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3 The good news is a balanced budget for the province. The bad news: local tax hikes.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EVENT: Youth self-esteem seminar for parents
WHEN: Tomorrow, 7 p.m. (\$5 per family)
WHERE: Markham District High School, 294-5830



19 Students enjoy the action of soccer and the challenge of chess with Subbeteo.

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TUESDAY FOCUS

A love story set to music

Catholic cemetery focus of meeting

Crematorium part of 110-acre burial site

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
 Staff Writer

A park-like, 110-acre cemetery, which will include a crematorium, is planned for northwest Whitchurch-Stouffville, near Newmarket.

But the crematorium won't be built immediately in the Catholic cemetery, which will be built west of Woodbine Avenue and south of Davis Drive.

Richard Hayes, executive director of the Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Toronto, said Catholics don't opt for cremation as often as other religious denominations.

"Crematoriums apply to about 15 to 20 per cent of the Catholic population. But, the demand is increasing as time goes," said Hayes, adding about 40 per cent of the general population is cremated.

With York Region's population boom continuing, the archdiocese decided another Catholic cemetery should be in place in about seven years.

A public meeting will be held May 16 at 7 p.m. to discuss an Official Plan amendment to accommodate the cemetery. The meeting will be held at the Whitchurch-Stouffville municipal office at 37 Sandford Dr.

Hayes is confident the plan will be well received by the public.

See CHURCH, page 2.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Tom Thibeault presented his wife, Jane with a birthday gift she would never forget when he wrote and produced a classical compact disc called *Mystery*.

Musical mystery

Tom Thibeault has crafted some unusual birthday gifts before. But this time, the Stouffville husband mixed his love for music with the love of his life.

[FULL REPORT/PAGE 8]

Boards tackle student sex abuse

Criminal checks of teachers called for in report

BY GIANNI COLAVECCHIA
 Staff Writer

Education officials admit no child is absolutely safe from sexual abuse at school.

The admission comes in the wake of a provincial report calling for reforms to prevent abuse by teachers.

"It's going to appear in schools, unfortunately. I don't know if we will ever have a system that's perfect," said Gerry Harrison, president of the York Region branch of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation.

But Harrison and officials with York Region's two school boards also note there are many checks and balances here to safeguard against sexual abuse.

And many of those safeguards, they add, were in place long before the report recommended them.

The 570-page, \$1-million report written by a former Ontario judge calls for officials to:

- perform criminal record checks on prospective teachers;
- train employees to detect signs of sexual abuse;
- and implement a code that prohibits reprisals against anyone complaining about an alleged offender.

In the past 15 years, a York Region principal was convicted of sexual charges, a Catholic school teacher was charged with sexual assault and a public school teacher pleaded guilty to sexual interference after sending letters to a teenage student.

See SAFEGUARDS, page 15.

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