

Dream The Impossible Dream with Uxbridge Musical Theatre's

# Man of la Mancha



Written by: Dale Wasserman  
Music by: Mitch Leigh  
Lyrics by: Joe Darion  
Directed by: Conrad Boyce  
Band Director: Steffan Brunette  
Produced by: Dave & Enid Jones  
Laurie & Karen Jess

## Uxbridge Music Hall

January 13-15 & 20-22, 2005

8:00 pm Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays  
3:00 pm Matinee Saturdays

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# TV coverage of tsunami too much for pub chef

BY HANNELORE VOLPE  
Staff Writer

Chef Sammy's 70-year-old uncle found the strength to cling to a palm tree on the east coast of Sri Lanka while a tsunami wave crashed over him and swept a coastal town out to sea.

Chef Sammy, whose real name is Shiyam Shanmuganathan, has been the cook at the Earl of Whitchurch pub on Stouffville Main Street for two years. The pub's patrons donated more than \$1,000 Sunday during a jam session to help tsunami victims.

The uncle, Bala Supramaniyam, was one of the lucky ones. At least two dozen other relatives are dead or missing. Mr. Supramaniyam was shopping at the seaside market in the town of Batticaloa when he heard some sort of noise, then people shouting.

He looked up to see a wall of water, which looked to be about 60 feet high, racing towards him. That's when he mustered a death-grip on the tree which saved his life. The time is seared into his memory: 8:55 a.m. Boxing Day.

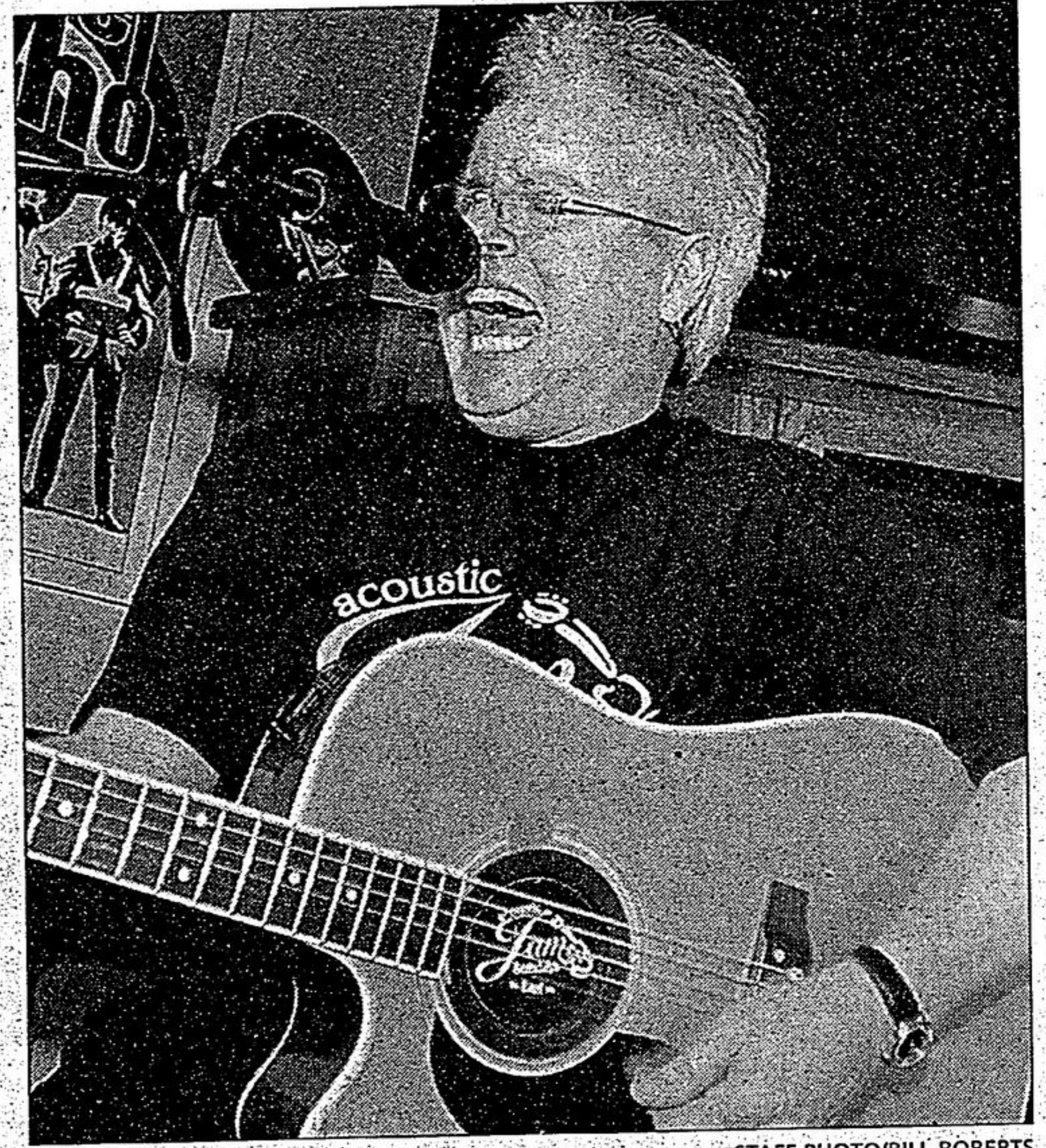
Batticaloa is one of the hardest-hit areas on Sri Lanka's east coast. Other survivors climbed on roofs, only to be swept out to sea.

Now the village is flattened. The market is gone, Mr. Shanmuganathan said, and so are all the houses and stores. His uncle's house is further inland, past the reach of the tsunami.

When Mr. Shanmuganathan first heard the news, "I couldn't move," he said. His parents and sister and brother, with whom he lives in Scarborough, couldn't stop crying.

The family had moved here in 1992 from Jaffna, a city on Sri Lanka's northern coast.

Many Sri Lankans had already



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

Pierre Bordeleux plays at acoustic jam fundraiser for tsunami victims at The Earl of Whitchurch Pub in Stouffville Sunday.

undergone two decades of suffering during a civil war pitting Tamil minority separatists against the government dominated by Sri Lanka's Sinhalese majority. A ceasefire was declared in 2002.

The only thing keeping him from going to Sri Lanka now is thinking about how to help Sri Lankans back home, Mr. Shanmuganathan said. He was able to phone his uncle shortly after the tsunami hit and has kept in regular contact.

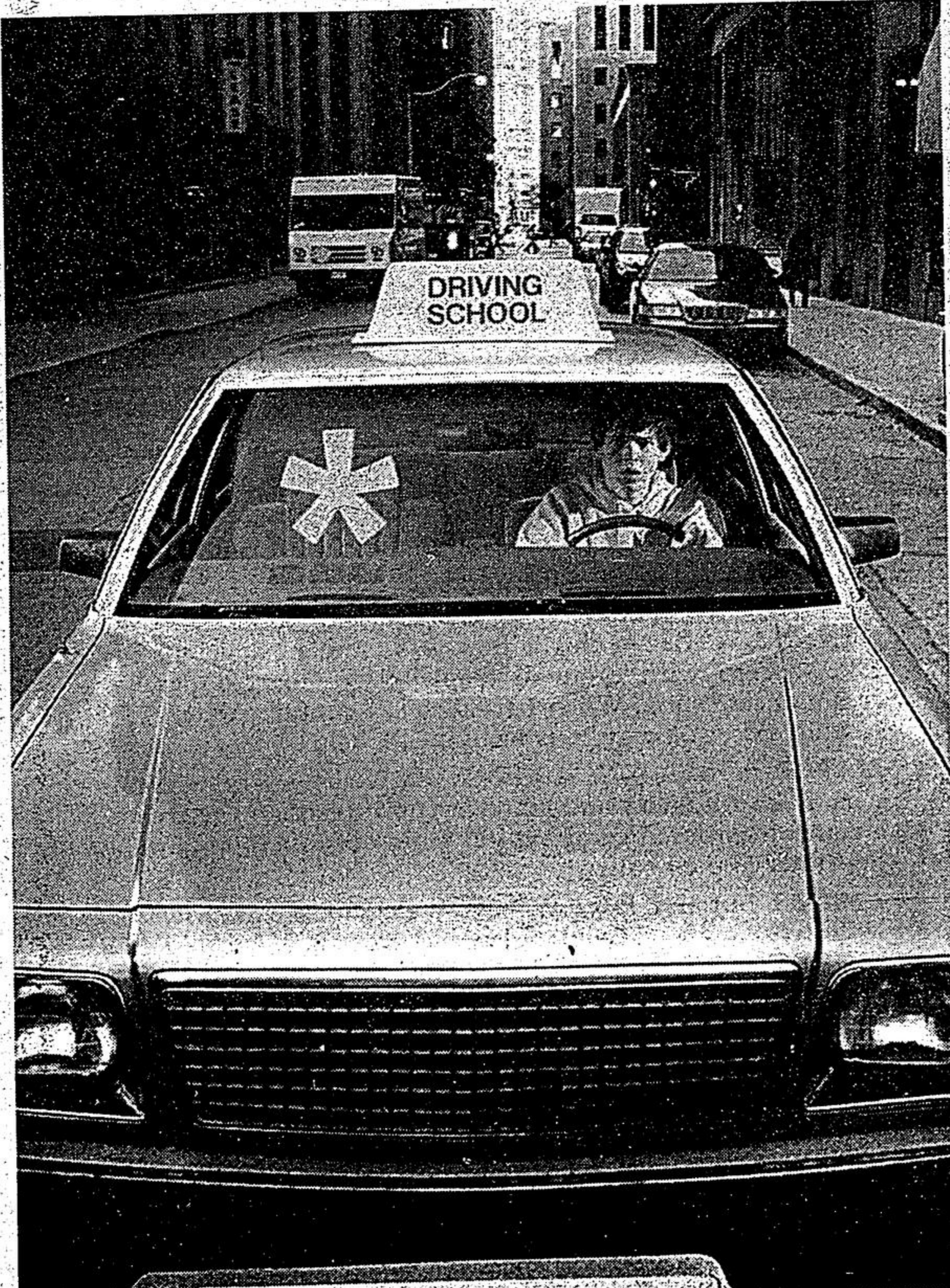
From his uncle, he hears about orphaned children crying the streets, dead being buried in mass graves and wells contaminated with sea water. There is no

food left. Many of his uncle's friends' homes were destroyed. Many families are still looking for missing relatives and friends.

"I can't handle watching the (TV) coverage because of all the dead," he said.

Mr. Shanmuganathan's aim now is to "help out my nation". He and his family have already sent money and clothes to family in Sri Lanka and are planning to send more money on an ongoing basis.

He's grateful to Canadians and the Sri Lankan community who have all come together to help. Patrons at the Earl of Whitchurch often stop him to ask how they can help.



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