

# 1,000 attended funeral on drowning victim's birthday

From page 8.

belief that keeps me going," he said.

There is one person, however, who has fired up Mr. Alibhai and it is not the driver of the speedboat. It's Councillor Phil Bannon, whose ward includes Musselman's Lake.

In the July 30 edition of The Sun-Tribune, Mr. Bannon said: "We can't legislate common sense and you don't want to legislate common sense."

Mr. Alibhai took exception to that comment.

"He was very insensitive about the situation. Very, very insensitive and he hasn't even come around to pay condolences for my daughter. And what he said you can't implement common sense ... common sense is very uncommon," he said. "Very insensitive person. I'm sorry to say that but you can quote me on that, I don't care."

Instead of blowing up balloons and cutting cake on July 21, which would have been Ms Alibhai's 16th birthday, she was buried.

As a surprise, Mr. Alibhai was going to buy his daughter concert tickets to Nicki Minaj, who is opening for Britney Spears later this month at the Air Canada Centre. He was also going to send her to Florida to visit family and give her driving lessons.

"All those dreams were shattered. God has better things for her," he said.

Mr. Alibhai and his wife, Ms Alibhai's mother, separated when their daughter was about five years old. But the couple worked hard to ensure she never went without or felt unloved.

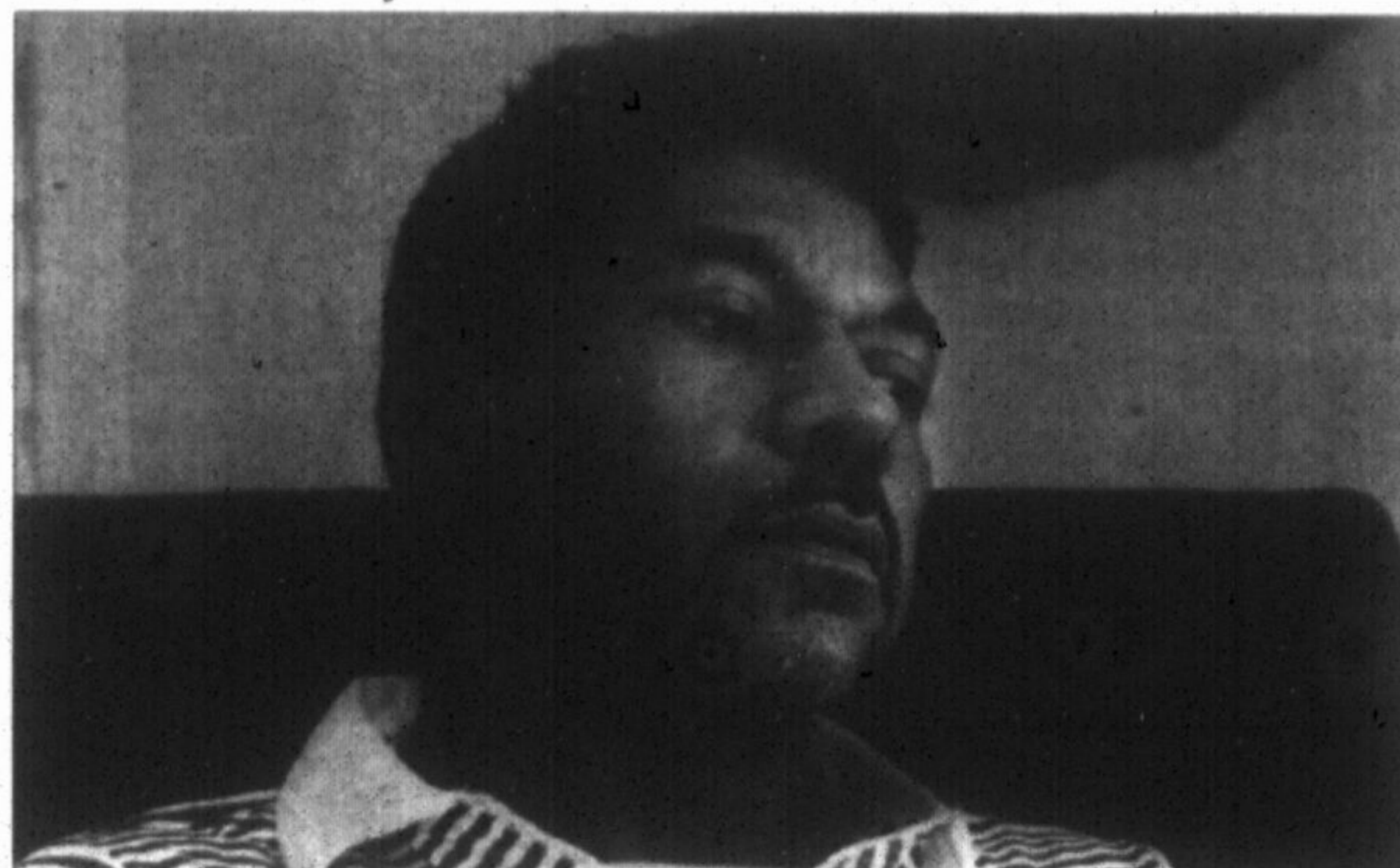
Ms Alibhai lived primarily in Richmond Hill with her mother, but when she came to spend the summer with her father in Musselman's Lake, she wanted to make it a permanent move.

The two planned to turn Mr. Alibhai's office - he's a certified accountant who works from home - into her study and the loft above the living room into her sleeping quarters.

On the day she died, they went to Stouffville District Secondary School to pick up registration forms. Ms Alibhai would have been in Grade 11 this September and was going to take chemistry, biology and physics with hopes of becoming a pharmacist.

"We filled them out the same day, before the incident. Registration forms for heaven, I guess," he said.

More than 1,000 people attended Ms Alibhai's funeral service and to this day, her father receives phone calls from around the world, from friends and strangers alike, expressing condolences.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Nash Alibhai talks about his late 15-year-old daughter, Sabrina, this week.

"She was quite the popular person," he said, noting she has 650 friends on Facebook, as well as too many to count friends she would see.

### TOOK SWIMMING LESSONS

She was a pretty girl, who caught the boys' attention.

"I asked Gift, her friend, does she have a boyfriend. She said yeah, all the boys are after her, but she says no," he said.

She was also independent and loved to swim. She took lessons. The 15-year-old also loved to watch movies, in particular the Harry Potter series. She saw the

final installment with her friends before she died. For the previous movies, Ms Alibhai brought her dad along, but for this one, he decided she was old enough that he didn't need to tag along.

"She's at that age she doesn't want to hang out with daddy," he said.

But that did not stop them from partaking in their Saturday morning ritual of going for breakfast at the Sunset Grill or Cora's in Richmond Hill, where Ms Alibhai ordered her favourite food - french toast.

Ms Alibhai was also very generous with her friends, he said. A few

days before her death, she bought matching bracelets for herself, Ms Diji and her dad that said "Best Friends Forever".

Mr. Alibhai is slowly putting the pieces of his life back together. However, there is one thing he still can't do - go by the lake. "I go the other way."

For the first week following his daughter's death, all he did was cry and pray. Then July 28, a week after her funeral, Mr. Alibhai said his daughter came to him in a dream.

"Just laughing away. Just playing away," he said of what she was doing in the dream. "She was full of life, like a kid and she's having the best time and I'm asking her: 'Are you happy where you are?' and she says: 'Papa, I'm very, very happy, don't worry.'"

He added: "My dream lasted a long time. It was an hour I was with her. I only remember the important time because God doesn't want you to remember all of it."

Mr. Alibhai is hoping the death of his daughter and her best friend brings about change on Musselman's Lake.

"The town should keep a life-guard in such places, I think," said Mr. Alibhai, who hosted an open house last weekend. "Or keep notices around with the inflatable tube to rescue people. ... My daughter and her friend were not the first incidents that have happened here."



**The doorway to your next home.**

Thousands of local rental listings for houses, condos, apartments, rooms, student housing, retirement living and even properties for rent.

  
**gottarent.com**  
 Find a place to rent