

Weekender

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Stouffville says no to no-fault insurance plan

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

Stouffville council backed Fair Action in Insurance Reform (FAIR) Tuesday and voted to pass a resolution in opposition to the Ontario government's no-fault insurance plan.

Warren Skinner, an Uxbridge resident and spokesman for FAIR, told council a letter from York-Durham MPP Bill Ballinger is inaccurate and urged town officials to back his group.

"Mr. Ballinger states the benefits will be enhanced (under no-fault legislation) to \$3,000, and yes they have doubled, but his word choice is interesting. He says the benefits are guaranteed. There is no such thing. A person still has to apply to the insurance company for benefits and if the company doesn't feel the person should get benefits, they won't," Mr. Skinner stressed.

Mr. Skinner read through a copy of Mr. Ballinger's letter to council in response to the town's concerns after first hearing FAIR, and pointed out several areas he said are inaccurate.

"Many critics (of no-fault) are simply unprepared to acknowledge the important principle of the plan," Mr. Ballinger wrote.

But local council backed FAIR on

the principle the "legal language" will be questioned if the legislation passed, as Mr. Skinner pointed out.

"A lot of people think (no-fault) will take income from lawyers but in five or 10 years lawyers will get very rich (if the plan passes, third reading)," Mr. Skinner warned.

"People will fight what the language means - what is 'permanent', what is an 'important bodily function' and what is 'serious and continuing' will be questioned," he stressed.

"The government has already made up its mind and they talk to us about it after the fact. We don't even have a choice," said Ward 2 Councillor Ron Robb.

Ward 6 Councillor Jim Sanders maintains he "hasn't seen or heard anything about no-fault that makes me feel comfortable."

"We haven't been told a lot about it except that it's supposedly a great thing. It sounds scary (based on FAIR's research)."

Council sided with Mr. Skinner and now supports FAIR.

"The government has not done its homework. They've spent \$50 million on studies that they themselves have ignored," concluded Mayor Fran Sainsbury.

Gary Fisher

Stouffville postmaster retires

Today marks the end of an era for Stouffville Postmaster Gary Fisher, who is taking an early retirement from Canada Post after almost 32 years of service.

Mr. Fisher joined the Stouffville post office in 1974 and moved into town in 1975. Now Mr. Fisher and his wife, Wanda, are planning the biggest move of their lives, with daughter Elisa, 11. "We're hoping to sell the house and move out west to join Wanda's family, who moved to Vernon last year," explains Mr. Fisher. "We've been planning this for about two years."

In the meantime, he's ready for a complete change in other areas of his life as well. "I've come up through the ranks at the post office. I started off as a letter carrier, but got my big promotion (to postmaster) when I came to Stouffville. Now I'm taking a breather. It's a well-deserved rest for Mr. Fisher, who has also been active in community life for many years."

His involvement in the Strawberry Festival goes back 10 years to the first Canada Day celebrations in Stouffville; last year he took on the job of chairman. And his love of railways and old steam trains drew him to the York-Durham Historical Railway Association, of which he is currently treasurer.

"Although I'm retiring from the post office," he comments, "you could well see me at the Villager Men's Shop, helping out Tom (Thompson) during the holidays and on weekends."

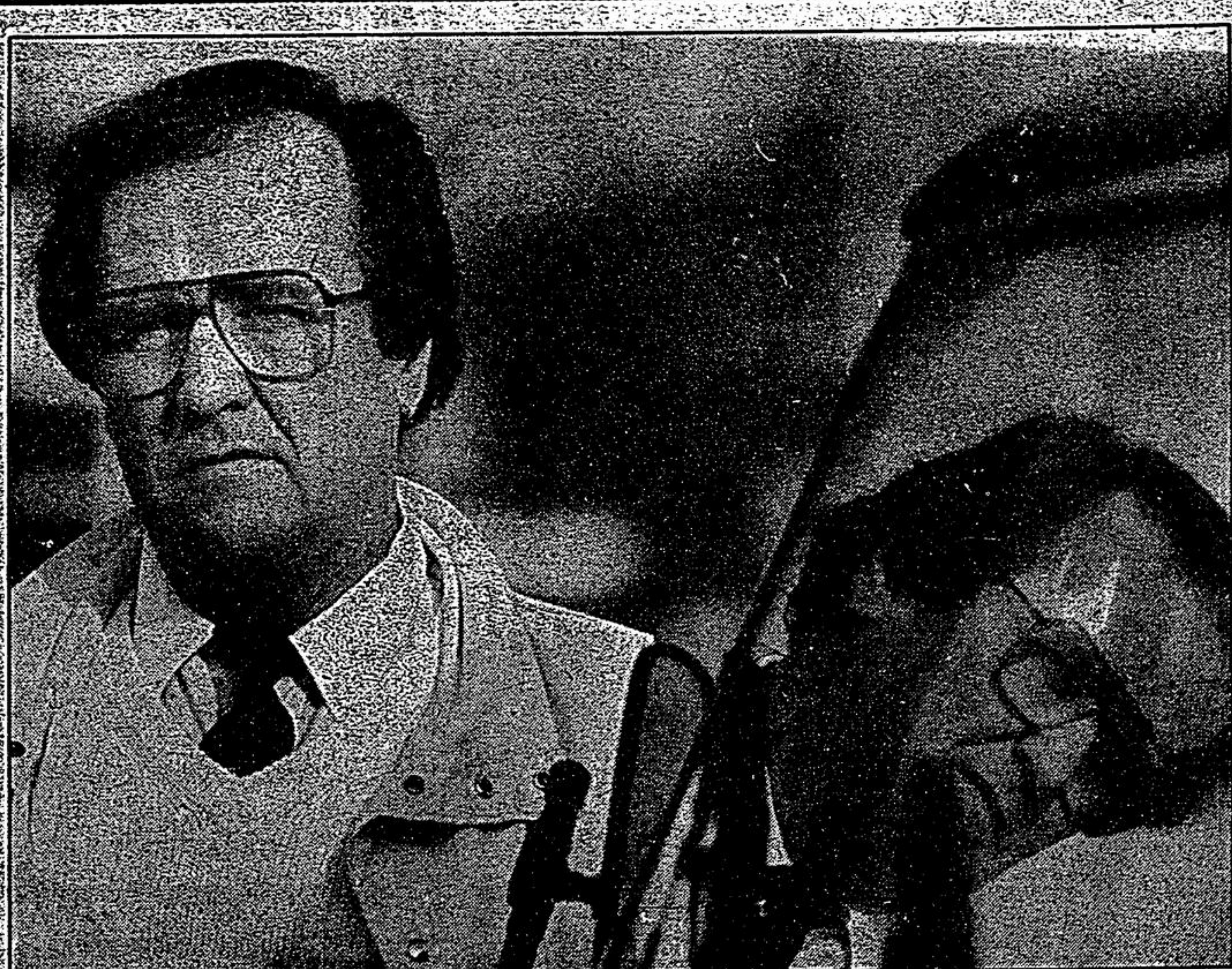


photo: RICK MADONIK

Stouffville resident Darrell Rolls was instrumental this week in helping police catch a suspect being sought in connection with the weekend murder of a Scarborough woman. Mr. Rolls was quick to respond when he spotted a car matching a description broad-

cast on a radio newscast and called police. A chase throughout the eastern part of York Region ended with the suspect's capture. Mr. Rolls is modest about his role in the incident and says he hopes others will become involved to help police fight crime.

Police chase

Stouffville man hailed as hero for spotting murder suspect

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

Whitchurch-Stouffville is home to a hero. Darrell Rolls' quick-witted response to a province-wide alert for a Metro murder suspect helped police capture the man following a region-wide chase Monday.

A man wanted in connection with the strangulation of 20-year-old Cheryl Baines, whose body was found in a freezer in her parents' Scarborough home last weekend, was taken into custody in Newmarket following the chase.

Mr. Rolls, 48, spotted the suspect's vehicle Monday afternoon in Stouffville at about 2:30 p.m. after hearing a description of the suspect and his car on a radio news broadcast.

Mr. Rolls recounted the events leading up to the chase in an exclusive interview at the Tribune yesterday.

"It happened in one or two minutes," said Mr. Rolls.

He first spotted the 1990 Chevrolet Cavalier in front of the I.D.A. drugstore on Main Street and rushed home to call the Metro Homicide Squad.

"I don't know whether it was dumb luck or what but I got back into my car and checked the plazas. The officer told me not to go near him," Mr. Rolls said.

He then proceeded to the A & P Plaza on Stouffville Road, where he noticed the car parked and pulled in beside it.

"I went into the Brewer's Retail and there were no customers in the store. I said call (the

police) right now. I think (the clerk) thought I was screw ball at first," Mr. Rolls said.

After updating Metro police on the suspect's whereabouts, Mr. Rolls went back to his car and waited. A few minutes later, he saw the man get into his vehicle.

"He casually proceeded out of the plaza and looked over at me. I pretended I was listening to the radio," said Mr. Rolls.

When the suspect backed out, Mr. Rolls once again went to Brewer's Retail to contact police. At that time, a York Regional patrol car pulled up.

"(The officer) took off immediately. The whole thing happened in about 12 minutes," Mr. Rolls said.

"I did nothing, really. The only reason I am doing this interview is because I'd like more people to get involved (in helping police)."

The whole thing was a total team effort between York and Metro police and a citizen.

"If more people would get involved rather than turning a blind eye, we could solve a lot of problems," he added.

Police captured the suspect in Newmarket after cruisers blocked off the southbound lanes of Hwy. 11 north of Bristol Road. The suspect rammed into a blockade, lost control and spun the car into the eastern lanes. He was unhurt in the crash.

"The way I look at it is I wouldn't want to find my daughter in a freezer," Mr. Rolls concluded.

Jeffrey Theys, 28, of Lambeth Square in Scarborough, was arrested and charged with first degree murder in the woman's death.

A Look Inside

