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TUESDAY, MAY 26, 1998

'I just want what is just and equitable' - Plante Bike shop owner, town face off in court

By Sylvia Warden
LENNOXVILLE

The dream of being your own boss has landed two men and the town of Lennoxville in court.

Michel Plante, owner of Bar Laitier Parfum d'Été ice cream and bike rental shop on Queen Street, is suing the town and another businessman, Kevin Ryan, for unfair business practice. Under Article 28, Subsection 2.2, Plante said a city cannot buy a property to lease or rent for profit.

"I just want what is just and equitable," said Plante from the patio of his year-old business.

In plain sight from his patio, Plante can see the bike trail and his nearest competitor's business at 4 Massawippi St.

Ryan, who also runs a bike rental shop, opened his business last July in the town-owned property that Plante had wanted to purchase.

"I went to the city to try and buy the property but was told the zoning was wrong," said Plante.

The building remains zoned for recreational - not commercial - purposes. Thinking the building would remain empty, Plante decided to open up shop in his current building. Plante said had he known the town was going to rent the property, he would never have opened his business.

"We're dealing with a lot of unethical people," said Plante, who worked as a mechanic for 30 years.

He said his love of people and bikes led Plante to run his own business.



SYLVIA WARDEN

In plain sight from his patio, Michel Plante can see the bike trail and his nearest competitor's business.

SEE FACE OFF, PAGE 2

Home-grown talent on 88.9 FM CJMQ's voice heard across the Townships

CJMQ 88.9 FM, the campus/community radio station located at Bishop's University, is proud to report that they have finally achieved what was once thought impossible - they are a 500 watt radio station.

"Five years ago, CJMQ was an AM carrier-current station. The signal couldn't even get off-campus," said Station Manager Matthew Shepherd. "Now, we're broadcasting to all of Lennoxville, Sherbrooke, and beyond!"

'Beyond' includes towns such as North Hatley, Rock Forest, Fleurimont, Waterville and Bromptonville. The station installed and began testing its new transmitter on Friday, May 8. Until May 31, it is running as a 'test broadcast' - regular programming with announcements stating that the station is currently being evaluated for potential interference problems.

As of June 1, CJMQ will be officially licensed to run at 500 watts - the only English-language radio station headquartered in the Eastern Townships.

"The first of June is the big day," said Shepherd. "As of 10 a.m., we will be officially broadcasting to most of the Townships."

Fortunately, the station has a DJ staff that is more than up to the responsibility. Over 75 volunteer programmers are currently working at CJMQ, doing weekly radio shows featuring all styles of music and commentary.

"Jazz, classical, country, rock, punk - we've got it all," said Nick Syriannis, CJMQ's music director. "Everything from A to Z. There isn't a person in the Townships that CJMQ can't accommodate."

CJMQ's DJ staff consists of Bishop's and Champlain students, and members of the community at large. This will be its second summer on the air, and over 20 new DJs from the Townships community have signed on to contribute. With student and community programmers working together on 60 different radio shows, CJMQ is guaranteed to be the most exciting radio station in the Townships.

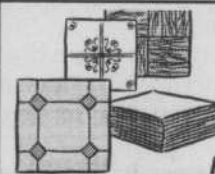
"This isn't 'pro' radio, with one-note announcers babbling about nothing and playing the same 20 songs over and over again," said Shepherd. "This is real radio, hosted by real people doing what they love. You can't buy talent like this."



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lennoxville is a
great place to retire

DEAR EDITOR,

We wish to thank all our family, relatives, friends and neighbors in the Eastern Townships for the wonderful times had the last few days, had by us, just before we left the North Road, for our new home in Lennoxville.

We missed by a month and a half living there for all of our forty-six years, June 14, 1998. So our record is spoiled.

It was the best place to raise our children in the wide open spaces. We do not regret that. Our grand-daughters will be there during their holidays.

My husband Fred was born there eighty-one years ago on January 21st. I was born in Stanstead. I lived there 20 years.

We were sorry to leave our home, but the house is badly in need of repair.

I hope Fred can adjust. You do not tear a man up by the roots at his age and not pay the consequences.

I paid the price, the highest price as it all fell on my shoulders. I made it through and I am still here to tell the story.

I have no regrets at all. We are now in the third phase of our lives and we can relax, no fires to build, no leaks to worry about when you least expect them. No patching to do. Best of all - no snow to shovel. It will be another's job.

We have friends here. We walk twice a day several times a week. Yes even Fred is doing that and enjoying it. I ride my bicycle when I want.

We wish to extend our most heartfelt thanks to one and all for being there for us all these years and especially for the

two lovely Farewell Parties, the lovely keepsakes, the fuchsia, the signed cards.

We can read the names on them for years and also for the very special photo album compiled and decorated by Dini and Diane. We will wear it out looking at it. We have already looked over several times and it isn't finished yet.

Please come to visit, it will be a pleasure to show you around.

I will let one and all know when the new wee one arrives at the home of our dear son and daughter-in-law's in Calgary in a couple of months. My only regret is Grandma will not be there to help and rock the wee one. I have to learn to be a long distance Grandma. That will be hard as my arms ache to rock a special new addition. I love babies, all babies, and caring for them.

My name will still be in the papers. I will still write poetry. One is in the

works now.

GOD BLESS ONE AND ALL,
THANKS AGAIN,
WINNIE AND FRED WRIGHT
Lennoxville

Thanks for
the flowers

DEAR EDITOR,

I would like to thank The Record and Vaudry's flower shop for the beautiful flowers I received at Mother's Day.

The arrangement was excellent in a beautiful teapot. The flowers lasted for three weeks and I thoroughly enjoyed them. Also I big thank-you to my daughter Linda Jewett who won the flowers in The Record's mother's day contest.

LEONA BUZZELL
Cherry River

'It's definitely not a
positive atmosphere'

Face off:

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

For his part, Ryan says he has done nothing wrong and is trying to make a go of his new business.

"It's definitely not a positive atmosphere," he said.

Ryan, too, says if he'd known the situation would land him in court, he would not have opened his business. But he's not about to back down now.

"We're here and we're here to stay," said Ryan, who approached the town in the winter of 1997 about buying and then renting the property at 4 Massawippi.

His business plan was approved by the town and soon he was on his way to being in business for himself, a goal similar to Plante's.

Plante doesn't know why his bid to buy or use the building was rejected but he did venture a guess: "Ask Mr. MacAulay if he know's this guy's father?"

The parties made their first court appearance on May 5. Since that day, there has been a delay in the proceedings and Plante is unsure when it will resume. But he's sure he'll see things through to the end.

"They can't do that to me. I want the pleasure of doing the business he wanted to do."

Battling the town has not come cheap. While Plante would not give an exact number, he said his legal bills are in the thousands and could top six figures. Ryan, too, said his legal fees have been high. "I won't put a number on it but it's several thousand dollars."

At the end of last month, relations between Plante and the town deteriorated even further. On April 28, Ryan, through his lawyer, sent a letter to town council asking it to reevaluate the approval given to Plante to build a walkway from his property to the bike trail. The walkway, which sits on municipal land, was approved on March 20, 1997 by the Local Urban and Regional Committee and erected by Plante.

"I built the walkway with the city's blessing and at my cost," said Plante.

But at 7 p.m. on April 28, at a regularly scheduled council meeting, the mayor announced that the "situation, in particular with regard to Mr. Kevin Ryan, as a tenant of the building located at 4 Massawippi, is unjust and could constitute an illegal subsidy, to the benefit of the business operated by Mr. and Mrs. Plante ... On the other hand, it is not in the economic interest of the Municipality and all its taxpayers to ratify the present situation."

The following morning, workmen arrived to tear up the walkway.

"I've never seen the city work so fast," said Plante of the early morning work.

Add to that a letter dated May 19 from town manager Jacques Gagnon to Plante telling him to stop mowing the lawn in front of his property which overlooks the bike trail because it is municipal land.

Plante, who can't believe the town would resort to such tactics said, "You can't fight city hall. It's not a question of money - it's a question of rights."

No one from town hall would comment on the situation when contacted.

Émilie Ouellette goes to
La Dictée P.G.L.'s Grand Finale
Lennoxville
student writing
her way to
Montreal

Émilie Ouellette was the Estrie region's representative at the seventh annual La Dictée P.G.L.'s Grand Finale Competition, which took place May 17 in Montreal. The École St-Antoine student in Lennoxville wrote the best dictation in the area to win a spot at the international event in the French category.

The eventual winners were Simon St-Pierre from South Hull School in Aylmer in the French Immersion category and Michelle Gourdeau, from the Pensionnat des Sacrés-Coeurs in St-Bruno for the French category. Each won a trip to Florida's Kennedy Space Center to attend the launching of space shuttle Atlantis and a fully equipped computer.

La Dictée P.G.L.'s Grand finale will be seen throughout the country on CBC French network, Sunday May 31 at 5 p.m. For this international final, 100 students gathered at CBC studios in Montreal. Selected through a series of regional competitions held this spring, contestants came from all of Canada's 10 provinces and two territories as well as from the U.S., Senegal and Mali.

More than 146,000 pupils (33,000 in French Immersion) took part in the dictation contest launched in 1991 by the Paul Gérin-Lajoie Foundation. Through La Cueillette du Partage, a fund-raising activity associated with La Dictée P.G.L., these children have raised over \$600,000. Half of this amount will remain in their schools to finance various projects while the other half will be sent to the Foundation to support education in Senegal, Mali and Haiti.

La Dictée P.G.L. is financially supported by Quebec's Ministère de l'Éducation, Heritage Canada and several private companies. Among them: Industrial Alliance Life Insurance Company, the main sponsor, Chrysler Canada, Metro grocers, Alcan, Bell Canada, Hydro-Quebec and Air Canada, the finalist's official airline.

Has collected funds for Third World Rally for four years

North Hatley boy raises \$1,000 for charity



SYLVIA WARDEN

Jonathan Sharman... 'I've got a lot so why not help those that haven't got a lot.'

By Sylvia Warden
NORTH HATLEY

What started out as a way to earn extra money and to win a few prizes has turned into a self-described "obsession" for Jonathan Sharman.

The 14-year-old has raised more money for charity than some twice, even three times, his age.

In the four years since joining the efforts to raise money for Third World Rally, an organization that helps people in less-developed countries, Jonathan has biked up and down the steep hills of North Hatley, stopping at almost every house and collecting more than \$1,000.

"I just figured it's a good cause. I've got a lot so why not help those that haven't got a lot," said Jonathan, a Grade 8 student at Alexander Galt Regional High School in Lennoxville.

This year alone he raised half of the \$1,100 collected in the hamlet. He said the first year he went door-to-door to collect sponsors for the bike-a-thon that marks North Hatley's involvement with the 30-year-old charity, he came back with \$127 and 60 sponsors. Three years later, he's got almost everyone in the community of 700 giving a loonie or twoonie to the tune of more than \$500. Jonathan's next closest competitor collected \$40 during the seven-day sponsorship period.

On May 10, Jonathan and others biked, walked and a few even kayaked along the Massawippi River for 14 kilometres.

"I know it's helping some people," said the soft-spoken teen curled up on a wing chair in his family's North Hatley living room which overlooks Lake Massawippi.

His parents, Wes Sharman and Joey LeBaron, along with twin brother Elliott and 11-year-old brother Griffin are pleased with Jonathan's charitable streak, which doesn't stop with Third World Rally.

He is also an extraordinary chocolate bar salesman for his school. He won \$200 for selling 450 chocolate bars.

"I only do it for the prize," said the teen, showing a bit of entrepreneurial spirit.

His dedication to fund-raising is garnering a lot of attention.

"He went around to every house in North Hatley - for a 14-year-old kid, I certainly wouldn't have done this," said Carleton Monk, a lawyer and fellow Third World Rally fund-raiser. "This is a record year thanks to Jonathan. The previous record was \$950."

Jonathan says the secret to his success is quite simple: "Cause I go everywhere."

At 14, Jonathan has no plans to be a career fund-raiser. Instead, he is mulling over the idea of being a field biologist or a robotics engineer. "Because they're the most likely to make a difference and they sound interesting."

Making a difference is important to Jonathan.

"There are really only two purposes in life: To reproduce and to make a difference so that when you die you're remembered," he said.

With that in mind, Jonathan says he has no plans to stop collecting for Third World Rally.

"I'll stop when I'm not cute enough to go door-to-door."

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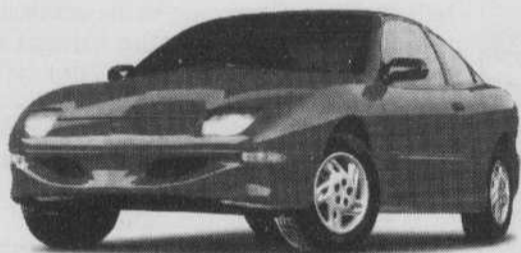
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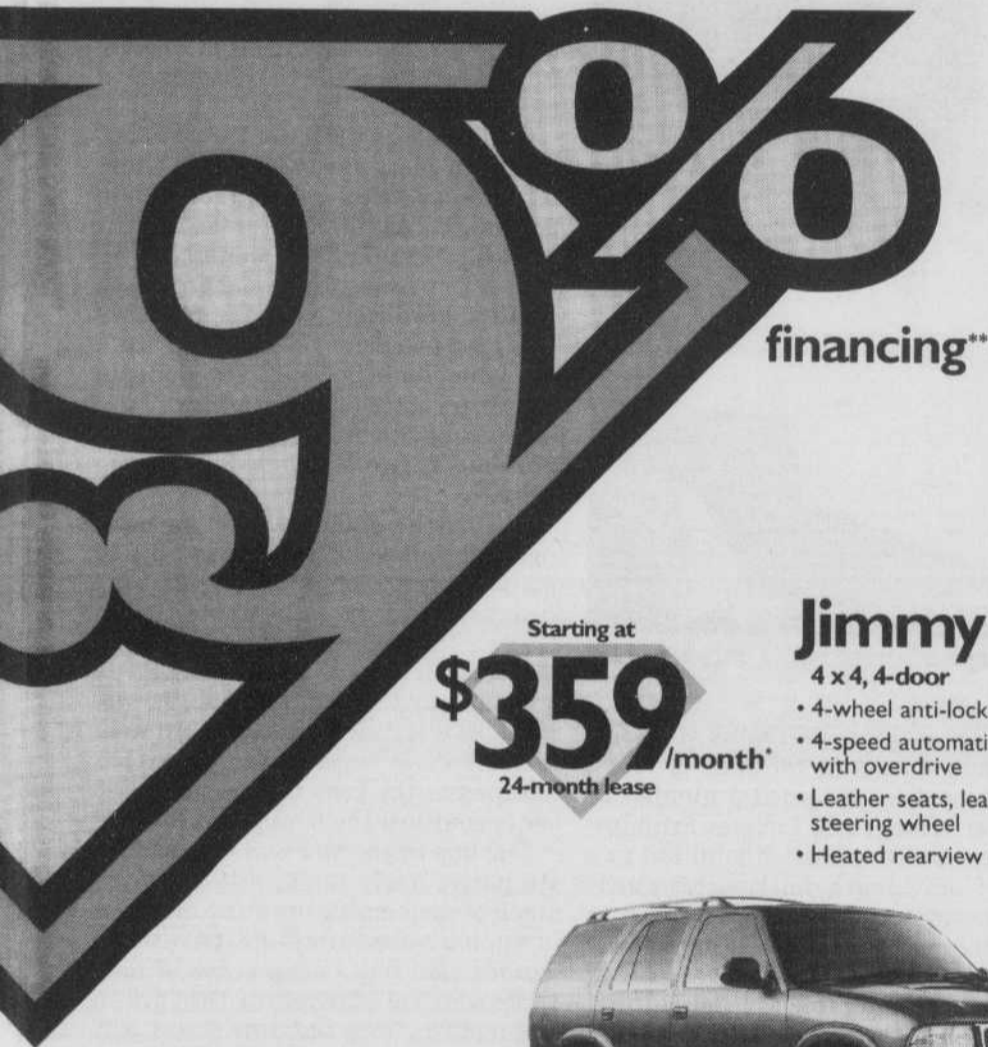
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Beaver Ridge Farms honored by Canadian Hereford Association

BURY

Barry and Wanda Parsons of Beaver Ridge Farms, Newport Township, were recently honored when they were inducted to the Canadian Hereford Association Honor Roll.

Sadly, early Sunday morning, May 17, 1998, fire completely destroyed all the barns at Beaver Ridge Farms. The original barn was built in the early 30s, with several additions made, including a 30 foot silo. One of these barns Barry's father had moved there in 1974 from the vacant Parsons' homestead in Knicky Knocky.

Their loss included 22 show animals, six bulls, six cows, three heifers (one he had recently purchased) and seven calves.

Their faithful dog, Earl, also perished, who they consider saved their lives by awakening them. They lost a tractor and an undetermined amount of equipment which will take time to evaluate. Both the Bury and Sawyerville fire departments were called to the scene, but due to the intensity and advancement of the fire were unable to save anything in the barns. However the garage, implement shed and house were saved.

Despite their great loss, Barry, Wanda and their daughter, Robyn plan to rebuild.

Beaver Ridge Farms is the only home Barry has ever known. He is the second son of the late Thomas William Parsons, a descendant of the late William Parsons, who came from England with the great influx of settlers in 1836, and his wife Doris Mayhew, a descendant of the late Robert Mayhew, who also emigrated from England and settled in Canterbury, Que., in 1836.

Barry's father, Tom was a pioneer whose dreams began to materialize in the early 30s. At that time, he and his brother Lynn purchased this lot of land, which consisted of pasture and woods with several brooks running through. The only buildings were a couple of camps, one they lived in and the other was used for a barn. This lot was a short distance from their parental home.

Gradually they cleared land making fields and pasture, working around stumps at first. They built a new barn, then a lovely little house.

In 1935, Tom took over full ownership, the beginning of Beaver Ridge Farms. On August 10, 1938 he and Doris were married at Christ Church, Canter-



Barry and Wanda Parsons of Beaver Ridge Farms, honored recently when inducted to the Canadian Hereford Association Honor Roll.

bury, bringing his bride to the farm. They raised a family of four boys, Aylmer, Barry, Gordon and Dale.

Through hard work and careful planning, their farm and buildings continued to improve and enlarge, including farms once owned by Barry's grandfather, George Parsons, great-grandfather Thomas William Parsons, and great-great-grandfather Stephen Parsons. Ponds were made, forming a beautiful picturesque setting of 300 cultivated acres and 300 wooded acres, a haven for fishermen and hunters.

In 1955, Tom, with the help and interest of Doris and their boys, started raising purebred Hereford cattle. In 1956, they had two registered Herefords; 42 years later, the herd consisted of approximately 200 first class animals. They had always made a point of purchasing top semen to augment their herd's genetics.

Beaver Ridge Farm, registered under

the name of Thomas Parsons and Sons, has shown animals for over 40 years. They have been awarded a number of Premier breeder and Premier Exhibitor banners and trophies, in addition to a host of individual animal awards. Cattle were shown at nearly all open shows in Quebec, and later mostly Eastern Townships shows. They also showed several times at the Toronto Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, Ottawa, Peterborough and Belleville.

Following in his father's footsteps, Barry began his cattle career early by joining the Bury 4-H Club in 1956, of which he was club leader for many years.

In 1973, Barry married Wanda Green-shields of Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Que., and brought his bride to the new apartment in the upstairs at Beaver Ridge Farm. From the beginning, Wanda worked side by side with Barry, no matter what the task, contributing to the

success of the farm.

Barry was a founding member, director for 25 years, and president in 1987, of the Eastern Townships Hereford Club. He supported their sales and held his own production sale with 35 head in 1989. He was a director of the Quebec Hereford Association and Beaver Ridge Farms hosted their annual picnic three times.

Barry helped organize Bonanza in Sherbrooke in 1986, where their son Richard and daughter Robyn participated. A respected judge, Barry has demonstrated his eye for cattle by being asked to judge shows of all breeds in Ottawa, Brome, Carp, and the National Annual in Quebec.

He served as director for approximately 10 years and was elected president in 1973 of the Quebec Beef Association, was director of the Eastern Townships Exhibition at Sherbrooke for several years, and the local Compton County Exhibition in Cookshire since 1983, and president from 1987 to 1989, also a director of St. Paul's Rest Home in Bury. Barry served the Township of Newport as councillor for seven years. He is a member of the Masonic Friendship Lodge.

During the quieter winter months, logs and pulpwood are cut, and a fine quality of maple products are produced in sugaring season.

Their son Richard completed an architectural course and is presently working in B.C. Their daughter, Robyn, after completing a diploma course in agriculture at Macdonald College has returned to the farm to become a partner to continue the family tradition.

The day of the fire was very sad for all, particularly the family, to see so much of their endeavors go up in smoke in such a short time. Relatives and friends also felt a deep sense of loss. Those who had watched the farm grown and mature, from the time it was only pasture and woods, the first additions of buildings, when there was no hydro, telephone or mail delivery, when water was pumped by dog power, to what it had become.

Barry, Wanda and Robyn were deeply touched by the many kind gestures shown them at the time and following this devastating fire. The continuous stream of friends who came to offer their regrets, food and help of all kind are much appreciated.

Nina Rowell

United Church women meeting held in Birchtown

BIRCHTON

Ten members of Birchtown UCW met in the hall on May 7 to arrange the many articles brought in for the garage sale the next Saturday. When the work was finished everyone gathered around a table for a period of devotions, business and pot luck lunch.

Eleanor Taylor conducted devotions

beginning with a poem about Courage and a hymn, "Something God Alone can See." After reading parts of Psalm 31 she gave a meditation on mothers and ended with prayer.

President Hazel Rogers thanked all who cleaned the hall and a short business meeting was held. Rena Halsall reported having visited Alice King in

Sawyerville and Mildred Judge here who has been sick. She took some flowers to the sick. Muriel Prescott for Church in Society told about the work churches were doing to try to do away with video lottery terminals on which the government makes so much money at the cost of others.

Correspondence consisted of a letter

about the Camp and a letter and donation from Earl Dawson's sister-in-law in appreciation of the lunch after his funeral. Hazel Rogers mentioned the planning meeting for the anniversary service on May 31. Plans were also made for Visitors Night with Edith Warner as guest speaker. Everyone enjoyed the pot luck lunch after an evening's work.

KID'S PAGE

BUTTERFLY

Butterflies are among the world's most beautiful insects. Alfie Alligator is searching for butterflies in his neighborhood. Hidden in the picture are the letters that spell BUTTERFLY. Try to find all nine letters.



Fun
facts

The ancient Greeks believed that at the time of death, a person's soul left the body in the form of a butterfly.

The world's largest butterfly is called Queen Alexandra's Birdwing. It can be found in Papua New Guinea and has a wingspread of 11 inches.

The word butterfly comes from the Old English word "buterfleoge," meaning "butter" and "flying creature."

There are approximately 15,000 to 20,000 species of butterflies.

Butterflies have two long antennae between their eyes. The antennae are organs of smell which guide the butterfly to food.



Species Search



Scientists group the thousands of species of butterflies into families according to the physical features the insects have in common. Some of the family names are hidden in the word search below. Find and circle the words listed in bold.

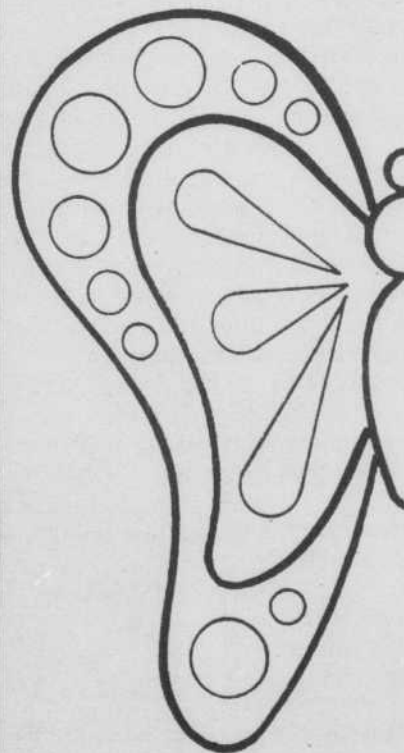
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SNOUT
SWALLOWTAILS
WHITES
WOOD NYMPHS

Complete the drawing of this butterfly and you'll have a beautiful picture to color.



Co-stars with Michael Douglas in A Perfect Murder

Gwyneth Paltrow comfortable in her own skin

By Jamie Portman
SOUTHAM NEWS
NEW YORK

There's a hair-raising scene in Gwyneth Paltrow's new movie thriller, *A Perfect Murder*, when a masked intruder attempts to kill her in her own kitchen.

So the inevitable question arises: how badly was she knocked about during the filming of the brutal sequence? In answering, Paltrow unabashedly reveals the truth.

"Thank God for the stunt double!" she laughs. "She did the heaviest parts, and then I would sort of do the easier stuff."

She says this could still be daunting in terms of the acting demands: "All of a sudden you're inserted into a scene for one bit and you're supposed to be charged up and emotional . . . you're supposed to have worked yourself into this frenzy. So it was really an acting challenge."

But, she adds firmly, "it was my double who was actually being thrown around. I just did the closeups because I'm such a big wimp."

There's something refreshing about such honesty. Paltrow may take the craft of acting seriously, but she tends to be irreverent about the processes of filmmaking and the world of make-believe which is Hollywood's stock-in-trade.

She retains her sense of the ludicrous when discussing the night she and a film crew arrived in Manhattan's Metropolitan Museum of Art to shoot another key scene for *A Perfect Murder*.

DRESSED TO KILL

Since she was playing one of New York's beautiful people, she was dressed to kill for the occasion in a magnificent Balenciaga gown, and her most glittering accessories were a small but spectacular pair of diamond earrings and a necklace.

As far as the camera was concerned both pieces of jewelry looked equally expensive. But, as Paltrow gleefully reports, the earrings were actually fake, whereas the necklace was on loan from Cartier and worth \$180,000 U.S.

The necklace might just as well have been paste as well, but because she had this fortune hanging around her neck she faced stepped-up security, far more than she's ever had to deal with simply as an actress.

"It was ridiculous!" she giggles. "I actually had to have an armed guard with me all the time."

A Perfect Murder arrives in cinemas June 5, with Paltrow portraying a young married woman whose fling with a struggling New York artist (Viggo Mortensen) rouses homicidal instincts in her fiercely possessive millionaire husband (Michael Douglas). The film is loosely based on Frederick Knott's hit

Broadway play, *Dial M For Murder*, and the subsequent movie version of the same name directed by Alfred Hitchcock.

This afternoon, Paltrow is doing her pitch on behalf of the film by closed-circuit television: the press is in a Manhattan hotel suite while she's in London where she has been busy filming *Shakespeare In Love*. She's no fashion plate on this occasion - at one point, a make-up woman rushes into view on television to attempt an ineffectual adjustment to a wayward lock of hair. Paltrow is wearing a simple print shirt, and there are periodic glimpses of a blue-jeaned knee.

"Beauty, to me, is about being comfortable in your own skin," she once observed. "Either that or a kick-ass red lipstick." Watching her today, you see what she was getting at.

But at 24, she does continue to strike a note of poise, balance and good humor. There is also the continuing sense of her being in control. Paltrow endured her share of unwelcome tabloid scrutiny during her troubled romance with Brad Pitt, but unlike Pitt - an actor who continues to have problems dealing with the glass bowl of stardom - she remains largely unruffled by such experiences.

"People will scrutinize your private life if they find it interesting or find you interesting or if they find your work interesting . . . Unfortunately, such scrutiny is a by-product of all that. But what I've also learned is that I can be the proprietor of what I want to discuss and not discuss. I can keep my private life private: everybody can talk about it or not talk about or speculate about it - but by not adding to it I can really control it from an internal perspective. If you don't do personal things out there for everybody to see and comment on, then there's nothing there."

She thinks over what she's just said,



Gwyneth Paltrow... 'People will scrutinize your private life if they find it interesting or find you interesting or if they find your work interesting.'

gives a disarming grin, and then apologizes: "That's a very long-winded answer. Pardon me."

She thinks that one of the reasons she has managed to retain her equilibrium is that she grew up knowing the business from the inside. Her mother is revered character actress Blythe Danner. Her father is Bruce Paltrow, a respected television producer.

NO REGRETS

And she says she doesn't regret past mistakes but does learn from them. "I think regret is a total waste of time." When she does find she's made a bad choice, her way of dealing with it is to make sure she doesn't "recreate" this situation on another occasion.

Co-star Douglas is an old family friend who has known her since she was a child. This created an unusual dynamic during shooting because she always regarded Douglas as one of her champions.

"He's wanted me to succeed and he's always been very supportive of me." But she had trouble seeing herself as his peer. "I had to resist the temptation to keep calling him 'Mr. Douglas!'"

Douglas says he isn't surprised she

has grown into such an accomplished performer because Paltrow's mother is such "a wonderful, wonderful actress."

"Blythe and I auditioned together for a play at the Lincoln Centre in 1968 - that's how long we've been friends," Douglas said. "I've known Gwyneth since she was in school. She's a lovely young woman, and she has this sense of being so comfortable in her situation and not feeling threatened by it in any way."

BIG MISTAKE

The key people connected with this movie - Paltrow, Douglas, director Andrew Davis - are anxious that it not be perceived as a remake of *Dial M For Murder*, or as an attempt to outdo Hitchcock. Douglas thinks Warner Brothers made a big mistake in initially hyping it as a reworking of the 1954 film, which he says was never a vintage Hitchcock item in the first place.

"All these comparisons do is take away from the good job Patrick Kelly has done on our screenplay," he complains.

The studio has tinkered with the ending of the film, calling back the stars to shoot perhaps 90 seconds of extra footage. But Davis insists that the changes are essentially fine-tuning on a product that has already been testing with great success in previews.

Meanwhile, Paltrow is having to deal with the fact that some pundits are now suggesting she's attempting to fill the shoes of Grace Kelly who played the role of the embattled heroine in the earlier film. She knows this kind of industry hype is more bane than blessing, but she struggles valiantly to address it.

"I feel very flattered - and unworthy. There's only one Grace Kelly. She was an extraordinary actress and an extraordinary presence. Obviously, it's flattering, and there are worse people I could be compared to - but I obviously feel it's totally unjustified."

Paltrow loves breaking new ground. She's done the classics - Jane Austen's *Emma* and an updated version of Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations*. She's succeeded with contemporary romantic comedy (the current *Sliding Doors*), and is moving into the suspense genre with *A Perfect Murder*. She has just completed *Shakespeare In Love*, working from a script by award-winning British playwright Tom Stoppard and sounding genuinely humble when she talks about being part of an "extraordinary" cast that also includes Dame Judi Dench, Geoffrey Rush and Simon Callow.

So what's left for her to conquer. Would she, for example, be prepared to put on 40 pounds for a role.

"Would I have to?" she replies in mock horror. "I guess I would, but I probably wouldn't like to. I guess I'm as vain as the next boring actress actually."