

canoe network ... **CNEWS**

Rundle vows to get tough

FANSHAWE: College president also blames landlords and drug dealers for neighbourhood troubles

By JOE BELANGER

A frustrated Fanshawe College president vowed yesterday to get tough with students and took swipes at others after a week of rowdiness near the college that's led to more than 700 charges.

Howard Rundle also blamed landlords, drug dealers and other outsiders for fuelling some of the trouble in and around Fleming Drive, which during the last few years has been transformed from a family-dominated neighbourhood to student housing.

Two students have been suspended indefinitely and others are being investigated, he said.

"It is rather frustrating because so much effort and resources have been put into this issue this year . . . it doesn't appear to have made a difference," Rundle said.

"But if a student's actions lead to criminal charges or (a student) does something that causes harm to others, then we're saying, 'If that's the kind of person they are (off campus), we're worried they will do something while on campus.' When word gets around (about suspensions) does it start changing some of the behaviours?"

In recent years large gatherings of students on Fleming Drive have resulted in clashes with police, but this year they also set fire to large piles of discarded furniture left behind by previous tenants.

In one tussle early Saturday, a student being arrested was injured and the province's Special Investigations Unit was called in.

Police have laid more than 700 charges against an equal number of people, including about 550 students -- mostly from Fanshawe -- for liquor- and noise-related offences, but also for criminal offences.

Dozens of students from the University of Western Ontario have also been charged.

More than 300 charges were laid last weekend when students set several fires and clashed with police.

Rundle said several landlords in the Fleming Drive area didn't clean out rental homes and students were forced to clean out the debris, leaving piles of discarded furniture that were set on fire.

"These landlords are making a good deal of money from students and they aren't bearing the costs or consequences (of what their tenants are doing) and that's just not right," Rundle said.

The number of officers involved in this year's Project Learn has been increased, said police Chief Murray Faulkner, who said it will cost an extra \$18,000 to \$20,000.

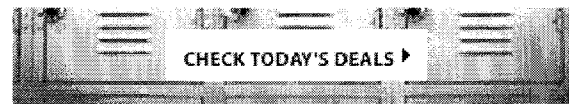
Facing politicians at city hall yesterday, Faulkner said his force is doing what it can, but there are limits to how police intervene.

"This isn't China's Tiananmen Square -- we don't roll in with tanks," Faulkner said.

Project Learn -- for Liquor Enforcement and Reduction of Noise -- involves increased police presence in student-dominated residential areas around UWO, Fanshawe and the Richmond Row entertainment district.



3 STUDENT-SAVING DEALS A DAY!
GET YOURS WHILE THEY LAST. SEPT. 2-5, 8-12



We cannot forget student contributions

By PAUL BERTON

Amid the parties, the noise and the neighbourhood problems, we should try to remember that college and university students are among London's biggest and best assets.

And as Fanshawe College president Howard Rundle points out, it's not just students who are causing neighbourhood problems.

Police have laid charges against about 700 people this month related to school parties. More than 500 of those charges have been laid against students, but a considerable number are not students. Many are from Fanshawe College, but some are from the University of Western Ontario.

Most are liquor and noise offences, but there are a few more serious charges.

The students deserve much of the blame, but so do landlords and other non-students. They are being charged and getting a message, it is hoped.

Meanwhile, school officials, students, community members, politicians and police must together work to safeguard neighbourhoods, property and people. We must deal with all crimes -- serious crimes are inexcusable and should be dealt with harshly.

But these young people and the institutions they attend give far more to London than they take.

It may be difficult for some of the immediate neighbours to accept, but the mere presence of students in our midst makes us a better, more creative city, let alone what these people and the two institutions do for the economy in general -- a figure that runs into the billions.

Beyond that, students are our future. In the case of Fanshawe College, most of those students remain in the region and become the engines of our economy. Few of us have such short memories we cannot understand that.

There are 12,000 students at Fanshawe College, 7,000 of them are first-year students. Many are involved in endeavours, charitable or otherwise.

That doesn't include the contributions they will make in the future as working citizens.

The University of Western Ontario has more than 30,000 students. The university at this moment may be brewing the "next big thing," a company or a product or a medical breakthrough, that will put London on the map and change the way we do business -- and a student may be involved.

We must do what we can to reduce escalating neighbourhood problems, but we cannot blame it all on students and we cannot underestimate what they do for the community at large.

