

Crime

Holes cut through walls revealed maze of marijuana

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to learn that an illegal drug growing operation was in full swing just a few feet away from his business doorstep.

"I had no idea this was going on," said Trudel. "I came back here last night, saw all the action as well as the television crews. I thought they were filming a movie. Then I found out it was a (drug) bust. The police questioned me. They wanted to know what I did here - I'm running a roofing business."

The neighbors were of the impression that Way and his partners were running a welding shop.

Bob Jones, who owns an electrical business at Unit 5, said he recently contracted Way and his buddy to do some work.

"They did some welding for me," said Jones. "Other than that, we didn't have much to do with them. They were quiet. They kept to themselves. They did keep the snow cleared out from the back in the winter."

Walter said police were aware that there was a hydroponic growing marijuana operation being carried out

"somewhere in Stouffville."

Working on a tip, police stationed themselves within eye shot of a Etobicoke-based hydroponic supply store. The police spotted a customer buying large quantities of equipment and followed him to the Ringwood Dr. industrial mall.

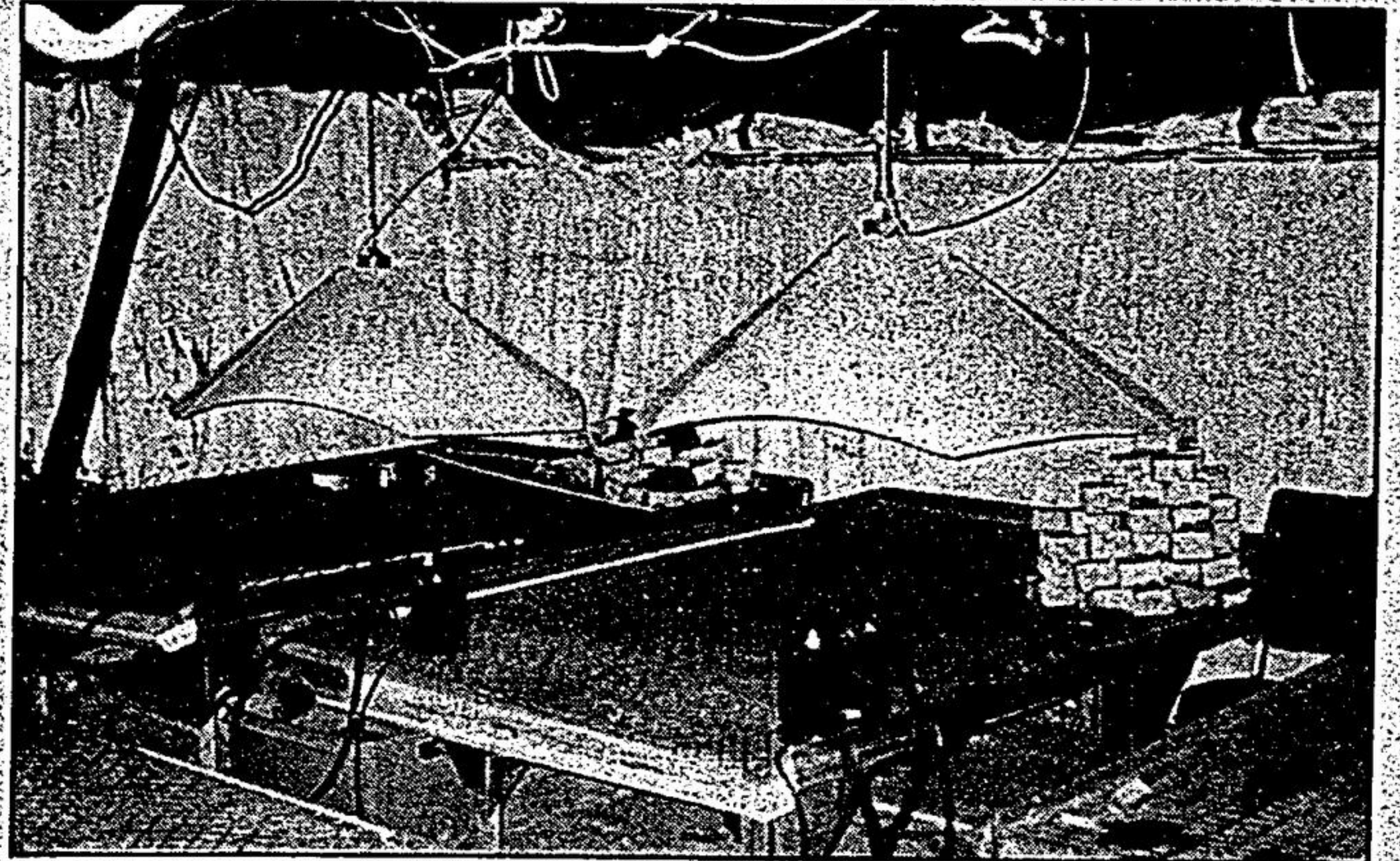
While there, the police noticed that the windows of the units facing the street were completely covered, said Walter. Both men were arrested at the scene without incident, the detective added.

No weapons were found at the scene, stressed More.

Unit 8 was suppose to be vacant but police found that it was being used as a "growing room." Police also found a hole had been cut through the wall, allowing access from Unit 6 to 7. "It involved all four units," said Walter.

The detective estimates the Hydro bill for the drug operation would be about \$1,000 a month.

Walter was drawing up the appropriate papers to be served to Whitchurch-Stouffville Hydro. "Through Hydro,



Some of the hydroponic growing equipment seized by police at a Ringwood Dr. industrial building Wednesday. Police sources said the operation could have easily brought in \$200,000 every six weeks once fully operational.

we'll find out how many units were hearing was held Friday morning, both rented," said Walters. While a bail Way and Dunn were held in custody.

Accident victim's condition upgraded from critical

While a woman continues to fight life-threatening injuries, criminal charges have been laid against a Unionville man in connection with the death of a Stouffville service station attendant, the Ontario Provincial Police has reported.

Geoffrey Lam, 22, of 48 Corby Road, Unionville will appear in a Newmarket court on July 4.

The 22-year-old has been charged with dangerous driving causing death and dangerous driving causing injury in connection with a June 8 accident that claimed the life of 35-year-old Rocco Rea of Richmond Hill.

Rocco Rea's wife Caroline Rea (nee Carr), 34, sustained serious head injuries.

Rea, who grew up in Stouffville was transferred to Sunnybrook Health Centre. Her condition has now been upgraded from

critical to serious.

Gary Carr, Caroline's brother, told *The Tribune* that his sister has been taken off life support and is awake. Although still suffering serious injury, including head injury and broken bones, Caroline is able to comprehend and can recognize visitors. Also, she can move her legs and her arms, said Carr.

Caroline is expected to be hospitalized for another six weeks. Because Caroline is a nurse, she understands the need for extensive physiotherapy, said Carr. Meanwhile, Caroline has been told that her husband of three years was killed in the accident. "It is sad," said Carr.

Rea worked at Stouffville's East End Service Station for 19 years. The accident took place on Highway 7, just west of Bayview Ave.

- Joan Ransberry

Community

Strawberry Festival once again offers something for everyone

By KATE GILDERDALE
Correspondent

Whitchurch-Stouffville's party of the year begins Thursday with a host of great activities for all the family at the 1995 Strawberry Festival.

The Lawn Bowling Club gets the ball rolling with a tournament in Memorial Park beginning at 1:30 p.m. and free swimming will be offered at the town pool Thursday and Friday from 2 to 4 p.m. Meet friends and neighbors at the Lions' beef barbecue in the park and enjoy entertainment from strolling clowns and magicians.

Opening ceremonies take place at 7 p.m. on the park stage, followed by the Baha'i music concert from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. At 8 p.m., history buffs are invited to assemble at the pavilion for a guided tour of the downtown business area, hosted by the Historical Society.

Some of Music Town Ontario's talented singers and musicians will be featured at the sacred music concert at Parkview Village, beginning at 8 p.m. and young children can enjoy the kids' carnival in the library parking lot, which will be open Thursday, Friday and Saturday until 11 p.m.

Friday's events include the start of the Buttermakers' slow pitch tournament, a euchre tournament at the Silver Jubilee Club, the variety show in Memorial Park, the Much Music video dance for teens at the recreation centre and the Buttermakers' dance at Latcham Hall.

Canada Day offers some friendly competition for athletes with the triathlon and the beach volleyball tournament, while foodies can enjoy a blowout at the Ballantrae Lions' pancake breakfast. Other events include pony carriage rides, a giant chess board challenge, the Progress Club baby contest, the sponge

toss and an in-line skate scavenger hunt.

The downtown area will be closed to traffic from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. so that visitors can browse at the giant craft sale on Main St., enjoy non-stop entertainment on the town stage and visit local stores and restaurants.

Latcham Gallery will feature close-up magic shows at noon, 1 and 2 p.m. A bike decorating contest, pie and jam contests, and the Freckle contest will all be featured in the downtown area during the day.

Magnificent antique and classic vehicles will be on display on Main St. and the family aquatic carnival at the town pool offers fun for all ages. Drop into Buckingham Manor for tea between 1:30 and 3:30 p.m., check out Myng's Tae Kwon Do demonstration

at 2 p.m. and don't forget to take the kids to the children's music in the park, courtesy of the Baha'is.

Evening events get under way with the singing of O Canada, the cutting of the cake and awards for the Citizen of the Year and the Sports Personality of the year at 7 p.m. Youngsters are invited to attend the perennially popular Teddy Bears' Picnic and Mike Feher's Orchestra and

Swing Band will offer great musical entertainment until dusk, when the fireworks begin.

Sunday July 2 is Novopharm family day. A 10 km run begins at 9 a.m. from Stouffville District Secondary School and at 10:15 a.m. the Salvation Army Band will play in the park. The ecumenical church service begins at 10:45 a.m. and everyone is invited to bring lawn chairs, and join this special community service.

At noon there will be a strawberry social and a children's scavenger hunt and the fun pet contest gets under way at 1:30 p.m. Activities continue until 4 p.m. with a fun family concert, clowns and magicians, face painting and children's entertainer Dan Devon.

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