

Two teens guilty

Editor's note: A story in Thursday's Tribune on two teens found guilty of assault in Newmarket 17 months ago was cut off. The rest of the story follows.

Following the assault, the victim got up, brushed himself off, and walked home, making an obscene gesture to the youths as he left.

Later that night, he began slipping into a coma. He was taken by ambulance to a York Region hospital and then rushed to the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto in a "pre-death" state.

Although defence lawyers speculated the victim may have suffered his injuries falling from a fence as he cut through yards on his way home, Mr. Justice Michael Caney said they presented no evidence to support the "fanciful" claim.

Even though a friend of the victim's admitted they concocted a lie that saw the teen hitting his head on a rock when he fell in the mud while out for a walk, Caney said the fabrication was meant to hide their involvement in a gang that was writing racist graffiti in the neighbourhood.

He said the assault was

the only plausible reason for the victim's injuries.

"The only evidence of any force applied to (the victim) that day relates to (the first youth) punching him in the head and (the second youth) kicking him in the head, or at least kicking dirt at his head."

Caney said either the punches or the kick, or a combination of the two, at the thinnest part of the victim's skull were responsible for his injuries. The two convicted youths will be sentenced Jan. 16.

Stephen Brown, lawyer for the acquitted youth, said his client is relieved.

"It's been a very difficult time. He's been almost under house arrest since he was charged with this," Brown said. "He has to live with (witnessing the assault) for the rest of his life."

"No one intended these injuries that happened to happen. None of these boys wanted that. None of these boys intended that. (My client) is sorry he was there. He's sorry the events unfolded the way they did."

Meanwhile, a civil lawsuit launched by the victim's family is proceeding.

'Bad feelings' over pool will heal

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indoor pool-library-fitness complex.

Delivering the high-ticket item has not been easy, Emmerson is the first to admit. Local council, especially Emmerson faced strong opposition to the project. Many objected to the chosen site, while others opposed moving the library from its downtown location.

"Once people see how attractive the complex is and once it's up and running, people will use it and enjoy it. The bad feelings will heal," said Emmerson.

Some gravel pits have been a sore spot in this municipality for many years. Emmerson and mayors before him have struggled with ongoing gravel-related problems. The controversial issue of how fill is being handled at pits needs to be addressed once and for all, stressed Emmerson.

Questionable fill is being illegally dumped in defunct pits, area residents have charged. Emmerson is suggesting local MPP Frank Klees, representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ministry of the Environment be invited in January to a Stouffville-based public meeting to discuss switching the monitoring of gravel pits from the provincial jurisdiction to the municipal level.

"That's what the people want and that's what they should have," said Emmerson. "It would work a lot better. It would be best to give us the reign. The residents are asking for this. The residents are right. As it is, we don't know what's being dumped in these pits."



WAYNE EMMERSON: Ambulance service needs improvement in Whitchurch-Stouffville, mayor says.

Whitchurch-Stouffville's roads are not up to snuff, said Emmerson. On the plus side, there is some money in the kitty to fix the damaged roads.

"We have up to a million dollars budgeted for road work," said Emmerson. "We're in fair shape money-wise. Our roads aren't in good shape. They need attention and the need is all over."

Water for Vandorf is also a priority. Just how to deliver communal water to about 80 homes will be finalized soon.

Also, a Secondary Plan for Vandorf and Preston Lake area will be completed soon. "There's a lot going on in this area," Emmerson stressed.

Emmerson knows the area. He was

not only born here, he's third generation Whitchurch-Stouffville. He graduated from Stouffville District Secondary School, is employed at a Stouffville business, has always lived in Stouffville and, no doubt, always will.

He and his wife Debra marked their 25th wedding anniversary this weekend. The couple have two sons.

Since the mayor's raised children he know the importance of living in a community that offers quality health care. Delivering enhanced ambulance service to Whitchurch-Stouffville is important to Emmerson.

"It needs to be improved here in Whitchurch-Stouffville. I'll continue to work on it."

As well, Emmerson wants to implement recommendations contained in a recent report presented by the Ontario Fire Marshal.

In his final term, Emmerson expects to deal with a mayor's usual work load: planning matters, public work issues including roads and water bills, garbage troubles, parks and recreation, cemetery plots, snow removal, ice, floods and power railures.

While the "A" word cropped up often during the municipal election campaign, Emmerson doesn't expect Whitchurch-Stouffville will be forced into amalgamation any time soon.

"There will be another election in this town. Amalgamation is not going to take place right away. This town will be a town for a long time yet," he said.



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