

# Lions vision screening for students

By Kate Gilderdale  
Stouffville This Month

During the week of Jan. 19, trained volunteers from the Stouffville Lions Club provided vision screening for students in all local schools.

Using a kit which includes a hand-held autorefractor, a wall chart and a three-dimensional fly survey, the program can help identify amblyopia, commonly known as lazy eye, as well as other vision problems. The screening is not a complete eye examination and parents or guardians are advised to follow up with their optometrist.

"It's all done by volunteers and we also raise funds (for the kits)," explained Lion David Barthau, who is on the District A-16 program committee. Each screening unit costs \$10,000 and District A-16, which covers York and Durham regions, currently has two units and is fundraising to purchase two more.

In its first year of operation, the program resulted in more than 700 referrals to optometrists. Last year 10,000 students were tested. "It's brought

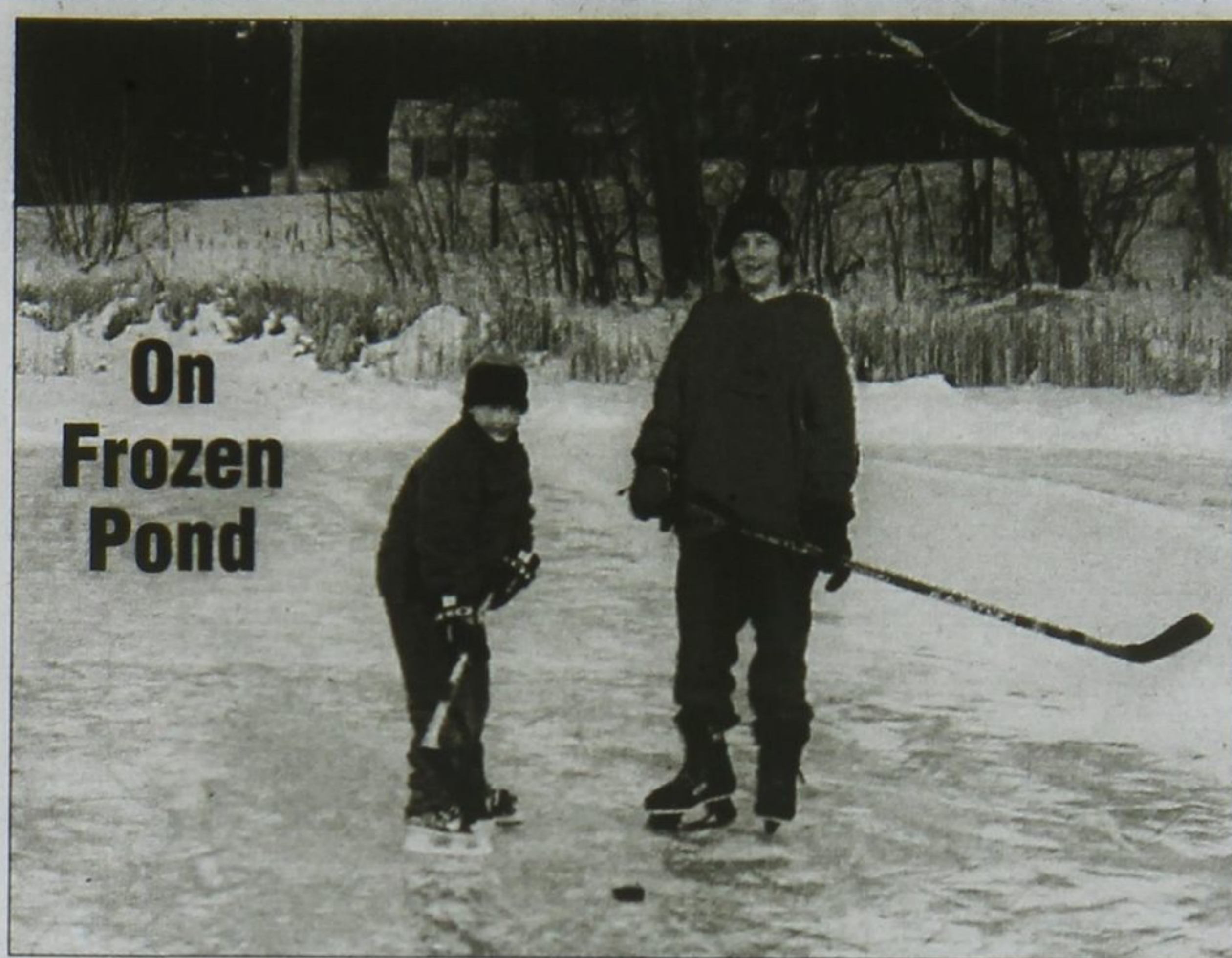
awareness not only to the children, but also to the school boards, who realize how important vision is to learning," said Mr. Barthau.

"This is a good program and the Lions Club is to be congratulated," said Stouffville optometrist Martin McDowell. "The only unfortunate thing is

we can't get at the kids earlier." With the vision system developing up until about the age of nine, he said, the sooner the optometrist sees the patient, the better.

The Ontario Association of Optometrists recommends every child

should have his or her first eye examination by the age of six months. If no abnormalities are detected, another exam should be conducted at the age of three. Annual eye examinations, which are covered by O.H.I.P., are recommended for children of school age.



**On Frozen Pond**

Jimmy Sambrook, 10, and Tyler Schevers, 13, find a game of pick-up hockey on Windsor Lake the perfect way to beat the winter cold snap. Visible from Ninth Line just south of Musselman's Lake, Windsor Lake provides a convenient and popular skating and hockey rink for area

Nancy Hopkins / Stouffville This Month



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