

1,000 town catch basins cleaned out in West Nile fight

From page 1

As an alternative to larviciding, Mr. Plakes is recommending people protect themselves by using a natural repellent and eliminating standing water on their properties.

People living in the hot spots should also avoid going outdoors in the early morning or in the evening, said Mr. Plakes. "If people do go out, they should wear long sleeves and pants," he added.

While Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson is backing the councillor by asking people to exercise common sense, he is not opposed to larviciding.

"It's being done around our catch basins," he noted. "But common sense should still rule. People should cover up when the mosquitoes are out."

"I'm not suggesting people wear snowmobile suits or live in a bubble."

The battle against the West Nile virus is being taken seriously at the municipal level, said Mr. Batt.

Before the larviciding takes place, Whitchurch-Stouffville's 1,000 catch basins will be cleaned out by a recently hired contractor.

While York Region is quarter-backing the assault against the virus, the municipality will help monitor the situation. "If we see a problem with standing water, we'll report it," said Mr. Batt.



WAYNE EMMERSON: Mayor not suggesting residents wear snowmobile suits this summer.

Officials in York Region took special note of the problem when a second bird with West Nile virus was found in neighbouring Aurora.

The bird was found near the intersection of Wellington Street East and Bayview Avenue, but acting medical officer of health Dr. Hanif Kassam could provide few details.

The region's first dead crow, believed to be the first West Nile-infected bird found in Ontario this year, was discovered in mid-April near Leslie Street and Muloock Drive in Newmarket.

Dr. Kassam stressed no human cases of the virus have been identified in York Region

this year, but he fears people may contract the potentially fatal disease as early as next month.

Dr. Kassam said the majority of infected people suffer few or no symptoms.

However, during a conference held last Friday with hospital authorities, he urged them to be on alert for patients complaining about West Nile symptoms.

"I'm hoping (larviciding) along with an extensive media campaign educating people will reduce the risk for West Nile virus," said the doctor.

Symptoms range from mild fever and headache to loss of consciousness, seizures, weakness and swelling of the brain.

The most severe symptoms are exhibited in only a small percentage of victims.

The virus is passed to humans by mosquitoes that have fed off infected birds.

Mayor Emmerson pointed out mosquitoes near such waters as Musselman's Lake and Preston Lake are a different breed and not threatened by the virus.

He added last year six cases of West Nile virus were reported in humans. Province-wide the number was 307, while in all of Canada there were 325 cases.

Meanwhile, in the United States, 4,156 people were hit with the virus.

Besides the locations in Whitchurch-Stouffville, the public health department has identified hot spots throughout the region, including:

Pollock Road and Woodbine Avenue in Georgina;

Lake Ridge Road south of Baseline Road in Georgina;

Yonge Street from Green Lane to Queensville Sideroad in East Gwillimbury;

Hwy 404 from St. John's Sideroad to

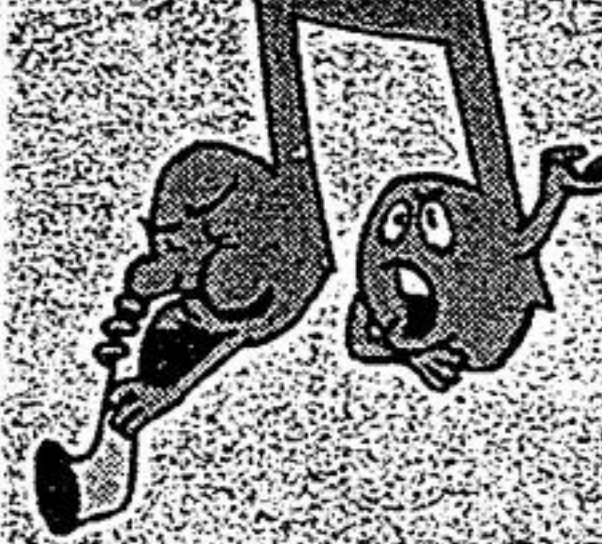
Green Lane in Newmarket;

St. John's Sideroad from Bathurst Street to Bayview Avenue in Aurora;

15th Avenue from Yonge to Leslie Street in Aurora and Richmond Hill;

an almost continuous area straddling Hwy 407 from Vaughan to Markham.

IMPORTANT BULLETIN!!



News from UXBRIDGE MUSICAL THEATER

AUDITIONS for SWEET CHARITY

The great 60's musical by Neil Simon and Cy Coleman, with popular tunes like *Hey Big Spender*, *If They Could See Me Now*, *Baby Dream Your Dream*, and *The Rhythm of Life*.

Great show for female dancers!

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Udora Community Centre (15 km. North of Uxbridge on Hwy. #1)

Please prepare a song, and come comfortably dressed for a dance audition. Call Conrad Boyce at 905-852-4669 for more information.

Performance dates are Oct. 9-18 at the Uxbridge Music Hall.

ALSO:

If you missed UMT's Hit production of last fall *Radio Gals*, don't make the same mistake twice! The hilarious story of a bunch of wonderful women who start up a pirate radio station in Arkansas in the 1920's, is being re-mounted at the Academy Theater in Lindsay, July 10 and 11 at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., and July 12 at 7:30 p.m. You can reserve your tickets by calling 1-877-888-0038.



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