

Public must decide quality of life to curb increasing vandalism

By GEORGE EVASHUK
Herald staff writer

Vandalism in Halton in the past year has "increased tremendously," Halton Regional Police Superintendent Floyd Schwartz told The Herald in a recent interview.

"It's a disturbing situation and there's no easy answer," he said, but "the public must decide on the quality of life they want and be ready, willing and able to help the police and the courts to stamp it out."

The crime of vandalism does not have a high solve-rate, Schwartz said, because "these are generally isolated cases with no pattern, rhyme or

reason, unless you know someone is in retaliation." Clues are difficult to discover and unless a citizen sees the vandals in the act and is willing to go to court, you're stymied.

"Most of us laugh when we see some old blue laws," Schwartz said, but to curb vandalism, society "may have to reach back and dust them off... to re-educate people to more responsible behavior."

Although vandalism is a crime associated with youth, "it's up in the adult stages too," Schwartz said. Acts of vandalism are "basically a search for personal recognition among

one's own peer group. Young people think they must do outrageous things to curvy recognition from their own peer group... but it's a negative type of recognition."

Two broad categories of vandalism exist, Schwartz said. One is motivated as a form of retribution for real or imagined ills and the other "im-personal, isolated and not a

great deal of damage" is "some kind of thrill kick."

Many kinds of minor thefts, such as stealing flags from buildings, are a form of vandalism, Schwartz said. Other acts, such as breaking into schools, could lead to "terrible fires" as almost happened last year at Milton's high school.

"I guess Oakville has a very bad problem with schools."

Schwartz said, "and we have some here."

Another particular act of vandalism that disturbs Schwartz is the breaking of stained-glass windows "It's absolutely criminal the action that prompts someone to break something of beauty like that."

Acts of vandalism against automobiles also disturb him. "I don't know how people get a

hang out of slashing tires but it happens in this town far too regularly."

In the past vandalism was more like malicious behavior where nothing was destroyed or damaged while today it "has become more destructive."

"What further encourages outbreaks of vandalism is that one act breeds the next."

To try curbing vandalism by putting a policeman on every corner "is idiotic in a practical sense," he said and would merely move vandals to other areas. "It's not an easy thing to curtail it requires education."

Schwartz believes rising vandalism is a social problem and the mark of a decadent society. "No one is teaching anyone the rights of others and the respect for property neither in the home nor the school in too many cases."

If citizens see acts of vandalism under way or suspicious people in their neighborhoods they should phone the police. "At least, let us know to keep an eye on it." Citizens should not form vigilante groups, he said.

Areas that may contribute to vandalism need to be appraised, but with the only tools the police now have, "maybe we should put some teeth into blue laws, loitering and curfew laws," Schwartz said. "The majority of the population must say 'No, this is not the kind of society we want!'"

Violence against people, outcome of vandalism

Violence against people may be the logical outcome of increasing vandalism says an Acton psychiatrist who believes that vandalism is committed by bored people.

The increase in vandalism in society is a sign that more people are suffering from boredom, believes, Dr. John Dougan who practices psychiatry at the Homewood Community Psychiatric Clinic, Guelph.

"When you get people with not enough to do," Dr. Dougan told The Herald in a recent interview, "they'll breed damage." But the danger is that vandalism can escalate to violence, especially as violence and aggression are more acceptable now, he said. "Violence and vandalism go hand in hand."

Although vandalism is both a social and a personal problem, "it's mainly social," he said.

Most vandalism seems to occur in and at institutions because of "displaced resentment," he said. "Instead of hitting or hurting an individual, the vandal strikes the property."

"In a prison riot, instead of killing the warden, you burn the block," Dr. Dougan said. "Prison riots break out

because you have lazy groups of people with nothing to do."

An act of vandalism is a "demonstration of power over people by someone who in fact has no power," he said. "It's usually done in company as a demonstration of power by the wanted, stupid people. They're below average and they feel frustrated so they go smash something of value."

Dr. Dougan believes that violent shows on television and even the news pictures of war have the effect of increasing violence, "but you can't prove it."

A recent film's theme was the emotional and physical abuse an innocent person became the target of and it "absolutely horrified him," Dr. Dougan said.

The film, Marathon Man, "has reached a new low in entertainment," he said. "Once you accept that kind of violence - even in fantasy - you're well on the way to promoting vandalism."

"It's got to be checked somehow because the next step is violence against people senseless attacks."

Dr. Dougan's prescription for keeping you people from boredom and vandalism is "to keep them busy. There's no lack of organizations: Scouts, Guides, all that stuff."

But the trouble is that young people who are going to get in trouble, don't join such organizations because they feel "looked-at," Dr. Dougan said.

Even more important than organizations is the need for a stable, well-kept home-life. Dr. Dougan believes, "Most stable families keep the kids busy. There's always something to do."



Lorne Ford stands behind one of two broken plate glass windows at his garage. Vandals recently caused \$4,000 damage to his service station property.

School surveillance systems employed

In an effort to cut down on vandalism Halton board of education is installing a surveillance system in its schools.

Sharp kids

"Vandals actually are pretty sharp kids with a weird bent to their creativity," Judy Alexander, chairman of the board of education told The Herald recently.

She criticized the press for published reports of vandalism at Halton schools. "Publicity increases vandalism," she said.

She feels publicity is wrong because schools which previously weren't hit by vandals soon afterwards are attacked. But when vandals are caught, she added, "It's great to publicize."

"I'd like to make the parents responsible," she said, "if they don't know where their kids are at 10 o'clock at night."

The behavior of vandals is "anti-authoritarian," she said. "You can't punch your father in the nose so you go to a neighbor's fence."

"We feel this system will tend to reduce the amount of after school internal vandalism," Hartley Lishman of the board told The Herald in a telephone interview.

The "motion detection systems" as they are called, cost an average of \$1,000 each although the units for larger schools may cost more, he said. Maintenance and monitoring costs are about \$50 per month.

Lishman was reluctant to say how many surveillance systems are in use now, where they are located or how they work. He said the board, which has budgeted for the units, will implement the program in all 90 schools over a number of years.

A useful by-product of the "motion detection system" at "virtually no cost," he said, is its capability to note heat gain and heat loss, which could result in fires being noticed earlier or the loss of heat in a school because of a boiler breakdown, for example.

The system can provide continuous protection while the school is vacant of staff, he said.

Contracts awarded

D.R.G. Stationary Company of Georgetown has won two contracts worth \$373,385 to provide Supply and Services Canada with memorandum books and writing pads, the department announced Monday.

A second Georgetown firm, Varian Associates of Canada Limited, has been given a \$16,459 contract to manufacture electron tubes for the department of national defence.

SOMETIMES FLOWERS ARE THE ONLY WAY YOUR HEART CAN SPEAK

Whatever your message
Call us Today and
its on its Way

Fendly FLORISTS
82 Mill St. 877-6901
Georgetown

•• OPENING IN ONE WEEK ••

THE BAKERY

IN THE
NEW MOUNTAINVIEW PLAZA
(Guelph Sts. & Mountainview)

Featuring ***Open Window Bakery Products***
European Style Breads, Bagels

Kaisers and Rolls
- DELIVERED TWICE DAILY -

Cakes-Pastries-Donuts
Wedding and Birthday Cakes

Bakery Delights
Hot Cakes to Your Sweet Tooth

Elias's Carpet for QUALITY AND SAVINGS

NAME BRAND CARPETS IN ALL QUALITIES, SIZES AND COLOURS

REC. ROOM CARPET . . .	\$5.99 yd.
HARDTWISTS	\$6.99 yd.
KITCHEN CARPET	\$6.99 yd.
HEAVY LEATHERETTE \$4.50	running yard.

and much, much MORE

UP TO 70% OFF
on REMNANT and ROOM SIZES

We will cut to size (in most instances) Ideal for HALLWAYS, STAIRS, ODD SIZE AREAS, CARS and VANS etc.

PAY THE REMNANT PRICE ONLY FOR WHAT YOU NEED

Elias's Carpet Warehouse
BRAMPTON'S LARGEST CARPET STORE
18 KENNEDY ROAD N. (in Eastown Plaza)
BRAMPTON 453-2175

HOURS: - 10 A.M.-9 P.M. DAILY. SAT 9 A.M.-6 P.M.

401
KENNEDY
ELIAS CARPET WAREHOUSE
NO. 7 QUEEN ST.
DIXIE RD.

SMOKING UPHELD

Smokers at the Halton board of education breathed a (rough cough) sigh of relief last Wednesday as the board stubbed out a motion to ban smoking at its meetings.

The intent of the motion to ban smoking was not frivolous, said Trustee Bill Herd who presented the motion. He hoped the discussion would not become longwinded on the rights of smokers and non-smokers.

Trustee F. Armitage asked if Herd would support a smoking ban on all school property by school administrators, teachers and students, but Herd replied that it was a hypothetical situation which could not be answered.

Trustee Rev. Garry Morton told the board he wished someone would pass a motion, so that he could stop smoking. Morton, a former cigarette smoker, now smokes a pipe. Instead of smoking in the board room, trustees would smoke in the back room, he said. "That's ridiculous."

Trustee Bill Priestner told the board he thought the motion was a joke at first. If

Robert Tait
Insurance Agency Ltd.
74 Mill St.
Georgetown
877-4814 or
877-6148

"Count on me for economical protection and prompt, personal service."

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.

Milton court tender

TORONTO—Transportation Minister James Snow announced last week that the Ancaster firm of Harm Shilthuis and Sons has received the tender for the construction of a two-storey addition to the Ontario Government Building, Milton. The tender bid of \$2,059,853 was the lowest of 13 bids; the high being \$2,278,000. The addition to the existing building will double the present usable space.

For That Special Dinner or Date See Our Selection Of . . .

'Restaurant Dresses'
Assorted Styles and Sizes

MARILYN'S
Village Boutique

124 Mill St. E. • Acton • 853-3910

BINGO
EVERY WED.
AT ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION
Branch 120 - Mill St.

EARLY BIRDS
7:45 PM
16 REGULARS - \$20 Each

JACKPOT \$500.
ON 58 NUMBERS
\$50. MUST GO

Two other specials

Proceeds to Retarded Children, Georgetown Memorial Hospital, and Minor Sports.

Like Magic!

Turn \$5 into \$8 Worth of Revlon Products

NOVEMBER 18 to DECEMBER 15

\$5 REVLON BONUS
WITH ANY \$5.00 REVLON PURCHASE
EXCLUSIVELY NOW AT MOST Zellers STORES

Here's how...with every \$5.00 purchase of Revlon products, you get your choice of \$3.00 worth of Revlon products, as a BONUS! The whole wonderful collection of Revlon cosmetics and fragrances is yours to choose from at Zellers. For yourself. For gifts. What a beautiful Christmas bonus!

Zellers

GEORGETOWN GEORGETOWN MARKET CENTRE
MILTON MILTON MALL SHOPPING CENTRE