

# Children losing their cyberpets to thieves

JORDAN H. GREEN  
Correspondent

The trendiest toys are disappearing during Stouffville's daycamp at Bruce's Mill.

According to a parent, Tama-

gachis, or cyberpets, have gone missing during the swim session.

"While swimming, a kid had his bag dumped," said Yasmin Hassan, whose son Adam is one of the victims of the toy theft.

"Less than a week later another

kid's was stolen."

Following hot on the heels of Tickle Me Elmos, Cabbage Patch Kids and Power Rangers figurines, cyberpets are the latest toy fad sweeping across North America.

"(It's) the latest craze, and every kid has one," said Hassan. "My eldest son had three of these pets."

Similar in size to pet rocks, cyberpets imitate real pets in that they move, sleep and even cry.

"You actually have to wash them off, they do poos and everything," said Hassan.

"Those get stolen all the time from the pool," said the camp's summer co-ordinator Jen McGowan.

Selling for about \$30 to 40, the toys are hard to find on the shelves with lengthy waiting lists at malls.

"I think they should have given the kids a lock," said Mark Hassan, a camper's father.

The camp, which is run by the town, doesn't provide locks. However for a loonie, kids can lock up their valuables.

"I believe the kids at the town

pool should have been told a dollar could be used for a lock," said Mark Hassan.

Along with using the lockers, the best advice is to leave the toys

at home, according to the summer co-ordinator.

"Unless they wear them around their neck all the time, don't bring them," said McGowan.

## Oak Ridges MP Wilfert opens constituency office

Oak Ridges MP Bryon Wilfert's constituency office is open for business.

The recently-elected Liberal MP represents all of Stouffville and Richmond Hill and the northern part of Markham.

The riding's constituency office is located at 225 East Beaver Creek Rd., Suite 231, Richmond Hill. The postal code is L4B 3P4. Stouffville residents are encouraged to take note of the telephone number: (905) 709-5908.

Assisting Wilfert at the Richmond Hill office are special executive assistant Imma Trozzola and constituency assistant Vivien



BRYON WILFERT

1954.

Meanwhile, Shirley Head is Wilfert's executive assistant in the Ottawa office.

Both offices will be open Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to

Chan.

Wilfert's Ottawa office will open on Aug. 4.

The Ottawa telephone number is (613) 992-3802 and the fax number is (613) 996-

## Stouffville students open homes to Quebec 'twins'

JORDAN H. GREEN  
Correspondent

Three Stouffville youths bid 'au revoir' to Chicoutimi, Quebec, as they returned home this week.

Organized by the Society for Educational Visits and Exchanges in Canada (SEVEC), the three were part of a summer exchange program of 86 young people, between the ages of 12 and 15.

The exchanges include 31 Ontario and Quebec schools, offering students an opportunity to experience the other province's culture. It also tests the students' language skills, as they learn to communicate in English and French.

"I didn't like it at first, because I couldn't understand a word that was said," said Nathan Balsdon, 13.

"It was fun," said Jessica Chewits, 13, of her trip. The youngsters were twinned with other students in their age group in Quebec, and stayed at their twin's home for the 12-day trip. They had never met their twins before the trip.

"I was nervous at first," said Gemma Cumbers, 13, of her first meeting with her twin.

Once in Quebec, the students had fun participating in various events including a treasure hunt, a

crazy olympics and a dance with more than 900 people.

"The fourth day was supposed to be a beach day, but we saw a French movie instead," said Cumbers.

In order to cover costs of the trip, the students had to bang on doors raising money.

"I raised the most money, so I got a Discman," said Balsdon, of his \$560 worth of trip money.

More money came from corporate sponsors including the local IGA, Pét Value, Barthau Jewellers and ATC Corral, among others.

SEVEC also receives grants from the federal Heritage Ministry and the provincial Ministry of Education and Training.

The three students arrived back in Stouffville, just in time to meet their Quebec counterparts — three students from Quebec arrived in Stouffville last Monday.

Were the Quebec students nervous coming over to Ontario for 12 days?

"No, she's really nice," said Sabrina Trembly, 13, of her new roommate.

The Chicoutimi students will take in a Blue Jays game, ride roller coasters at Paramount Canada's Wonderland, and shoot each other silly at Laserquest, among some of their planned activities.



TROLLING FOR TADPOLES: Chris Dodds, 9, gets direction from the peanut gallery on where to get those critters in the water at Stouffville Memorial Park last week.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

## Home invasion suspect has Monday court date

JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Reporter

A Downsview man facing criminal charges in connection with a home invasion and the kidnaping of a Gormley store owner will make another court appearance Monday.

While Sohaib Syed Razvi, 20, will face a Newmarket judge, York Regional Police continue to seek two more suspects in connection with the crime.

Razvi was released on bail in February after being charged with robbery, disguise with intent and forcible confinement.

On Feb. 12, the owner of Gormley's MIS Variety was approached

in the parking lot after closing his store.

Sgt. John Sheldon reported that the man was forced into a vehicle at gunpoint and driven to his residence on Bayview Avenue.

Once at the home, two of the suspects entered the house, confronted the man's wife, showed her the gun and her husband's driver's licence and threatened to kill him if she didn't co-operate.

Sheldon said the woman, fearing for her life, handed over \$5,000 in cash. She was handcuffed to the refrigerator, the telephone lines were cut and the master bedroom ransacked.

The suspects fled in a getaway vehicle.

## Province making way for 2,250 new jobs

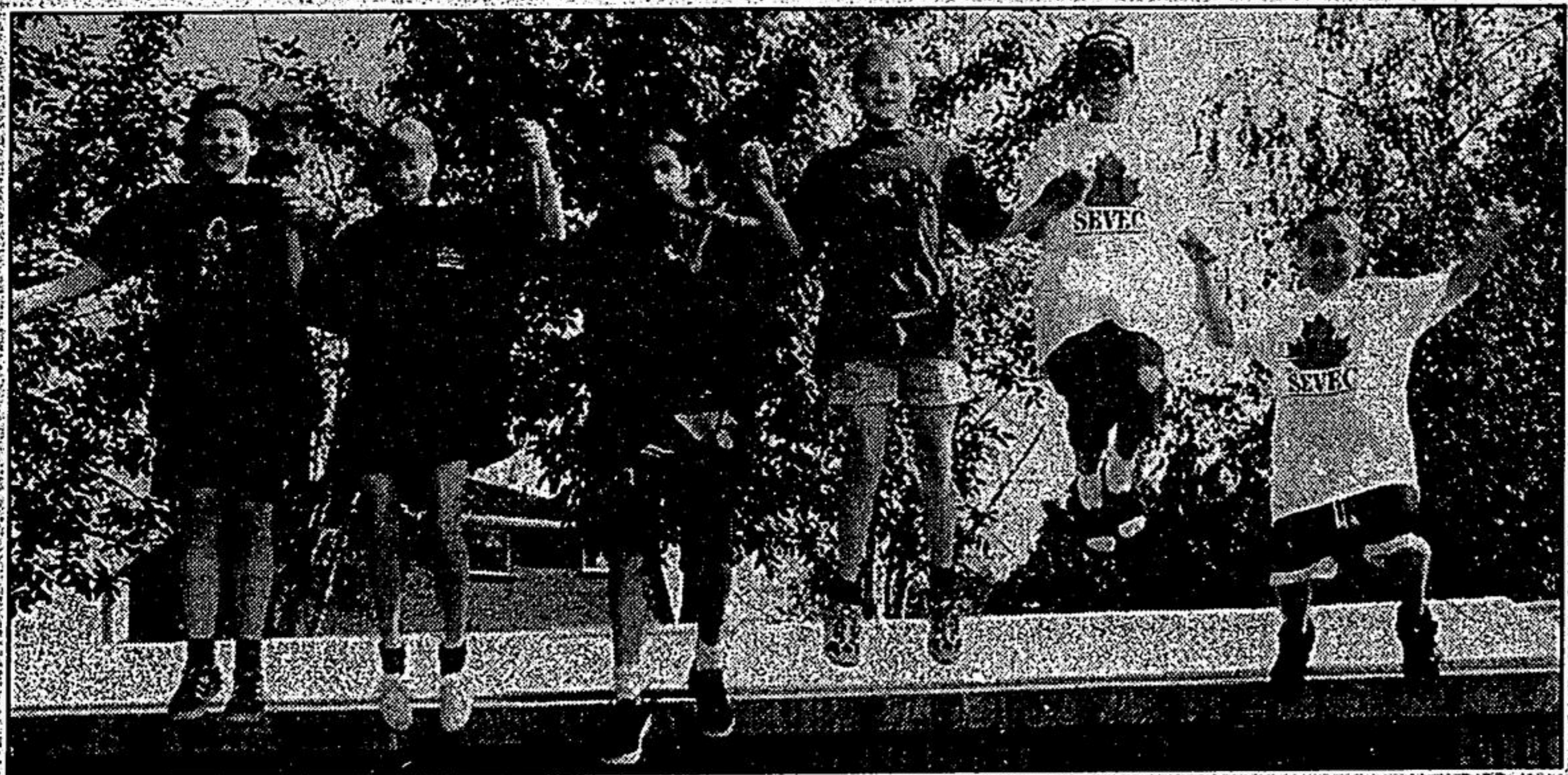
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The province-wide funding will create 2,250 new jobs in Ontario with 1,750 of the jobs in nursing and personal care. A spokesperson for Munro's office said the number of job opportunities at the six local facilities has yet to be determined.

In total, Ontario has 495 nursing homes and homes for the aged.

The funding will also help with maintenance costs for facilities, housekeeping and utilities.

Wilson noted that his ministry is ensuring services are in place as hospital restructuring moves forward. "This is vital to seniors in Ontario and it's an important step in ensuring the success of hospital restructuring," he said.



JUMP FOR JOIE: Hanging out together are, from left, Sophie Turmel, Gemma Cumbers, Sabrina Trembly, Jessica Chewits, Pier Alexandre Gauthier and Nathan Balsdon. Gemma, Jessica and Nathan are hosting their Quebec 'twins' in Stouffville.

Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE