

## Powerful connection for women in business

Kate Gilderdale  
Stouffville Free Press  
young mothers, Stouffville  
Michelle Butt found that balancing  
family life could be a major

decided to open my own  
over a year ago, after having  
part-time job to stay home for  
raise my four children, I was  
way to connect with other  
women for services, support and  
advice explained.

whose background is in  
employee performance  
management, was looking for ways  
to connect with other business people  
"I realized women need a  
place where they can meet and talk  
about business and challenges like juggling  
making a living."

internet search, "I stumbled  
upon the Women Exchange (POWE),  
a support group in Durham Region  
for women in business," she

found support and camaraderie.  
Women just like me, growing their  
business and reaching out. It's more than  
just a business level, because  
of friendships." POWE started two  
years ago in Ajax and soon expanded to  
the Bay of Quinte. In November,

Michelle is launching a Markham chapter  
for women in York Region.

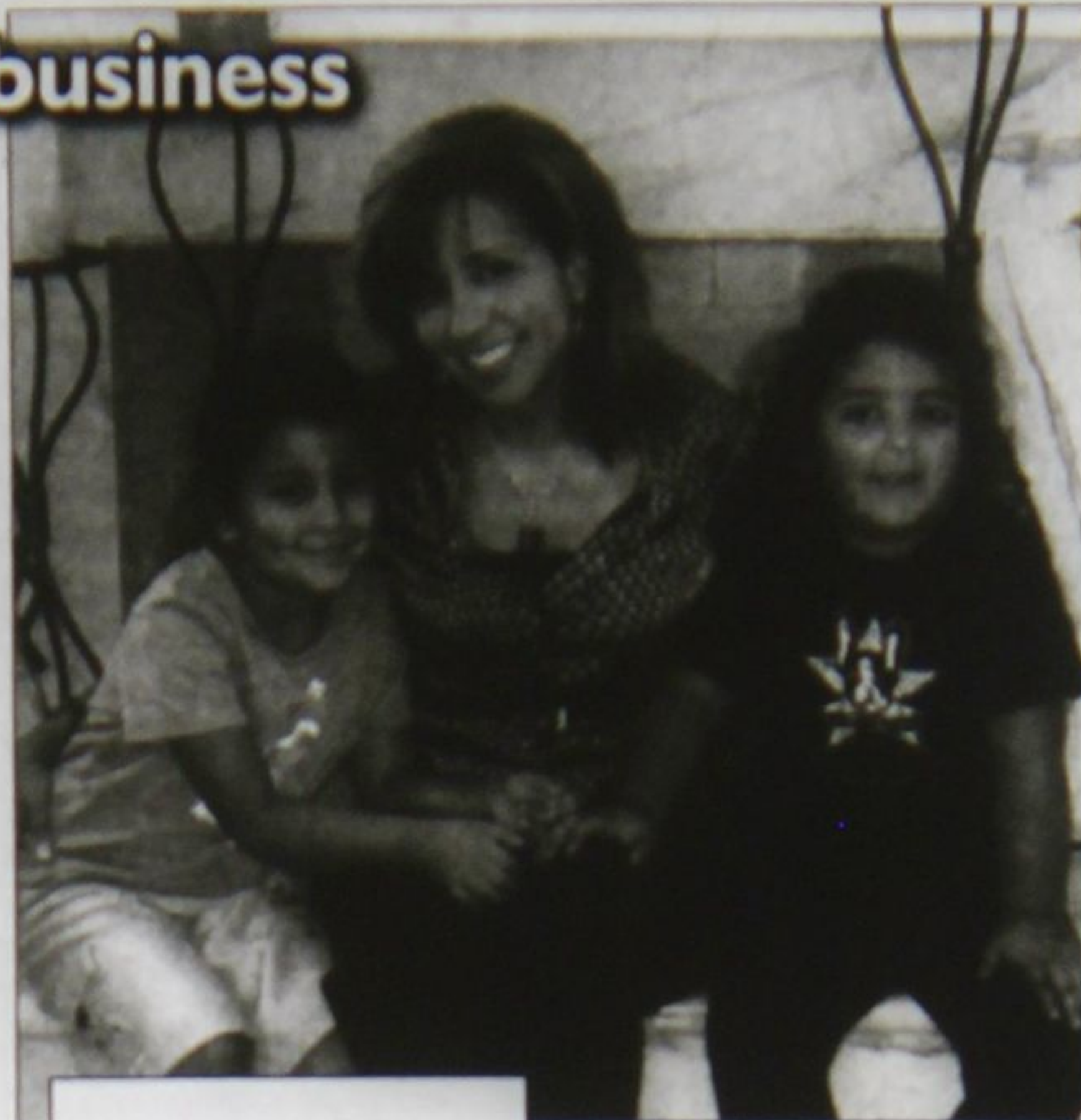
"It isn't just about how we can make  
money, it's about how we can support each  
other." And it's not exclusive. "We can have  
a number of members in the same area (of  
business), not just one from each area," she  
noted.

"Since the membership is all women,  
we approach business differently than our  
male counterparts. We reach out to each  
other and the community as part of our  
mandate to support our world."

POWE supports local charities and  
fundraisers. "We have a bursary program  
that is to start in 2008, specifically designed  
to help members in need of financial  
support, and many more wonderful  
opportunities to grow and reach out."

Membership is open to any woman  
with an entrepreneurial spirit, she added.  
"Some people want to get into business  
and they're looking for ideas. When I first  
joined I had just started figuring what my  
business would be."

POWE's York Region launch takes  
place Nov. 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at  
La Rosa Banquet Hall in Markham and  
members will meet for lunch on the second  
Tuesday of each month thereafter. For  
more information call Michelle at 905-640-  
0555 or 416-996-2843 or send her an email  
at michelle.butt@rogers.com.



Stouffville  
entrepreneur  
Michelle Butt is  
launching the York  
Region chapter of  
POWE on Nov. 13.  
She is seen with  
daughters Jaide, 5,  
and Jeena, 4.



## On The Town

### SPRIT OF LEGISLATION IGNORED

By Pam Mandich

In my previous columns I said that this council  
rather apologize than ask permission. I have  
my mind. Rather than apologizing, they seem  
to use their consultants as a shield to hide

On Oct. 18, the town held a not very well publicized  
information presentation on the environmental  
impact of being done to decide where to locate the  
new operations centre. I say not very well pub-  
licized because after it was announced at the Oct. 16  
meeting, I tried to find it on the town's web site  
and didn't.

The meeting was well attended by the residents of  
Bethesda Road, where the new operations centre will  
be located. Troy Bauman, the project manager from  
the town, stood at the front of the room to give the  
presentation and answer questions, while the politi-  
cian Mayor Wayne Emmerson, Councillor Susanne  
and Councillor Clyde Smith stood at the back of  
the room. Mr. Bauman went through his presentation  
and he concluded that the site the town bought is  
(to my surprise) the preferred site for the operations

questions followed but the one that stood  
out was the one the politicians should have answered but  
Dr. Terry O'Connor, a well known advocate for  
the environment who farms on Bethesda Rd., asked why this  
site would choose to follow the letter of the Oak  
Moraine Conservation Plan but not the spirit of  
the plan.

He noted that the municipality could locate  
the operations centre on land designated as countryside  
under the act, it was a decision that did not honour the  
intent of the legislation. The countryside des-  
ignation is meant to protect and encourage agricultural  
use of the land. An operations centre does not

This was a political question, Mr. Bauman could  
not answer it. I fully expected Mayor Emmerson would  
not answer the question. Sadly, neither he nor either of the  
politicians present chose to answer Dr. O'Connor.  
To be honest to say, it was a hostile crowd in attendance—  
people being visibly upset that their neighbourhood is  
being invaded by increased traffic, increased noise,  
new plows leaving in the wee hours of the morn-  
ing, salt storage on an environmen-

tally sensitive piece of land  
and a definite impact on  
their quiet rural life style.

These people pay a lot of  
money in taxes to live in a  
rural area. Then, of course,  
there is their concern for their property values, the  
safety of their children and the protection of their rural  
setting. Questions from the residents were fired at the  
consultant, who responded with a promise to take all  
their concerns into consideration and try to "mitigate"  
the impact. Mitigation is not what the residents wanted  
to hear about.

What they wanted was to work with the town to  
find another location that would have less impact on  
any resident, not just them. What they wanted was for  
the operations centre to be located in an industrial or  
commercial area. But this dialogue was not encouraged.  
Clyde Smith stepped forward to reassure the residents  
that the town had been looking for a long time and  
there wasn't really a lot of land available for this type  
of operation.

The difficulty with this answer is that the criterion  
for choosing a site seems a bit random. All four possible  
sites are located on Bethesda Road. The main reason  
for this is that it was determined that the site must  
be three to five minutes from the main urban area of  
Stouffville. Why three to five minutes? Why not five  
to eight minutes? Why not even be more daring and  
increase the number of site locations by allowing eight  
to 10 minutes? I mean really, public works is not the fire  
department or the ambulance service. And if they do  
need to have a few trucks available for quick responses  
to emergencies in town, why not park a few trucks at  
the town offices, at the arena, or at the Lebovic Leisure  
Centre?

The residents have not given up their fight. They  
recently held a meeting to organize and plan their next  
step. They are searching out information from planners,  
politicians and environmentalists. They are searching  
out other political levels for help.

I wish them the best of luck, but not because of their  
specific issue. I wish them luck because it makes me  
afraid to see how easily this council can justify deci-  
sions and ignore the spirit of the Oak Ridges Moraine  
Conservation Plan. If they can do it once, what is to stop  
them from doing it again?

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