



Christine Cole of Tuitman's Garden Centre, south of Acton, displays one of the many Christmas trees available. Tuitman's are donating 50 cents from the sale of each tree to Acton Foodshare.

TED BROWN Independent/Free Press

## Deny welfare to teenagers, councillor urges

By **STUART JOHNSTON**  
Staff writer

Providing welfare to 16 and 17-year-olds will only lead to continued abuses of the system as well as the breakdown of the family unit, Burlington councillor Doug Greenaway charges.

Greenaway believed Halton's current practice of supplying teens with welfare as well as either a place to live or money for rent will create a domino effect throughout the region.

"There are a growing number of 16 and 17-year-olds who just don't like the rules of home, so they go down and get welfare," Greenaway argued. "Halton's high schools are training grounds on how to abuse the welfare system, as they learn it from their friends...They can apply for welfare, be given a cheque for rent, and now we have a 16-year-old living in our neighborhood who is no longer under any control."

Greenaway believed these teens become "magnets" for others who "may be on the edge" and "no longer want to stay at home."

He argued money should instead be put towards putting the teens in "controlled environments" such as group homes.

"It has to be that tough — live by the rules or be out on the street," he said. Greenaway was responding to a health and social services report that stated 69 teens throughout Halton receive welfare, nine of which live in Halton Hills.

However, strict rules are enforced to ensure abuses do not occur, acting social services commissioner Karen Chan argued, such as mandatory school attendance or job searches if the person is not a student. She noted 95 per cent of those on welfare are attending school.

Chan added only those 16 and 17-year-olds who are deemed as having "special circumstances" are approved for welfare.

Greenaway's comments raised the ire of many of his colleagues, who believed the system is working, and helping those teens who are truly in need.

"Bear with us and leave the safety net in place so people do not have to sleep on park benches," Burlington's Ralph Scholtens said. "I do believe we're doing the best we can under difficult circumstances."

## Tuitman's helps food bank with sale of Christmas trees

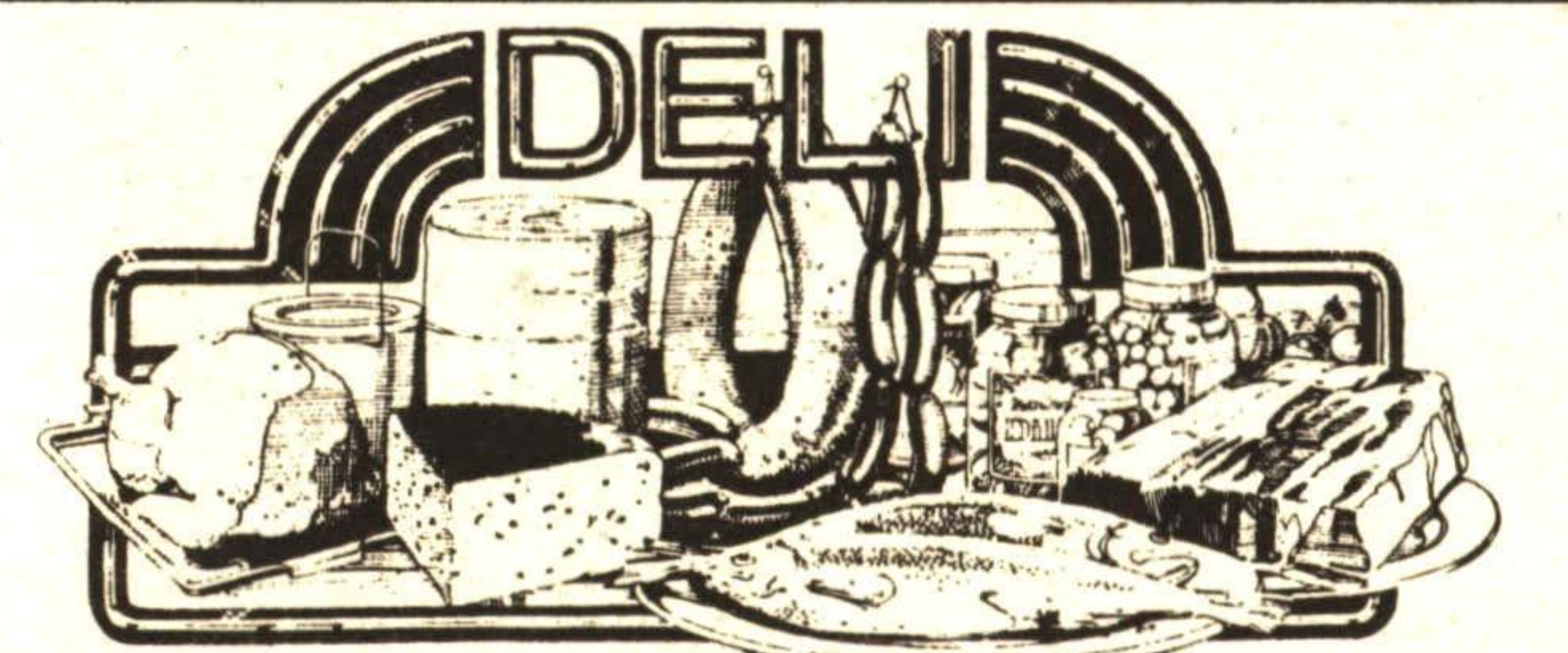
When you're shopping for a Christmas tree this year, buying one at Tuitman's Garden Centre will also help Acton Foodshare.

Once again this year, a donation of 50 cents from the sale of each Christmas tree sold at the Hwy 25 garden centre, will be given to Acton Foodshare.

"Many people still enjoy a real tree," says garden centre manager Christine Cole, "And we have a great selection. Besides, with each tree, the buyer also receives a coupon for a free seedling, to be redeemed in the spring, to replace trees cut for Christmas."

The free seedling is Tuitman's way of replenishing the supply of trees used for Christmas, says Cole, and can be returned to the garden centre in April and May for the seedling.

The Christmas tree selection includes a number of different sizes and prices of trees as well as both spruce and pine varieties.



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Coupon valid until closing Saturday, Dec. 12, 1992 at Georgetown I.G.A. only.

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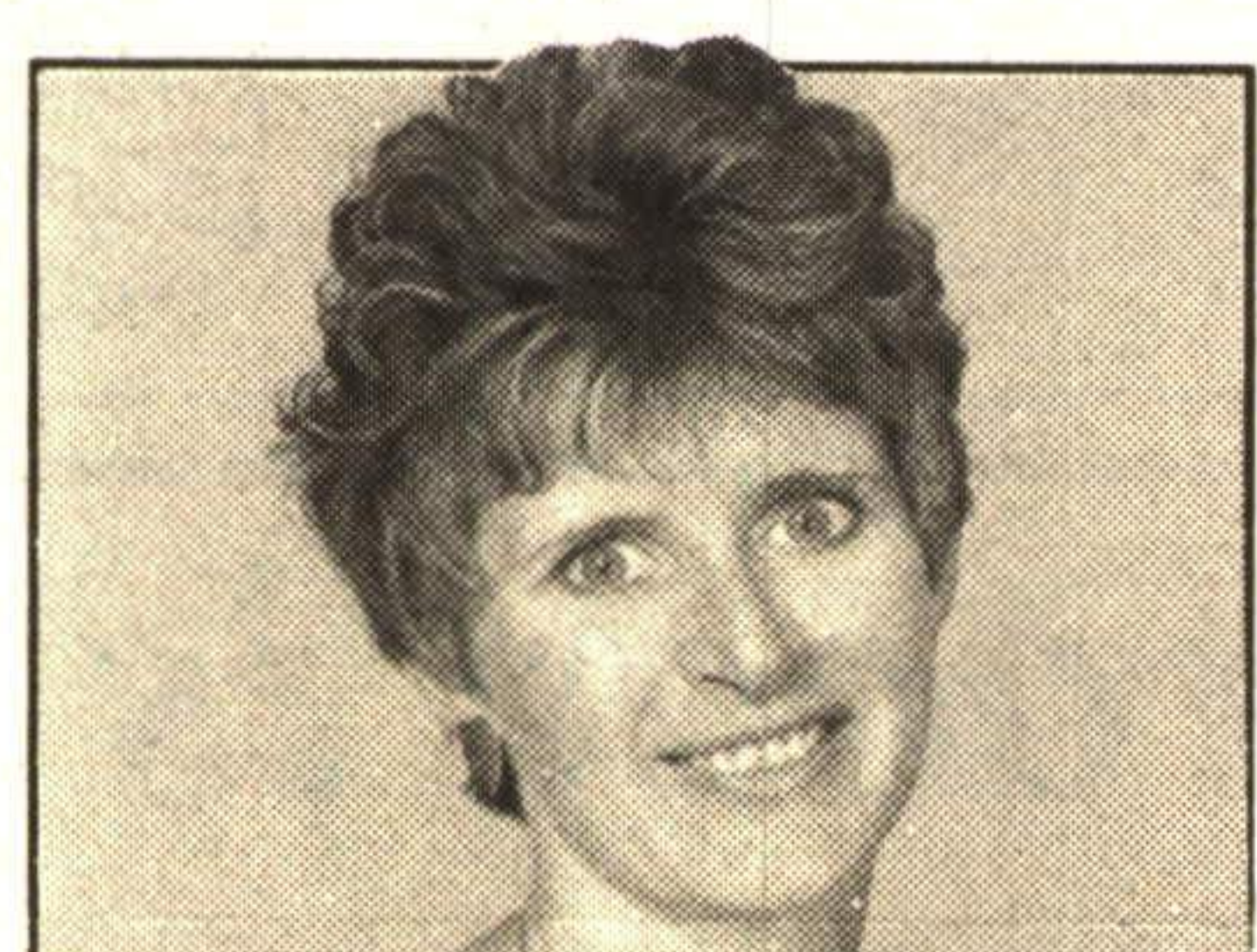
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