

Go slow in snow — or else, OPP's Fantino says

BY JOE FANTAUZZI
Staff Writer

If you drive too fast in bad weather and get into a collision, you could be charged under an idea being discussed by Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Julian Fantino.

Police would lay a charge that is not as serious as careless driving and would not need a lot of evidence of inappropriate driving leading up to the collision, Commissioner Fantino said.

"The circumstances basically would speak for themselves, as

opposed to having witnesses that would tell you that 'this person was tailgating me, was cutting in and out, was speeding,'" he said.

The officer would have to make a judgment call based on road conditions at the time, he said.

If a motorist rolls over at a spot where thousands of other drivers, who have adjusted their speed to the weather and road conditions, have passed through safely, that could be evidence he wasn't driving for the conditions, Commissioner Fantino said.

"Invariably, it comes back to that human dynamic — people

'I'm not saying the police can't lay charges, sure they can, but I'm saying they have to prove it'

— Defence lawyer Peter Lindsay

just aren't using common sense," he said.

On Tuesday, a driver exiting one highway to get on to another and wanted to get ahead of everyone else, sped up, lost control, crossed

two lanes of traffic and hit the centre barrier, Commissioner Fantino said.

"Probably \$10,000 worth of damage for the experience," he said. "Mind you, it was well deserved; at the end of the day, he wasn't hurt and point made."

But, if the intent of the proposed law is to make people explain why they were in a roll-over, that could be a violation of the Canadian Charter right to a presumption of innocence, defence lawyer Peter Lindsay said.

If someone sees a collision, there is evidence of speeding or there

is physical evidence, such as skid marks available, there could be good reason to charge a driver, Mr. Lindsay said.

But there mere fact of an accident doesn't mean a driver should be charged, he said.

"It doesn't seem to me that we just say, 'Well, it speaks for itself and no need to prove it; you have to prove offences. That's as fundamental a principal of law as we have in Canada is the presumption of innocence."

"I'm not saying the police can't lay charges, sure they can, but I'm saying they have to prove it."

Teenagers get creative at Art Bunker

Teenagers who want to explore art in a relaxed setting can come to the Art Bunker after school.

The drop-in program hosted by the Latcham Gallery began in December with T-shirt painting, artistic snacks, and relaxed creative fun after school.

Youth from several schools go to the bunker to create art with the gallery's education staff.

They used permanent professional fabric paints to create designs on T-shirts including monograms, logos and images.

Murals are among the

projects teenagers create later with the help of a visiting artist.

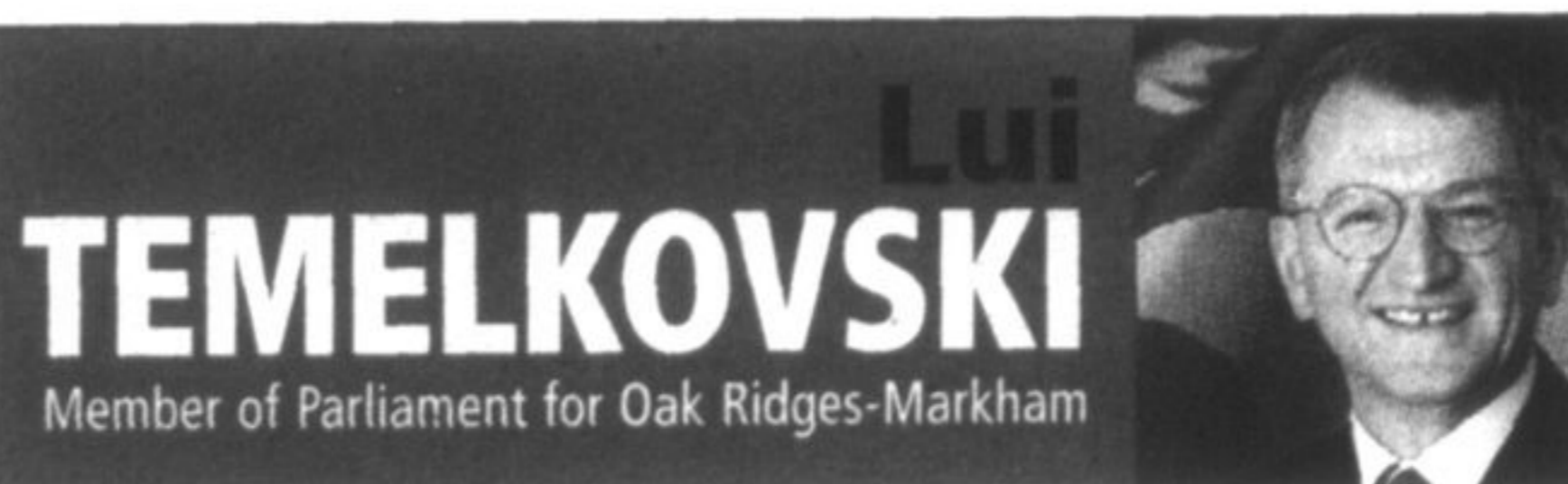
More teenagers are welcome to come for the after school art to share ideas and work on projects.

There is no pressure, plenty of room to experiment and an opportunity to complete a project, whether small or big, on your own or in a team.

The Art Bunker is in the basement of the Silver Jubilee Club building at Market and Main streets in downtown Stouffville.

For more information, e-mail info@latchamgallery.ca or contact Cass at 905-640-8954.

— Hannelore Volpe



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