

Most Markham merchants are opening Sunday

By BRUCE ETHERIDGE
The majority of storeowners in Old Markham Village have agreed to open their shops tomorrow.

Business Improvement Area spokesman Dayle Rasmussen, said that 15 out of 17 businesses indicated they would open for business on Sunday at a meeting last Monday night.

Kim Lennie, co-owner of the Presents of Mind shop in Markham Village Lanes, said she was not initially excited about the prospects of opening Sunday.

"When other merchants said they did phenomenal business on Sunday," Mrs. Lennie said she and her husband reconsidered. Now Sunday "is quite a busy day," she said.

Merchants have reported doing up to 30 per cent more business on Sunday as opposed to regular days-of-the-week.

There have been concerns voiced by church groups that Sunday store opening would prevent families from spending time together. But Mrs. Lennie said she has "more families walk through the store on Sunday than any other day of the week."

Sunday is "often the only day people can get out together as a family," she said. "It's also the day most families make their major purchases," Mrs. Lennie added.

Other benefits that influenced the merchants' decision to open Sunday was reduced traffic — particularly the absence of trucks — and parking congestion on Main St., Mrs. Rasmussen said.

With the major malls closed, people will turn to the smaller businesses, Mrs. Lennie said. She also pointed out it will create part-time jobs for people — especially youths in the area — and encourage tourists to visit Markham on weekends.

With her store open Sundays, Mrs. Lennie said she has been able to hire another part-time staffer. "Most are quite willing to work on Sunday."

"They're glad to make the extra money," she continued. "Sunday is a shorter and busier day so most don't mind working."

Mrs. Lennie hasn't received any complaints in the year-and-a-half the store has been open on Sunday.

Of the two stores remaining closed on Main St. The Kitchen Door owner, Betty Keller, said her store would remain closed because none of her staff wanted to work on the Sabbath.

Although not "keen on the idea" of Sunday opening herself, Mrs. Keller said she is in a different position than most store owners. "I have staff, most of the other merchants are working on their own."



Passengers injured

Four people were sent to hospital following a three-vehicle collision at Denison St. and Warden Ave. Wednesday afternoon. It took Markham firefighters 10 minutes to free the passenger of the Subaru from the wreckage using hydraulic cutters. "He was bleeding pretty badly," said

Gary Lyons, driver of the Chrysler involved in the accident (at left). Ambulance attendants also put a neck brace on the man. Seven people were involved in the three vehicle pile-up.

— Bruce Etheridge

Police runners seeking sponsors

More than fifty York Regional Police officers will take up the torch in a run for the Special Olympics on June 3.

It's the first time a Canadian police force has sponsored a torch run for mentally handicapped athletes.

The torch relay will move down Yonge St. and finish at Varsity Stadium in Toronto for the opening ceremonies of the Special Olympics International Floor

Hockey Tournament.

Officers are soliciting pledges for the run through the police department's "Adopt-A-Cop" campaign.

Police are going door-to-door seeking local sponsors and the public is invited to make pledges at any York Regional Police station.

All donations will go toward sports training for the mentally handicapped.

MP Roman supports Markham lobby group

By PAUL PIVATO
Staff Reporter

New homeowners without door-to-door mail delivery are being discriminated against, says local MP Tony Roman.

"It's pure discrimination," says Mr. Roman, Canada's only independent member of parliament. "The same service should be provided for all people."

The York North MP is backing RAM (Residents Against Mailboxes), a local lobby group opposed to the lack of home mail delivery.

"This is probably the most adversely affected riding in the country," says RAM organizer and spokesperson Anne Derrett. "We want Mr. Roman to make it a major election issue."

Rough estimates indicate there are close to 50,000 new homes in York Region — the bulk of them in Mr. Roman's York North riding.

Many of the new homeowners are coming from areas that had door-to-door mail delivery and they could become part of a broad base of disaffected voters, says Mr. Roman.

Mr. Roman has included a RAM clip-out coupon in his latest newsletter from Ottawa and urges constituents who want to fight the lack of home delivery to express their support on the RAM coupon.

He also says that he has presented several petitions in the House of Commons and discussed Canada Post's controversial new policy with various ministers.

"I disagree with the supermailbox policy, and I've expressed that in no uncertain terms," says Mr. Roman.

Anne Derrett says RAM wants the following issues raised in the House of Commons:

- The impact of the new supermailboxes on the elderly and disabled.
- The effect of the supermailboxes on the market value of homes. RAM believes that the lack of home mail delivery can decrease the market value of a home.
- The effect of the supermailboxes on home assessments. RAM says that homeowners in



TONY ROMAN
"I disagree with policy."

Winnipeg had their property value re-assessed and lowered because of crown-owned mailboxes on their property.

The results of a government-backed survey that said 94 per cent of Canadians supported the supermailboxes. RAM says the survey is "misleading" since it lumped satisfied and "somewhat satisfied" respondents in the same category. RAM also contends that surveyors interviewed people in areas such as Stouffville who never had home mail delivery.

"Of course they would support the supermailbox," says Mrs. Derrett. "They've never had anything like home delivery to compare it to."

But she said RAM officials have not seen the actual survey and are trying to obtain a copy from NDP postal critic Cyril Keeper.

Mr. Roman agrees with RAM that the lack of home mail delivery is a "major problem in growing areas such as York North."

Says Mr. Roman: "There's a lot of determined people in my riding who want this changed. They're putting a lot of political pressure on the government."

Ed and Claudette

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