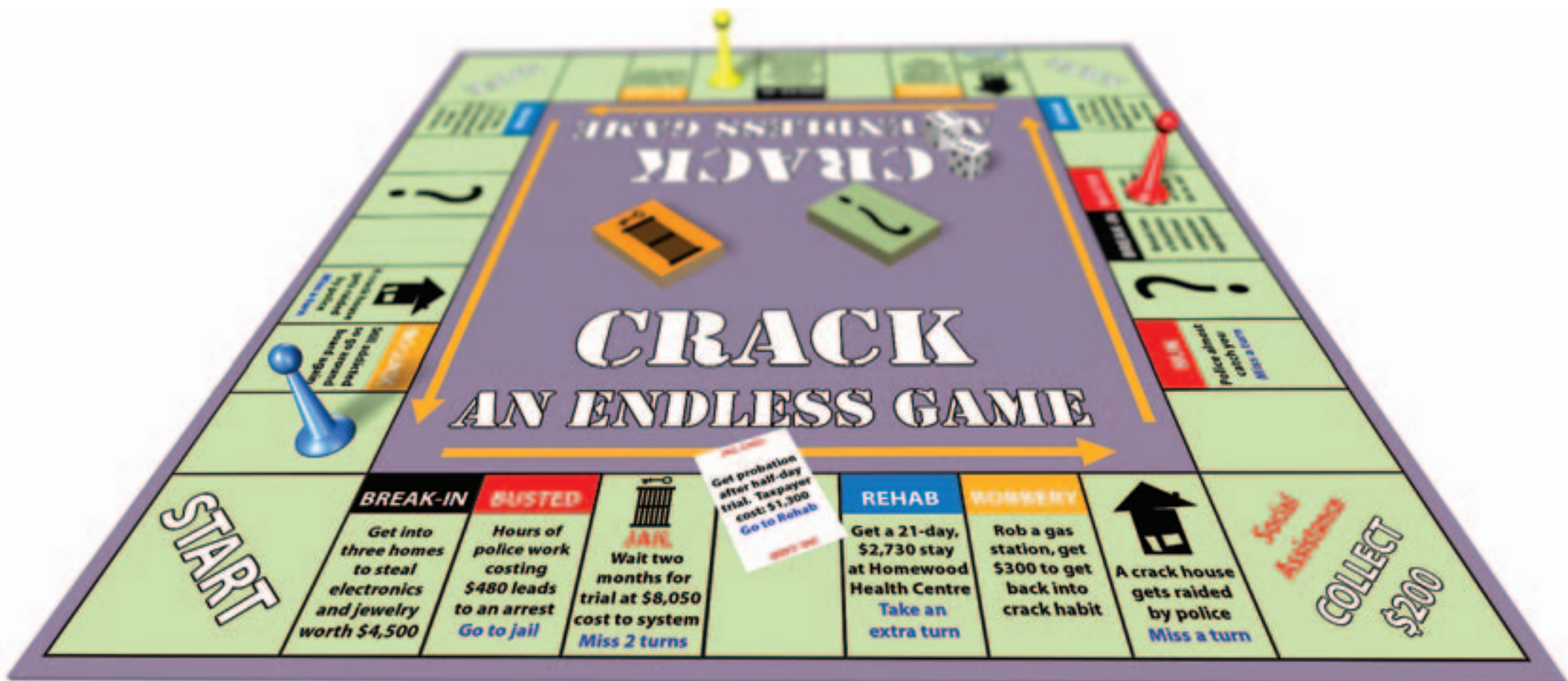




GUELPH MERCURY



ANDREW BRUCE, GUELPH MERCURY

Crack takes toll on city

No one is safe from the drug's impact — not even elderly ladies walking home from church

By DEIRDRE HEALEY
MERCURY STAFF

GUELPH

Maria Mammolite was introduced to the dark world of crack cocaine while on a short walk home one evening from mass at Church of Our Lady.

The frail 87-year-old was just half a block from her house when an addict came up behind her and knocked her to the

ground. He tore the purse from her shoulder and took off on a bicycle, leaving the tiny Italian woman lying on the sidewalk with scrapes and bruises on her arms and legs.

She was attacked by a man who needed quick cash for a fix.

The robbery happened in August last year and Mammolite had just cashed in her pension cheque — money she planned to ration on groceries

for the month and weekly donations to the church.

Mammolite had noticed the man following close behind her when she left the downtown church, but never thought she was in any danger.

"My heart is sincere," said Mammolite, who speaks very little English. "I never thought he would harm me."

Mammolite is just one example of the innocent victims of

the crime that follows when crack cocaine takes root in a community.

As the number of crack addicts and dealers continues to grow in Guelph, so does the number of thefts, assaults, weapons and break-ins, Guelph Police Chief Rob Davis said.

"Crack has a huge impact on a city. It's not like marijuana growers," he said. "Right now this drug is having an impact on

your safety and the safety of your children, the protection of your property and where your tax dollars are spent. It's not someone else's problem, it's your problem."

The man who robbed Mammolite was in the Owen Sound Jail on other charges when he confessed to police a month after the attack that he had stolen her purse to pay for crack.

SEE CRACK: PAGE A2

TAKING THE HIT

A five-part series on crack

Tuesday: The Deal

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Thursday: The Cops

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Saturday: Prostitution

WEATHER

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High 31
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Haunted by a murder

Woman who knew Lynda Shaw wants changes to parole system

By ERIC VOLMERS
MERCURY STAFF

GUELPH

Jackie Fraser was only 18 years old when the disappearance and murder of Lynda Shaw gripped her close-knit home town with fear.

Fifteen years ago, the small farming community of Huttonville had yet to be swallowed up by neighbouring Brampton. Everyone knew each other.

Shaw was well known for her

academic achievements at Brampton Centennial High School. Fraser grew up just down the road from the Shaw family farm.

Shaw's decision to pursue engineering at the University of Western Ontario was an inspiration for science-minded female students like Fraser. When word began to spread around town on April 16, 1990, that the conscientious 21-year-old Shaw had missed an exam, fear set in.

"I can just remember my

friend saying that her roommate didn't know where she was," said the 33-year-old Fraser who now lives in Fergus.

"She was such a good student, she wouldn't have missed an exam. At that point they hadn't found the car yet. But we knew something was wrong if people hadn't seen her for a day."

Shaw's car was found on Highway 401 near Ingersoll the next day with its rear window smashed and front left tire changed. On April 22, Shaw's burned and beaten body was found on a wooded lot in North Dorchester Township, south of the 401.

SEE MURDER: PAGE A2



NATHAN DENETTE, GUELPH MERCURY

Jackie Fraser, 33, sits on a picnic bench in Guelph yesterday. She wants to start a letter-writing campaign over Lynda Shaw's 1990 murder. Fraser lived in Shaw's close-knit community.

Teen could have cleaned up wall to avoid court

Guelph 15-year-old gets community service sentence for stairwell graffiti at high school

GUELPH

Instead of spending a few minutes cleaning up his mess, a local teen will do 50 hours of community service and stay away from his buddy for the next year.

A 15-year-old pleaded guilty in Guelph court yesterday to mischief and was put on 12 months' probation.

Court heard the accused and

another boy went to John F. Ross high school May 25. Neither were students of the school, but went to visit their girlfriends.

At the time the accused was on a two-week suspension from another Guelph high school and had been given a letter banning him from being on Upper Grand District School Board property until the end of May.

About noon on May 25, a

teacher at Ross saw the accused writing "penis" in the stairwell with permanent marker.

The boy was detained and taken to the vice-principal's office, where police were called, court heard.

The accused, who has a previous record for arson causing damage, admitted writing on the step.

Court heard the teen was giv-

en the option of cleaning up the graffiti instead of facing a criminal charge of mischief, but refused to do so and said he did not care if he was charged.

"Why would you do that?" Justice Robert Rogerson asked the boy.

"Were you trying to show you're a big man or something?"

"No," the boy responded quietly, adding he did not believe

the graffiti would come off because it was written in permanent marker.

Rogerson suggested it was "wanton damage" intended to show disrespect for the school system.

As well as community service and staying away from his friend, the boy was placed on an 11 p.m. curfew.

• Mercury staff



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