

Crime Stoppers leads to 126 arrests in Halton

About \$440,000 worth of drugs and properties have been recovered

By LISA TALLYN
Special to The Champion

Thanks to anonymous tips that have been called into Crime Stoppers of Halton, police have recovered about \$440,000 worth of drugs and property since the program was started here almost three years ago.

As of the end of August tips from people who are granted anonymity, have led to 126 arrests, 285 charges laid and 467 cases cleared.

The program is a joint effort between the Halton Regional Police Service and the community — members of the Crime Stoppers board of directors — and they say the program is a success.

The Halton program is based on the first Crime Stoppers program initiated in Albuquerque, New Mexico by a police officer in 1976.

Each week Halton police decide which crimes to publicize in the local media (radio, television and newspapers). Bev Pickard, a member of the board of directors responsible for public education, says police often pick cases that they are stuck on.

The program, which pays callers for tips that lead to arrests, is run by a 17 member board of directors. The directors, volunteers from across the region, meet monthly.

The board's key roles are to raise money and public awareness for the program.

Ms Pickard says the board is very pleased with the results of the program and points to two of its biggest success stories.

She says two years ago police arrested the man responsible for driving a van through glass doors at Milton Mall. The arrest stemmed from

information provided by an anonymous caller. That arrest led to the recovery of \$150,000 worth of property stolen from E.C. Drury High School.

Last year a tip from a caller led to the arrest of a man who was sentenced to two years in jail for uttering death threats to several women in the Burlington area.

"We have also had several drug cases solved as a result of Crime Stoppers tips," said Ms Pickard. "We often get information on break and enters and smuggled goods."

Ms Pickard says the fact that Crime Stoppers callers are required to be anonymous is an incentive for many of them.

"If charges are laid we do pay for the tip, anywhere between \$50 and \$1,000. The reward depends on the severity of the crime, the quality of information provided, the risk taken

by the informant and the amount of the property or drugs recovered."

Ms Pickard says Crime Stoppers receives about 20 calls a day, and most of them are legitimate.

"We are very pleased that we don't get many wacky calls," said Ms Pickard. "But we have kept track and we do get more calls during hot weather and during a full moon."

When a person calls with information his call is answered on a separate line at the police station. Each caller is provided with a code number, and is told to refer to that code when he calls back.

The person can call back to see if any arrests resulted from their information, but Ms Pickard says only about half of the callers ever call back for their money.

According to Ms Pickard, the board pays out about \$4,000 a year

in tip money.

The bulk of the money raised by the board comes from a bingo held in Burlington each month which nets the program about \$400 monthly.

About another \$2,000 is raised each year through donations from businesses, including insurance companies which Ms Pickard says often make donations because solved crimes could lead to lower insurance claims.

The board serves for three years. Volunteers can also work on either the fundraising or public education committees of the program.

"Our volunteers come from all walks of life. We have several retired people and business people volunteers."

Ms Pickard says an election will be held soon for new members of serve beginning in January.

Anyone interested in becoming volunteers or providing information should contact Sgt. Dan Farr of Crime Stoppers at 825-TIPS (825-8477) or 1-800-668-5151.

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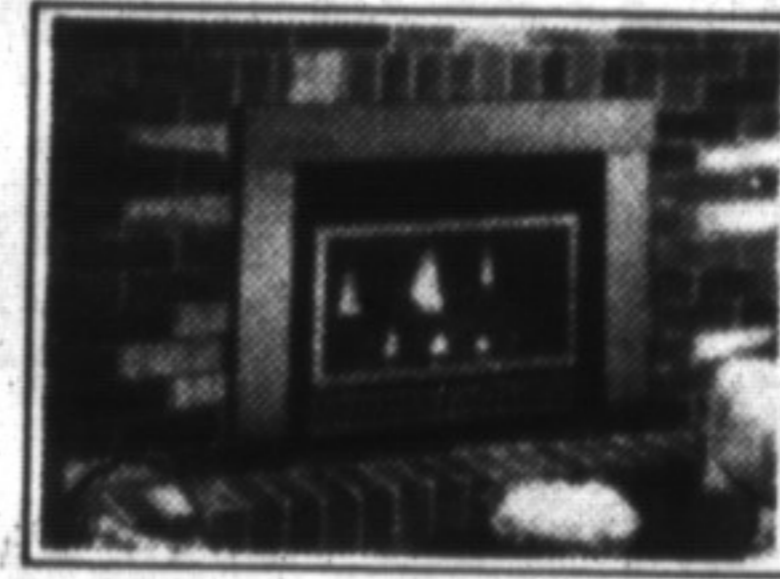


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The American Animal Hospital Association is an international association of more than 11,000 veterinarians who treat companion animals, such as dogs and cats. Established in 1933, the association is well known in the veterinary field for its high standards for hospitals and pet health care.

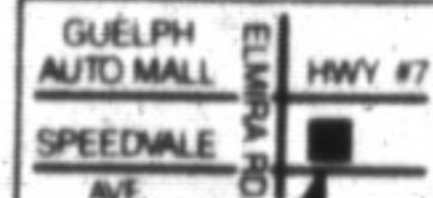


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