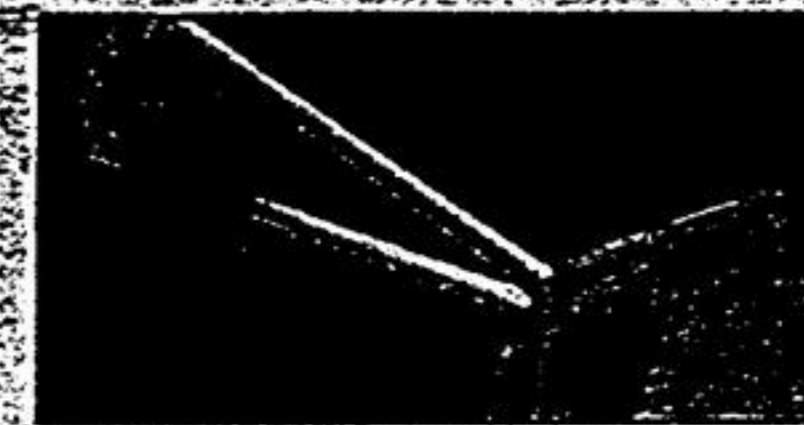


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27 Jim Fletcher is
back doing what he
enjoys most at Stouffville
District school.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENT: MS fundraising walk
WHEN: Sunday, April 18, 7:30 to 9:45 a.m.
WHERE: Markham District High School



13 Savour an array
of exotic Asian
tastes at dim sum
restaurants in the region.

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THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 1999

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Hospital abortion lawsuit settled

*Nurses can't be forced
to assist in abortions*

BY JENNIFER BROWN
Staff Writer

After a six-year battle, nurses at Markham Stouffville Hospital have won the right to refuse to help doctors perform abortions, according to a new agreement with their employer.

The debate ended Tuesday for Ailene George and seven other nurses, after a settlement was reached that includes a policy promising to respect their objections to providing abortions.

Originally slated to be heard before the Ontario Human Rights Commission, a deal was reached between the two sides following a mediated settlement, said Ernest Guiste, George's lawyer.

"We look forward to putting this matter behind us and continuing to work with our community to deliver exceptional patient care," hospital corporate communications director Pam Brodie said in a media release.

All elements of the agreement are confidential, except the new policy allowing nurses with religious or moral objections to refuse to participate in the procedure.

Nurses at York Central Hospital in Richmond Hill are able to opt out if they do not want to be involved in abortions.

But at York County Hospital in Newmarket, staff are informed during their job interview the hospital performs abortions and that it would be a condition of employment that they participate in the procedure.

TOWN BUDGET: Growth, heavy Main Street traffic creates huge problem for fire department, chief says

Fire hall to move off Main

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
Staff Writer

Stouffville's fire department has outgrown its Main Street location and will relocate in the next few years.

The town plans to spend more than \$1.6 million over the next five years to relocate, upgrade and equip a new headquarters.

"We have realized for a long time now our station is in the wrong

spot. We can't get in and out to get to the fires (quick enough)," fire chief Bill Brown said yesterday.

"Fire officials tell me that it's easier to get into a congested area than to get out. With the downtown congestion — particularly on Saturday — we've got a real problem," Mayor Wayne Emmerson said.

The town plans to spend \$331,000 next year to buy land in an undisclosed location to house the

downtown fire hall, as part of its five-year capital budget forecast.

Taxpayers will also spend \$680,000 to build a satellite fire station in Gormley in 2002. The hall will be located on town-owned land on Woodbine Avenue near its work depot in Vandorf to serve both hamlets.

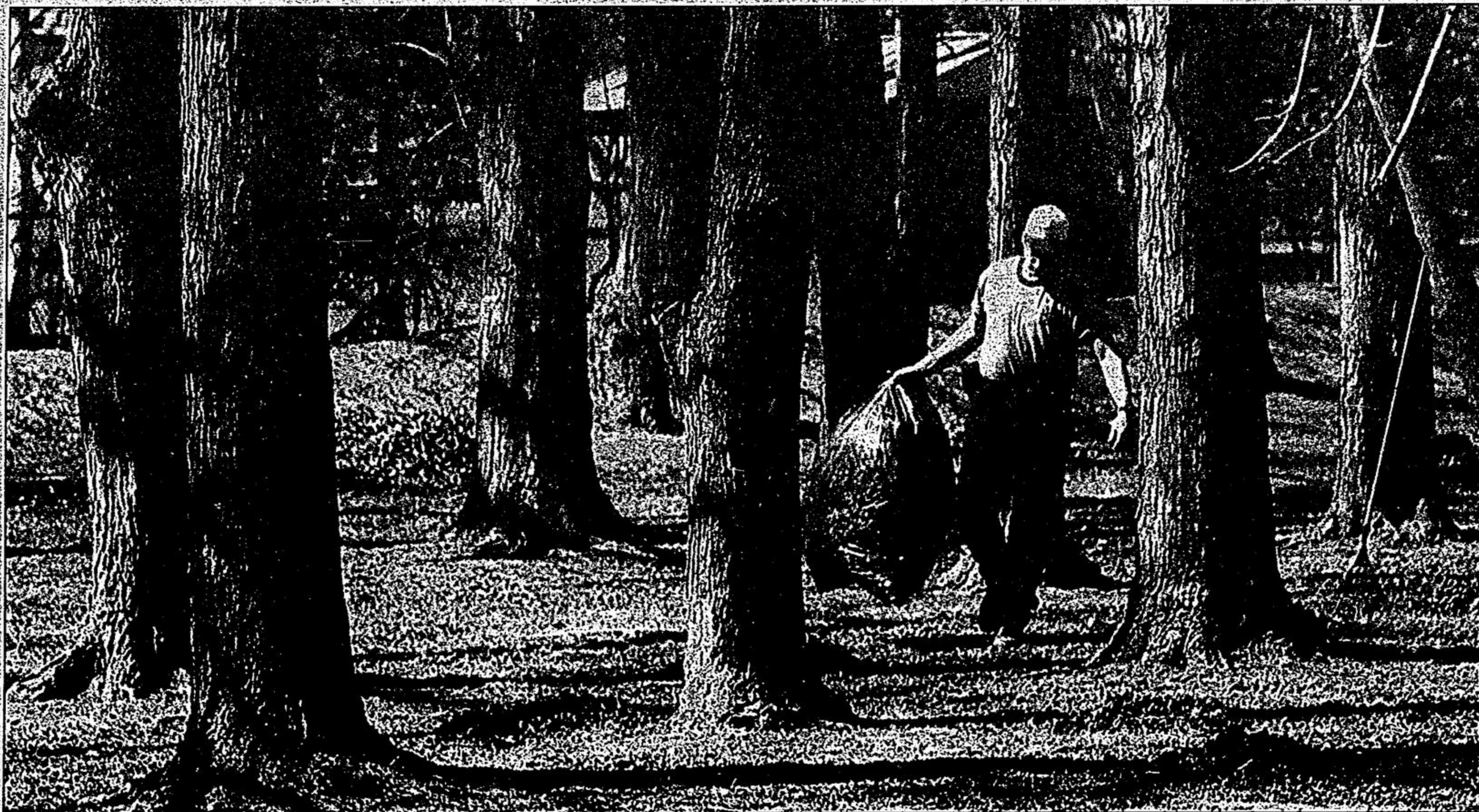
"General growth is an issue and if (developer) ClubLink builds the new Tennis Canada facility, which

takes in 1,000 homes, there will be even more demand on our fire department," Brown said.

As well, the town has approved \$1 million for the new fire hall in Ballantrae, expected to begin construction in the next few months.

The changes could lead to hiring a full-time fire brigade and still have a volunteer back up, the chief said.

See HOMEOWNERS, page 4



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

IT'S IN THE BAG

Shawn Norton of the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville parks and recreation department does some spring cleaning in Sangster Grove, part of the Stouffville Memorial Park last week.

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