

June court date for tree-cutting charges

Defendants facing more than 40 charges stemming from the destruction of 45 acres of trees in an environmentally sensitive woodlot on the Oakville/Milton border will appear in court next June to stand trial.

Two days had been set aside for the trial this week, but after pre-trial conferences in September and November, it was decided that four days would be set aside in June (3, 10, 17 and 24) to hear the case in a Milton courtroom.

The property owner, 1255732 Ontario Inc., and George Vastis, a director and company officer, each face 21 charges in connection with the tree cutting incident

last spring on a property located near Sixteen Mile Creek.

In addition to the 40 original charges for cutting down mature trees, two charges were laid following an investigation into an allegation that heavy equipment moving around on the property destroyed a number of saplings.

The charges were laid last June against the landowner under the Region's tree-conservation bylaw for allegedly cutting hardwood trees. Each charge carries a maximum fine of \$20,000 under Ontario's Forestry Act. The total amount of fines could be \$840,000.

The property, located east of Fourth Line and south of Lower

Baseline Road and straddling the Oakville-Milton border, is designated as an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA), as well as a regional Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI).

Until the cutting, the property contained a 60-acre woodlot. Then contractors using excavators cleared about 45 acres of land, allegedly at the request of the landowner. About 50 of the 60 acres are located in Milton.

The woodlot contained a number of species of trees in the 80 to 100-year-old range that offered interior forest habitat for songbirds such as scarlet tanagers, wood warblers and Coopers hawks.

Driver succumbs to injuries from collision

Funeral services were held Monday for a 28-year-old Oakville woman who was injured in a collision at Upper Middle Road and Eighth Line on Dec. 7.

Cheryl Denney, of Westminister Drive, died in hospital last Friday.

Denney's funeral was held Monday at Bramalea Alliance Church in Brampton.

The Halton Regional Police

Traffic Bureau is still investigating the accident.

It was around 12:30 a.m. on that Sunday morning that police, fire and ambulance officers found a heavily damaged 1998 Toyota on the south shoulder of the road. The Toyota had been travelling eastbound on Upper Middle Road when it turned in front of another car.

Denney was extricated from

her car and taken to Hamilton General Hospital with serious head injuries.

The other vehicle involved was a 1997 Toyota, whose 34-year-old female driver was not injured.

Anyone who witnessed the accident, or who had contact with Denney after 10:30 p.m. on Dec. 6 is being asked to call 905-878-5511, ext. 5108.

Busy schedule for Queen's Park Pages

(Continued from page A1)

In addition to their page duties, they attend classes in the legislature process, social studies, the arts, and mathematics.

Julie and Gabrielle must get up at 6:30 a.m. – and hour earlier on Thursdays because the legislature sits Thursday mornings – to catch the GO Train and subway to Queen's Park. They arrived home on the GO Train at 7:30 p.m.

"On the weekends we try to sleep in until 9 o'clock, but we're so used to getting up, we just get up," said Gabrielle.

"Yeah, getting up at 7:30 a.m. to go to school will be like sleeping in," added Julie.

"On the weekends we got to see daylight, because during the week it's dark when we get up and dark when we go home," said Gabrielle.

Weekends were spent swim-

ming, jogging and shopping.

And courtesy of Queen's Park, the pages visited Casa Loma in Toronto, made Christmas ornaments for the Lights Across Canada, went skating at Nathan Phillips Square, and had fun at a cookie exchange and Secret Santa gift exchange. The girls were taken for lunch by their MPPs, Kevin Flynn and Madeleine Meilleur, and were formally introduced to the speaker, lieutenant-governor, and Hansard director, Premier Dalton McGuinty, Opposition and Progressive Conservative Party leader Ernie Eves and NDP leader Howard Hampton.

For Julie, working as a page for the past month "is cool. I've seen a page featured on TV, and also my mom told me about it." Gabrielle found out about the page program from her older brother who participated two years ago,

"he had found out from my mom. I don't know how she found out about it."

Both girls found working as a page to be an interesting learning experience. "I liked the debates," said Julie, adding she's not sure if a career in politics is in her future. "I like law," said Gabrielle. "I'm thinking about becoming a lawyer but I'm not sure. It's a little too early..."

To qualify, students in Grades 7 and 8 must have an 80 per cent average. Julie's has an 86 per cent average, and Gabrielle has 81 per cent.

Julie found that no one in her class knew about the page program, and only one of Gabrielle's classmates was aware of it.

The Queen's Park Legislative Page Program receives hundreds of applications from which 20 are chosen for each session.



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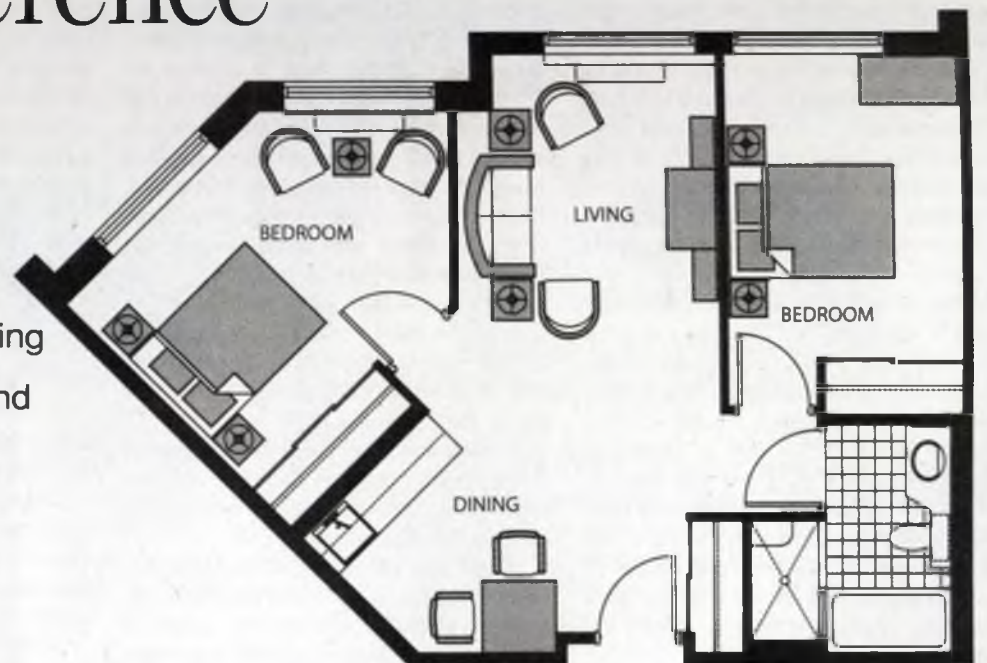
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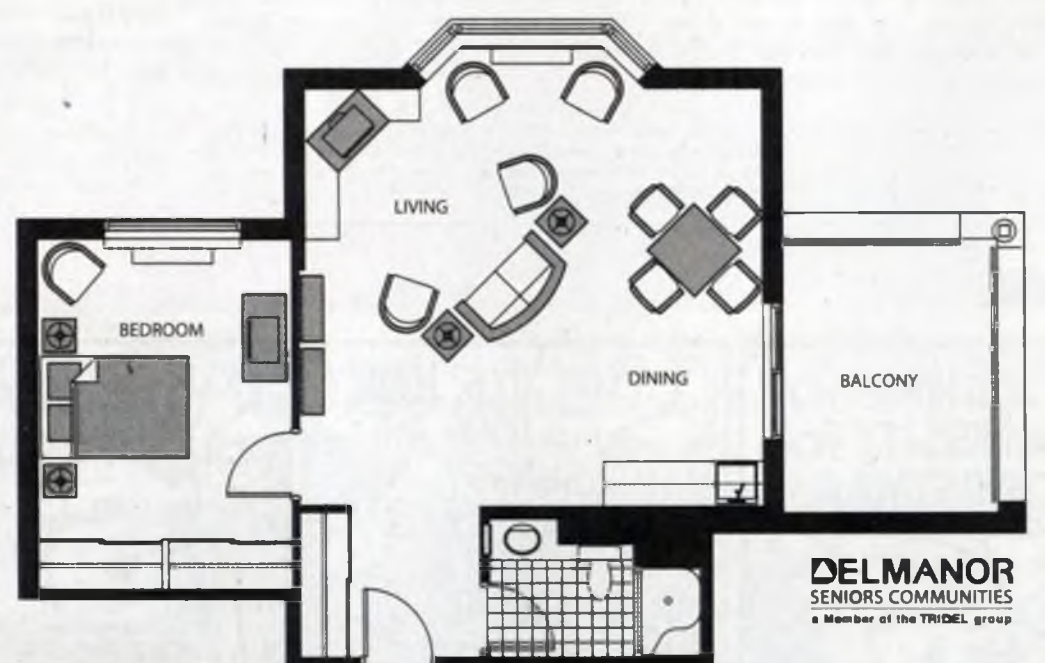
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