

Firefighters praised for blaze evacuation

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

A fire in a Stouffville seniors apartment caused about \$100,000 in damages, but all residents escaped without injury.

Twenty Whitchurch-Stouffville firefighters were on the scene shortly after receiving the call about 5 p.m. Friday.

The fire erupted in the two-

storey, 36-unit residence adjacent to Parkview Home on Rupert Avenue. Trucks from both the Stouffville and Ballantrae fire stations responded. Firefighters escorted all residents out of the 32-year-old building.

The blaze was confined to the apartment where it started, but smoke travelled through the building

"The resident was home at the time and noticed fire behind her couch area," fire and emergency services Chief Tim Beckett said. "We had a situation where we had a lot of seniors who needed assistance."

TEMPORARY QUARTERS

Residents went to Parkview Home next door until they could

return to their apartments. Temporary quarters were found for the occupant of the damaged unit, said Tina Skodic, the housing administrator for the apartments.

She had high praise for firefighters, saying, "They were absolutely wonderful. I was very, very impressed."

Cause of the fire is still under investigation.



TIM BECKETT: A lot of seniors needed assistance, fire chief said.

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Bowmen rebuilding Ballantrae home

The York County Bowmen have been given the go-ahead from Whitchurch-Stouffville council to replace their Ballantrae clubhouse severely damaged by fire a year ago.

Without the facility, the archers were forced to curtail some winter activities. The club has been at the same site, on McCowan Road, north of Aurora Road, in rural Whitchurch-Stouffville since 1952.

Club members decided to rebuild rather than make costly renovations. The new structure will occupy the same perimeter and area as the old 3,482-square-foot clubhouse. Cost is estimated at between \$120,000 and \$140,000, club president Willi Wakenhut said.

The bowmen applied for a \$100,000 Trillium grant, but it fell through last fall. Now, funds for the project are to come from club reserves, member donations and fundraising events.

Whitchurch-Stouffville firefighters will use the old building for training exercises before destroying it in a controlled burn.

Over the winter, the club's 128 members were confined to outdoor activities, since the building housed their indoor shooting range. A small portable was set up in the interim. Archery enthusiasts travel to the club from across the GTA.

The bowmen are planning a full slate of spring and summer events. They include popular 3-D competitions, where archers follow a marked trail leading to life-size replicas of animals scattered over the course.

The popularity of the sport has been growing, Mr. Wakenhut said, particularly since the introduction of Saturday morning and afternoon archery lessons. "We have children's programs and a lot of families come out," he added.

The bowmen also host corporate archery clinics and team-building events led by 10 certified coaches.

For more information on archery and the bowmen, call 905-642-0695.

— Hannelore Volpe

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