

Police on hunt for street racers

BY JOE FANTAUZZI
Staff Writer

For the commander of York Regional Police's traffic bureau, street racing is a conscious decision, the same as impaired driving.

A dozen charges for driving more than 50 km/h over the posted speed limit were laid in York Region as part of the annual Project E.R.A.S.E. (Eliminate Racing Activity on Streets Everywhere) crackdown on street racing, figures released to the York Region Media Group show.

The statistics reflect E.R.A.S.E. efforts only and don't include charges laid by officers on regular patrol.

"Impaired driving, now, is a socially unacceptable behaviour and we're going to need to see that with street racing," acting Staff Sgt. Brad Bulmer said.

During this year's E.R.A.S.E. blitz — a partnership between York police, the Ontario Environment Ministry and 21 other police forces — 1,664 vehicles were investigated in this region.

Police laid nine charges for stunt driving, nine for seat belt violations and 53 for speeding, according to the numbers.

"I think the image of street racing has gone way beyond two cars in a race," acting Staff Sgt. Bulmer said, adding the modern definition of the activity includes fast driving, careless driving and driving vehicles with modifications and implies motorist acting in a risky way.

Four charges of dangerous driving were laid against motorists, four people were busted for impaired driving and five charged with driving with more than 80 milligrams of alcohol in the blood during the blitz.

While racers can appear anywhere in York at any time, police find a higher concentration in the region's south end — especially along the Hwy. 7 corridor spanning Markham, Richmond Hill and Vaughan, Staff Sgt. Bulmer said.

"Street racing and car enthusiasts have been around ever since the motor vehicle was invented, but there is a new culture forming now that is taking it almost to another level," he said.

While there were car clubs and some racing — often in rural areas — years ago, that activity has now come into urban communities.

Markham Fair looking for new ambassador

Would you like to serve your community, win great prizes and have fun?

If you are between 18 and 24, Markham Fair wants you.

The fair is looking for entrants in its ambassador contest, Sept. 20 at the fairgrounds.

The contest is open to men and women.

The ambassador will represent the fair during the four days (Oct. 2 to 5) of the fair, at community events throughout the year and at a two-day meeting with ambassadors from across the province in Toronto.

► Go to markhamfair.ca for an entry form and more information.

Two assistants will also be selected.

Many ambassadors and assistants have been from Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Stouffville District Secondary School graduate Cindy Schickedanz was the 2007 ambassador. She is studying agriculture science at the University of Guelph.

The contest will take place during a family barbecue. Unionville singer

Brian Roman will be the master of ceremonies.

Aside from the competition, there will be pony rides, hay wagon rides, children's pedal tractor trials, miniature horses, a cash bar and music.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under. Tickets are available at the fair office on McCowan Road and from Candlelight and Memories in downtown Stouffville. Tickets will not be sold at the door.

For more information, call Heather Franzisi (905-476-7524) or Mary-Lynn Seeley (905-557-3127).

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