

WE HAVE A WINNER!

The judges have picked the best in our Fiction Contest. See Page 20.

The Tribune *Stouffville*

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Crime

Deer Park burns again

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

Arson is suspected in a \$10,000 Mother's Day blaze after firefighters battled a mid-day fire at Stouffville's vacant Deer Park Inn.

Flames erupted Sunday at 12:59 p.m. in the rear of the building - one of the few areas untouched by a previous fire just more than one year ago, said Stouffville fire chief Bill Brown yesterday.

Right next door at the popular Stouffville Flea Market, hundreds of shoppers browsed through stalls of merchandise.

The local brigade battled flames for more than four hours and called in Markham's tanker truck as an added precaution, Brown said.

The chief said because the area is not serviced by fire hydrants, he wanted to ensure there was no shortage of water.

Although the "super hot" flames were "really going good" when the crew arrived, Brown said he suspects arsonists had been on the site in the morning.

The Fire Marshal's office is investigating the exact cause, he said.

Brown said crews confined the flames to a room located under the building's rear apartment,

where furniture had been stored.

He estimates about \$7,000 damage in goods and \$3,000 damage to the structure.

This blaze marks number two for the vacant building - once an outstanding entertainment haven for local and visiting guests.

The Deer Park Inn closed its doors in 1990 after creditors forced it into receivership with a debt totalling about \$1 million.

After remaining vacant for about one year, a Tribune exclusive April 3, 1991 revealed the Deer Park would once again enjoy the hustle and bustle of customers.

A 58-year-old Toronto investor had plans to purchase the business and announced he would open the doors to the public in June, 1991.

His big plans died, however, after three young offenders and one adult set fire to the vacant building April 15, causing \$1 million damage.

York Regional Police charged four people with arson and related break and enter charges and the new potential owner was forced to put off his construction and re-opening plans.

Since then it has been quiet and lonely on the Deer Park Inn grounds, until the fire last weekend.

Charges have not yet been laid, and police and the Fire Marshal's office are investigating.

Town wants to up gravel fees

Aggregate producers should pay the town about 625 per cent more than it pays now for each tonne of aggregate product trucked out of the municipality, officials decided this week.

But industry officials say such a massive levy hike would create unemployment in the construction and road industry, and would hurt the Ontario taxpayer.

Aggregate producers currently pay a levy of six cents for each aggregate tonne - four cents of which pads the municipal coffers from which it was mined.

But officials want 25 cents a tonne to flow into its revenue account, and voted to support a petition from the Town of Caledon, which initiated the bid this week.

Caledon wants support from 24 major aggregate-producing areas in its bid to raise the levy to 25 cents. This fee hike will offset the "stunningly inadequate" portion municipalities now receive, said Caledon mayor Norman Calder in a letter to local officials.

Calder, in a subsequent letter to Ontario treasurer and Caledon MPP Floyd Laughren, called aggregate a non-renewable resource, and said the industry is "extremely unfair and environmentally unsound." He added the pits "disrupt daily life," and leave "ugly scars to otherwise magnificent landscape."

Standard Aggregates vice president and general manager Gary Brown told *The Tribune*, however, that the current levies are "positive" fees

which re-direct funds directly back into the host municipality.

"Raising this fee to 25 cents would have a significant impact on the road and construction industry and would affect the cost of the product," Brown said.

Whitchurch-Stouffville, one of about 25 major aggregate-producing areas in Ontario, produced 2.5 million tonnes in 1990 and received a \$100,000 cheque from the industry. With the levy hike, the town would rake in about \$625,000 a year for producing the same tonnage. But Brown said a levy increase would only hurt the provincial taxpayers and would continue to hamper road and highway programs.

Although Mayor Fran Sains-

(See 'Gravel' on Page 3)



Residents are renovating once again: Building dept.

Whitchurch-Stouffville residents are spending more money renovating their homes, which is a positive sign for the town's building department.

Town building director Bob Bennett told *The Tribune* this week that there is a "little movement" in the department, but added staff is not "breaking any records" in issuing permits.

Bennett said building permit applications are down 25 per cent from May 1991 but are relatively the same as in April. He pointed out the type of work people are doing to their homes is also different. Although it appears there is a temporary slowdown in

(See 'Building' on Page 3)

A BIG THANK YOU

Thank you for the fabulous support we received during our GRAND OPENING!

Spring '92 was a great success thanks to you.

Ian Boyd

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Farmer Jacks Plaza in Stouffville

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Calder



P.S. Have a safe and enjoyable summer.