

No cause yet in Vandorf Road fire

Investigators are still seeking the cause of a fire that destroyed a Vandorf Road home last month.

"The investigation is still ongoing," said Carol Gravelle of the Ontario Fire Marshal's office of the May 4 fire that destroyed Herb Bell's home.

"Our investigations are pretty thorough, so it does take time because of the thoroughness of the investigation," she said.

The Ontario Fire Marshal's office estimated the value of damage to be \$330,000, Ms Gravelle said.

On May 4, the house Mr. Bell called home

for more than 30 years was "burned to the ground" according to Whitchurch-Stouffville Fire Chief Rob McKenzie.

Mr. Bell, 78, who was not home at the time, said his neighbour was out walking his dog just after 10 p.m. when he noticed Mr. Bell's home on fire and called 911.

Due to the magnitude of the damage caused by the fire, Mr. McKenzie said he called the Ontario Fire Marshal's office. York Regional Police were at the scene that night.

Musselman's Lake residents Al and Trudy Yetman turned their free monthly sing-along Sunday into a fundraiser for Mr. Bell. They collected more than \$1,000 with money still coming in.

- Sandra Bolan

Students, staff get support

BY JEREMY GRIMALDI
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A crisis management team visited students and teachers at École secondaire catholique Renaissance after the death of an "extraordinary" teacher.

Élie Ndayishimiye, 48, an Aurora father and math teacher at the school, was north-bound on Hwy. 404 near Gormley at 3:21 a.m. Sunday when his Mazda Tribute crossed the centre median and collided with a south-bound Toyota Camry.

"Our prayers accompany his wife and children," Conseil scolaire de district catholique Centre-Sud spokesperson Mikale Joly said.

The crisis team of counsellors, social workers and school chaplains attended the Bloomington Road school Thursday and Friday to provide support to people particularly hard hit by the death.

Many teachers and students are also expected to attend Mr. Ndayishimiye's funeral June 2.

The teacher hailed from Burundi and had degrees from l'École Polytechnique de Montréal and the University of Ottawa, according to his biography on the Renaissance website. He worked at the school since 2005 and was a keen soccer and basketball player.

In a letter sent to parents, board education director Rejean Sirois called Mr. Ndayishimiye a "good, wise and extraordinary teacher" who left an "imperishable memory".

The 62-year-old driver of the other vehicle, an AAA Aurora York Taxi cab, was taken to York Central Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.



ÉLIE NDAYISHIMIYE: Aurora high school teacher died following Hwy. 404 crash near Gormley.

The female cab driver spent three or four days in hospital before being released, AAA Aurora York Taxi owner Eli Shami said.

"She's OK, but obviously not 100 per cent," he said. "I still, to this minute, have no idea how this accident could have happened, but I was in the office at the time. All of us drive and have children and families. I wouldn't wish this sort of thing on anyone. What a terrible thing to hear."

Mr. Ndayishimiye's neighbours and students at Renaissance spoke about his wonderful smile, gentle soul, love for his family and positive outlook on life.

Mr. Ndayishimiye is survived by his wife and four children.



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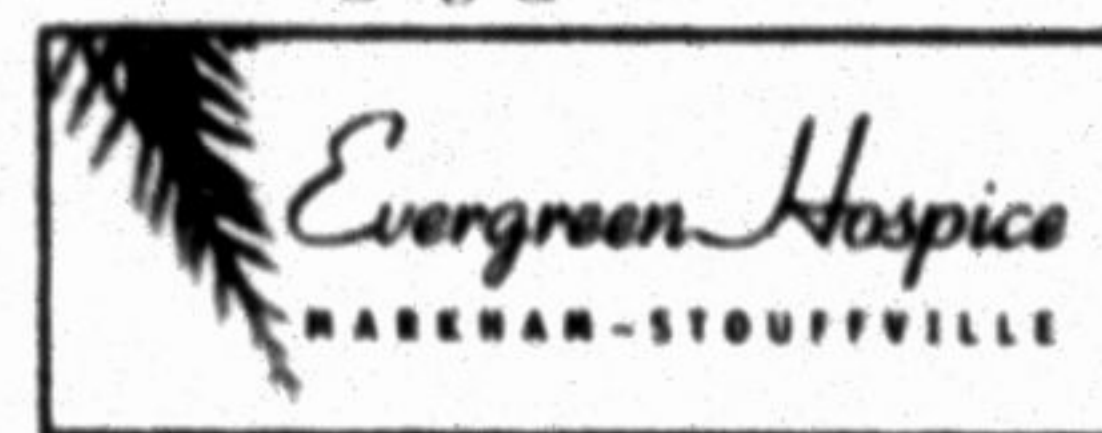
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