

# Cops bust 100th pot house in York Region

BY ROGER VARLEY  
Staff Writer

Det. Mike Klimm was not amused by a suggestion York Regional police should have brought balloons to mark the 100th raid of marijuana growing operation this year.

The raid, carried out at a house on Elston Court, a quiet cul-de-sac in Richmond Hill's Don Head area, nevertheless had some elements of a party.

A dozen or so officers from around the province, currently on a drug training course at the Ontario Police College, on hand to observe the raid by the York Regional Police drug unit, posed for a group photo in front of the pot house.

Inside the garage, the walls were covered with paintings of cartoon characters, done by a previous owner. At the side of the driveway was a house sign bearing a drawing of Snoopy carrying a brass 7.

"Number seven wasn't very lucky for them," quipped Det. Sgt. Gary Miner.

Inside the house, however, the damage resulting from the illegal growing operation was substantial. Black mould grew on the walls of what had been the front living room. The ceiling in the kitchen was bubbled and cracked by seeping water. Holes were cut into floors and walls to allow installation of wiring, plumbing and ventilation ducts.

The inhabitants of the house, which police said was rented, had also cut a door leading from the back of the garage into the house to allow the marijuana to be loaded into vehicles unobserved.

In the basement were hundreds of mature plants and all the usual paraphernalia used in such operations.

Marking the 100th bust, however, was both a testimonial to the success of police in uncovering the illegal grow houses — (there were 89 such raids in York Region in all of 2001) — and an indication of the proliferation of the crime.

Det. Sgt. Miner said the increase in the number of raids on marijuana operations has its down side.

"It's losing its momentum in the media," he said.

Neighbours, however, credited media coverage of pot houses for uncovering the operation on Elston Court.

Peter and Pauline Rood, who live a few houses away, said neighbours became suspicious because the occupants were rarely seen, the grass on the front lawn was unkempt and they rarely saw garbage or a blue box put out for collection. They said newspaper articles and television shows alerted them what to look for.

Mrs. Rood said they persuaded another neighbour to call police with their suspicions.

Jennifer Dowell, who lives next door to the pot house, was also suspicious.

"I once saw one guy weed-whacking his lawn," she said. "And I saw a silver car one day. But I never saw them use the front door, their blue box was always on the front porch and there was always the same light on."

One thing the neighbours might have been looking for was not evident at this house. Unlike many marijuana operations where the windows are blacked out to prevent anyone looking inside, the windows of the house of Elston Court were dressed with lace curtains.

Det. Klimm pointed out, however, that all was not as it appeared. Behind the lace curtains, dummy walls had been erected about two feet from the windows to fool prying eyes.

"They're starting to do this now," said Det. Klimm.

No one was present at the house when the raid took place.

## Flyer

## WATCH

Inserts for  
Thursday June 13, 2002

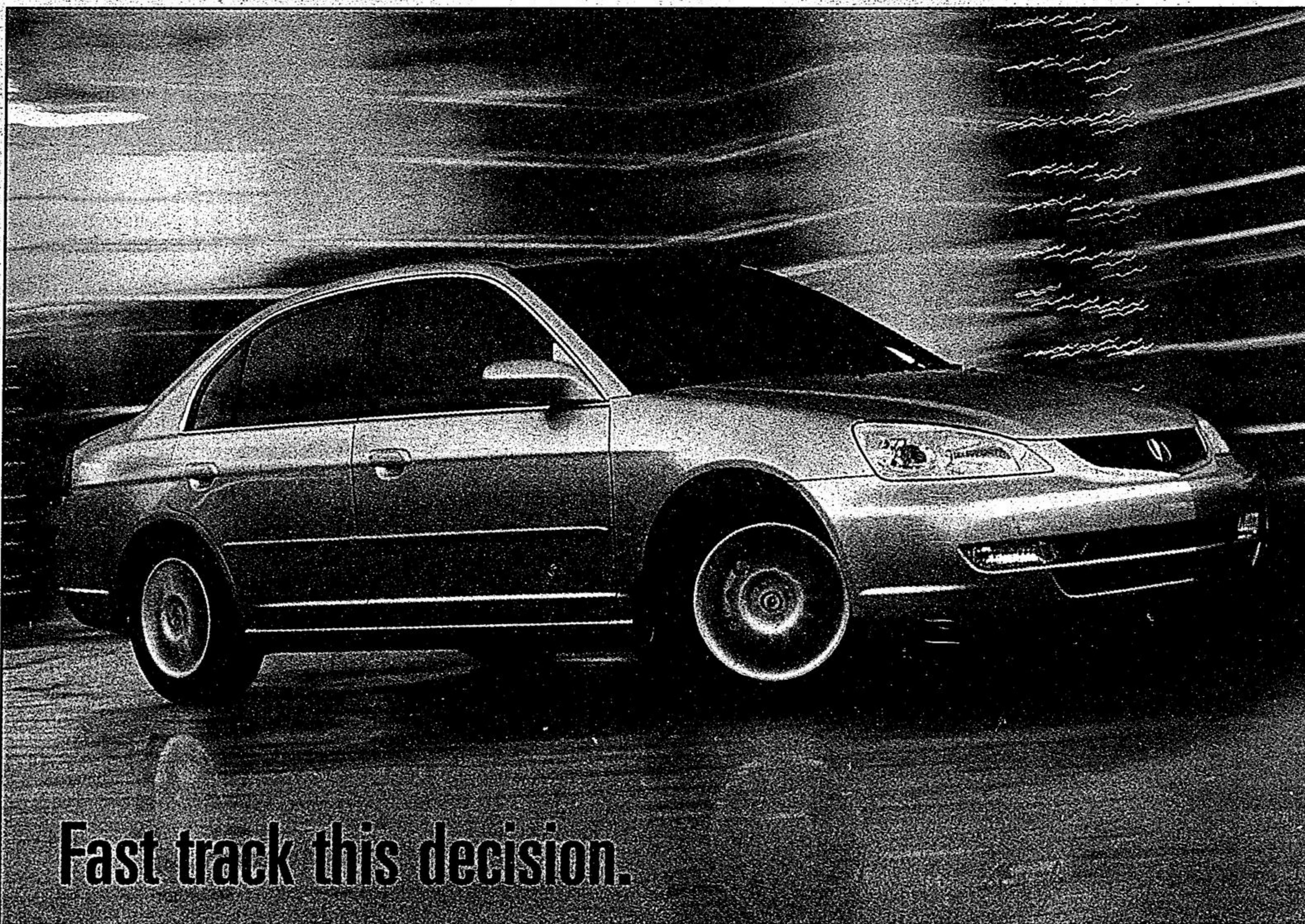
Canadian Tire*	Assante Capital Management*	The Bay*	Lawn & Garden*
IGA*	Sears*	Price Chopper*	Future Shop*
IGA - Stouffville Market*	Shopper Drug Mart*	The Era Banner*	Cliffords Haulage*
Wheels N' Boards*	A&P*	Weston Produce*	Todays Homes*
Loving Care For Seniors*	A&P - Pharmacy*	Toys R' Us*	Henry's Cameras*
Edmund Pharmacy*	Zellers*	Home Depot - Fathers Day*	K. Jamson*
		Home Depot -	

\*selected areas only

**NO ONE DELIVERS RESULTS LIKE WE DO!**

To find out more about how to reach your target market and get the same great response from your flyer distributions as these customers, call us

**ECONOMIST & SUN** today! **Stouffville Tribune**  
**(905) 294-8244**



**\$297/mth.**

**The 2002 EL.** We think the sleek-looking Acura EL is a proposal everyone can get behind. It features a responsive VTEC engine, 4-wheel independent suspension and side airbags. Plus, you get air conditioning, power window and door locks, keyless entry, CD player and a plentiful array of standard features. Some decisions are quicker than others. Visit Acura in Markham with haste.



**ACURA**

\*LIMITED TIME LEASE OFFER based on the 2002 EL Touring 5-speed (model ES3562E) and available through Honda Canada Finance Inc. Lease payments are \$297 per month for 48 months. O.A.C. Down payment or equivalent trade of \$2,455, first monthly payment and security deposit required. A.L.R. 7.8%. Total lease obligation of \$16,711. 96,000 km allowance (12¢ per km exceeding 96,000 applies), destination charges (\$900) included. Taxes, licence and insurance are additional. Option to purchase at lease end for \$10,633 plus taxes. Dealer may lease for less. See Acura in Markham for details.

**ACURA IN MARKHAM**

**5201 Highway #7 East, Markham** (at McCowan)

**905-948-8866**

### CAMP McNAT

**410 Goldhawk Trail**

(1 block S. Steeles, 1 block W. McCowan)

Summer Day Camp

July 2 - August 23

Monday to Friday, 7 am - 6pm

\$85.00 per week Ages 4-11

Registration Dates:

June 14 : 7pm - 9pm

June 15: 10am - 12noon

**416-299-9592**

Snacks provided, day trips and transportation included.

Activities include games, crafts, sports.

Sponsored by St. Michael The Archangel.