

Criticism cost grant cash, environmental group says

BY LINDA JOHNSON
Staff Writer

A provincial agency has cut \$200,000 in funding from a project to restore wildlife habitat because the environmental group criticized the government, the group's president said.

Two years ago, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, which distributes money collected from government casinos to community groups, gave Save the Rouge Valley System a five-year grant of \$345,500. So far, it has paid out about \$150,500.

But in a letter of Nov. 21, the foundation's director of grant operations Patricia Else, said the agency had decided to rescind the balance of \$195,000 because of the group's "advocacy work".

However Glenn de Baeremaeker, president of Save the Rouge, said the decision to cut the funding is retaliation for the group's criticism of a government agreement with developers allowing new houses on the Oak Ridges Moraine in Richmond Hill.

"The government never had a problem, not one

word of complaint about our organization, until we criticized the Ontario government," he said. "They're targeting one group because we exposed their deal with developers."

But Ms Else said the funding was withdrawn because Save the Rouge had violated advocacy rules introduced last year.

She said several meetings were held in May and a letter in July warned the group the

'In a democratic society, we should be able to give our opinion.'

grant might be rescinded.

"The only reason this grant was rescinded was they were asked to meet the conditions of the grant and they didn't meet these terms," she said.

When the grant was first made, she said, the foundation understood the money was solely for a habitat restoration project in the Rouge Watershed and that restoration was the focus of the group's work.

"That was our understanding of the organization and that was their portrayal of their organization, that they did restoration work."

"When the advocacy issue arose, we met with them to say, as a public institution we can't support organizations or initiatives that do advocacy."

But Mr. de Baeremaeker said the group has no political bias, noting it congratulated the government when it revealed plans to save the moraine a year ago.

Last spring, during an annual review of its project,

Mr. de Baeremaeker said, foundation staff asked why the group had changed its mandate.

At that time, Save The Rouge Valley system was told funding would be cut if its campaign continued.

"It's simple political blackmail," he said. "They said to us if you criticize the government, we will cut your funding. But if you stop criticizing it, then we'll give you your money."

"In a democratic society, we should be able to give our opinion."

Markville store earns honour

Coast Mountain Sports' Markville Shopping Centre location has earned its designer an international award.

Parchoma & Jones Design Inc. — a interior design firm specializing in retail services — was recently honoured by the International Council of Shopping Centres for its cre-

ative and functional design of the Markham branch.

The Maple Leaf Award was presented to the firm in the "over 10,000 square feet" category.

The ICSC is the global trade association of the shopping centre industry.

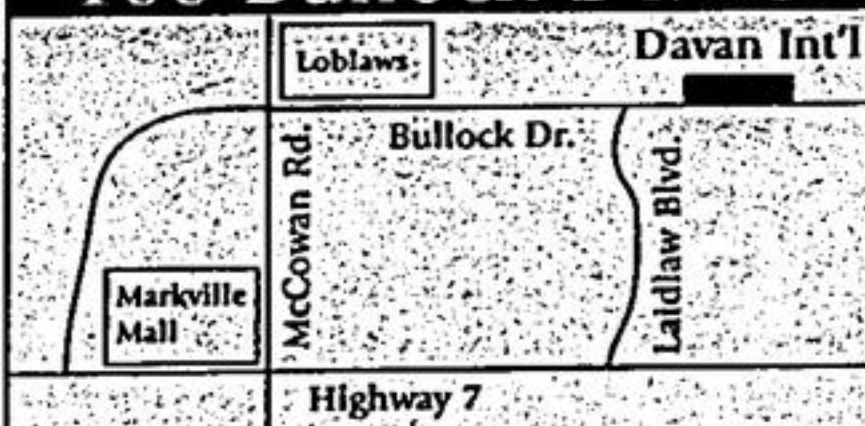
— Laura Nelles

DAVAN INT'L WAREHOUSE SALE

up to **90% off**
(suggested retail prices)

- casual wear
- shoes samples
- sweater
- men's wear
- night dress
- kids wear
- ladies' wear
- giftware
- Christmas decorating items

166 Bullock Dr. #3



Monday to Friday

11:00 am ~ 6:00 pm

Saturday

9:00 am ~ 6:00 pm

Sunday

11:00 am ~ 5:00 pm

We accept cash only

DREAM GIFTS! REAL SAVINGS!

BUNDLE INCLUDES: 17" MONITOR, PC AND HP 3820V PRINTER!

SAVE 273⁸⁴

1199⁹⁵

Price After Rebates
Our Price, 1473.79
Mail-in -\$200 and Instant -\$73.84 Rebates
Coupon Code: 5279000000000000

- Intel Celeron 1.8 GHz processor
- 128 MB RAM
- 40 GB hard drive
- CD-RW & CD-ROM drives
- 56K modem and NIC
- Windows XP™ Home

FREE INSTANTLY WITH PURCHASE OF HP 7550 PRINTER!
Value: 59.98 (451364)
Coupon Code: 52694

PHOTO SMART 7550 PRINTER

- Colour LCD to edit and preview pictures
- Up to 4800 optimized dpi
- 4 media card slots - preview, edit and print images directly

492081

449⁹⁴

EPSON 2400 PHOTO SCANNER

- 2400 dpi resolution
- 48-bit colour
- Includes 35mm slide and negative adapter

496079

SAVE \$65

129⁹⁵

Our Price \$194.95
Mail-in -\$45 and Instant -\$20 Rebates
Coupon Code: 5320000000000000

FREE CASE LOGIC CASE WITH PURCHASE (501424) VALUE: 29.26

PRICE CUT was \$299

m500 HANDHELD

- 8 MB memory
- Software includes Documents to Go, Palm Read eBooks viewer and MGI Photo Suite

457057/476746

248⁹³

Panasonic 2.4 GHz DDS CORDLESS PHONE WITH ANSWERING MACHINE AND CALLER ID*

- 12-minute record time
- 50 name/number caller ID log

487860
*Requires service from your phone company.

179⁹⁵

Father's

NEW THURS. WIN A CARIBBEAN CRUISE

Thurs., Dec. 19 Thurs. Night Fever with DJ Bobby Boggie

Fri., Dec. 20 New Year's Eve Preview with THE ALL NIGHTERS

Sun., Dec. 22 KARAOKE

NEW YEAR'S EVE TICKETS ON-SALE NOW!

Call for details **294-0134**

The Last Call Free designated driver for you and your car (starts 11:30pm)

Corner of Hwy. #7 and McGowan Rd. Since 1984

Don't Miss This Weekend!

For the nearest STAPLES® Business Depot and store hours, call:

1-800-668-6888

Valid until December 22nd, 2002, or while quantities last. Not all items available with delivery or online orders.

