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Pet insurance popular

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Students stay in school for summer

Working the break gives them leg up

BY CAROLINE GRECH
Staff Writer

For many high school students, the summer means lazy days by the pool or holding down a couple of jobs to save for university.

For others, such as Frank Gao, the summer can mean more time to get through their high school courses on a faster route to university or college.

Mr. Gao, a Newmarket High School student going into Grade 11, is taking summer school for the first time, trying his hand at accelerated chemistry.

With a load of science and math courses next year, Mr. Gao not only wants to ease the burden, he also wants to make a quick exit from high school.

"I want to finish faster so I can finish high school earlier and go to university or college," Mr. Gao said. "I am bored with high school."

The York Region Public School board offers more than 30 courses for students looking to speed up their four years in secondary school or make their schedules a little easier during the school year.

The most popular accelerated course offered in the public board is a Grade 10 history course, according to Jim

See BUSY, page 12.

TONGUE TWISTER



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Patrick Laffan, 13, and Kyle Fockler, 12, ride the round-up at the midway in Memorial Park during the Strawberry Festival Thursday afternoon. The 21st annual festival continues through Sunday. Main Street in downtown Stouffville is closed until 5 p.m. today for a craft and collectibles sale. For more information, log on to www.strawberryfestival.ca

Toronto business moving to burbs

Higher taxes, traffic congestion may make T.O. bedroom city

BY PATRICK MANGION
Staff Writer

York Region and its 905 counterparts are stepping out of Toronto's shadow as big business turns to the suburbs to cut costs.

Higher taxes and traffic congestion threaten to make Toronto a bedroom community for the 905, a June report from the Canadian Urban Institute warned.

In what is sure to be among the most startling revelations in the report, over the past seven years, just seven new high quality office buildings have been built in Toronto, compared against 102 in the 905 area.

After leasing in Toronto for more than 10 years, State Farm Insurance is pulling up stakes and moving to a sprawling new facility in Aurora.

The 325,000-square-foot building at Hwy. 404 near Wellington Street is expected to be completed next year.

Being able to own its land and accessibility to the Greater Toronto Area market made the decision to move Aurora much easier, said Derek Fee, a spokesperson for State Farm.

Reasonable land prices, tax rates and the local community created an ideal situation to relocate the company's Canadian headquarters, Mr. Fee added.

"First and foremost, we were looking to build a facility to meet our future needs. It's similar to being a homeowner. It had to make good fiscal sense."

The 54-page report revealed office buildings in York Region, in particular the area around hwy. 404 and 7, boast the lowest net rent

See TORONTO, page 9.

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