

Oakville vet wants to save deer wounded by arrow

A renowned Oakville veterinarian wants to try to save a doe shot through the head with an arrow. But the Ministry of Natural Resources worries the operation would be too stressful for the animal.

Dr. Wolfgang Zenker, who operates the Burloak Animal Clinic, would first tranquilize the deer and then remove the arrow.

He's widely known for his expertise with large animals. He has treated other deer, buffalo calves and has a lion scheduled to visit his Lakeshore Road animal hospital next week.

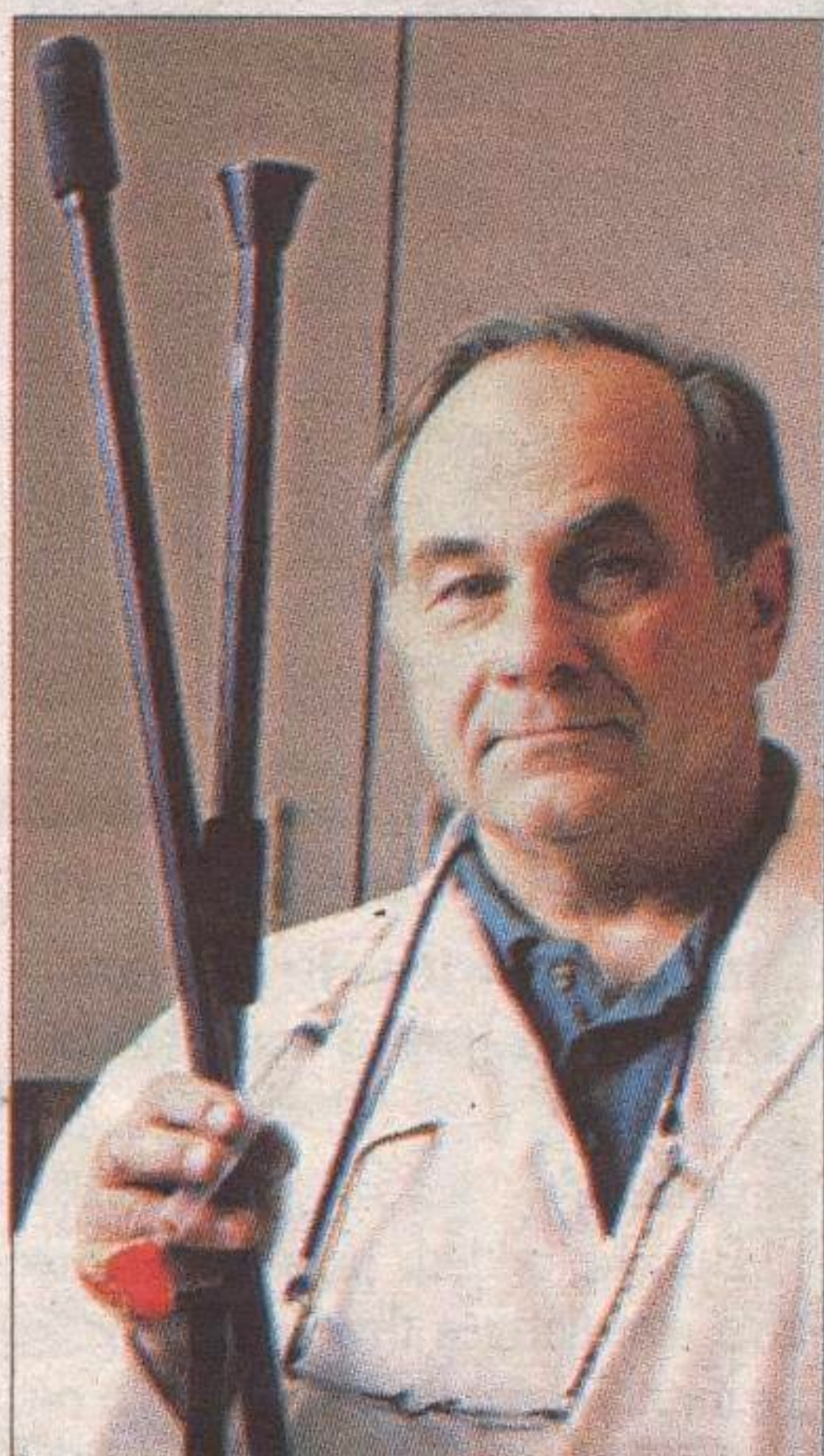
"I'm hoping if I can get close enough and the deer is quiet enough, to hit it with a dart and tranquilize it," said Zenker. "All I have to do then is cut the back part of the shaft off and pull the rest of the arrow through. That's it."

Ancaster resident Julie MacBourne spotted the deer Monday evening. Her husband, Vic, called the Metro Toronto Zoo seeking advice. They referred him to Zenker.

Zenker plans to travel to Ancaster, near the Dundas Valley Conservation Area, with his blowgun Friday or Saturday.

The blowgun is similar to those used by South American natives.

"I'm confident we can help," Zenker said. "The hardest part is



Barry Gray • Hamilton Spectator

Dr. Wolfgang Zenker hopes to tranquilize a doe and remove an arrow lodged in her head.

going to be getting the dart in and making sure it doesn't run away before the tranquilizer takes effect.

"If it doesn't go too far and we can follow it and I can get there, then I can use a reversal agent to reverse the tranquilizer and it should be OK."

Bill Murch, from the Ministry of Natural Resources, says the vet could be authorized by the MNR to render emergency assistance

but some details have to be worked out before any rescue attempt is made.

"There is a fair degree of risk associated with that (tranquillizing rescue)," said Murch.

The animal has stress from the injury it's sustained. People around it add stress and tranquilizing adds further stress.

"If we do go ahead with this, we don't want it turned into a media event. The animal is under enough stress already."

Vic MacBourne echoes Murch's sentiments and asks that the public stay away from the area and respect the delicate nature of the situation.

Murch is concerned the deer will die from infection caused by the arrow and may have to be put down.

But Zenker is more optimistic.

"I've seen some pretty horrendous injuries to deer and they heal well," he said. "Deer have a very good immune system, so I don't think it's infected. If we're able to get a hand on it and pull the arrow through, we might have time to give it antibiotics."

He said the arrow obviously didn't hit an artery and he understands there is no blood around so it probably happened a while ago.

The season for hunting deer by archery ended Dec. 31.

— Torstar News Service

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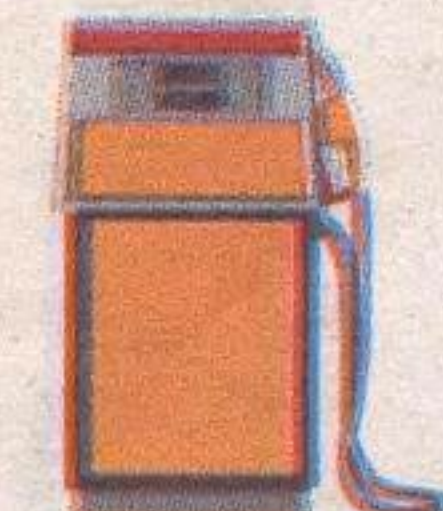
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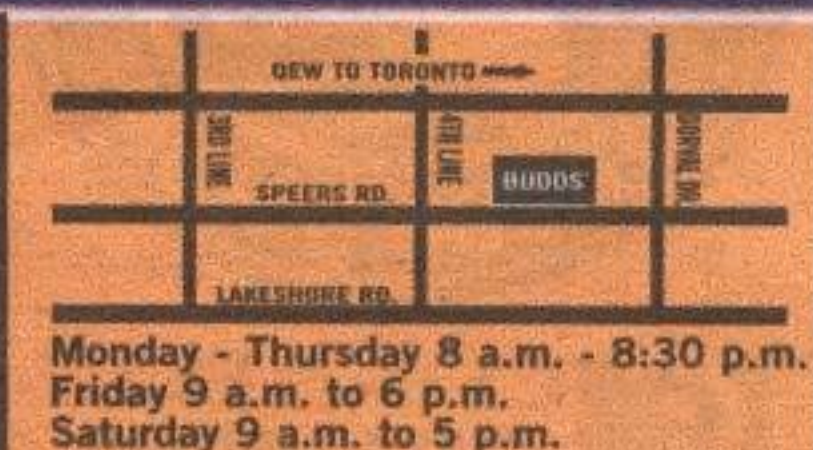
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