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8 Canadians are gearing up to celebrate the nation's birthday with fun, food and fireworks.

ARTS & CULTURE CALENDAR

EVENT: Strawberry Festival
WHEN: Wednesday through Sunday
WHERE: Whitchurch-Stouffville



3 Mapping out the future of transit for easier commuting through York Region.

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Killers lay in wait for man's return, police say

Stabbed to death in front of home

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
 Staff Writer

A 33-year-old man was stabbed to death in front of his Vaughan home Sunday night by two men who police believe were lying in wait for him.

Manuel Desa was pronounced dead at hospital after collapsing on the street outside his Royal Colwood Court home at about 10:30 p.m., shocking neighbours in the Dufferin Street-Hwy. 7 area.

Desa, his common-law wife Rosa and her two-year-old daughter from a previous marriage had been out to dinner with friends. When they returned to their small house, they were confronted by two men in their driveway.

"An argument started and Mr. Desa was fatally stabbed," said Det. Sgt. Denis Mulholland, head of the York Regional Police homicide squad.

Desa staggered to the middle of the street where he collapsed. Neighbours ran to his aid and called an ambulance, but to no avail.

"He was VSA (vital signs absent) when he arrived at hospital," Mulholland said.

An autopsy performed yesterday found the cause of death to be a stab wound to the abdomen, although police won't say how

See MURDER, page 7.

RAFFI TORRES PICKED FIFTH OVERALL IN SATURDAY'S NHL DRAFT

Islanders net scoring ace

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
 Sports Editor

Raffi Torres learned the answers to two of the biggest questions in his budding hockey career Saturday when would he be picked in the NHL entry draft and which jersey would he be slipping on?

Entering the draft, staged at the Canadian Airlines Saddledome in Calgary, the 18-year-old Markham resident was projected to go some-

where in the first round and probably to a team in dire need of scoring talent.

Torres did not have to wait for long.

Dealing goalkeeper Kevin Weekes, defenceman Kristan Kudroc and their second-round pick in the 2001 draft to the Tampa Bay Lightning, the New York Islanders received their first-round and fourth-round pick.

With the first-round selection, which was the fifth overall, the Islanders called Torres up to the podium.

For Torres, who toiled last season with the Brampton Battalion, the moment of truth brought an end to all of the anxiety that had built up over the last few months.

"I'm definitely relieved and, at the same time, excited," said the left winger, who led the Battalion in

scoring this past season with 43 goals and 48 assists.

Torres said he had no idea the Islanders would choose him. But he did see his name crop up on the Internet and had dinner with some of their representatives prior to the draft.

Judging by the way the Islanders wheeled and dealt their way

See BAHEN, page 5.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Raffi Torres is now the proud owner of a New York Islanders' jersey. The Markham resident plans to spend the summer working out at the gym.

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