

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

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JUSTICE

Nearly 1,000 crimes against disabled in York last year

BY JOE FANTAUZZI
jfantauzzi@yrmg.com

The custodian who wandered back into the nursing home after hours one night about five years ago didn't get in without being spotted.

Suspicious, a support worker began wandering halls of the Vaughan home.

It was when she stopped at the room of a woman — younger but incapacitated — that she saw the custodian sexually assaulting the woman.

The custodian was arrested, convicted and jailed, York Regional Police Staff Sgt. Shelley Rogers said.

"This woman would never have been able to communicate it," she said of the victim. "That's in a nursing home, where you think your loved one is safe."

Disabled people are less likely to be satisfied with police response and believe they are at higher risk, York's police services board heard.

There were 997 crimes against people with disabilities last year, including assault, sexual assault and robbery, York police said.

Perpetrators of crimes against disabled people often know their victims, such as support workers

See **DISABLED**, page 5.

STORM CHASERS



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

Port Perry Power runner Jake Durham beats the throw to Stouffville Storm third baseman Jake Dille during York Durham squirt softball action in Memorial Park Wednesday. Port Perry handed the home team its first loss in eight regular-season starts, 9-3.

WOOF!

Off-leash dog park to open next month

BY SANDRA BOLAN
sbolan@yrmg.com

Local dogs will soon have a place to call their own.

Council unanimously approved a pilot project for its first off-leash dog park last week. It's expected to open by late July.

"I think it's definitely worth a try," said Councillor Susanne Hilton.

The park will be located behind Walmart and Staples, adjacent to the storm water pond area near the SmartCentres development at the end of Rouge View Avenue.

The park's size has yet to be determined. "We want to make sure the site is in decent shape because it has been a construction site," said Rob Raycroft, director of leisure and community services for the town.

"(The Rouge View Avenue site) provides most of the key items on the evaluation criteria, can be accessed via the road year round and will be on the trail system in the future, as well," Mr. Raycroft wrote in his June 15 report to council recommending the pilot project.

"It provides enough distance from the residential area not to negatively impact homeowners, but is still convenient to get to."

Year-round parking on Rouge View will accommodate about 12 vehicles.

"A better socialized dog is far less likely to have issues with barking or aggression," said Brendan O'Sullivan of the Stouffville Dog Owners Association, which will be working with the town on the park.

"The most successful parks are ones that are partnerships and the owners take an active participation," Mr. Raycroft said.

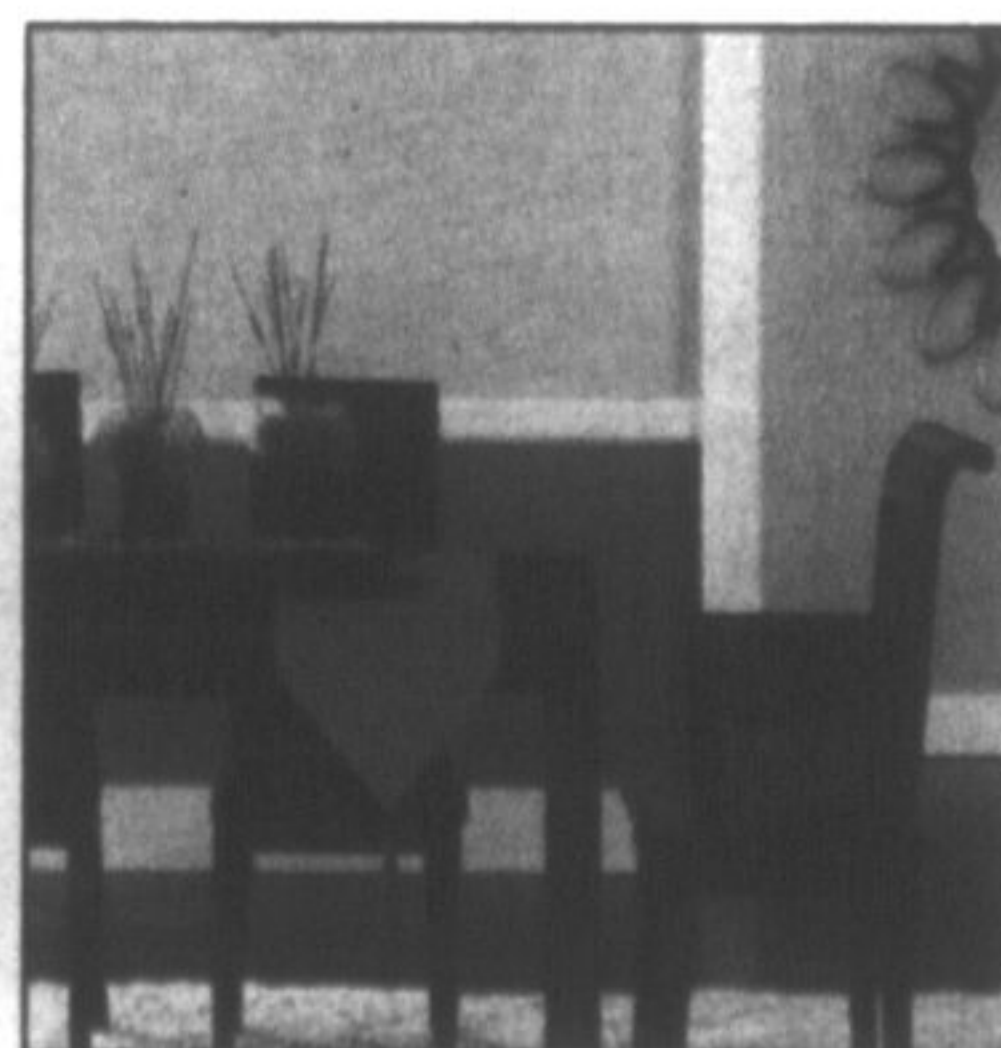
Along with the land, the town is providing snow fencing around the park's perimeter and regular waste pick-up.

See **OWNERS**, page 5.

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