



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## Moonlight muse

Artist Walter Campbell was at the Harrop House Gallery recently displaying works from his Moonlight Ride Collection.

## Cops have begun drunk driving crackdown for another season

By HOWARD MOZEL  
Special to The Champion

With the holiday season just around the corner, area police are launching their own Yuletide tradition — the annual RIDE (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) program.

The initiative, which kicked off recently, runs until Jan. 2 in an effort to curb the death toll and injuries on Ontario roads resulting from drinking and driving. Locally, both the OPP and Halton Regional Police will be taking part.

This year, though, the OPP will release to the media the names of impaired drivers they charge.

According to Constable Sonya Siebert of the Burlington Detachment, the new policy will be in effect across the OPP's Greater Toronto Region. All names will be collected by OPP headquarters in Aurora, then released weekly.

During the 1996-97 Christmas season, the Halton Regional Police RIDE program stopped 6,000 more vehicles than the previous year, but laid two less impaired charges.

From Nov. 28, 1996 through Jan. 1, 1997, spot-checks stopped 23,285 vehicles, compared with 17,110 vehicles during the 1995-96 program.

A total of 122 roadside tests were administered (39 in 1995) resulting in 18 12-hour suspensions (only one in 1995) and five impaired charges.

During all of 1996 a total of 57,330 vehicles were checked.

Province-wide during last year's Christmas blitz, the OPP stopped 446,957 vehicles. A total of 581 drivers faced Criminal Code alcohol-related charges and

1,023 12-hour suspensions were issued.

During the same period, the OPP investigated 46 fatal collisions in which 56 people were killed. More than 30 per cent of these collisions were alcohol-related.

"Although the OPP continues to increase the number of officers committed to cracking down on drinking and driving, alcohol related deaths are still too high," says Sgt. Al Reid of the OPP's Traffic and Marine Safety Bureau in Orillia. "Through education and zero tolerance enforcement, the OPP will continue to catch drinking drivers, making our roads safer for everyone."

In May, Halton Regional Police received more than \$24,198.21 as part of a major provincial funding commitment to the RIDE grant program.

At that time Queen's Park announced that \$1.2 million per year will be going toward enhancing front-line policing on the province's roads. The money covers overtime incurred by 90 municipal police services and 30 OPP municipal contract locations for RIDE spot-checks.

Complementing the efforts of law enforcement agencies is the annual Red Ribbon Campaign sponsored by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Canada.

MADD Halton recently donated a new \$12,000 Intoxilizer breath testing instrument to Halton Regional Police — the second such device donated in as many years. MADD Halton purchased the equipment entirely through the proceeds of last year's Red Ribbon Campaign and various fundraisers.

## Aussem says he has lost respect for hockey and won't play again

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Mr. Genesee said, "I like the fact that my client is going to put something back into hockey."

Aussem said he won't be playing hockey again. "I have no faith... I've lost a lot of respect for hockey," because the police were called in to settle a hockey dispute, he said outside the courtroom. He added he

may consider "coaching some day, but not in the near future."

"I'm glad it's over and done with," he said. "I'm just looking forward to getting on with my life."

Mr. Heron, of North York, is currently playing hockey for the University of Boston.

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