

STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

BY STEFANIA RIZZI
Staff Writer

More than 10 years ago, Lana Grainger and another courageous soul braved foul weather to sit in the stands and watch a charity polo game.

"There were two people in the stands and it was pouring rain ... one man was sitting at the bottom and I was down on the other side, with my umbrella," said Ms Grainger.

"When I was a child, I rode every day. Horses have always been my favourite ... I always wanted to see a game so when I saw the sign, I had to go to investigate."

"I've been going ever since and I really wanted to get involved with them," said the 54-year-old Stouffville resident, referring to the charity event, Polo for Heart.

Polo for Heart, which takes place June 14 to 16 at the Gormley Polo Centre in Richmond Hill, is an annual fundraiser for the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario. Now in its 23rd year, Polo for Heart has raised more than \$3 million for heart disease and stroke research.

It takes months of planning to organize such an event with countless volunteers working to ensure an enjoyable time is had by all.

"It's an accomplishment. I've always wanted to be a part of it," said Ms Grainger, who will be one of a number of volunteers on hand at the three-day event.

"The volunteers are warm, kind and

they work like horses. No pun intended," she laughed. "I am extremely thankful to be part of this great bunch of volunteers."

Other Polo for Heart volunteers include Newmarket's Ron Anderson and Lynn VandeBeek of Aurora.

When he heard about Polo for Heart, Mr. Anderson said he couldn't resist not becoming a part of the charity event.

"I'm a compulsive volunteer. I can't say no when there's a need or a good cause," he said. "I just care too much about things."

Mr. Anderson will be volunteering at front gate and anticipates a big turnout.

"5,000 people — it's not out of the unexpected," he said. "It's going to be a great three days."

Ms VandeBeek is heading up the silent auction and, as the person in charge, is hoping to beat last year's record by raising more than \$45,000.

"People will bid up and over the retail value (of an item) because they're having so much fun with it," said the real estate agent, explaining some items to be auctioned off are valued at \$3,000.

Although her seven-member team can spend up to eight hours a day talking to companies donating an item for the auction, Ms VandeBeek said it's worthwhile.

"When I was told how many hours are required, it was massive. I thought I'd be crazy to do it," she said. "It's hard, but I enjoy it."

This year's event is especially signifi-

cant for Richmond Hill's Keri Weir. For the first time in its 23-year history, Polo for Heart will host an all-woman polo match.

For Mrs. Weir, a member of the Toronto Polo Club, this means she will be both a Polo for Heart competitor and volunteer.

"It's very exciting," said the 30-year-old, who is in charge of preparing gift bags for visiting polo players from such cities as Montreal, Buffalo and Hartford, Connecticut.

Mrs. Weir has been a Polo for Heart volunteer for several years and has found the event to be fulfilling. "A lot of people come out because this is such a good organization and it's for such a good cause," she said. "You get to help other families in need if not your own."

King Township's Jackie McCassey is of the same opinion and encourages people to attend the event.

"The weekend offers so much to so many different people," said Mrs. McCassey, who will head this year's added feature, the Players Classic, a 12-goal polo game followed by a buffet dinner and live auction held as the kick-off to the three-day event.

"It's going to be a fun-filled weekend that offers more than what I think most fundraisers have," she said, "and it's a worthwhile foundation to help."

Admission is \$10, with children 12 and under admitted free.

For more information, call 416-432-9735 or visit www.polo4heart.org

The Police Retirees of Ontario Proudly Present

GARDEN BROS. CIRCUS

65th Edition

THURSDAY JUNE 6 2002
TO
SUNDAY JUNE 9 2002

4:15 & 7:30 THURS. & FRI.
11:00, 3:30 & 7:30 SATURDAY
1:00 & 4:30 SUNDAY

APPEARING AT
RAY TWINNEY RECREATION COMPLEX

Only Research can cure Leukemia
Only Excellence in Canadian Research is funded by LRF
Please Help!



1110 Finch Ave. W., Ste. 222
Toronto Ontario M3J 2T2
Tel. (416) 661-CURE (2873)
Fax (416) 661-3840

This message originates as a community service of The Economist & Sun/Tribune

An Evening with David Suzuki

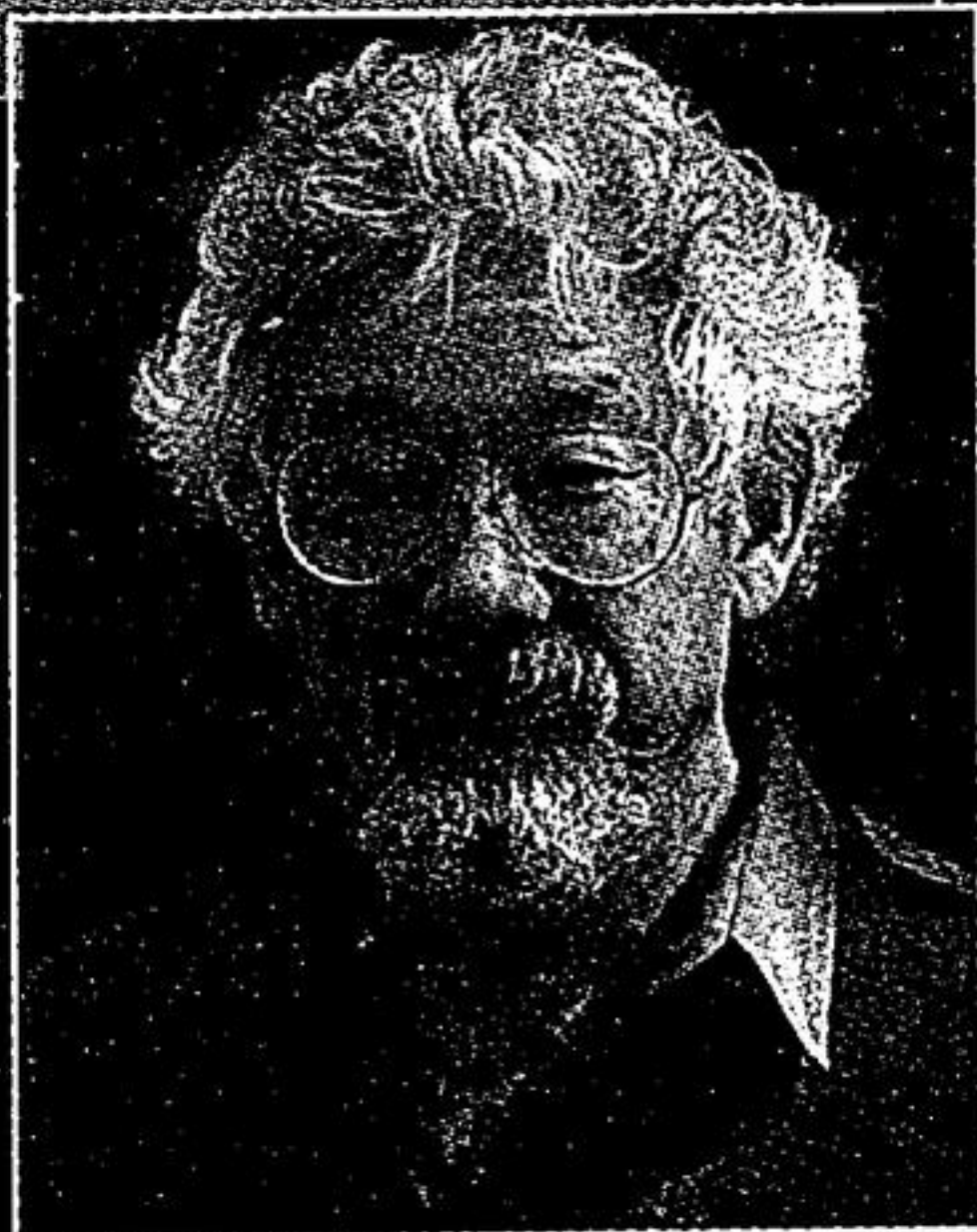
Tuesday, June 11, 2002
at 7:00 pm
Premiere Ballroom
9019 Leslie St.,
Richmond Hill
(Hwys. 404 and 7)

Hear Canada's Best-known scientist, author and environmentalist discuss

"The Challenge of the 21st Century"

Tickets \$18.00 • \$20 at the Door
www.ticketmaster.ca/416-870-8000
or call 905-953-0011

For more info visit our website www.yrea.org
Brought to you by the York Region Environmental Alliance
Funded by Ontario's Trillium Foundation



GOLF FOR 2002?

We are now accepting membership in our private Golf & Country Club in 3 categories

- 1 - Weekday - Mon to Fri (Except Holiday)
- 2 - Trial - 1 year membership
- 3 - Full membership

Featuring - * Swimming Pool
* Tennis
* Fine Dining
* Sauna

Newly Decorated Club House.

You can play with our friendly members & join in the many golfing events planned.

Located on Woodbine Avenue
For a Personal Tour with Director of Golf, Corey Shanahan call 905-477-7711.

