

ARMADALE PUBLIC SCHOOL CLEARED FOR 45 MINUTES

Arson suspected in Markham school fire, York police say

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN
Staff Writer

Police are investigating a fire, likely deliberately set, at Markham's Armadale Public School Tuesday morning.

The fire caused \$3,000 damage and was contained to a second-floor girls' wash-room, said superintendent of schools Vicki Bismilla.

"There's some smoke damage, but it was quite minor," she said.

Police said the fire started about 8:30 a.m. under a sink, worked its way up the walls and melted a soap dispenser, which accounted for much of the smoke.

Markham firefighters quickly extinguished the flames.

Students were forced out into the school yard for about 45 minutes until the smoke cleared Bismilla said, adding principals from nearby schools came to supervise the children.

Police spent the day at the school interviewing students as Markham Fire investigators probed the scene. The investigation continues.

Road blitz today

If you drink and drive, you'd better stay home Saturday.

Officers from more than 220 police forces across Canada will be cracking down in their communities for a 24-hour blitz dubbed Operation Impact.

Every year in Canada, more than 1,100 people are killed and 3,600 injured in crashes involving a drinking driver.

Alcohol was a contributing factor in 20 per cent of York Region's 34 fatal collision last year, said Sgt. John Sheldon.

York officers will be using the new mobile breath testing vehicle during Saturday's blitz, which can process the testing and arrest of a suspected impaired driver right on the roadway.

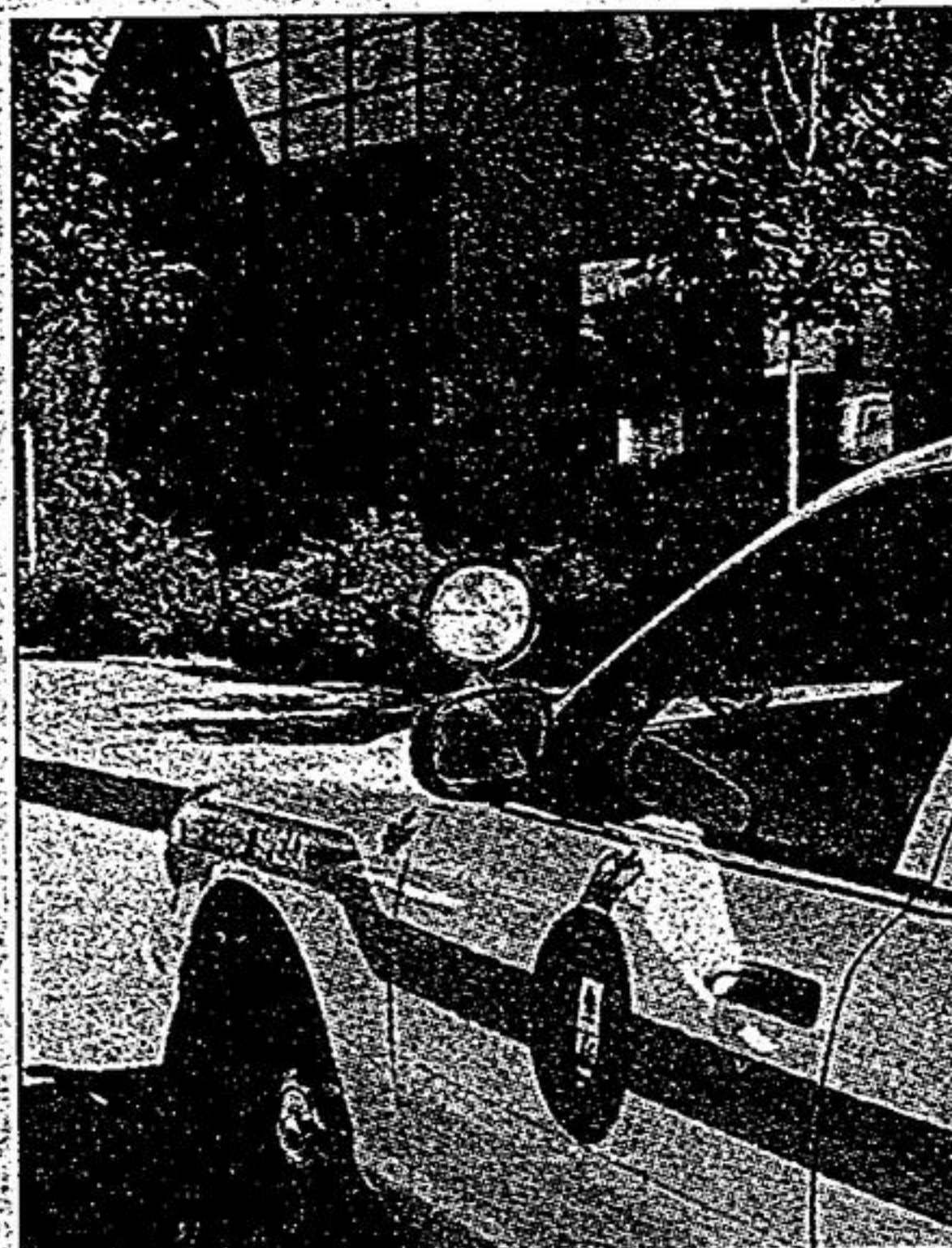
621 charges laid

York Regional Police laid 621 charges last month during its school zone traffic enforcement program.

Most of these drivers disobeyed speed restrictions in school zones or disregarded school bus signals.

October's focus is on seat belt enforcement.


During a blitz last weekend, police found between 88 and 97 per cent of drivers were wearing their seat belts when stopped by police.



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

A fire cleared Armadale Public School for 45 minutes on Tuesday morning.

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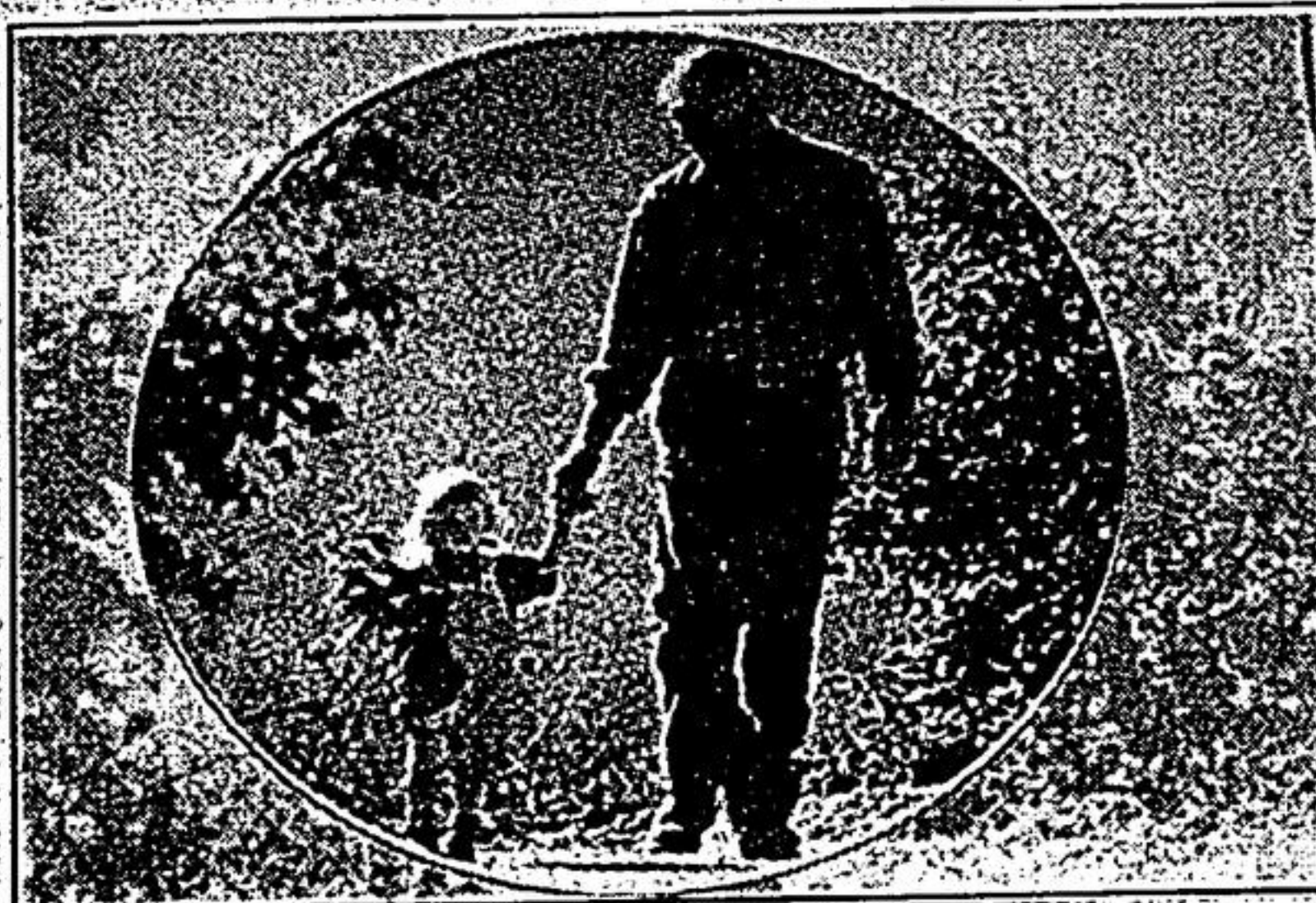
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