

# Good Samaritans to the rescue

By PAM DOUGLAS

Special to The Independent/Free Press

Two area heroes who rushed to the aid of a woman pushed to the sidewalk by purse snatchers will be recommended for citations.

Alan Henry, 47, of Georgetown, and Dennis Hopper, 27, of Brampton were strangers until last Thursday when they witnessed the attack as they sat in separate vehicles at a traffic light on Bovaird Dr.

"I saw this lady hit the ground, and two youths," recalls Hopper, a software development engineer for a Downsview burglar alarm company. "One of them (the youths) grabbed her purse and they took off southbound on MacKay St. That ticked me off."

The 38 year-old woman was walking home after taking her two young girls, aged 4 and 8, for a swim at Ellen Mitchell Recreation Centre, something they had done since the summer started. They had made a quick stop at the grocery store and the woman was telling her 8 year-old to hold the hand of her sister before crossing at MacKay St. at approximately 6 p.m.

"I saw these boys coming out of a car," says the victim, who did not wish to be identified for fear of retribution. "They came walking, one was on my right and one on my left. One snatched the groceries, the other snatched my purse. I tried to keep hold of my purse."

She was knocked to the ground and suffered cuts and bruises which had to be treated at hospital later.

The teenagers took off with her purse, running south on MacKay with Henry and Hopper hot on their trail.

The two men caught up with the teens on Massey St. and took hold of the six-foot-tall youth who had grabbed the purse. The youth struggled, and Henry, who works for a food company in Brampton, was slightly injured as he tried to hold him on the ground.

A passing taxi cab driver stopped and the two Good Samaritans hollered at him to call police. The cabbie complied, then stuck around, joining a gathering crowd of neighbors from surrounding homes. The onlookers surrounded the second suspect as Henry sat on the first youth and Hopper held onto the struggling teen's legs.

"For 16 he was strong," Henry says. "I had trouble holding onto him." Henry's left arm was twisted during the struggle.

A 16-year-old from Bolton is charged with assault and robbery while a 16-year-old Bolton youth

faces a charge of robbery.

The victim is grateful to everyone who helped her. "I want to thank these two gentlemen (Henry and Hopper) and another man who helped my kids," she says. She says she want to thank everyone involved.

The victim says she is too afraid to walk alone now, day or night, and she doesn't have a car. "I think it's too scary now," she says.

Her children were so frightened by what they witnessed that they are afraid to sleep alone.

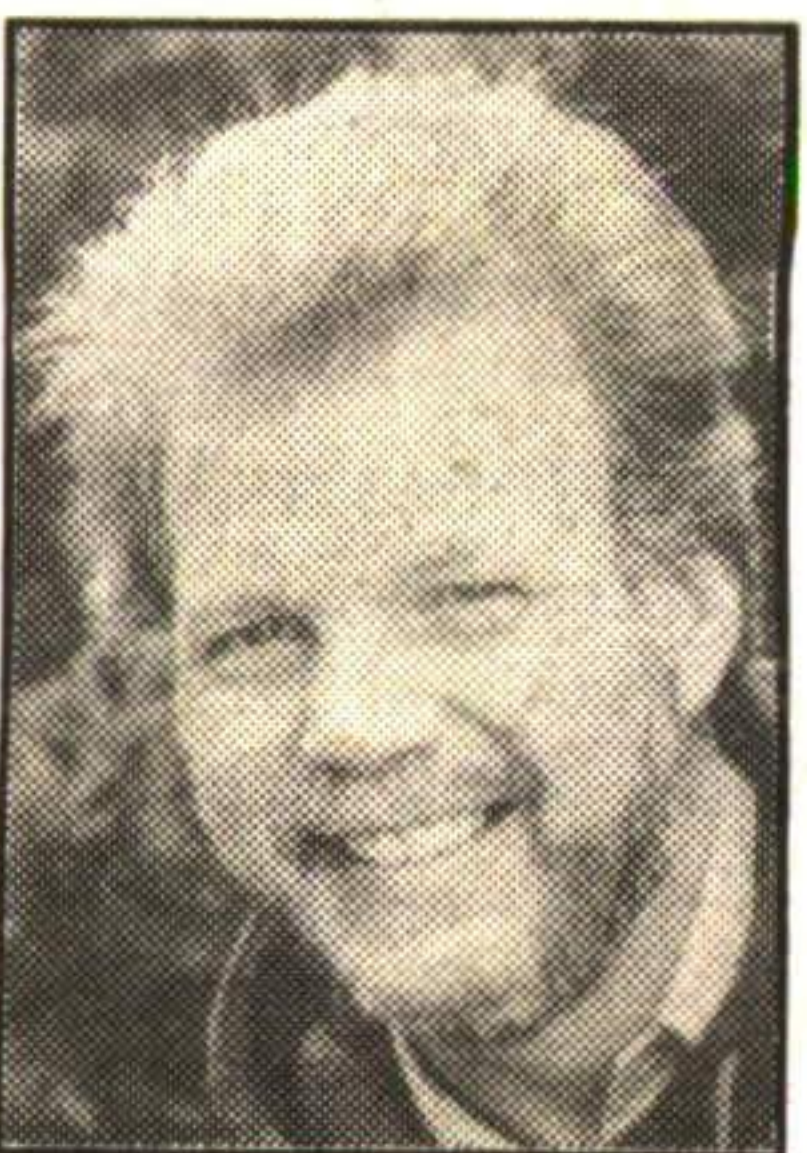
For a fleeting moment Hopper admits he second-guessed himself on whether or not to get involved. However, he says he was annoyed at what he saw happening in his own community, and he felt he had to do something.

Henry says he didn't think about what he was doing. "It's something I always said I would never get involved in," Henry says. "These young guys could have knives, or guns, but it never crossed my mind. It was just an instinct, away I went."

Both men say they would probably do the same again, without a second thought.

"I did what I thought was right," Henry says. "I felt good about it when I left (the police station), proud that I had helped."

Peel police say the men will be recommended for civilian citations for their actions.



ALAN HENRY

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## Police seek shoplifting suspects

Three Georgetown electronics stores were hit by shoplifters last Thursday afternoon.

Two people entered G/S Television on Guelph St. at around 4 p.m. While one diverted the attention of the clerk, another removed a compact video camera worth over \$1,000, police said.

The Stereo Shoppe at Georgetown Mall was also hit that same afternoon. At 3:30 p.m. two people entered the store, and one distracted the clerk while the other reached inside a display area and removed a Panasonic camcorder worth about \$1,500. Then, at about 4:30 p.m. the manager of Radio Shack, who

was working alone, noticed that four walkie talkies worth about \$800 had been taken. The last time he saw the items in place was at about 3 p.m. While the manager didn't notice the two suspects carry out this theft, police say they believe it was likely the same two people.

Both suspects were in their early 20s, police said. One was 22-24 years old, white, about 5 ft. 10 inches and 175 lbs. with a pock-marked face and dirty blond hair.

The second suspect was black, 22 to 25 years old, 5 ft. 10 inches, 175 lbs. and unshaven.

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