

# York crime stats boast good news and bad

**KATHLEEN GRIFFIN**  
Staff Reporter

Nine more people died on York Region roads in 1997 than did the year before in twelve more fatal accidents — representing a 30 per cent increase in traffic fatalities last year.

Thirty-nine people died in car crashes last year, compared to 30 in 1996. In York Region there were 10,784 motor vehicle collisions in total, 257 less than the 11,041 accidents recorded in 1996.

York Regional Police have released their crime statistics for 1997 and presented them to the York Regional Police Services Board last week.

Generally, it seems crime has decreased, although criminal harassment, arson and assaults numbers are up.

There was one less murder last year than in 1996 for a 13 per cent drop.

Five of these murders, including the brutal beating death of elderly Milliken resident

Yee Mei Ng, have been solved.

Two are still outstanding — including the murder of Milliken shopkeeper and mother of two, Alberta Khan.

Incidents of criminal negligence causing death, attempted murder and robbery and extortion all decreased last year by 60 per cent, 27 per cent and 12 per cent respectively.

Sexual assaults increased by one incident — 290 in 1996 to 291 in 1997.

Criminal harassment increased by a whopping 50 per cent, from 108 incidents in 1996 to 162 in 1997. Assaults increased as well, by nine per cent, from 2,529 to 2,746.

Drug charges are down 10 per cent, weapons violations are down by 14 per cent while prostitution and gaming occurrences are up 1 per cent.

Arson has increased 15 per cent but break and enter, theft, posses-

sion of stolen goods and mischief are all down between 1 per cent and 18 per cent.

Citizen demand for service went down by eight per cent, or about 12,000 fewer calls in 1997 than 1996. Eighty per cent of that drop is attributed to a decrease in alarm calls.

Total criminal occurrences reported in 1997 amounted to 31,664, compared to 33,317 in 1996.

Of 1997's total, 10,380 have been cleared — 32 per cent. In 1996, police cleared 33 per cent.

## Millions could be cured of blindness

Half of the people in the world who are blind due to cataracts, could be cured, according to the Christian Blind Mission International.

During White Cane Week, Feb. 1-7, the Stouffville-based development agency wants Canadians to realize how lucky they are that there is one eye doctor for every 28,000 people in Canada. In Africa, for example, there is only one for every one million people.

A vast majority of 38 million blind people in the world live in poorer countries, and could have their sight restored by a simple eye operation.

The aim of the Christian Blind Mission is to prevent and cure blindness around the world.

The mission performs 270,000 sight restoration surgeries each year, and aims to reach one million cataract operations by the year 2,000.

### PEACH TREE ORIGINALS

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### TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

#### Public Information Meetings To Discuss Markham's Transportation Needs

Markham Council and staff are planning Public Information Meetings in your neighbourhood to hear your concerns about the transportation needs in Markham. We are bringing together the departments and agencies which are responsible for transportation planning and operations in Markham and we want to hear from you about local issues such as congestion, traffic infiltration, development, traffic calming and parking.

**Come out and meet with us.**  
**Let us know what is important to you.**

**Council and staff available from 7pm to 9pm.**

#### MEETING LOCATIONS

<b>WARDS 1 &amp; 2</b> Monday, February 9 Thornlea Secondary School Cafeteria 8075 Bayview Avenue	<b>WARDS 4 &amp; 5</b> Thursday, February 12 Markham Village Community Centre Village Lounge 6041 Hwy. #7
<b>WARDS 7 &amp; 8</b> Thursday, February 19 Armada Community Centre Denison Room 2401 Denison Street	<b>WARDS 3 &amp; 6</b> Monday, February 23 Anthony Roman Civic Centre 101 Town Centre Blvd (Hwy. #7 & Warden)

**Transportation Committee Chair**  
**Regional Councillor Gord Landon**