



**PET BLESSING:** Father Bob Bulbrook, Pastor of St. Joseph Church blesses an assortment of dogs and cats, large and small, in the church yard on Sunday afternoon. The traditional blessing of pets is attributed to St. Francis of Assisi, the 12th century saint who loved all creation and had a particular love for animals.

# Three arrested in Nigerian scam

The RCMP, along with the FBI and Secret Service in the United States, recently cracked an eight-year letter scam from Nigeria, arresting three people in Toronto. Several people in this area reported receiving letters from Nigeria. None reported losing money.

More than 300 victims around the world were duped into giving money to a fake organization. The RCMP say people lost between \$52,000

and more than \$5 million U.S.

Officials call this an "organized advance fee fraud." It normally occurs in two phases:

**PHASE 1:** It is controlled out of Nigeria. Typically, victims receive a letter either by mail, fax or internet allegedly from officials of a large Nigerian institution, such as the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation or the Central Bank of Nigeria.

The letters contain an ur-

gent request for a need to transfer funds out of Nigeria to financial institutions in the victim's country - with the victim reaping a percentage of the profit.

The letter says foreign accounts are needed so victims are asked to wire personal banking information and \$10,000 U.S. to cover administration fees. Numbers for fake banks forward to a "boiler room" in Toronto.

**PHASE 2:** Victims are contacted by a person posing as a merchant banker of the Central Bank of Nigeria. They are told the funds are now in a clearing-house or mercantile bank in North America.

Phone numbers given for the fake banks were all forwarded to a "boiler room" in the Toronto area. The scam continues with the victim levied taxes, duties and other fees, with the promise of getting a windfall, until the victim is bankrupt.

The RCMP began a coordinated effort with U.S. Police forces in 1998. According to an RCMP news release, police detachments in the Toronto area received at least one complaint a week for the past eight years from victims who lost money in the scam.

Victims suffered health problems, mental breakdowns, divorce and the break-up of their families because of the fraudulent scam.

The investigation culminated in the arrest of Wenceslaus Utomi, 47, of

Richmond Hill; Ainsley Anthony Drakes, 34, of Toronto; and Richard Brewster, 33, of Toronto.

**Call The New Tanner with your news tips!**

## POLICE BEAT

### Yukon gone

Thieves stole tools and a GMC Yukon truck parked inside Halton Hills Electrical Contracting on Commerce Crescent overnight last Thursday/Friday.

They forced open a rear window and slipped a garage door to get into the shop. The keys were in the black 1993 truck that police value at \$10,000. Water skis, power tools and air tools were also stolen. There were no witnesses.

### Unscheduled Caravan

A locked 1992 White Dodge Caravan was stolen from the driveway of a Campbell Court home between 3 a.m. and 3 p.m. on Sunday. Police report the van, valued at \$5,000, was locked.

### Jeep junked

A stereo system and soft top of a 1997 Jeep owned by a Lasby Lane resident were stolen between 2 a.m. and 2 p.m. last Sunday. Thieves opened the soft top roof of the Jeep, parked in the driveway, to get in.

They damaged the dash to take the CD player. The top and some CDs were also stolen. Total loss is \$2,000.

### Furnace smoke

An overheated furnace motor filled a Longfield Road home with smoke at 10:48 last Wednesday night. Acton firefighters ventilated and deodorized the house.

### Accidental alarm

An open burning complaint that called Acton firefighters to a house on Highway 25 south of Speyside at 12:42 a.m. on Saturday was an accidental false alarm.

**Halton Hills**  
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND INFORMATION

## Meals on Wheels

Week is October 1-7

Our community supports people to stay healthy where is preferred: in one's own home. The Meals On Wheels service provided here by Halton Community Support and Information allows people to have a nutritionally balanced meal delivered to their own homes, up to 5 days a week, and the price is very reasonable at \$3.50 per meal.

We celebrate Meals on Wheels week from Oct 1-7, and we celebrate the achievement of about 25 Acton volunteers who make up the dedicated team that delivers hot lunchtime meals to

homebound individuals throughout the area. Volunteers break up the isolation of many seniors as they bring friendly greetings along with the meal made up of soup, entrée, bread and dessert.

On Wednesday, October 3, meals on Wheels and Wheels to Meals Volunteers will gather at our local Acton office for coffee and brunch and enjoy each other's company. Our community is fortunate to benefit from the kindness of these volunteers.

If you would like more information on Meals on Wheels (hot lunchtime meals) or Meals on Ice (frozen meals) or for information about volunteering, please call 853-3310.

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