

CRIME WATCH

Computer theft ring busted

More than \$50,000 worth of stolen computer equipment was seized from a Hood Road company Thursday in a York Regional Police raid.

A tip to police that Computerlink Systems Inc. was selling stolen components prompted investigators to send in an undercover buyer who purchased a computer board.

When officers contacted the original manufacturer, it was discovered the board had only been assembled a few weeks ago, was not available for retail sale, and was in fact part of a customer's order.

"The manufacturer told us there was no way that piece of equipment could have been lawfully obtained," 5 District Const. Peter Fleming said. "As a result of that, we obtained search warrants."

Those were executed Thursday, resulting in the seizure and charges against the owner and two employees, Fleming added.

"We are still investigating and still tracking some of the seized equipment — when it was made, where it was built and when it was shipped," he said. "That computer board can only have been obtained as a result of a theft, maybe during shipping."

Fleming said the theft of laptops and the commercial theft of hard drives and monitors has almost reached "epidemic" proportions and is certainly one of the top '90s-style crimes.

The three men are charged with one count each of possession of stolen property.

Parking spot squabble leads to charges

A fight over a parking spot ended with one man being punched in the head and threatened with a pocketknife while the other faces assault charges.

Police responded to a 911 call from the 21-year-old victim after the 4 p.m. altercation Thursday in a Steeles Avenue parking lot.

Police said the victim was attempting to back in to a space but it was being blocked by a man parked in the fire route, and he got out of his car and asked the driver to move his car.

According to police reports, the suspect became enraged, and began swearing and yelling

at the victim, spitting in his face several times. He then pulled out his pocket knife, waving it around in front of the victim.

The suspect approached the victim and punched him twice — once in the head and once in the shoulder — before taking off.

He was arrested at 10 p.m. that night, after arriving at the 5 District station to tell his side of the story. A Scarborough man, 40, is charged with level one assault and assault with a weapon.

Purse snatched in woman's driveway

A 49-year-old Markham woman escaped injury after she was robbed of her purse in her own driveway.

Police said the woman had just left her Shadlock Street home, in the Elision Road and Hwy. 48 area, and was about to get into her car when the suspect approached her from behind.

He grabbed her purse and fled northbound on Shadlock.

The purse was later recovered by a neighbour with all the property intact, but police are still looking for the suspect, described as a black man, about 20 years old, five-feet eight-inches tall with an average build. He was wearing a long black jacket, black pants and runners.

If you have information about this or any other crime, call police at 881-1221 or CrimeStoppers at 222-TIPS.

Trash can fire doused at high school

Police are investigating a deliberately-set garbage can fire in a Thornlea Secondary School washroom Wednesday.

Police said the fire was discovered by a student about 11:30 a.m. in the boys' washroom. The student pulled the fire alarm and alerted a teacher while the fire department was called.

Principal Helen Fox evacuated the building, while firefighters doused the flames. Fans were brought in to help clear the smoke and students returned to class shortly afterwards.

While the fire caused only minor damage, police are treating the incident as arson.

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