



ROGER LEBLANC, RECORD STAFF

Firefighters prepare to enter a building at the corner of Queen and Charles streets Sunday in downtown Kitchener. No one was injured in the fire, officials say.

Quick response keeps fire in check

Damage estimated at \$50,000, no one injured after flames break out at Queen Street building

Linda Givetash, Record staff

KITCHENER — A fire that broke out at a downtown Kitchener building gave neighbouring business owners a scare Sunday afternoon.

Just after 12 p.m., black smoke and flames were seen coming out of a doorway leading to an apartment above a vacant storefront at 92 Queen St. S., just metres away from the intersection at Charles Street.

Employees at neighbouring stores — Candy Candy Candy and Far Out Flicks — quickly notified emergency services.

“We heard the fire alarm go off ... we realized it was an internally wired fire alarm,” said Sharon Watson from Candy Candy Candy.

“I went out and walked up the block, pushed open the door and smoke came out,” Watson said her husband called 911 and then alerted people in other businesses in the building.

“The first caller had heard the fire alarm go off in the unit next door — that was part of why we got here so fast,” said Platoon Chief Steve Zurell of the Kitchener Fire Department.

By the time Watson and other occupants of the buildings along Queen Street made it to safety, she said police were already arriving.

“I was grateful that we were connected to that fire alarm,” Watson said while standing among the growing crowd watching firefighters at work.

Ray Leyes lives on the block but was

working at Far Out Flicks when the fire started.

He was grateful when fire crews reunited him with his cat Sip who was in his apartment.

“She wasn’t out where the fire was, she was in the back area I think,” he said, but added that Sip seemed shaken by the incident.

No one was injured in the fire, however, tenants of the two units on the second floor of the building will not be able to return for some time due to damage, Zurell said.

The neighbouring businesses were unaffected.

“We checked all sides of the building and everything was fine,” he said.

Damages are estimated at \$50,000.

The cause has yet to be determined. Police and fire officials are continuing the investigation.

lgivetash@therecord.com



ROGER LEBLANC, RECORD STAFF

Ray Leyes is reunited with his cat Sip after fire broke out Sunday at 92 Queen St. S. Leyes lives and works on the block.

Top honours for young heroes

Linda Givetash, Record staff

CAMBRIDGE — When 12-year-old Bailey Mitchell witnessed his aunt — a crossing guard — being struck by a vehicle in January, he stayed calm and called 911.

Mitchell stayed by his aunt’s side until police arrived, then ran home to get his parents and to contact his uncle. For his bravery and quick thinking, Mitchell was among eight children honoured with a Children’s Hero Award at the Children’s Safety Village on Saturday.

“It’s awesome,” he said, on receiving the award.

The very establishment that was presenting the award was the reason why Mitchell said he knew how to react at the collision.

“We come here a lot, to the (Children’s) Safety Village and they teach us a lot of this,” he explained.

His aunt, Susan Riddell, said she was proud that his efforts were recognized. In addition to helping her the day of the crash, Mitchell continued to visit her home and do chores such as shovelling snow while she recovered.

“He came over without



DAVID BEBEE, RECORD STAFF

Bailey Mitchell (left) was honoured for coming to the aid of his aunt Susan Riddell after she was struck by a car earlier this year. He received a Children’s Hero Award on Saturday for his bravery.

(being) asked and helped out,” she said. “I’m very, very proud of him.”

The young recipients of the awards ranged from ages five to 12. All of them committed unique good deeds in their communities to help and inspire others.

Illustrating that heroism isn’t defined by a single great act, the Melchin family accepted an award on behalf of six-year-old Nolan.

Nolan was a Grade 1 student at N.A. MacEachern Public School who died in March of an aggressive brain tumour. In

his short life, however, Nolan inspired his classmates, friends and family with his bravery and determination.

“He loved his friends, he was a very social kid,” said Melanie, his mother.

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Crowds gather for annual quilt auction

Linda Givetash, Record staff

NEW HAMBURG — Whether they were bidding on handmade quilts or enjoying delicious pie, thousands of local residents gathered on the weekend to support a good cause.

The Mennonite Central Committee held its annual relief sale Friday and Saturday, featuring its famed quilt auction and fresh made-on-site strawberry pie. Funds raised through the event help support the committee’s aid efforts around the world.

“I believe in the cause of MCC and what they do with the funds that they raise at this sale,” said Judy Truax, of Mount Forest, who has volunteered with the sale for the last eight years.

She said the event wouldn’t be possible without the many volunteers who worked through the weekend or the many people who crafted and donated their high-quality quilts.

Truax was also among the many hard-working craftspeople whose quilts were auctioned off at the sale. Her donation was a wall hanging featuring a wreath in fall colours.

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