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VOLUME 1, NO. 24

"ALL THE NEWS YOU NEED"

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1992

## No Acton interest at meeting to set Town budget

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

Not one Acton citizen or group showed up to comment on the budget at a special Town meeting Wednesday night at the Civic Centre.

In a departure from the normal budget process Council invited rate-payers to make comments before the budget is finalized.

Eight Georgetown citizens spoke at Wednesday night's meeting, urging Council to not cut spending for the library system, parks and seniors. One Georgetown businessman said he would be willing to see less services if it meant less taxes.

Town staff's original budget model included a 7.2 per cent tax increase but Council asked for spending options including a tax increase equaling the rate of inflation and a zero per cent increase.

In his 40-minute budget overview, treasurer Ray King reminded everyone that Town Council con-

trols just 26.9 per cent of every tax dollar it collects and acts as a tax collector of levies for the boards of education and the Region of Halton."

In an interview Thursday, King said fiscal responsibility is not just a matter of cutting one dollar of expenditure to save one tax dollar.

"Sixty per cent of our revenue relating to the operating budget is taxes. The other 39.5 per cent is a combination of service fees for the arenas, building permit fees and investments," King explained. "If building slows and the number of permits drop then we will have a shortfall in that area. It's not simply the expenditures alone that we have to look at. It's our other sources of non-tax revenue that play a very big part in what the bottom line of the tax bill is."

King said many of the assumptions  
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**CLASS PET:** Acton's Nan Hurst prepares to read to special needs students at M.Z. Bennett school as part of the GrandTime program. Shown clockwise from centre are Nan Hurst, Cora Ridout, Mark Everson, Kyle Williams, Charlie Hick and William Denny. (Frances Niblock photo)

## Back to school for Acton's Nan Hurst

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

A former Acton English high school teacher has returned to the classroom as part of a special program that matches seniors with students who need help.

Nan Hurst is one of four Acton GrandTime volunteers who spend time in local schools each week, offering their skills, wisdom and experiences. Nan read about the program and decided she had the time and interest in helping kids learn to read.

"I decided that I should be doing some kind of community work and decided I wanted to work with kids again," Nan explained in an interview Thursday. "My thing is that so many kids go through the school system and they never learn to read

and write properly, so I started volunteering at M.Z. Bennett. At first I just helped as needed but last year I began a one-on-one reading program with special needs students."

For one hour a day, four days a week Nan is a friend, a teacher and a confidant to a group of students who are learning to read.

Nan says she has her own style, which seems to work. "I absolutely refuse to go along with any of the new-fangled books because they don't work. I teach them by using pictures or sounding out the words until they gain some confidence. I just wing it and I love the kids and they love me."

And what does Nan get from the program? "I get a great sense of

satisfaction helping these kids. We talk about what is going on in our lives and become friends. As an outsider and a former teacher I sometimes can recognize where the student's problem might be."

The GrandTime program started six years ago when an Oakville teacher convinced local seniors that their skills and knowledge were needed in the classroom. The program has grown to include all Halton schools and Grand Time Committee president Dick Marshall, of Oakville, is always looking for new members.

"The ideal Grand-Timer is a mature person who likes to work with children. They don't have to have a background in education—

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## Food drive Sat. in Acton, Rockwood

On Saturday, Acton residents and businesses, along with those in Rockwood and Eden Mills, will be asked to help feed the hungry by donating food in the second annual Scout and Guide food drive.

Organizers hope to gather 30,000 pounds of non-perishable, high-protein food to stock the shelves at Acton's FoodShare and Georgetown's Love in Christ food bank.

Scouts, Guides, Beavers, Cubs, Sparks, Calvinist Crusaders and their leaders and parents will knock on all doors in Acton and surrounding areas between 9:30 am and 12:30 pm to collect the food.

If you don't plan on being at home on Saturday, or if you don't want to be disturbed, you can leave a bag of food on your porch or by your front door for pickup by the Scouts and Guides.



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