



REALLY BIG SHOE

Stouffville's Chuck Keith and his shadow work their way down a steep slope on snowshoes at Skyloft Ski Resort. Keith's artificial left leg adds to the challenge. He was participating in Tubbs Snowshoe Festival at the ski resort Saturday.

STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

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CRIME REPORT

Main Street crime wave hits towns

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
STAFF WRITER

Smash and grab thieves have been busy — in Stouffville and Markham — creating their own mini crime wave over the last few days.

In Stouffville, Freel Lane was the location for two break, enter and thefts last week.

On Thursday, suspects punched the lock on the front door of Evan's Wedding Accessories.

A computer, stereo, CDs and several wedding dresses were removed. The stolen property is worth \$4,000; damage is estimated at about \$500.

The next day, Natural Choice Outlet on Freel Lane was entered by much the same way.

Thieves punched out the lock and stole computer equipment, electronics and cash worth more than \$3,500. Damage is estimated at \$150.

While unsure whether the thefts are connected, police are asking for the public's help in nabbing those responsible for stealing more than \$600 worth of cigarettes and calling cards from Mega Convenience Sunday about 5 a.m.

Thieves punched out the lock and stole computer equipment, electronics and cash worth more than \$3,500

Thieves forced the front door lock on the Middlefield Road store, causing about \$50 damage.

Police believe at least five thefts committed in Markham over the weekend are also connected.

"I would certainly say that's what we're looking at," said Det-Sgt. Bruce Powley. "There is a similar method of entry and the occurrences all took place in generally the same area."

He said police are working on several leads, but asks anyone who may have seen suspects hanging around Main Street, Markham's commercial businesses Saturday afternoon after about 5 p.m. to call the 5 District police station.

Late Friday night locks were spun at the Taoist Chi Society on Jerman Street. While nothing was removed, damage is estimated at \$60.

The crime wave intensified Saturday about 5 p.m.

On Main Street, North, thugs spun the locks at Peach Tree Originals, causing \$200 damage to steal about \$30 cash.

An hour later, locks were forced at Equality Shoe Repair, causing \$80 damage, while \$25 cash was stolen.

Sometime between Saturday at 6 p.m. and Sunday morning, Rosedale Cleaners at 20 Main St. suffered the same fate. Locks were disabled and \$50 was missing as staff arrived for work Sunday.

Around the same time No Frills Haircutting on Mintleaf Gate was broken into after thieves pried the front door lock. About \$230 cash was removed and damage is pegged at \$70.

Anyone with information about these crimes is asked to call 881-1221 or Crime Stoppers at 222-TIPS.

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