

Computer thefts may be the work of a crime ring

As the computer industry is rapidly expanding, so is the business of thieves.

Computers are being targeted more than ever by burglars, and computer-related thefts are increasing in Milton, according to Halton Regional Police.

"We believe some of the recent computer (thefts) are connected," said Staff Sgt. Roy Smith. "It's becoming a really popular crime."

Two Milton businesses and a church lost computers to thieves between January 22 and 28, police said. Culprits made an attempt to steal some equipment at another business,

but were scared off.

St. Paul's United Church on Main Street East was the first target January 22 at 6 a.m. Someone ransacked the office and made off with a photocopier, computer and printer for a loss of \$6,000.

A witness noticed a man loading the equipment into a van, Staff Sgt. Smith said.

A total of \$10,000 worth of computers was taken from Milton Computer Services on Main Street Friday. The culprit broke a front window to gain entry at 4:30 a.m. The alarm sounded, but the thief had already fled with the

Police Blotter

goods by the time police arrived.

Overnight last Wednesday, Suma International was hit, but something must have scared the thieves away. The culprits attempted to dismantle the equipment, but fled before completing the job. About \$400 damage was caused to the front door.

Loneragan Insurance on Main Street East was most recently targeted. Overnight Sunday, culprits forced open a back door and stole a comput-

er. Minor damage was caused to the building.

Police are advising computer owners to record the serial numbers of their equipment so it can be identified as stolen property if it ever turns up.

Teacher suffers broken nose in assault

A 19-year-old female Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf student faces an assault charge after a teaching assistant was punched in the face during class January 23.

The 39-year-old woman was hit at 9:20 a.m. after telling a student not to go near a desk, police said.

The teacher's nose was broken in

the assault.

Thieves trick clerk

A Farah's Food Mart clerk was kept busy by a male youth while another stole an undisclosed amount of cash from the rear of the Laurier Avenue store Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

One of the culprits forced open the rear door and rummaged through the back room while the clerk was serving another youth, who pretended to be a customer.

The suspect youth is described as five-foot-nine with long curly black hair. He was wearing a blue baseball cap.

Region moving on conduct code

By BRAD REAUME

The Champion

Halton Region wants a code of conduct put in place to guide councillors and staff through the public-private finance partnership that is expected to fuel the Halton Urban Structure Plan (HUSP).

Members of the procedural bylaw review committee met last Wednesday and suggested drafting a code of conduct in the next few months with particular attention on receiving gifts and hospitality, and councillors directing staff outside the bounds of council.

"I see other municipalities with codes of conduct but if we didn't have one for 20 years it makes you wonder if we need one now," said Burlington Councillor Ralph Scholtens. "I guess other municipalities instituted codes because of some incident."

Oakville Councillor Kevin Flynn said it was a matter of HUSP project priorities. "We must do it up front. If the public sees it in place they will have a better perception. The public always thinks someone's got the inside track."

Halton clerk Joan Eaglesham told the committee that a wide-ranging code of conduct including processes for enforcement, appeals and penalties would take several months to put in place.

"I think of the code as more of a shield than a sword," said committee chair Rob MacIssac. "The principle is to give councillors guidance when they are

faced with grey areas. If someone is going to do something, the code is not going to stop them, and they would also be breaching the conflict of interest act and probably the criminal code."

Most codes of conduct are merely statements of principles and they underscore various laws and rules which govern public business, Ms. Eaglesham told the committee.


"It always struck me that the Soviet Union had a Bill of Rights while the United Kingdom does not," Mr. MacIssac said. "What difference does that piece of paper make to human rights in those countries?"

In addition to the code of conduct the review also touched on council procedure. Committee members debated a measure which would require disclosure of new business items prior to any council or committee meeting.

Mr. Scholtens suggested all items to be brought up under new business be cleared by the chair prior to any meeting, to give councillors time to formulate an opinion on the issue to be discussed.

The new business segment of the meeting is often used to draw council's attention to community events. However, it also functions as an emergency door to get an item on the floor. After a short debate Mr. Scholtens' idea was rejected.

The draft procedural bylaw will be circulated to regional council members for their comments.



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The Town of Milton is looking for a DBase programmer to complete repairs to custom written Parking Ticket processing software. We expect the work to take a maximum of 20 hours, and are willing to pay \$13.00/hour. Programming work would have to be done at the Town Hall, between the hours of 8:30 to 4:30 pm to be completed by Mid March. If you are interested in carrying out this project, please submit your resume to the attention of Linda Nielsen Taylor at:

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