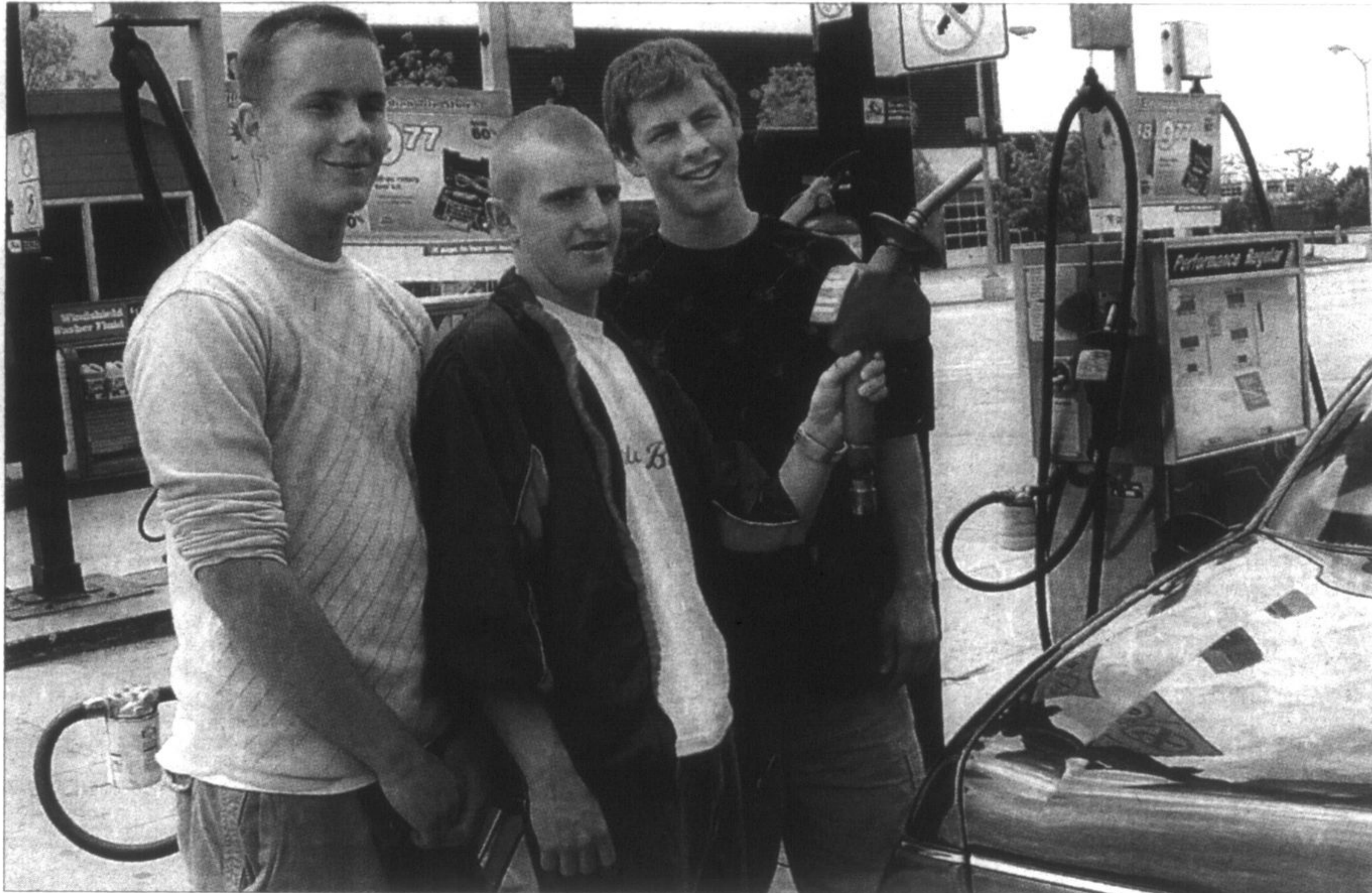


SUN-TRIBUNE PEOPLE

Stouffville District Secondary School students Brent Hewlett, Scott Miller and Chris Boake, wanted to find out where their gas money goes. They were surprised. They also investigated solutions to our big-time gas bills, in-house.

Stouffville District Secondary School students Brent Hewlett (from left), Scott Miller and Chris Boake, seen filling up at the Stouffville Canadian Tire gas bar, wanted to find out where their gas money goes. Crude oil costs and taxes are the big-ticket ingredients in the pump price. They also asked one of their teachers, scientist Andrew Cherkas, for his take on high gas prices.



STAFF PHOTO/JIM MASON

Don't blame gas stations for pumped-up prices

BY CHRIS BOAKE
SCOTT MILLER
AND BRENT HEWLETT

With today's raging gas prices burning a hole in consumers' pockets, it is natural for us to wonder where our gas money is going.

Is the greater percentage going to the owners, the transporters or even the people who pump our gas? Many consumers think that most of the money is going straight to the gas companies.

We did.

However, there are many factors that affect rising gas prices. On average, 48 per cent of the total cost goes toward the crude oil cost, 32 to taxes, 17 to refining and marketing, and three per cent goes towards profit, according to Petro-Canada.

Crude oil and natural gas prices are affected by a number of factors including: supply and demand; political events; and market competition.

As the world's population and Canadian standard of living increases, the greater is the demand for crude oil and, ultimately, gasoline.

Depending on the availability and demand, the price of gasoline at the wholesale level will either go up or down. Since gas is a basic commodity around the world, when the demand is greater than the supply, prices soar.

'We can't use biofuels because these use ingredients such as crops. So if we cut down crops there won't be any food. I think we need to stop mass building of houses on farmers' fields so that there can be more locally grown food.'

Dr. Andrew Cherkas
Stouffville District Secondary School

Gas prices will continue to rise unless we find an alternative method to feed our economic standards of living.

The reality in today's society is we survive on gas and no matter how much gas prices go up there will still be consumers buying this resource. Maybe the answer to these high gas prices is for citizens to be smarter in their gas consumption. Dr. Andrew Cherkas, a scientist and teacher at Stouffville District Secondary School, thinks so.

He believes that with our economy developing so quickly and gas becoming such a dependant resource, it is our duty to cut down on the use of gasoline in our lives.

He lives what he preaches, walking to school

from his home in east-end Stouffville.

Question: If you could change something in our energy supply system what would it be?

Dr. Cherkas: I would change the whole system.

- Create a new economy with less use of gasoline.
- Cut down on transportation.
- Use farmland to feed us locally. With locally grown food, there is less transportation involved.

• Use alternative methods. We can't use biofuels because these use ingredients such as crops. So if we cut down crops there won't be any food.

I think we need to stop mass building of houses on farmers' fields so that there can be more locally grown food.

Question: Can we sustain our lifestyle with other countries trying to be like us?

Dr. Cherkas: For example Canada's population is about 36 million and China's is 1.3 billion.

If the Chinese want to be like us than there is a greater demand for crude oil and natural gas. As more and more countries gain a better standard of living, the greater the demand for natural gas.

Therefore, the gas prices will rise because of the great demand.

Whitchurch-Stouffville News Digest

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Second racing charge for Stouffville driver

A Stouffville man was charged with street racing for the second time last week in Brant county, according to Ontario Provincial Police.

At about 12:40 p.m. on June 6, OPP officers conducting radar on Hwy. 403 clocked a vehicle travelling more than 160 km/h in a 100 km/h zone, police said.

A 30-year-old Stouffville man was charged under the province's stunt driving law, his vehicle was seized for a week and his driver's licence was suspended for seven days.

It was the second time the man had been caught under the stunt driving legislation this year, OPP said.

On Wednesday in a statement, Commissioner Julian Fantino said the OPP will continue enforcing the street racing/stunt driving legislation, adding despite what he called "uninformed rhetoric to the contrary", the force's enforcement is achieving positive results.

Fatalities on OPP-patrolled highways have plunged 34.4 per cent thus far in 2008, the force said. Speed-related deaths are down nearly 42 per cent over the same period last year.

—Joe Fantauzzi

Get gardening assistance

Want some help with that gardening project?

The Stouffville Horticulture Society meets at Stouffville United Church Monday at 7:30.

"You don't need knowledge about gardening," spokesperson Diane Ward said. "We get together to share plants and what we know."

A guest speaker from Richters Herbs in Goodwood will address the group.

SOUND OFF

Have something to say about these or other stories?

E-mail us at jmason@yrmg.com

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