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Horses found near death; Humane Society on case

TRACY KIBBLE
 Staff Reporter

The Ontario Humane Society (OHS) is investigating what one inspector has called a "severe case" of animal abuse and neglect after two horses were taken from a Markham boarding stable Tuesday.

OHS inspector Martin Cole said the agency could take up to six months to "collect evidence" that two horses owned by a Stouffville woman were allegedly starved to near death at a 16th Ave. and Kennedy Road area boarding stable.

Cole said one of the horses was in "deplorable" condition - so thin the animal had absolutely no body fat left on his boney frame.

"This is the worst and most thin horse I have seen in my 12 years on the job," Cole said. The other horse is in "marginal condition," he said.

Cole, who said the OHS will "consider charges" once the investigation is complete, added the thinner horse also suffered urine burns and other bald spots on its body, likely

caused from external parasites.

Both horses were filthy dirty, he said, and suffered "poor overall body conditions."

Cole said his job is to "try and determine where the blame lies," but added "somebody is obviously responsible."

Cole will look at veterinarian reports and evidence gathered from talks with both the owner and the boarder before making a decision, he said.

The OHS official said it's too early to speculate whether starvation is the cause of the thinness because diseases can also cause the condition.

Cole said the thin horse is obviously "very down" emotionally and misses its owner - the two had been extremely close, he said, before the owner took ill and was forced to board the animals.

Both horses are likely going to be okay now that they are being properly fed, treated and cleaned up at the farm of Anne Marie Kunz in Ballantrae, Cole said.

The investigation will continue, and *The Tribune* will keep its readers posted on new findings.



Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Martin Cole, right, an inspector with the Ontario Humane Society looks at one of the horses held by Molly Sherman. The horses were seized after reports of abuse. Both

horses are now on the mend after being moved to a farm in Ballantrae. The Humane Society is investigating the reports of abuse, but no charges have been laid at this time.

Youth court

Witnesses to teen rumble ordered back on July 13

TRACY KIBBLE
 Staff Reporter

At least five crown witnesses to a teen rumble in Stouffville last April were turned away from Newmarket court Tuesday after waiting more than four hours to testify.

The witnesses, including a Stouffville teen allegedly assaulted by five Markham-area youths, were expected to take the stand this week.

Gregory Cummings, 19, of Stouffville waited outside the courtroom more than six-and-a-half hours to testify before being turned away by the court.

The accused's five lawyers and crown attorney Lynne Saunders-Gartner argued before Judge Michael Caney for more than six hours about the admissibility of evidence gathered by police last May.

Five youths, all Brother Andre High School students, are charged with assault - one

with a weapon - as a result of the fight on Stouffville streets.

Four crown witnesses were told at 2 p.m. they could leave the Newmarket courthouse as it became apparent the court would not have time to hear their testimonies.

Cummings and one other witness, however, were asked to remain outside the courtroom in case the trial would get under way at 3 p.m.

Judge Caney ruled at 4:20 p.m. that the police evidence in question will be admitted into the trial, which continues July 13.

Charges were laid against five teens last May after a street fight, which drew hundreds of teens and hordes of police officers to Stouffville's Main St., broke out April 9, 1992.

The reasons behind the altercation are expected to unfold during the summer trial.

Optimists help youth

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Optimist Club is chipping in to make the Stouffville Youth Centre a reality for local teens.

The Optimist Club, which promotes active interest in good government, civic affairs and a respect for law, is sponsoring an event by the Unity in Motion Dance Company which will be performing at the Markham Theatre Friday, April 2. Proceeds from the 500 tickets to be sold will go to support the local youth centre. Tickets are \$8 each. For more information call 642-3844.

March Break at museum

It's March Break at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Museum. The museum, located in Vandorf on Woodbine Ave., is offering several programs from Wed., March 17 to Fri., March 19 for school children. On Wed., March 17 from 1-3 p.m. children aged eight and over can celebrate St. Patrick's Day by quilling their own good luck shamrock. Then on Thurs., March 18 from 1-3 p.m. chil-

dren aged eight and over can work with wool and learn how to cork and weave to create fun items. On Fri., March 19 from 1-3 p.m. an open house will be held for the whole family, featuring penmanship and copywork in the newly restored schoolhouse.

Pre-registration is required for most programs. Call the museum at 727-8954 for more information.

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