

Thinking of SELLING OR BUYING?
16 years experience
June Williamson
477-0011
REMAX ALL STARS REALTY INC.

Stouffville Tribune

Weekender

Auto Express
MERCEDES BENZ
REPAIR SPECIALIST
172 BULLOCK DRIVE UNIT 31
MARKHAM
471-8660



Photo: JOERD WITTEVEN

Gone shopping

Sarah Koeri, 4, and mom Brenda shop for bargains at Stouffville Christian School's Christmas store that ran this week.

Police

Project 80 investigating activities at town offices

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

The Corporation of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is under police investigation — the latest in a three-year-long probe into municipal corruption across southern York Region, *The Tribune* learned this week.

Metro Toronto Police fraud squad Inspector Vaughan O'Toole told *The Tribune* yesterday that Whitchurch-Stouffville will be subject to a "preliminary investigation" after the force received several citizen complaints earlier in the week.

The Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville will now have to open its financial books to the police as part of the probe and politicians and staff will have to answer questions.

The investigation doesn't necessarily mean there is anything suspicious going on locally though and police won't know until after what could be a lengthy probe into town business, O'Toole said.

"We are performing a preliminary investigation to see if the complaints we received have any substance," O'Toole said.

The investigation, dubbed

Project 80, was triggered in 1990 after citizens of a southern York Region municipality complained of questionable deals between developers and municipal politicians.

Headed by O'Toole, the Project 80 corruption investigations have so far resulted in charges against Newmarket Mayor Ray Twinn, two Markham councillors and two former councillors in York

Region alone, as well as others in other regions across the Greater Toronto Area.

The latest fraud and forgery-related charges were brought against regional councillor Gordon Landon of Markham this week after an 18-month investigation into an account set up four years ago at Landon's request to cover administrative and secretarial costs.

(Please see page 3)

Council-sitting time changes eliminates public input: Sword

Stouffville council's decision last week to alter its meeting schedule has come under fire by at least one citizen who says the changes will eliminate public input.

Businessman Stephen Sword has written each councillor a letter this week urging officials to reconsider last week's decision which will have politicians discussing and voting on matters all in the same night.

"The obvious and important aspect of the change is loss of the week between the two meetings. In Ottawa, they'd call this an opportunity for "sober second thought," Sword said.

Majority council voted to have its council in committee meetings moved to the evenings (every first and third Tuesday of the month.) These committee meetings are the sessions where officials debate issues, formulate ideas, suggestions and lobby support for votes. The 4 p.m. sessions will now take place at 7:15 p.m. - prior to planning committee meetings - which will be followed by council meetings where discussions from earlier will be voted on and finalized. But Sword said this squelches council's opportunity to take a "natural break" from one week to the next to examine the issue carefully, perhaps see another side before voting on it the next week. "When people discuss things twice within a few hours they are most likely to call upon the same arguments; when they have days between, they will see new points that need to be raised," Sword said.

Sword, who owns the Something in Common book and novelty shop; also stressed concerns for the loss of public input. The new system will rob citizens of an opportunity to "express their concerns or provide information to the councillors: an opportunity needs to exist," he said.

"Under the proposed format, only agenda watchers will have that opportunity, barring the regular use of tabling, predicted above," Sword said. Ward 6 councillor Ken Prentice, who voted against the change last week, also said the change needs reconsideration.

"It will all be done Tuesday night. The change leaves no room, no further consideration...boom...it will all be over in one shot," Prentice said.

Tracy Kibble

Board employee faces fraud charges in asbestos dealings

An employee of the York Region Board of Education faces fraud charges in connection with contracts involving the removal of asbestos at region schools.

York Regional Police arrested the 56-year-old Mississauga man Thursday after an investigation into irregularities concerning purchase orders dealing specifically with the removal of asbestos from elementary and secondary schools.

The board of education had relayed these concerns to the police who then began an investigation.

Police conducted five simultaneous raids Thursday at various locations in York, Scarborough and Mississauga.

According to York police, these raids

obtained documentation which was signed by officials of the board and had then been forwarded to private contractors in Toronto. An examination of these documents showed monetary figures had been altered and additions made to the description of work to be done so as to justify the inflated figures, police said.

The accused has been an employee with the York board since 1990, and faces charges of fraud over \$1,000, forgery, and uttering forged documents.

Police said the charges were laid in relation to one purchase order involving a loss to the board of \$21,000. Other seized invoices are currently being examined by police.

MARKVILLE MAKES IT HAPPEN!

<p>BRAND NEW 1993 VILLAGER GS</p> <p>BEST PRICE \$19,888</p> <p>OR LEASE FOR \$299/mo.</p> <p>24 MONTHS</p> <p>INCLUDES: 7 pass, A/C, air, cruise, p/w, p/l, luggage rack, flip open luggage window and more. (MSRP \$21,973) S&L #13961</p>	<p>BRAND NEW 1993 VILLAGER LS</p> <p>BEST PRICE \$22,999</p> <p>OR LEASE FOR \$369/mo.</p> <p>24 MONTHS</p> <p>INCLUDES: Loaded, 8 way/power seat, 1/1one point, high level audio system, aluminum wheels and more. (MSRP \$25,495) S&L #14151</p>	<p>BRAND NEW 1993 MERCURY GRAND MARQUIS LS</p> <p>BEST PRICE \$24,988</p> <p>OR LEASE FOR \$579/mo.</p> <p>24 MONTHS</p> <p>INCLUDES: Leather, climate control, dual p/locks and much more. (MSRP \$26,856) S&L #1126C</p>	<p>BRAND NEW 1994 FORD F150 ENFORCER PICK-UP</p> <p>BEST PRICE \$12,994</p> <p>OR LEASE FOR \$219/mo.</p> <p>24 MONTHS</p> <p>INCLUDES: 4.9L engine, p.s., p.b., step bumper, AM/FM stereo, styled wheels and more. S&L #13397</p>	<p>BRAND NEW 1994 SABLE GS WAGON</p> <p>BEST PRICE \$18,499</p> <p>OR LEASE FOR \$379/mo.</p> <p>24 MONTHS</p> <p>INCLUDES: 3.8L V-6, A/C, p/w, p/l, tilt, cruise, buckets & console & more. (MSRP \$28,286) S&L #1197C</p>
---	---	---	---	--

4072 HWY. #7 MARKHAM 470-7044

NEW SERVICE HOURS
Mon., Thurs., Fri. 7:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Tues., Wed., Sat. 11:30 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.