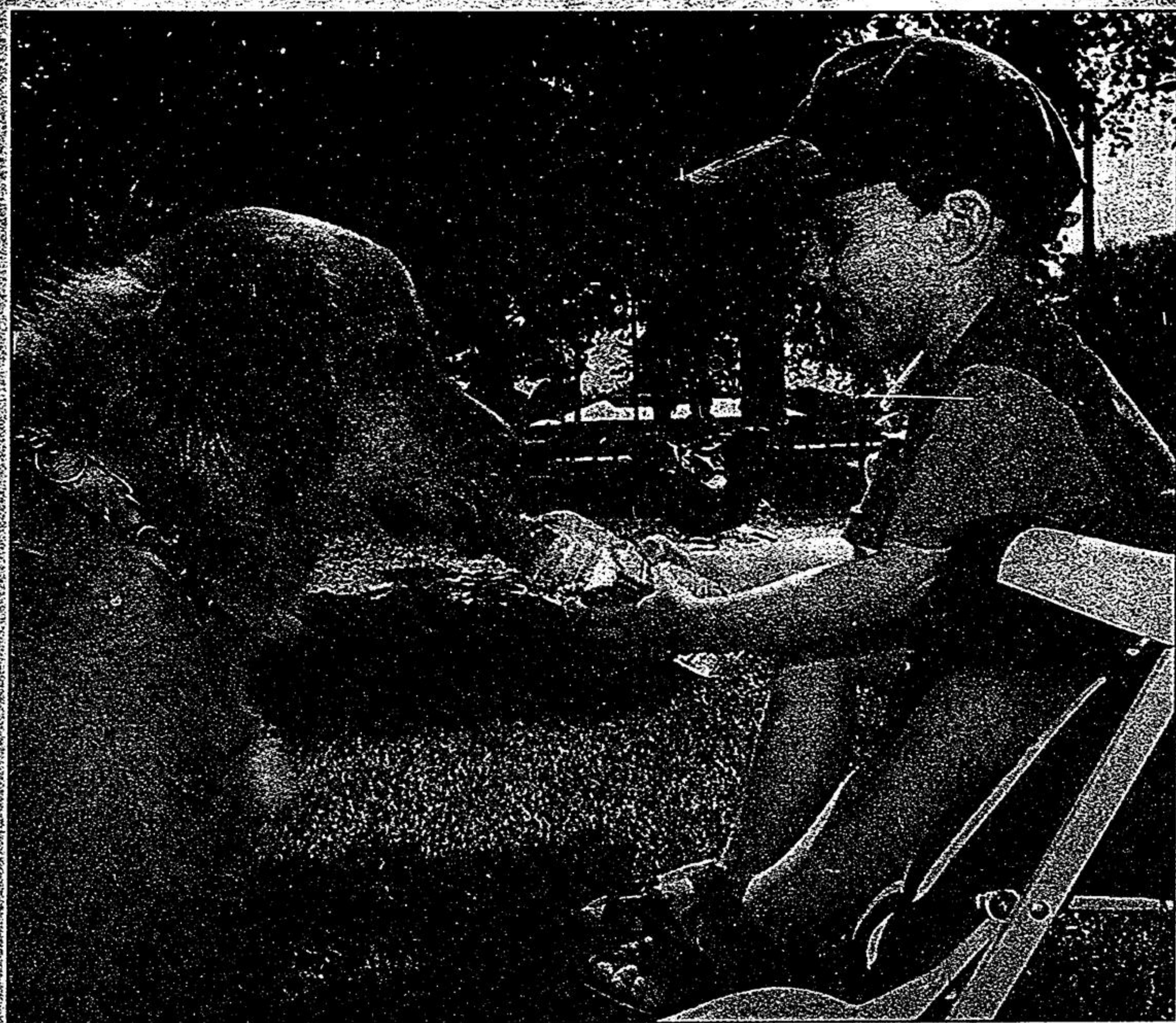


SHARING WITH A FRIEND



PHOTO/LORI EMMERSON

Colin Grosse holds a water bottle for his thirsty dog, Harley, during a visit to the town park last Saturday.

COUNCIL: Provincial downloading to blame, treasurer says

Town tallies \$500,000 shortfall

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

Whitchurch-Stouffville has lost more than \$500,000 because of provincial legislation, a town official has reported.

Town treasurer Ed Blackburn confirmed losses due to provincial legislation total \$503,000, but admitted he doesn't know how the shortfall will impact taxes.

Local property owners will have to wait until at least Aug. 18 to find out if taxes will rise.

Blackburn stressed the serious money shortage is out of the town's hands, blaming the province for the shortfall to town coffers.

Changes for 1998 in provincial legislation have reduced the revenue available to the town which could be used to reduce taxation, said Blackburn.

The \$290,000 Municipal Assessment grant from the province

has been eliminated, while \$63,000 from Bell Canada is now paid directly to the province. Other changes to the assessment legislation will result in a loss of revenue of up to \$150,000, said Blackburn.

Before town staff can be directed to send out the tax bill, council will deal with the actual cost of downloading.

Last year, Harris promised a "revenue neutral" impact because of downloading. At the same time, mayors across Ontario, including Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson, said they'd hold Harris to the promise.

Local property owners will not get their tax bill until September. Usually, the tax bill is in the mail by late June.

If council manages to cap taxes, the average homeowner in Whitchurch-Stouffville will pay about \$520 a year for the municipal portion of the three-way tax bill.

COUNCIL: Politicians to make decision in two weeks

Hydro office move on hold

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

The plan to move the Whitchurch-Stouffville hydro utility office from Main Street to the Tenth Line has been put on the back burner for two weeks.

On Tuesday, Whitchurch-Stouffville council opted to wait until August 18 to deal with a recommendation to sell the

existing building on Main Street and to move the building used by the engineering and planning staff to the local utility-owned property on the Tenth Line.

Since the town's planning and engineering departments are joining other town departments at the Imperial Centre on Sandford Drive in early

September, this move makes further economic sense, said Stouffville utility manager Nick Tatone.

Money from the sale of the building on Main Street could be forwarded to the residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville in the form of a rebate, or it could be used to upgrade the system, Tatone added.

Vandals damage train station

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

Stouffville's new train station was hit by vandals Tuesday night.

When Whitchurch-Stouffville Chamber of Commerce manager Barb St. John arrived at her work place Tuesday morning, she discovered that the train station had

been targeted by vandals.

St. John assessed the damage — eaves had been smashed, the flower garden had been damaged, hanging plants had been torn from chains and more graffiti had been written on the deck.

"It was so upsetting, I feel so angry. Why do people do this?" said St. John.

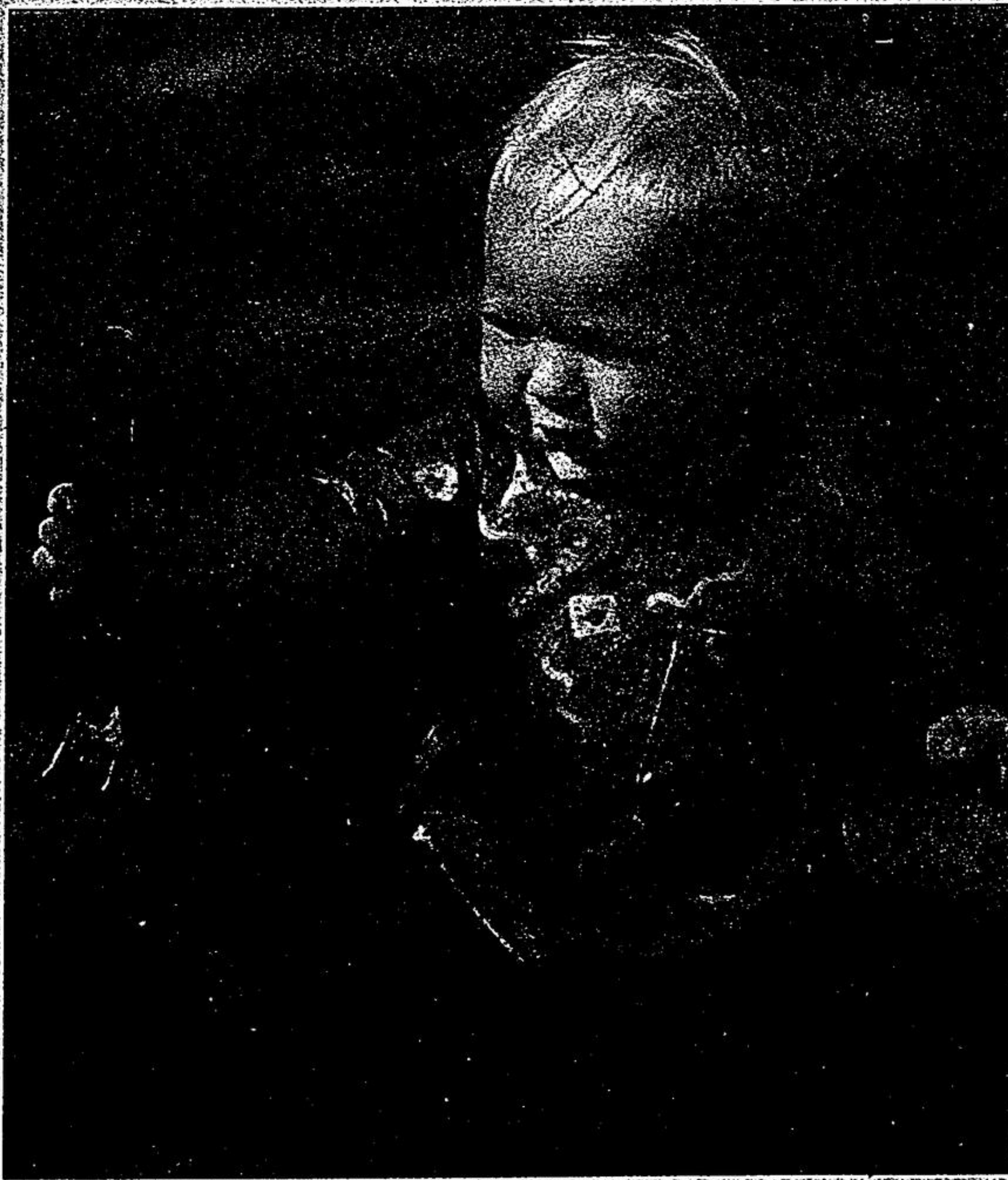
Town officials, aware that

vandalism needs to be addressed in a formal way, recently posted a \$500 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone charged.

Meanwhile, signs carrying anti-vandalism messages will soon be placed in town parks.

"We can fix it. But we need to look at what causes it," said St. John.

TOOL TIME



STAFF PHOTO/SIOERD WITTEVEN

Nicholas Weygang, 14 months, hands his dad Julian a tool to give him a hand fixing bikes on the front lawn of his Stouffville home.

Flyer Inserts For Thursday, July 30, 1998

- Sears
- Sears Whole Home
- Canadian Tire - St.
- The Bay
- Canadian Tire - R. Hill
- Home Hardware - Nwkt.
- Zellers
- Luciano & Associates
- Mataki Masonry
- Today's Homes
- Papa Karl's Pizza

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