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3 EXCLUSIVE
 Former police chief
 Bryan Cousineau speaks
 out for the first time.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR
EVENT: Breakfast at Harvey's for Mullings fund
WHEN: Feb. 6 & 7, 8 to 11 a.m.
WHERE: Harvey's, 15 Sandale Rd., Stouffville



16 Respect goes both
 ways, students say
 of Mike Harris' conduct
 comments this week.

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Crime wave

grows on Main Street

*Police say thieves could
be crack cocaine addicts*

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
STAFF WRITER

Stouffville is in the midst of a crime wave.

Six burglaries in three days, five on Main Street and three within an hour of each other early Monday, has police searching for suspects, witnesses and the public's help.

"I would think they are all connected, most were committed exactly the same way, it's likely the same suspect," Const. Peter Fleming said.

Police believe the same suspects may be involved in at least 15 break-enter and thefts committed in the last few days in the Main Street, Markham and the Hwy. 7 area.

And the reason for the recent rash of petty thefts could be the obvious one — drugs. Police confiscated perforated pop cans, often used to smoke crack cocaine, from one Stouffville Main Street location.

"It concerns me to hear crack may be involved; that means they will likely not stop on their own," Fleming said.

Culprits spun the lock at No-Frills Haircutting and swiped \$50 petty cash while causing \$80 damage last Saturday about 5:30 p.m.

Locks at Flanagan's Folk Art must be better, as suspects could not gain entry Sunday about 6:30 p.m., though they caused more than \$80 damage trying.

Parkview Village on Ninth Line had a \$5,000 sound mixing board removed last Friday morning, about 10 a.m., after thieves gained entry by

See SUSPECT, page 10.

COMMUNITY: Crowd urges council to close the book on pool/library plans

Like it or not, pool a go

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
STAFF WRITER

Despite a flood of requests to close the book on the town's pool/library plans, council voted to proceed with the \$5-million project.

The controversial complex will be built on 20 acres of vacant land at South Park, near O'Brien Avenue, council decided Tuesday, in front of a standing-room-only crowd.

"A pool and a library together is a better idea than having two sep-

arate (facilities)," Ward 2 Councillor Mark Carroll said.

By twinning the projects, taxpayers will save money in the long run for two facilities that have been in the works for years, town CAO Merlin Dewing has stated.

Construction of the 32,000-square-foot complex will begin in April with a targeted July 1, 2000 opening.

"This has been a very difficult decision," Mayor Wayne Emmerson said.

The final vote came following

three gruelling hours of debate. For the second time in a week, a large crowd criticized council for embarking on a project which has the potential to increase taxes.

While the project's capital cost comes out of the town's \$11-million reserve fund, the annual operating cost, estimated to be as high as \$400,000 a year, could translate into a marked tax increase, Dewing said.

But a tax hike did not sit well with most of the audience at Tuesday's meeting.

Patti Scott of St. John's Sideroad helped gather 301 names on a petition calling for council to reject the project.

"We don't want a tax hike," Scott said.

"Why should you increase our living costs? Give your heads a collective shake. This is a luxury we can't afford."

Of the few who spoke in favour of the project, Chris Larkin reminded the audience that the

See POOL, page 5.



PHOTO/LORI EMMERSON

Patti Scott takes her turn at the podium Tuesday night, armed with a 301-signature petition, and a request for council to reconsider its plans to build a \$5-million pool/library complex. The town has said the project could raise taxes to pay for operating the facility and many residents want the plan aborted.

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