

43% of Stouffville homes fail alarm test

BY JIM MASON
Staff Writer

Just over half the homes in Whitchurch-Stouffville have a working smoke alarm, judging by visits made by local firefighters.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire and Emergency Services visited 726 homes this year, gaining entry to 247. (Residents at 410 homes weren't home and at 69 others firefighters were refused entry.)

"Only 57 per cent of these houses (we inspected) met the

requirements for working smoke alarms," said Jeff Bignell, fire prevention/public education officer. "If you were in school, that would be close to a failing grade."

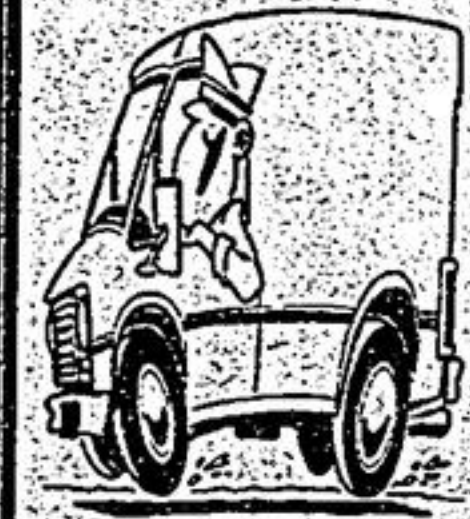
Thanks to a donation from Schell Building Centre, firefighters installed 155 alarms free of charge during their tour.

Since March of 2006 all homes in Ontario must have working smoke alarms on every level of the home.

"It's not that this is new news," he said. "Many people have alarms, but don't maintain

them." In fatal fires across the province from 1996 to 2005 where the smoke alarm did not operate, 55 per cent were not connected to power (dead battery, hydro shut off), according to the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office. In an additional 10 per cent of these fires, there was no battery in the smoke alarm.

Firefighters will be at Schell Building Centre on Edward Street Saturday promoting fire safety for the holiday season between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.



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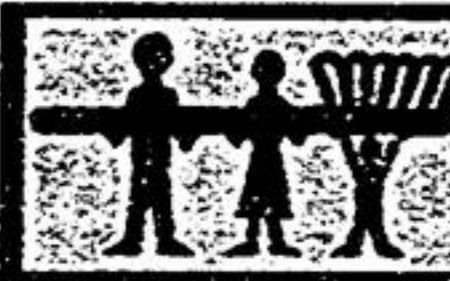
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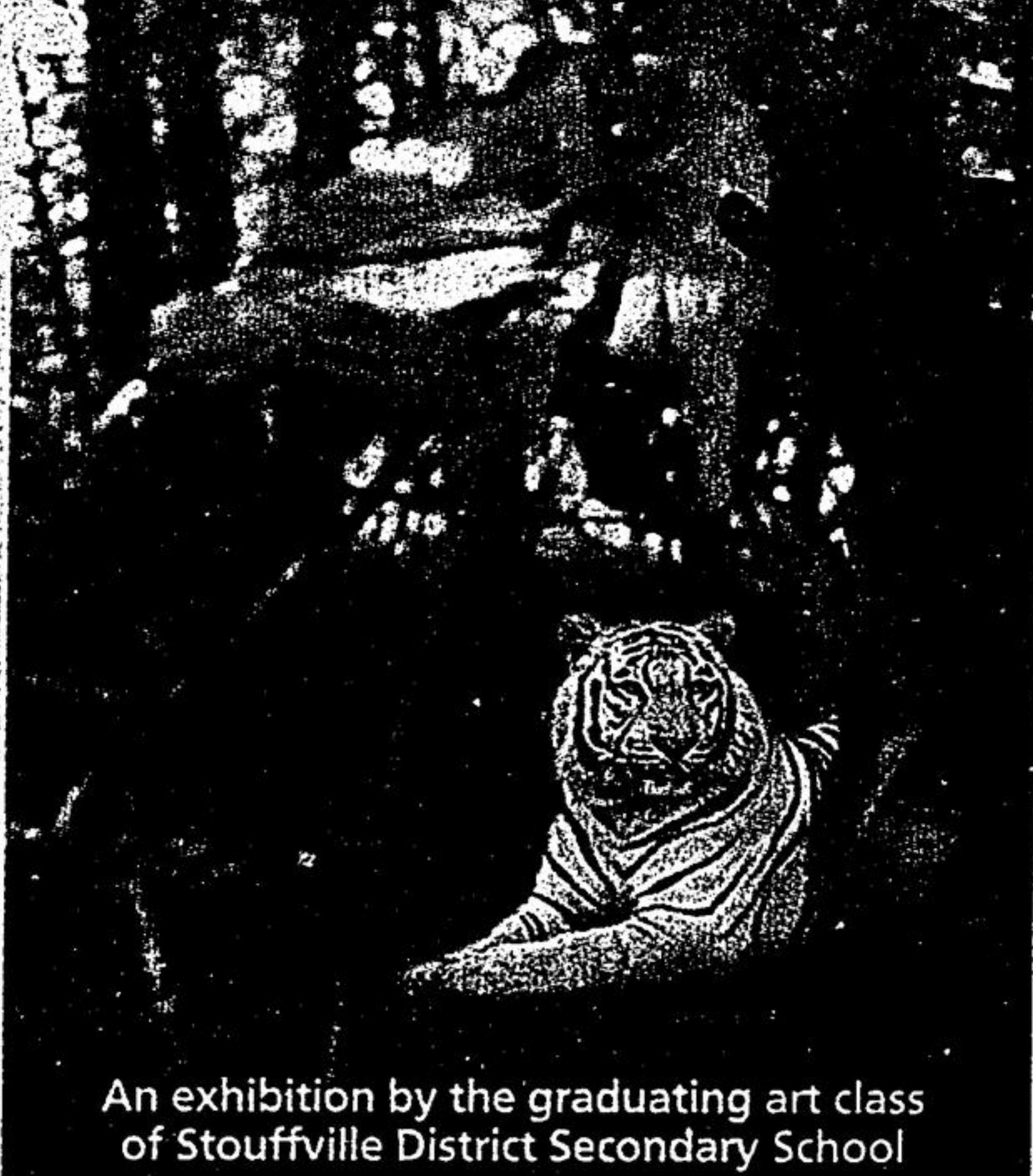
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This exhibition has been generously sponsored by Giles Chevrolet and Button, Armstrong & Ness.
Awards have been donated by the Stouffville Lions Club.

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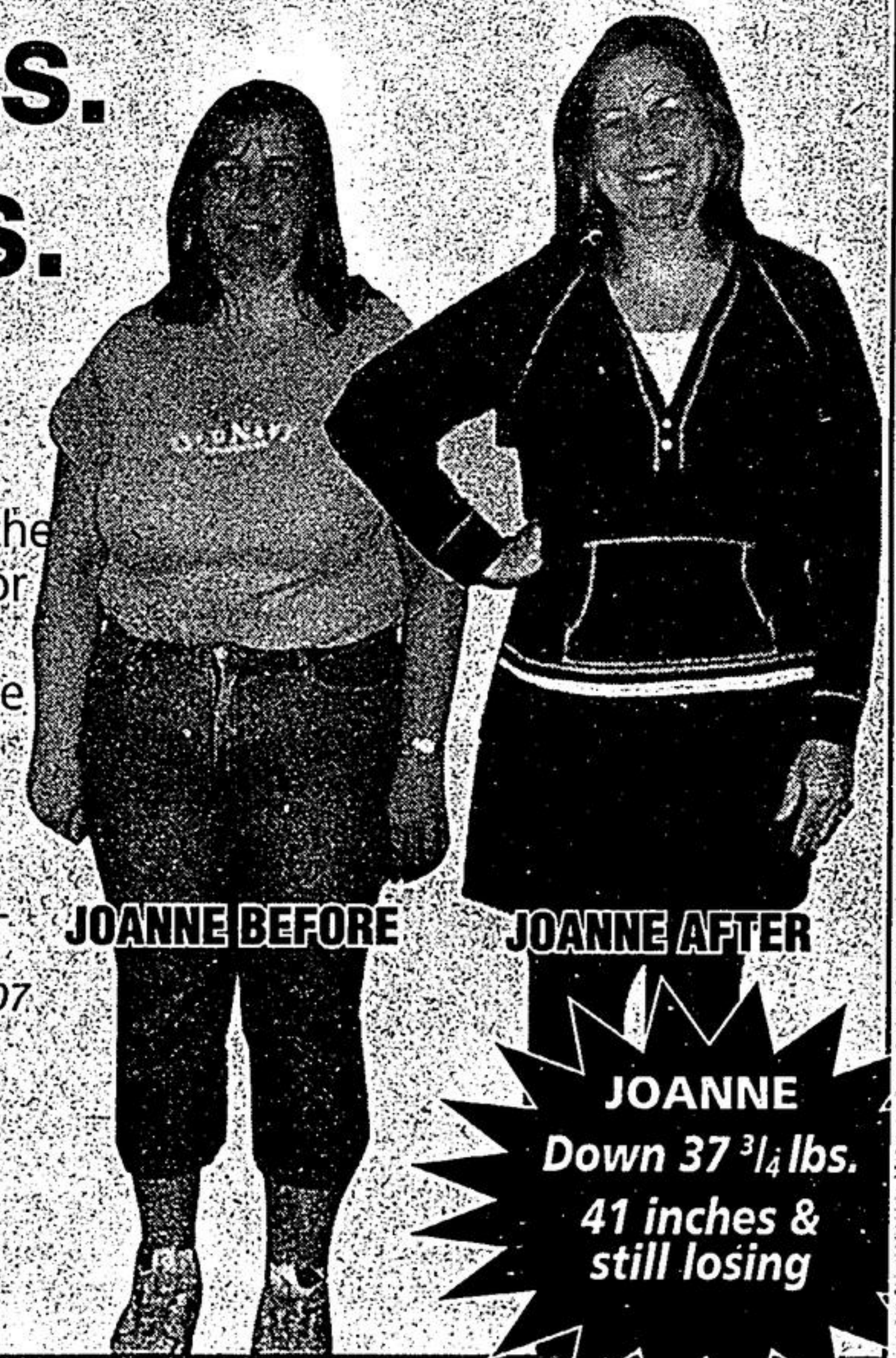
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