

Extended drinking hours draws mixed response

By **JOAN RANSBERRY**
Staff reporters

Last call for alcohol will be 2 a.m., beginning May 1.

The province's move to extend drinking hours by an extra hour in Ontario is drawing mixed reaction in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Kathy Fullerton, co-owner of Fullerton's, is against the change. She's suggesting the move will contribute to an increase in the number of impaired drivers and, consequently, result in more deaths and injury on the highways. Except for tourist areas, extended drinking hours will not mean more business for tavern owners, added Fullerton. Here in Whitchurch-Stouffville, patrons will drink at home and end up coming to the bars later in the evening, said Fullerton. "They'll end up drinking more by starting at home," she stressed.

John Breen, owner of the Town Crier, said unfortunately putting a limit on the number of hours that alcohol can be served does not affect safety on the highway.

"If people get wasted and drive like lunatics, there's nothing to stop them," Breen said.

Breen doesn't anticipate an increase in business because of the change. "The same will come in," he said.

Graham Hoad, owner of The Earl of Whitchurch said there's a chance of business increasing, especially on a "hot summers night on the patio."

However, Hoad has yet to decide if he'll keep his establishment open the extra hour. "I'm not sure if there will be the demand from the right kind of people," said Hoad.

In defending the move to have the bars stay open longer, MPP Norm Sterling, Consumer and Commercial Affairs minister, said it is high time the province changed its drinking hours to reflect what's been happening for years in neighboring provinces and states.

Stirling's position does not go over well with everyone. Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) officials are totally against the new drinking laws, entire communities are opposing it. Last week, Owen Sound council asked the province to hand over the responsibility of setting drinking hours to the municipality. Owen Sound thinks a 2 a.m. alcohol cut-off time will cause an increase in drinking-related traffic accidents.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson does not share the concerns expressed in Owen Sound. Emmerson said he's confident that the province did its homework before making the change. "I'm sure they studied this," said Emmerson.

He wants no part of overseeing booze. "They can do it. We haven't got the expertise or the staff," said the mayor.

Drinking habits have changed over the past few

years, said Emmerson. "Today, people are a lot more responsible," he said.

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and to ALL the friends and members of York-Durham Heritage Railway and the Uxbridge Celebration of the Arts, who helped in any way, who attended, and who bid so enthusiastically!

Chamber offers course

Another customer-service training course is being offered in Stouffville in mid-May.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce is, once again, sponsoring Superhost, a one-day training program, designed to improve customer service.

The course will be held on May 14 from 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Maples of Ballantrae.

Helene Johnson, president of the local Chamber, is stressing the importance of business learning how, when and why to better relate and serve clients.

Superhost is back by popular demand simply because it is an excellent course, said Johnson. "The people who took it last time

expressed that it is well worth the time and the cost," stressed Johnson. Cost of the course is \$50 for Chamber members and \$60 for non members.

The maximum size of a class is 20, explained Johnson. For more information call the Chamber office at 642-4227.



Yee haw

Jon Tamlin and Melissa Miller perform in the annual country dance competition held at Stouffville Secondary School Thursday.

Photo: SJOERD WITTEVEEN

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Shirley Kohler, assistant animal control officer at the Uxbridge/Scugog Animal Shelter was happy to report the phone ringing off the hook in response to our April 3 edition of You & Your Pet. All the dogs featured in the section found new homes. On behalf of the animals, The Tribune would like to thank all advertisers and sponsors for their participation and support.

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