

Fight leads to driving charge

BY PATRICK MANGION
Staff Writer

A Markham man is facing more than an impaired driving charge following a fit of road rage in the waning days of this season's RIDE campaign.

Following a minor collision in Markham last week, a 46-year-old Markham man was charged with assaulting the driver of another

vehicle before officers arrived, York Regional Police said.

The man then assaulted a police officer and refused to provide a breath sample.

Along with two assault charges, the accused was arrested for impaired driving and refusing a sample.

He was one of 10 motorists charged with impaired driving in the fourth week of York's five-week holiday RIDE program.

In another bizarre incident, police at a Stouffville spotcheck charged a Richmond Hill couple at about 1:30 a.m. Dec. 20, for each having a blood-alcohol level exceeding 80 milligrams, within minutes of one another while travelling alone in separate vehicles.

Breathalyser results indicated a male driver had more than twice the legal limit of alcohol in his system.

The 49-year-old husband and his 32-year-old wife were shopping for a new home earlier in the day and were returning

home at the time of their arrests, police said.

The final results of this year's five-week campaign are expected to be released by police tomorrow.

To date, York officers have stopped 21,634 vehicles, conducted 280 roadside tests resulting in 61 impaired driving-related charges.

In 2001, York police stopped 21,251 vehicles during the December RIDE program, resulting in eight impaired driving charges. And in 2000, 19 drivers were charged with getting behind the wheel with a blood-alcohol level above the legal limit.

While police agreed this holiday season's RIDE statistics are disappointing, figures collected in recent years were much lower because only impaired-related arrests at RIDE spotchecks were reported.

In 2003, statistics included both spotchecks and charges laid by officers during the course of their regular patrols.

Former residents die in accident

Two former Whitchurch-Stouffville residents died in a Christmas Eve car accident just outside Orillia.

The couple, Robert McConnell, 72, and his wife, Gayle, 66, had been living in Minden.

An Orillia teenager was also killed in the head-on collision.

Area police are still investigating the cause.

Fire causes \$175,000 damage

A fire just two days into the new year has left a family with a burnt-out garage and an estimated \$175,000 in damages.

Firefighters from the Ballantrae and Stouffville stations responded to the 7:42 a.m. call Friday.

One of the residents of the Sandale Avenue house and his friends were in the basement when they smelled smoke.

They were able to alert his

sleeping parents before the smoke alarm went off. Everyone escaped safely.

Flames were already shooting through the roof when firefighters arrived at the home, several doors north of a Tim Hortons.

Four trucks and about 17 firefighters responded. It took them almost 45 minutes to bring the blaze under control.

The house and its contents received smoke and minor water

damage.

Neighbouring homes were unaffected.

"Most of the fire damage was limited to the garage area," said Tim Beckett, chief of Whitchurch-Stouffville's fire and emergency services Department.

The cause is under investigation.

—Hannelore Volpe

Hospitals already linked

From page 1.

emerged, reducing the price to about \$1 million.

The main concern was the cost of telecommunications and computer hook-ups, but new technology has made things much more cost effective, he said. And we've gotten contributions from both hospitals.

Many of the services at the hospitals have been linked for years and the move made geographic sense, as Uxbridge is a lot closer to Markham than Oshawa.

Hospital records show more than 200 Uxbridge Township residents are treated by general practi-

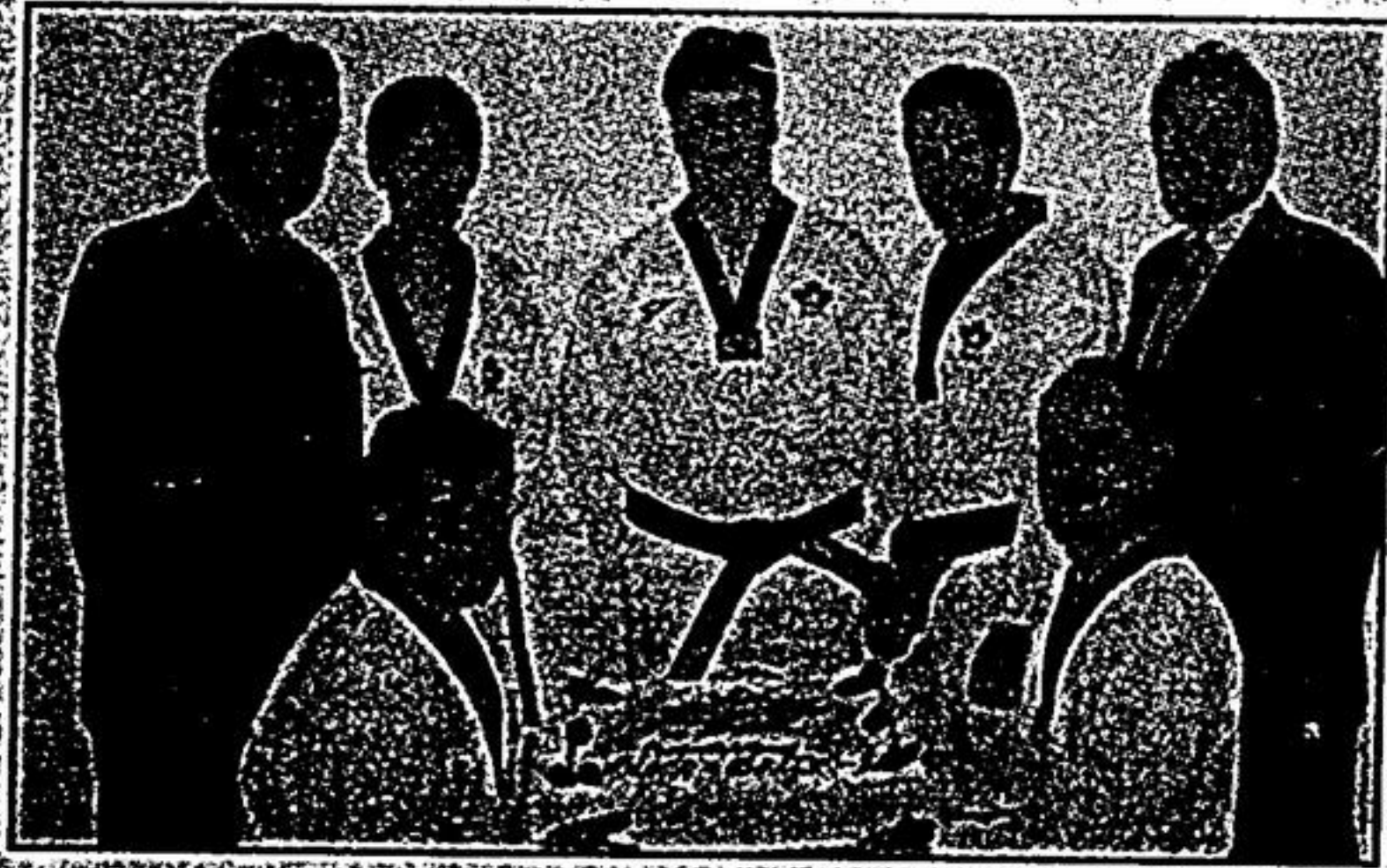
tioners at Markham-Stouffville and almost 1,000 had day surgery at the facility in 2002. Mr. Zon says if a patient in Uxbridge was referred to a specialist it was usually at Markham-Stouffville.

'NATURAL ALLIANCE'

"It really was a natural alliance," he said, adding because of its proximity to the town, many Whitchurch-Stouffville residents commonly use the Uxbridge facility as well.

With plans to rebuild the Uxbridge hospital on a new site, there will be many advantages of realignment and shared services for patients at both facilities, Mr. Zon said.

Advertising Feature



Authentic Tae Kwon Do Celebrates

Authentic Tae Kwon Do celebrates a landmark for 5 of their students who tested for either their first or second degree black belt in Nov. Shown in the photo (standing from L-R) Master Richard Bedard, Jeffrey Chau 2nd degree, Brian Gibb 1st, Robert Marion 1st, Dr. (Master) Daniel Gibbs, (below L-R) Randy Josephs 2nd and Tom Oetlinger 2nd. A black belt at Authentic Tae Kwon Do is only achieved through hard work and dedication and is never given or taken lightly as these elite members of this school will attest to.

Notice of Intent to issue a Nursing Home Licence to Markhaven, Markham

In accordance with the *Nursing Homes Act*, public opinion is being requested prior to a final decision being made on the above. Markhaven Inc., the owner/operator of Markhaven, a 75-bed facility approved under the *Charitable Institutions Act*, has applied for a licence to operate and maintain the 75 beds in accordance with the *Nursing Homes Act* and its Regulations. Markhaven Inc. is redeveloping the 75 approved beds (which are currently not in operation) in addition to developing 21 new beds awarded through the Request for Proposals Process, in order to meet the current structural design guidelines. This transaction will result in a new 96-bed facility built on the existing site in Markham to be licensed under the *Nursing Homes Act*.

If you have comments or opinions and wish to bring them to the attention of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, you may:

1. Submit them in writing by February 2, 2004 to:

Director under the Nursing Homes Act
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Long-Term Care Facilities Branch
c/o 5700 Yonge Street, 4th Floor
North York, Ontario M2M 4K5
Phone: 416-326-1933 Fax: 416-326-3142

OR

2. Present them orally at a public meeting, to be held on Monday, February 2, 2004 at 1:30 p.m. at the Milliken Mills Community Library, 7600 Kennedy Road, Unit 1, Markham, Ontario.

Please include the name of the nursing home and quote Project #214-04 on all written submissions.

The Director will consider all submissions before making a final decision.



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