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**29** Coach says dealing with parents is one of the toughest coaching tasks of all in rep hockey.

**ARTS & CULTURE CALENDAR**

**EVENT:** Music Manias As The Cork Flies  
**WHEN:** Tonight at 8 p.m. — final show  
**WHERE:** SDSS gymnasium, get tickets at the door



**26** The Rouge River and surrounding lands are in for the fight of their life. Can we help?

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## THE COURTNEY TREMPE INQUEST



STAFF PHOTO/ROB ALARY

Dog owners Todd and Kelli Reybroek leave the inquest into the death of Courtney Trempe earlier this week.

# Tougher laws a must

BY JENNIFER BROWN  
 Staff Writer

Bylaw officers say the laws controlling unruly dogs need to be made tougher to ensure public safety across the province.

Testifying Friday at an inquest into the death of eight-year-old Courtney Trempe, a Georgina bylaw officer said current laws allow a dog who has seriously bitten someone to remain in its owner's care without restrictions.

The process of the Dog Owner's Liability Act is quite long and allows the dog to remain in the community unrestrained for some time pending the hearing, Andrew Fordham said.

Unless the owner consents to an animal being destroyed immediately, as was the case in the Trempe tragedy,

## Bylaw officers say they need help to protect public from unruly dogs

owners can request a court hearing before a justice of the peace to examine whether restrictions should be placed on their dog's freedom.

An order may end in requiring a dog to be muzzled, leashed or contained in a fenced yard.

The dog that killed Courtney had no previous history of biting or viciousness, but the inquest is reviewing all laws regulating dog behaviour and public safety.

Fordham suggested bylaw departments should have the right to

restrain a dog who has bitten someone, without delay. The owner would then have to request a hearing within a certain period of time in order to get the dog back.

But even if restrictions are placed on a dog's freedom, they only apply to the dog's hometown, since each municipality controls its own dog bylaws.

"The public must see the order as valid no matter where you go in Ontario," Fordham said. "If you go camping in Algonquin Park, the (restricted) dog should be muzzled — the question is how do you get something in place that makes a community safe."

The inquest also heard that proper

See MEDICAL, page 3.

# York officials scramble to redraw town boundaries

## Local politicians try to head off Tory merger plan

BY LISA QUEEN  
 Staff Writer

Tory Party insiders say Premier Mike Harris plans to turn York Region into a mega-city immediately following the election, according to some regional politicians.

In an effort to deflect any plans to amalgamate York's nine municipalities, many towns are hiring consultants and setting up committees to find a better way to redraw the York Region map.

Vaughan Regional Councillor Michael DiBiase said Tory officials he has met at party fundraisers have warned him Harris will turn York, Peel, Halton and Durham regions into four mega-cities if he wins the election, expected in June.

The move would mirror what Harris did with Toronto after the 1995 election.

Markham Deputy Mayor Frank Scarpitti said there are rumours regional amalgamations will be implemented in time for the municipal elections in November 2000.

York Mackenzie MPP Frank Klees insisted his Tory colleagues still plan to let local



FRANK SCARPITTI: Rumours circulating about amalgamation.

politicians determine their own fates.

But they won't wait forever.

"We're going to give municipalities an opportunity to do the right thing. Obviously, at the end of the day, if we don't see that the taxpayer is getting efficient value for dollar, then the province may well have to take some unilateral action," Klees said.

In the past few weeks, there has been a flurry of activity at the local level relating to amalgamation.

Aurora set up a committee to investigate merging with Newmarket and King. And Vaughan and Markham have agreed privately to hire consultants to look at expanding their borders.

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