

Officers, civilians escape injury after shotgun-wielding man refuses to drop weapon

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The suspect's vehicle became stuck on a grassy shoulder in the Sinclair Ave. complex.

When two officers arrived a short time later the man jumped out of the van and pointed a shotgun at the officers, who were about 10 metres away.

Payne said the officers ordered the man to drop the gun, but he refused, so they both fired a number of rounds with their service pistols.

"The officers fired their police handguns and successfully found cover. As they did, the man ran onto Sinclair Ave. towards a number of citizens," said Payne.

He said the suspect refused to drop the gun when a third Halton officer, who has six years experience, approached him. The officer was concerned he might harm civilians or hijack a vehicle to get away.

"He (the officer) acted quickly and was able to take the man into custody before he could pose any further risk to the witnesses and citizens nearby," said Payne.

Lee Alas, of Bulldog Appliances, watched the final moments of the incident from the store's window.

"The police grabbed him and took him down right in front of the store," said Alas. "It was kind of like watching a TV through our window."

She said at approximately 7:10 p.m. her husband Peter looked out the office door and said "there's a guy running down the parking lot with a shotgun in his hand."

She said he locked the door and everyone in the store ran to the window to watch what was going on outside.

Alas said prior to seeing the man running she heard gunfire, but at the time thought it was a car backfiring.

Bulldog Appliances employee Jeff MacNeale accidentally came upon the shooting as he was leaving to go home for the night.

He was heading out of the parking lot when he came upon two officers, their guns drawn and pointed at a man in a van.

The man had what he first thought was an umbrella, but eventually realized was a shotgun.

Shots were fired. "I was white as a ghost. I threw my car into reverse and from there I can't really remember what happened," said MacNeale, who later returned to make a statement to



Steve Bard of Starr Glass sweeps up the glass to the Georgetown Bread Basket front door, which was shattered after police opened fire on a shotgun-toting man Thursday night at 55 Sinclair Ave.

Photo by Ted Brown

Halton Police.

Police Superintendent Signy Pitman praised the officers for their actions.

"We are pleased that the officers reacted in a way that is consistent with their police training," said Pitman. "We train our officers for critical incidents such as this but hope they never need to press that training into action. This is not a typical call for our officers and yet they reacted very professionally and in keeping with the high standards have come to appreciate."

Charged with failing to remain at the scene of a collision, pointing a firearm, possessing a weapon dangerous to public peace, possession of a prohibited firearm with ammunition, possession of stolen property, breach of recognizance and fail to comply with a probation order is Gerald Rawn, 40, of Hamilton.

Rawn, who appeared in Milton court Friday, is facing outstanding theft-related charges in Hamilton in connection with a shoplifting incident at Lime Ridge Mall Feb. 7.

On March 24 Hamilton Police issued a warrant for his arrest in connection with the alleged theft of a vehicle from his ex-wife's Hamilton home.

—With files from Torstar News Service (Lisa Tallyn can be reached at ltallyn@independentfreepress.com)

Curwood story earns reporter top award

Independent & Free Press reporter Lisa Tallyn's report on the closing of Curwood Packaging Ltd. last year, and its impact on local workers, earned her a provincial newspaper award Saturday.

Published Feb. 17, 2006, the story detailed how Curwood workers dealt with the sudden closing of the Armstrong Avenue plant—a move that resulted in the loss of 137 jobs.

Tallyn's story was named the Best Business and Finance Story at the Ontario Community Newspapers Association's annual award night in Niagara Falls.

"The faces from photographer Sabrina Byrnes draw a reader in— three normal looking guys soon to be out of a job. They dominate the front page of *The Independent* in a style that's straightforward and effective and stays with you. The story by Lisa Tallyn more than backed that visual



Independent & Free Press reporter Lisa Tallyn accepts her OCNA award for Best Business and Finance story from Bob Doornenbal, past president of the Alberta Weekly Newspapers Association, at Saturday's awards night in Niagara Falls.

Photo by Riziero Vertolli

impression with quotes from affected workers bringing out the personal end of those who would be finished when Curwood Packaging Ltd. closed its doors," said judge Rod Link of the Terrace Standard in Terrace, B.C.

Tallyn's article was judged the best among 56 entries. The OCNA awards are held annually to recognize journalistic excellence among Ontario's community newspapers.



Public information centre set for tomorrow on planned reconstruction of Maple Ave.

A public information centre will be held tomorrow (Thursday) on the planned reconstruction of Maple Ave. from Trafalgar Rd. to Mountainview Rd.

The drop-in information meeting will be held 6-8 p.m. in the Halton Hills council chambers at the Civic Centre. It will also include information on the watermain replacement on Normandy Blvd.

Wards 3&4 Regional Councillor Jane Fogal has requested that a second public information night be held at a later date since Thursday is part of the Easter holiday services.

Construction is tentatively scheduled to start in August 2007. Once the Halton Region project is completed, the Town of Halton Hills will assume control of the road.

Activity Challenge had 2,000 participants

Over the five eight-week Activity Challenge, Halton Hills residents walked more than 110,000 kms collectively since 2005.

More than 2,000 people participated and logged more than 20,000 hours of some form of activity, according to a Recreation and Parks summation report. Participants ranged in age from Robert Little School's Grade 5 class to seniors.

Residents can still log on to the Town's website, www.haltonhills.ca

to record their weekly physical activities.

The program was funded by the Ministry of Health (\$23,500), the Town of Halton Hills (\$8,000 in-kind services) and \$6,500 from the Recreation and Parks Department's Active Living operating budget.

Recreation and Parks Director Terry Alyman said his staff will continue to build on the momentum and seek out more grants to fund the program.

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