

# Cat-burglar on the prowl?

BY DOUG HARRISON  
The Acton Tanner

Little Margaret Bowes has had trouble sleeping the last 10 days. She's often waiting up for her little Smokey to come through a window at her family's Kingham Road residence.

"She thinks he's found a girlfriend and he'll return when he dumps her. She's devastated. Smokey was her baby," said Janet Lelievre, Margaret's mother, last week.

Two weeks ago, Smokey, a neutered male cat, wandered from the Lelievre residence like many cats are wont to do. However, when the sun started to fall, the black, short-haired feline with a white streak down the centre of its face didn't return.

"He's 10-years-old. He would not have walked off the property," said Lelievre. "He hasn't done that in years, because he's getting older."

This is just one in a series of recent incidents in the Kingham-Greenore-Cobblehill area, where at least three cats have vanished without a trace.

"Maybe it's the economic climate," Lelievre guessed. She said a couple of others went missing the same day. "It's a quick buck for somebody if they want to sell them, especially under the table. Somebody probably wants healthy animals for research."

However, Anne Burr, supervisor at the Erin-Hillsburgh and District Humane Society, said Monday that the Animal Research Act

forbids animals to be sold for research without paperwork showing their origin.

Lelievre, who has since given her 7-year-old daughter another cat to soften the blow of losing Smokey, said some of her neighbours don't let their cats out. If they do, the cats are put on a harness.

"When you see people doing that you think it's cruel. But when you think what's going on now..." Lelievre said she's had about five calls from people who thought they spotted Smokey.

Burr mentioned she received three calls last week concerning area cats. She doesn't think there's much of a pattern, since one had been missing for four weeks and another for five to six days.

Another came from a girl who said her grandmother had been feeding neighbouring cats and they disappeared without her knowing others had vanished as well.

Julia Prentice, who lives just south of Kingham Road on Hwy. 25, has also lost her 11-pound orange-white neutered male cat, who has no collar or tags.

"I know coyotes are over-populated this year and they're hungry... the most terrifying part is not knowing whether the cat is still walking around or if something has happened to it," she said.

"There really isn't too much of a pattern here," Burr confirmed. "If you live in a rural area, cats can be eaten by a fox or a coyote. We suggest that cats not be allowed outside, unless they're on a harness," confirmed Burr, adding "if people would only get their cat tattooed they would get them back quicker."

"If people don't want their animal to wander or get lost they can make sure of that."

# NEWS SHORTS

## Busy weekend for firefighters

Acton's volunteer firefighter brigade had a busy weekend, assisting in three separate incidents.

On Friday afternoon at the Fourth Line north of 22 Sideroad, firefighters were called to a train and motor vehicle accident. The firefighters helped to carry the auto's single passenger up a hill to the waiting ambulance.

On Saturday evening firefighters had a medical assist call for a male patient at a Victoria Avenue home. Firefighters initiated CPR until ambulance workers arrived and took over. The patient was transported to Georgetown Hospital.

Firefighters responded to a false alarm activation at McKenzie-Smith middle school on Sunday afternoon. The fire department believes the alarm was caused by a malfunction in the fire detection system.

## Thieves hit concession stand

Thieves broke into the concession booth at Limehouse ball park recently and stole an assortment of soda pop, potato chips and candy bars.

Police say the break-in occurred sometime between July 16 and 23. Value of the stolen goods has not been determined yet.

## Mill apartment ransacked

A Mill Street apartment reportedly was entered and ransacked recently. The residence was not occupied at the time it was ransacked and it is not known if anything was taken from the home.

The break-in occurred sometime between June 30 and July 4. Police have no suspects at this time.

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"There have been a few winners, but not nearly enough. The luck seems to pass Acton."

— Helen Jocque, lottery ticket seller, Page 4

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Tokyo Zoo in Japan is closed for two months a year to give the animals a vacation from the visitors.

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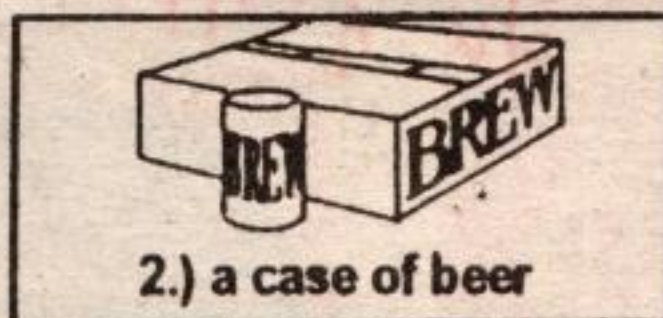
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