

Young musician influenced by mom, grandmother

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

In a day when a lot of music comes out of guitar amps cranked up high, Michael Volk sticks closely to the classics and romantic music he loves best.

Michael's favourite composer is Chopin.

The Grade 11 student at Stouffville District Secondary School is one of about 600 students who are performing at the annual Student Music Scholarship Concert hosted by St. James

Presbyterian Church.

The concert is at the high school Nov. 4. Performers include soloists, bands and choirs from Kindergarten through senior high school.

This year's music scholarship winner is Lillian Wild, who will receive the award from Rev. Kathryn Strachan of the Presbyterian church, concert committee member Gayle Atkinson said.

Michael, 16, typifies the "really nice group of kids" that have taken music since

Grade 9, head music teacher Dan McConnachie said. He plays tenor saxophone in the school's repertoire band and is the lead tenor saxophonist in the stage band.

He also plays the piano, following in the footsteps of his mother and grandmother, who are both music teachers.

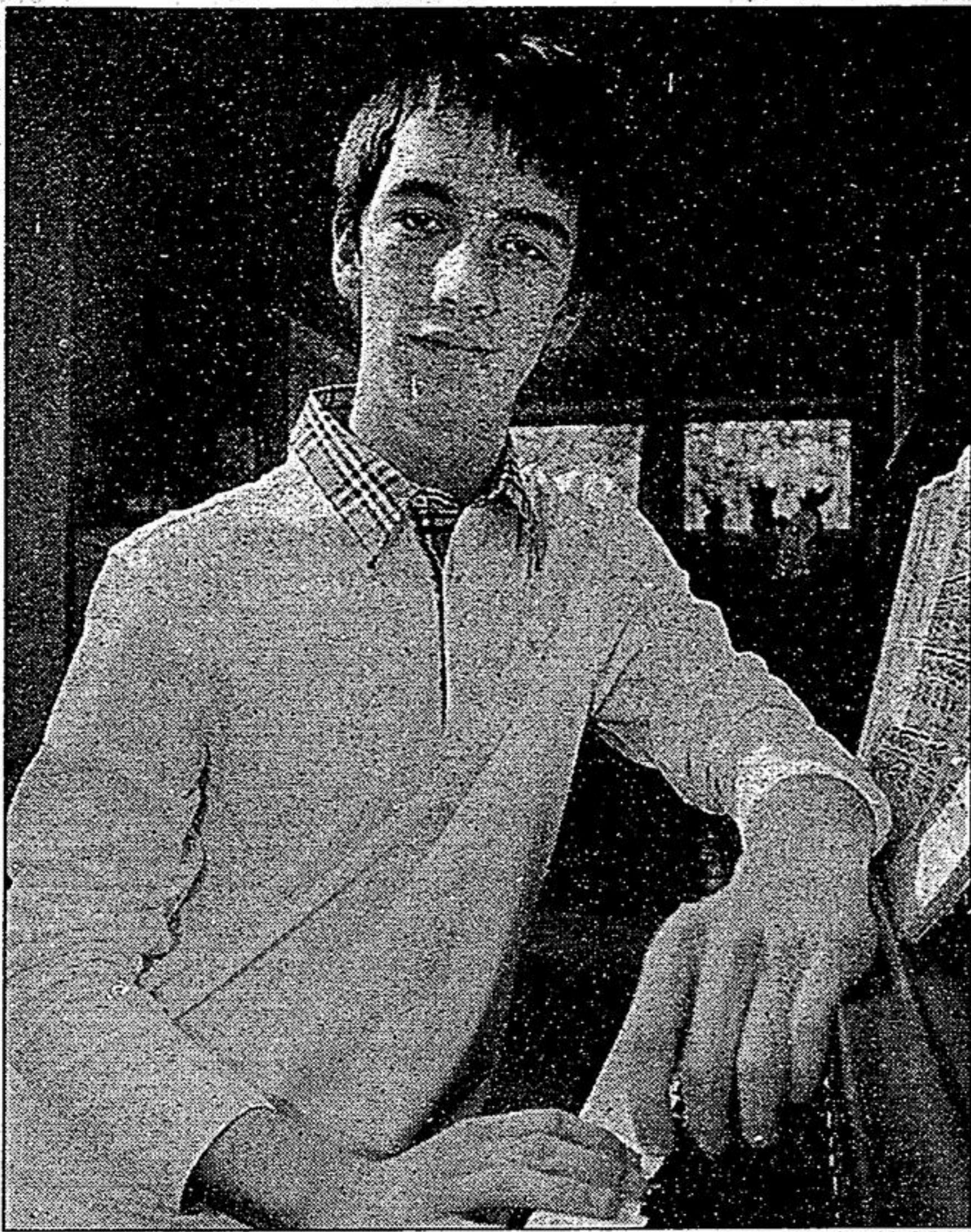
He's found Mr. McConnachie, his music teacher, "to be always there for my musical interests", he said.

It was Mr. McConnachie

who introduced the young student to jazz, something that was "virtually unknown" to him before he joined the stage band.

Mr. McConnachie described Michael as "mature beyond his years". He is an excellent performer and has great talent, he added. Music has always been a part of his life, but he began to take it seriously in Grade 8, Michael said.

Proceeds from the concert are returned to participating schools to further their music programs.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Michael Volk is one of the musicians performing during music scholarship concert at St. James Presbyterian Church in Stouffville.

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