

Stouffville youth priority for new top cop

BY JOE FANTAUZZI
Staff Writer

Sitting behind his desk at York Regional Police's Markham station, Supt. Robertson Rouse glances out his office window to the neighbourhood between sentences.

Supt. Rouse, 49, is your new police commander.

In police terms, he is the officer in charge of 5 District, which comprises Markham and southern Whitchurch-Stouffville.

A 21-year veteran, he hopes during his time in the district, police will be able to build the strongest possible relationships with the community and be as effective as possible.

He believes in policing through active citizen participation, by working with the community and listening to your concerns. Accepting your input into policing strategies helps build trust and confidence in the police, he said.

A University of Toronto criminology graduate, who also studies business administration, Supt. Rouse began his career with York police as a uniform patrol officer in Richmond Hill, worked in intelligence and then moved to the provincial weapons enforcement unit as an investigator.

He then worked with the Ministry of the Solicitor General where he conducted audits. When he returned to York in 2001, he was assigned to Richmond Hill criminal investigations, where he worked as detective.

A promotion to Staff-Sergeant, sent him to Vaughan. He has also served as the officer in charge of the sexual assault bureau and has been responsible for domestic violence and child abuse units.

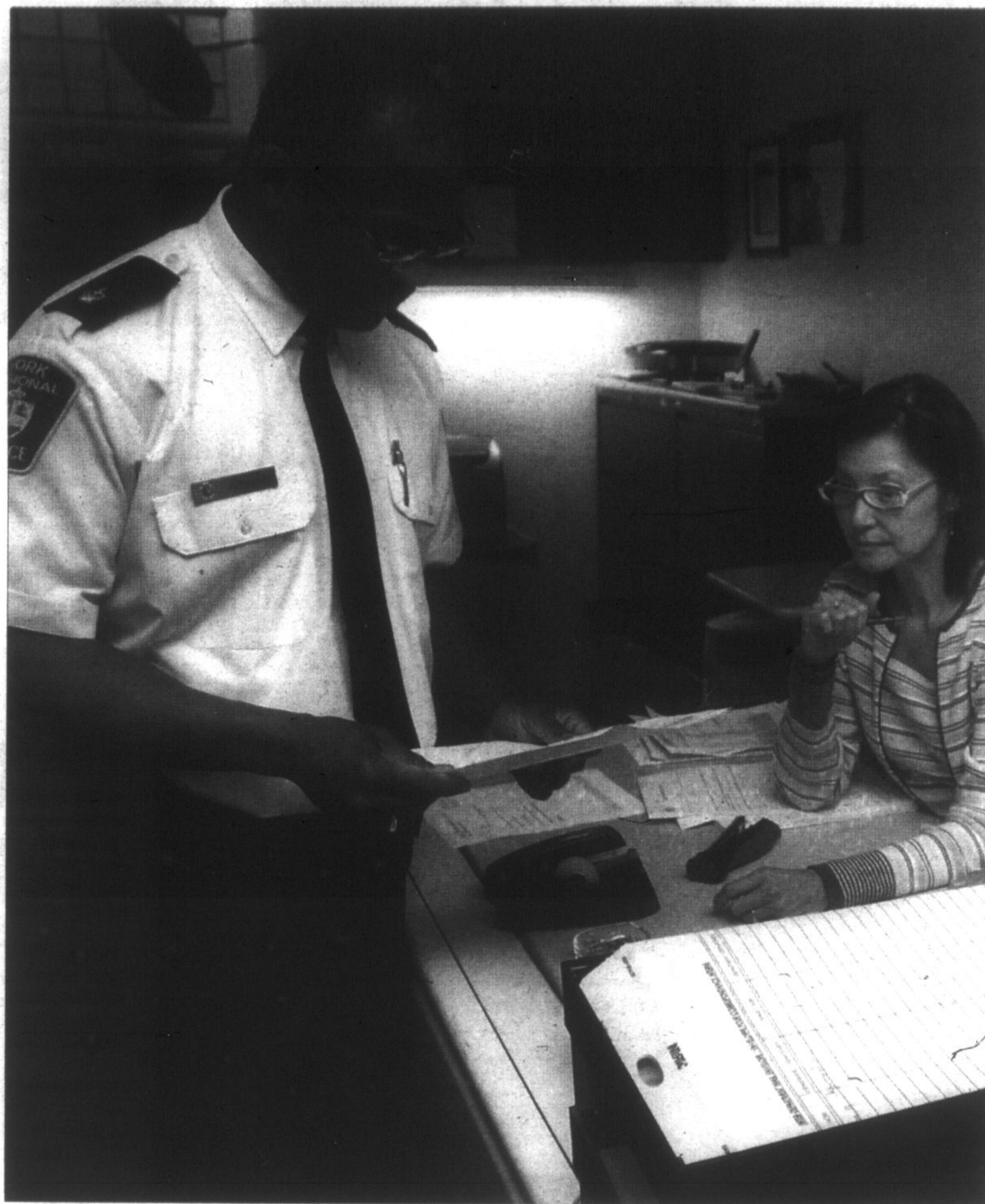
In 2004, he was promoted to inspector and moved to the Markham station, where he was given command in May 2008.

Q: You are now the commander of policing for Markham and part of Whitchurch-Stouffville. What is your vision for policing those municipalities?

A: My vision for policing these municipalities is to see we continue to build on the success established here at 5 District. I'm firmly committed to community policing, I'm also committed to looking at neighbourhoods, looking at the issues that concern neighbourhoods. Policing is a function that requires strong partnerships between the police and the various communities, in order for it to be truly effective.

Q: What are your top priorities for Whitchurch-Stouffville?

A: One of the areas I would like to



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Supt. Robertson Rouse, the new officer in charge of York Regional Police 5 District, which covers Markham and part of Whitchurch-Stouffville, reviews paperwork with Winnie Wales. A University of Toronto graduate of criminology, who also studies business administration, Supt. Rouse began his career with York police as a uniform patrol officer in Richmond Hill, worked in intelligence and then moved to the provincial weapons enforcement unit as an investigator.

address in Whitchurch-Stouffville is youth. The relationships that we can build between the youth and 5 District generally, and Stouffville in particular, I think will take us a long way in addressing preventative aspects of disorder. Not all forms of disorder are necessarily criminal in nature, but if we are able to address the concerns when they are identified at an early stage, I think we will be more effective at taking preventative measures.

Q: Of the emerging crime trends in Markham, which concern you the most?

A: I would say, as far as public safety is concerned, street-level crimes concern us.

Those are what I call signal crimes, that indicate to the public the level of threat that exists to them. The level of street-level crime in Markham is low and continues to be low, however, I feel that we can address even the low level of crime

exists in order that it doesn't grow.

Q: What drew you to police work?

A: I'm not sure there is just one factor that drew me to police work. There's the aspect of wanting to contribute to society, the aspect of wanting to make a difference and certainly the aspect of helping those in need, that I found especially attractive.

I should mention I was born in

10 minutes with ROBERTSON ROUSE

Occasional meeting with
Stouffville newsmakers

Trinidad and, growing up, I've had contact with a lot of family members who were police officers and they were a big influence in my decision. I saw them as positive role models. Looking at them, I thought if they could have such a positive impact on their community, that is something I would want to be a part of.

Q: How important is it to you that 5 District officers represent the neighbourhoods they serve?

A: To me, that's extremely important. Diversity and inclusivity is something that is dear to my heart. I want to see the police organization reflect the community that it serves. It is important to me that we have the cultural competence and linguistic ability to serve every aspect of our community. Since

I've joined York Regional Police, we have certainly become much more diverse in the years I have been here, especially in recent years, as a result of the efforts of Chief Armand La Barge.

Q: Do you watch police dramas?

A: I do. I appreciate them for entertainment value, but it is a far cry from the reality. (Laughing.)

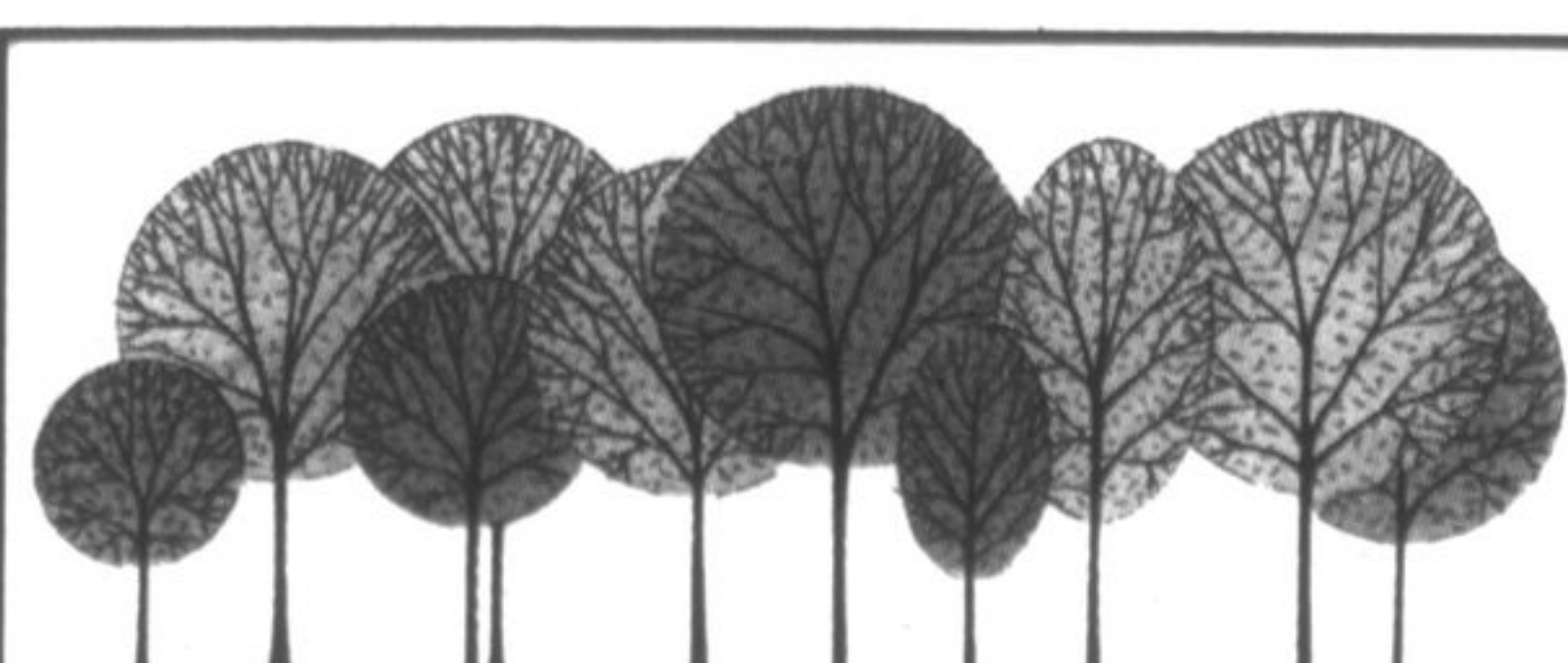
There have been a lot of shows I've appreciated. Barney Miller, I thought was good entertainment value.

Q: You recently returned from time spent at a police training facility in the United Kingdom. What was the purpose of your trip?

A: I attended the Police Staff College at Bramshill as part of an international commanders program. That gave me a very unique perspective on policing and exposed me to various policing models used around the world.

The course is designed to develop operational and strategic abilities — both of which I am responsible for. The course focused heavily on community policing and neighbourhood policing as well as some of the transnational aspects of criminal organizations.

The world has become a lot smaller since 9/11 and the concerns that are shared in North America are not unlike the concerns shared by police organizations around the world.



ART & ANTIQUES
IN THE PARK

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU TO BRIAN O'SULLIVAN OUR COORDINATOR AND TO THE MUSICIANS WHO DONATED THEIR TIME & TALENT!

ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7TH

10 am Brian O'Sullivan (solo)
www.fingersyleguitar.ca
11 am Terry Hart www.terryhart.ca
12 pm Brian O'Sullivan & Kathy Kay (duet)
1 pm Kathy Kay (solo) www.flutemusic.ca
2 pm Richard Elliot
www.richardelliott.ca/index.html

10 am Brian O'Sullivan (solo)
www.fingersyleguitar.ca
11 am D'Arcy Wickham www.darcywickham.com
12 pm Craig Cameron
1 pm Colin Campbell
2 pm James Brand
www.jamesbrand.ca/home.html