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GROWING ONLINE FRAUD, FAKES REPORTED TO YORK POLICE

Ticket buyers getting scammed

BY JEREMY GRIMALDI
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Online scammers are making off with increasing amounts of money by offering bogus concert tickets to some of the most sought after musicians for young girls, including Justin Bieber, Justin Timberlake and One Direction.

Const. Paul Jodoin, from York Regional Police's fraud unit, said he has already run into one man who spent \$1,800 on fake festival arm bands and a pair of teenaged girls who spent \$600 on fake One Direction tickets.

So far he said the vast majority of the tickets are being offered on Kijiji, the popular online classified website.

Although there appear to be between five and 10 different fraudsters using the scam, Const. Jodoin said, they all execute their schemes in a similar fashion, with small exceptions.

Tickets will be offered to major sold-out acts, usually geared towards younger people who can turn "desperate" for tickets.

"I haven't seen tickets offered to the Eagles or the Rolling Stones, because that age bracket won't be looking for them on the Internet," he said. "They're highly sought after and people get a bit desperate."

He added that older concert-goers also may be less likely to fall for the scam.

The two approaches include sellers asking for an Internet money transfer through banks

rather than more secure Paypal accounts and then never delivering the tickets.

The other tactic is sellers meeting up with those looking for tickets only to hand over fakes or duplicates that do not work at the concert gates.

This week, police decided to warn residents of the growing threat after they have received reports of 15 incidents in the past month.

"I would say only one in five report the crime, and I'm probably being conservative on that," he said.

So far, those who have met sellers have done so at sites including York University and Vaughan Mills mall.

He added that the fraudsters' actions are particularly harsh considering that in many cases buyers have asked the supposed sellers if they were "fraudsters" and they were told no.

"It takes a log of guts to do that, to go out there and say they are real," he added. "I feel bad for them (the buyers) because in some cases they have done their due diligence and the person lies to them."

Despite his feelings for those involved he also noted that throughout the Kijiji website there are prominent warnings against purchasing tickets on the website, as they are very often fakes.

He said other online ticket scams on the site include those selling passes to Wonderland, purchased with stolen credit cards.

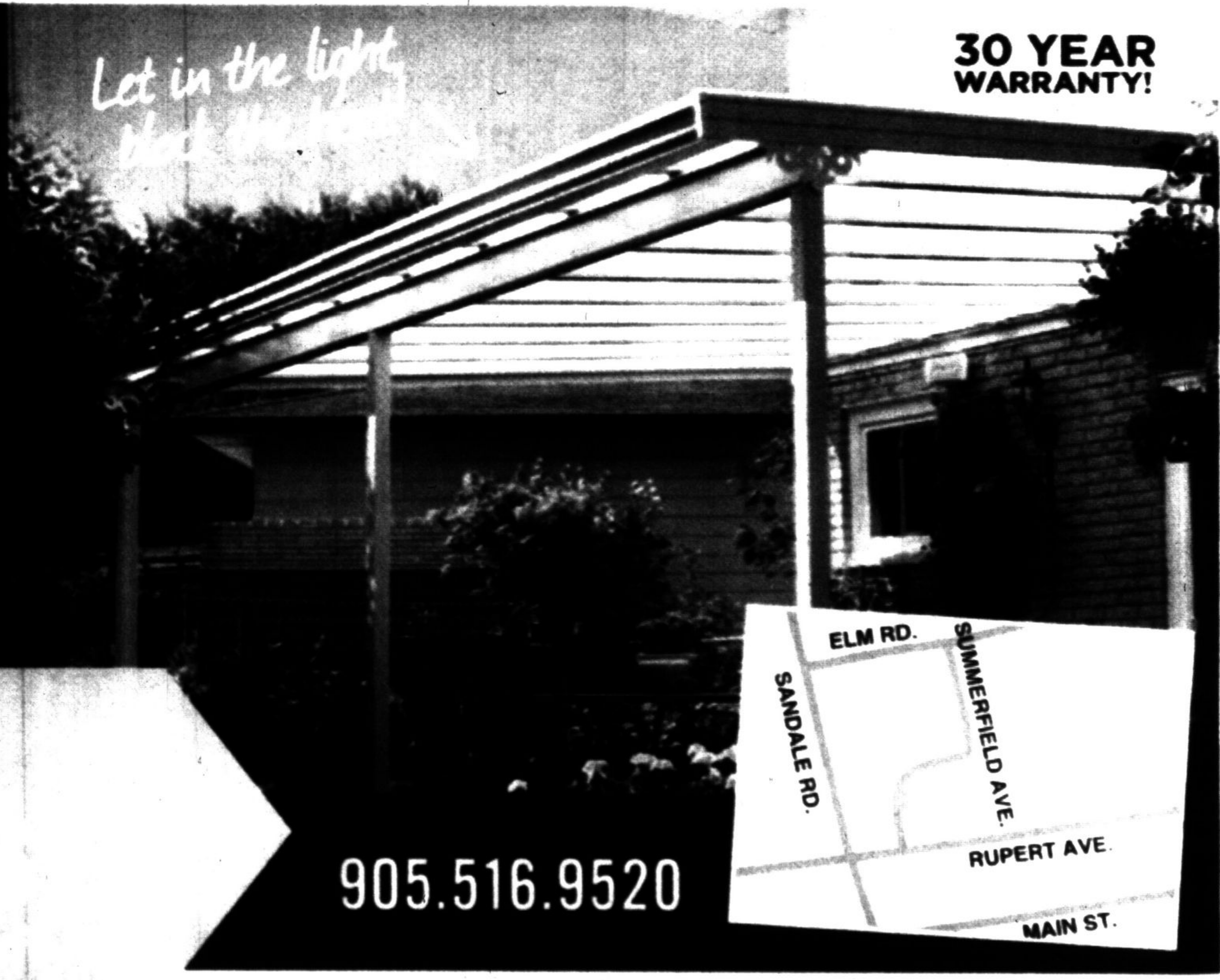
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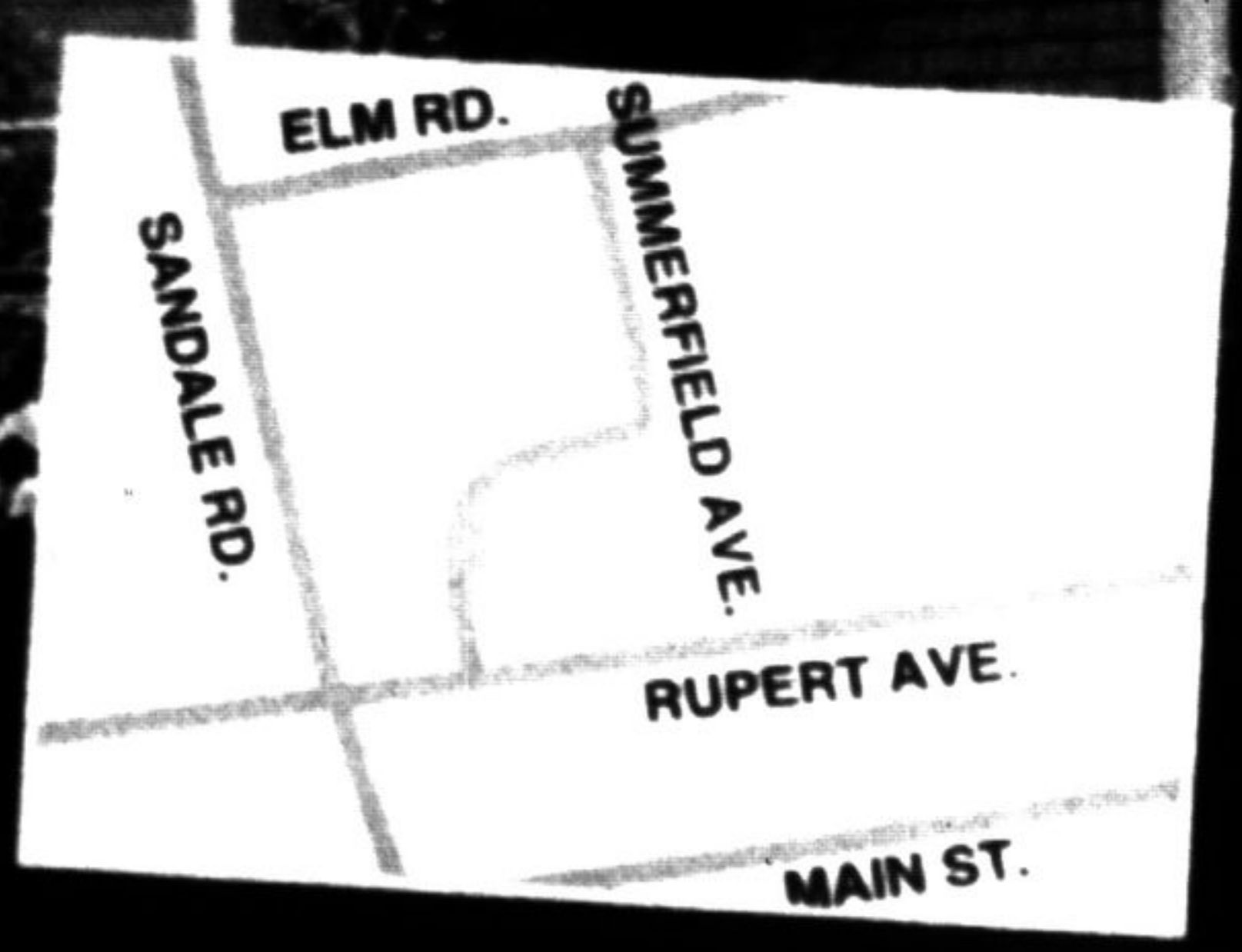
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