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Thousands of trees could be removed

Asian beetle invades York Region

BY MIKE ADLER
Staff Writer

A tree infested with Asian long-horned beetles will be carefully cut down in front of the media on a street just south of Steeles Avenue next week.

But that tree, riddled with tunnels dug by the still-chewing beetle larvae inside it, will just be the first of thousands removed from North York, Woodbridge and possibly other parts of York Region.

The probable starting point of Canada's first infestation of the beetle — an industrial plaza on the Vaughan side of Steeles — was found by chance eight weeks ago. Since then, federal and local workers discovered highways 400 and 407 were not barriers big enough to stop the spread.

INSECT CAPTURED

The insect that the Chinese call Starry Night Sky has been captured in Beechwood Cemetery east of Jane Street, as far north as Ainsley Grove Road near Chancellor District Park and far west as Pine Valley Drive at Steeles.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency hopes to wipe out the infestation in a single year, but its employees know their U.S. counterparts are still battling the beetle in New York State, seven years after the first

See BEETLE page 17.

Stick 'em up



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Stouffville District Secondary School assistant captain Josh Spang circles past a Mississauga Iona Catholic Secondary School player during Stouffville's 9-0 rout of the visitors in the SDSS Spartans high school tourney Thursday at the Stouffville Arena. The Spartans failed to reach the playoff round in the eight-team tourney that ended yesterday.

Union wants more officers

York police chief to announce 5-year staffing plan

BY JEFF MITCHELL
Staff Writer

York Regional Police need to step up hiring rates to deal with an exploding population and attrition, the head of the officers' union said this week.

"We want to see some significant increases (unlike) last year, they hired 47 people when the population went up by 42,000," said John Miskiw, president of the York Regional Police Association.

Mr. Miskiw and rank and file members are anxiously awaiting a five-year staffing plan by Chief Armand La Barge to be presented to the police services board Nov. 26. It will outline the chief's proposals for hiring and human resources management to address demands on a force serving one of the nation's fastest growing municipalities.

WONT BE HEMMED IN

Chief La Barge has been careful not to show his cards leading up to the report's release. But he has said he won't be hemmed in by committing to any specific police-to-population ratio, as has been suggested by the union and some community groups.

One popular model is one officer for every 700 residents, which would represent a vast improvement over the present ratio of one cop for nearly 900 citizens.

Mr. Miskiw realizes that's not going to happen overnight. But he wants aggressive hiring

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