

# Man guilty of assault for dog attack on senior with flare gun

One man has been found guilty of assault and his co-accused not guilty after an elderly Stouffville-area man was mauled by a dog when he turned up on their property brandishing a flare gun and complaining about noise.

Stuart Walker was found guilty of assaulting James Keith Rankin by setting his dog on Rankin and encouraging the dog to keep attacking him even after he had been disarmed. Justice Mary Misener ruled that Walker released the dog, but did not agree that he did so out of self defence.

Misener sided with the Crown in ruling that Walker's actions were motivated by revenge for the man trespassing on his property, a rural home that he rented on Hwy. 48 in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

"Mr. Walker was angry, he did not feel threatened and the dog attack was an act of revenge," she said in her judgment Wednesday.

Walker's co-accused, Ahmad Al-Maqdisy, was found not guilty of assault.

Misener said video recordings of the incident from Walker's cellphone did not prove Al-Maqdisy participated in the assault. She found that he acted out of reasonable fear when he made a kicking motion at Rankin, who was brought down by the dog. He then

fell on top of Rankin, wrested the gun from his hands and threw it away.

"He immediately began to get off Mr. Rankin," Misener said.

"His actions were (intended) to protect himself and others by disarming Mr. Rankin."

Rankin, who was 77 at the time of the assault in October 2013, suffered a fractured cheekbone and cuts to his body, Misener said.

*'Mr. Walker was angry, he did not feel threatened and the dog attack was an act of revenge.'*

Rankin showed off his collection of scars and battered head to police officers, politicians and other local residents during a meeting on crime hosted by then MP Paul Calandra at the municipal offices that fall.

In a separate case, Rankin is suing Walker and Al-Maqdisy for the injuries he suffered in the incident.

Walker will be sentenced at a later date that has yet to be determined.

*Torstar News Service*

# Smile, red-light runners! More cameras en route

BY LISA QUEEN  
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The number of red-light cameras at intersections across York Region will double to 40 next year, according to a report coming to a regional committee meeting Thursday.

Councillors are expected to approve spending \$5.5 million for a five-year contract beginning Jan. 1, 2017 with Traffipax LLC for the supply and installation of 20 new red-light cameras and for the ongoing operation and maintenance of the expanded system, which would also include the existing 20 cameras.

The contract could be extended for another five years beginning in 2022 for an estimated additional \$4 million.

Last June, when council approved the concept of adding 20 new red-light cameras, the region said the cost would be paid through fines.

If the new contract is approved at the committee meeting, it would still have to be endorsed by council Feb. 18.

Red-light cameras have dramatically cut down on right angle or T-bone collisions, a report coming to today's committee meeting says.

"Since fall of 2013, red-light cameras

have been operational at 20 intersections on regional roads. As of August 2015, right-angle collisions at these intersections were reduced by 60 per cent (from 134 collisions down to 51 collisions) over the first 18 months of operation," it said.

"Experience in other jurisdictions suggests that, over time, a right-angle collision reduction of 25 to 30 per cent is more likely. A 25 to 30-per-cent reduction is still significant and meets the safety objectives of the program."

Brian Patterson, president of the Ontario Safety League, applauds adding the new cameras.

"It's an appropriate use of technology that is going to save lives and reduce collisions in the region," he said.

There were some initial concerns that the number of rear-end collisions might jump if drivers slammed on their brakes to avoid entering an intersection with a red-light camera, but that hasn't been the case because the region chose the intersections wisely, Patterson said.

The only camera in Whitchurch-Stouffville is at Woodbine Avenue and Davis Drive. The intersections where the new cameras will be installed were not identified.



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