

## Crime

## Vandals set play equipment ablaze

TRACY KIBBLE  
Staff Reporter

Someone in Whitchurch-Stouffville doesn't like playgrounds and attempted to destroy one of the community's newest ones this past Thanksgiving weekend.

Deputy fire chief Murray Emmerson told *The Tribune* the department responded to a call about 1:28 a.m. Mon., Oct. 11 to the playground at Rupert Ave. and Weslawn Cres. where yellow plastic slides were found ablaze and other equipment had been damaged.

The playground, which officially opened last year, was donated by the Stouffville Kinsmen Club in partnership with the town.

Parks and recreation director Marlane McKee Wetheral said

the police were notified and will be investigating, but officers have stated there is not much they can do in cases of blatant public vandalism.

McKee Wetheral said town staff were on the site yesterday morning to assess the damage.

She said most of the equipment costs will be replaced through the town's insurance policy and added the town would "do its best to replace what we can" without additional costs to the taxpayer.

This is at least the second case of vandalism of public-owned property in two years — the other being damage to the town pool last season which delayed its opening.

The playground damage is estimated at about \$2,000.

## Halloween on Sunday?

Local politicians have yet to decide whether or not to officially switch Halloween from its usual Oct. 31 slot this year.

The dilemma arises every few years when the night of ghosts and goblins, tricks and treats falls on a Sunday — a day local churches would rather not share with the age-old autumn tradition of door-knocking, dress-up and treat-passing.

Local municipalities share a responsibility to address the issue and in other years some have opted to change Halloween festivities to Oct. 30. The matter has not come up at the local town office and chief administrative officer, Merlin Dewing admitted it's not a top priority when there are other pressing matters on the books.

Several local ministers have said while they wouldn't be offended if Halloween fell on a Sunday, they would prefer it take place another day so their members can attend evening church services.

Others say switching confuses everyone and houses end up with trick or treaters on both nights.

"It's no more offensive than stores opening on Sunday but my preference would be not to have it on Sunday," offered Stouffville United Church minister Wayne Reed.



Photo/LORI EMMERSON

## Helping the United Way

Tribune correspondent Bruce Stapley stopped by the United Way fundraiser barbecue at the Scotia Bank on Main St. Serving up the dogs were Kathleen Wilson-Housser and Rob Mattacott.

## Feds ignoring social impacts

(From page 1)

Services pays for residents to drink bottled water. "They aren't taking the water problem into consideration. All they tell us is 'let the buyer beware,'" she said. She called the federal government "very bad landlords" who, while offering moderate rent, leave the tenants with thousands of dollars in repair costs each year.

"They should not be in the landlord/tenant business."

Durham-York MPP Larry O'Connor has been a

big help, she said, asking his government what it can do to combat the problem.

"The province has declared a provincial interest in this sale in order to halt the process and allow some real land planning to take place," O'Connor said in a press release last week.

Calling for "careful planning" on both government levels, O'Connor is helping the residents deal with social issues such as affordable housing options for those who are to be displaced from their homes.



Photo/LORI EMMERSON

## Through the looking glass

Budding dancer Katerina Ciccirelli makes contact with her mirror image at a dance class at Expressions Dance Studio in Stouffville on Saturday afternoon.



Photo/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Principal Allen Dickson addresses Stouffville District Secondary School students after doing his part in the pie-throwing contest last week as part of Spirit Week.

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