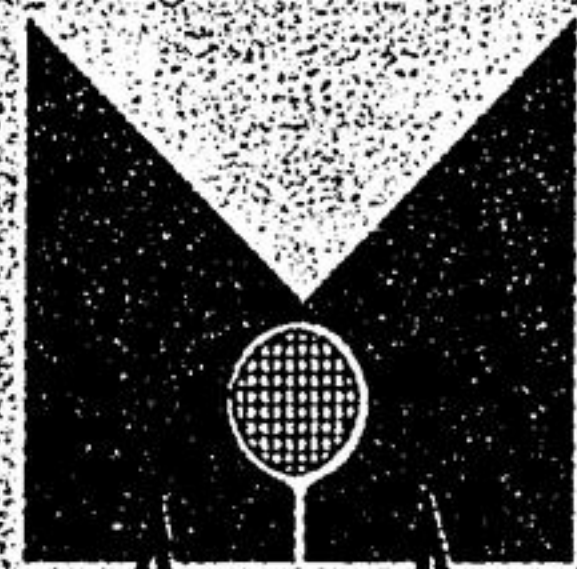
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