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NEWSLINES

Pot bust in 'burb

Two Sunnyvale Crescent residents were arrested at their home Friday after police seized nine kilograms of marijuana.

Armed with a search warrant, Halton Regional Police discovered the pot after scouring a Sunnyvale Crescent house and a vehicle shortly before 11:30 a.m.

Drug paraphernalia was also seized.

A man and a woman, both 30, face charges of possession of a narcotic for the purpose of trafficking. The man is also charged with possession of a narcotic.

Service continues for family benefits

The Ontario Public Service Employees Union strike has caused closures of some government probation and family benefits offices, but essential services will continue to be offered.

However, offices that remain open to provide essential services are operating with reduced staff.

To avoid long line-ups and confusion, Milton clients in need of probation and family benefits services are asked to call the following numbers for more information.

For family benefits, call 1-800-361-0897. For probation services, call 842-3565.

"We're asking that clients make appointments," said Karen Eisler of the Ministry of Community and Social Services' Mississauga head office.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Members of local 223 of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) picket in front of Trillium School on Ontario Street. Staff at the school for children with severe learning disabilities and the neighbouring Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf walked off the job Monday. They joined 25,000 OPSEU members across the province. See more photos page 5.

Government workers hit the bricks at E.C. Drury, court house, Maplehurst

By KAREN SMITH
The Champion

Court cases are being delayed, the jail is operating with skeleton staff and parents are having difficulty dropping their children off at school after hundreds of striking Ontario government workers began picketing Monday.

The first Ontario-wide provincial government employees' strike in history saw hundreds of local members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) set up picket lines at Maplehurst correctional and detention centres, the Ernest C. Drury School for the Deaf complex and the Milton court house.

The striking workers include Maplehurst guards, deaf school staff, court clerks and land registry staff.

Deemed essential services, the jail and court

house are still operating with reduced staff, causing further delays in the already backlogged court system and leaving inmates without recreation, visitation and canteen privileges.

"It will not be business as usual and people will be inconvenienced," said Halton North MPP Ted Chudleigh. "But the government has taken all the necessary steps to ensure essential services will be maintained during the strike."

Tempers are heating up at entrances to the deaf school complex, where problems are erupting as school buses and parents try to enter the facility to drop off students.

As cars, backed up to Derry Road, tried to inch their way through picket lines Monday, a striking worker fell onto the hood of a car, but wasn't injured, Halton Regional Police said. Further delays at entrance ways were reported Tuesday.

Classes at the deaf school and Trillium School

for students with severe learning disabilities are still running. However, residential programs for out-of-town students who reside at the schools have been cancelled and many children have gone home. About 162 OPSEU members are employed at the schools.

The land registry office, currently being operated by management, was reportedly open with reduced hours from noon to 4 p.m. Fifteen workers walked off the job at the office, which registers real estate deals.

A sign at the front of the Milton court house, which lost 76 workers, indicated court cases would go ahead as planned, but service counters would only be open from 10 a.m. to noon and 1-3 p.m., Monday to Friday.

Locally, the striking employees also include 25 area probation and parole workers, three clerks at

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BILL'S AUTO BODY SHOP

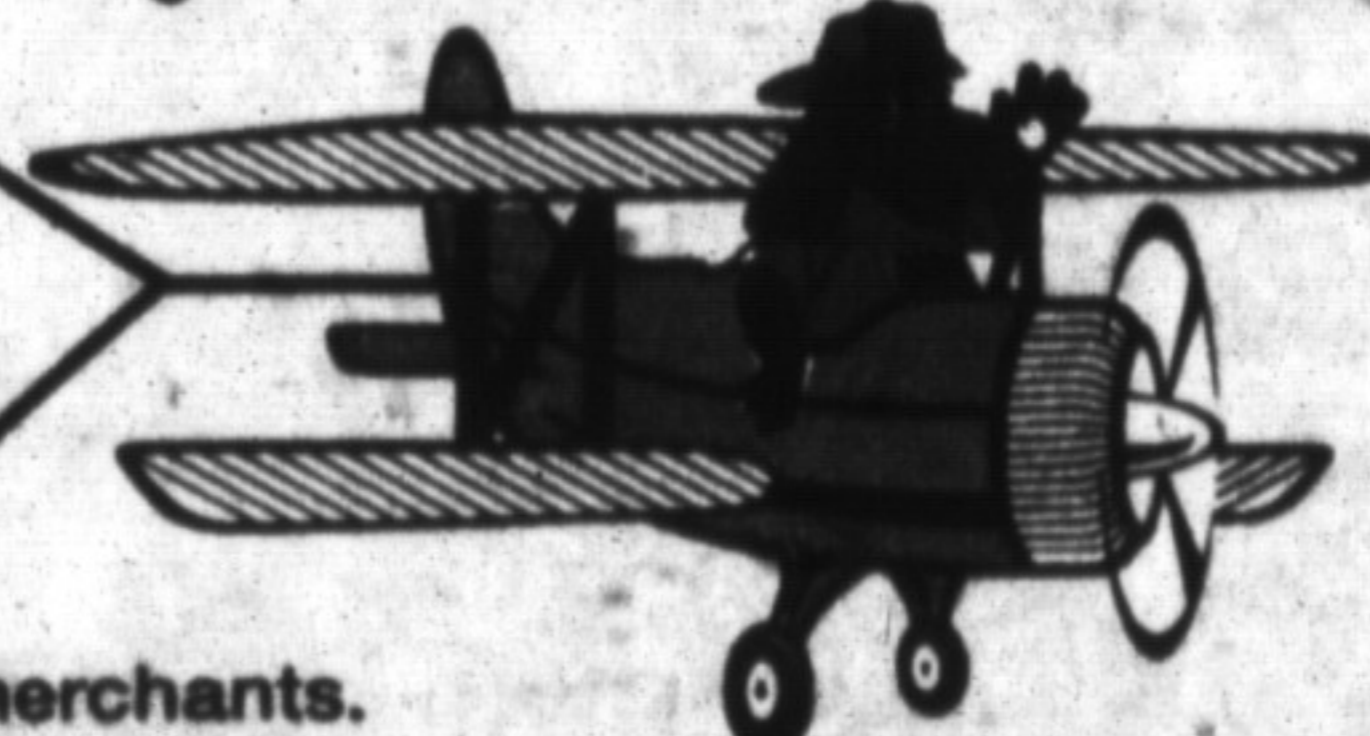


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