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3 York Region agency helps drunk drivers get back behind the wheel - this time sober.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENT: Stouffville Lions fish derby*
WHEN: Saturday, June 8, 9 a.m. (905-640-1476)
WHERE: Burd's Fishing (*for seniors and disabled)



16 Waiting for life to begin: York Region transplant patients await life-changing operations.

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■ SATURDAY, JUNE 1, 2002 ■

TO REACH US: (905) 640-2612

Corporate launch

Saying farewell to the family farm

Corporations, not kids buy York Region farms

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

The 100-acre farm is disappearing and the total number of farms in York Region has dropped by 36 per cent in the past decade, statistics show.

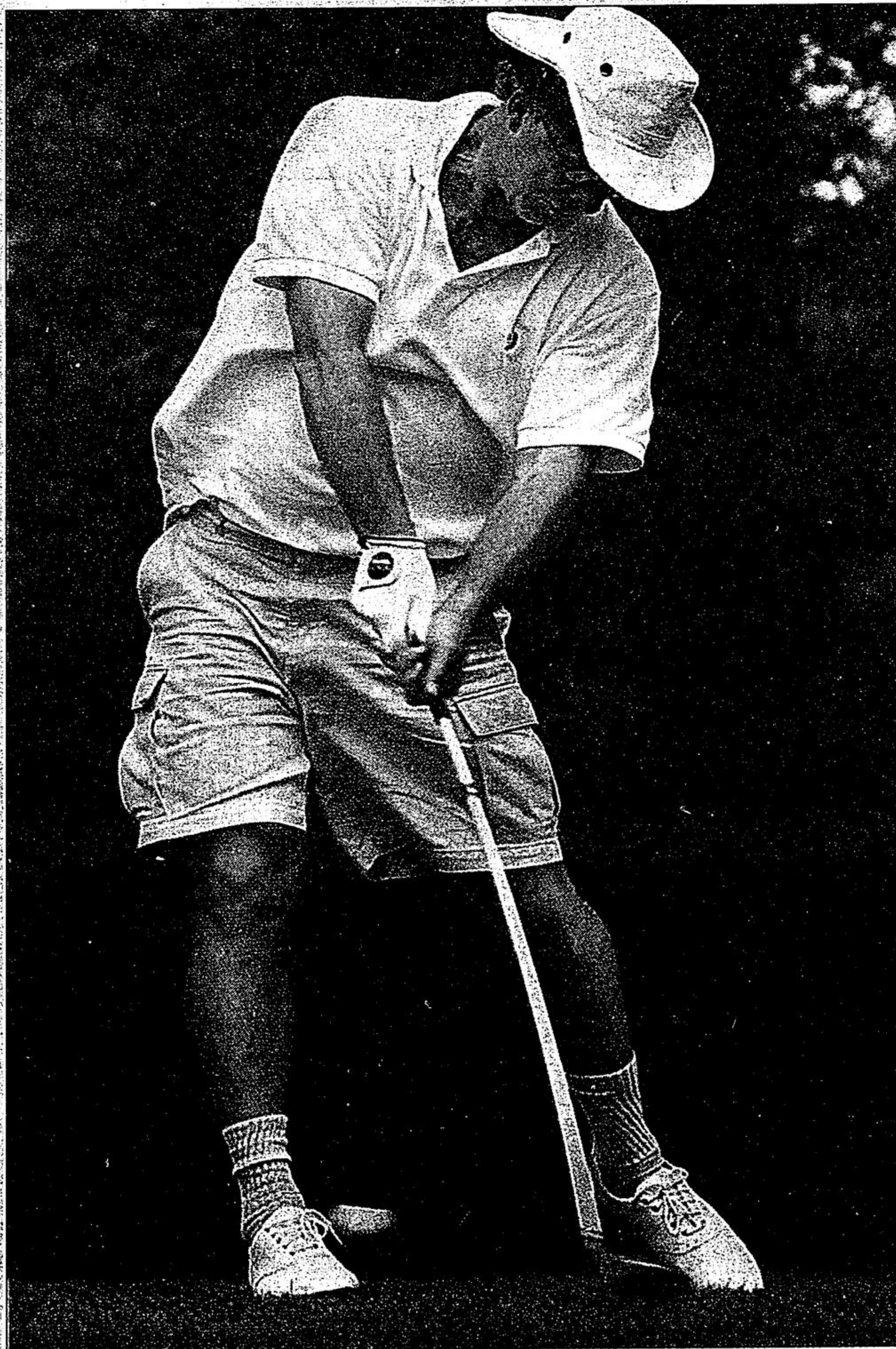
Agricultural land is being lost to urban sprawl at an alarming rate. Simultaneously, the size of the average farm is growing like a bad weed.

"Sadly, the small family farm is becoming a thing of the past," said Brian Reynolds, president of the York Region Federation of Agriculture (YRFA). "Development has gobbled up farm land like crazy across the Greater Toronto Area, especially here in York Region," said Mr. Reynolds.

Because of "low profitability in farming the average farm operation can't survive on 100 acres any longer," said Mr. Reynolds. "Big farms are taking over."

A 3,000-acre operation, run with high-tech methods, doesn't impress Mr. Reynolds, a Markham resident. To him it simply means a drastic change in lifestyle.

"It's sad," said Mr. Reynolds. "I grew up on a 100-acre farm. People were a lot happier living on smaller farms. We're losing a way of life. Today, agriculture is



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Ron Schell of Schell Ace Building Centre gets all of this shot at the annual Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce golf tournament at the Maples of Ballantrae on Thursday. The event was sponsored by Cook Canada, Bouwmeister Landscaping and the Stouffville Sun/Stouffville Tribune.

Violence grows with pot houses

Marijuana growers pay gangs for protection, police tell MPs

BY ROGER VARLEY
Staff Writer

Violence is growing along with the marijuana plants in many Canadian "grow houses", according to a York Regional Police officer who briefed MPs on the problem last week.

"We know there are homicides related to grow houses," Det. Sgt. Gary Miner said. "(The growers) are protecting their territories, but people are also resisting paying protection (to criminal gangs). If you don't pay, you get hurt."

York Region has already seen the proof. Van Boa Nguyen, 27, was shot to death in March in a Maple home that was being used to grow marijuana.

Last summer, Huy Long Nguyen, 35, of Toronto, was found shot, execution style, in a van in a Concord industrial area. Police say they are "investigating all possibilities" for a motive.

Two more people of Vietnamese origin were found slain in a field near Orillia last week in what Ontario Provincial Police described as execution-style slayings. The two had been arrested in a marijuana-growing operation in Peel Region earlier in the month.

Several homicides have been linked to marijuana operations in British Columbia in recent years.

On Thursday, drug investigators from York, Durham, Peel, Toronto and Waterloo, as well as representatives from the OPP, RCMP and the Criminal Intelligence Service of

See MPs, page 11.

See AVERAGE, page 9.

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