

Matthew Fleet is rolling along

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK
The Acton Tanner

His first year of university was not



Ellen Carla, daughter of Fred and Marion Piehl, has graduated from Sheridan College, Oakville, with a Journalism Diploma. She is currently working as a freelance writer for Halton Hills This Week.

Congratulations are extended from Dad, Mum and the rest of the family.

all that Acton's Matthew Fleet expected.

"It (his on-campus residence) wasn't as noisy as I thought it would be and there weren't as many parties as I expected," Fleet, 21, laughed in an interview Thursday.

"I didn't go to the pub every night, and spent most of my time studying and going to class and coming home on the weekends."

Fleet's study habits are evident in his marks — one B two As and an A-plus.

Fleet, a paraplegic since a holiday accident five years ago, said he would not have been able to attend university without the care and concern of generous Acton residents who raised money to buy him a custom-designed van.

"I chose York University because it is very accessible. The van allowed me the freedom and flexibility to be independent."

Looking back over his first year away from home, Fleet said leaving home for the first time was

hard.

"It was nerve-wracking at first. I had all of the fears and concerns of every other first-year student, plus I had to worry about getting around and having support services for daily living. There were just so many things on top of what everybody else was dealing with," Fleet said.

Fleet is currently volunteering as a teaching assistant at McKenzie-Smith Middle School and doing private volunteer tutoring at night.

"I've applied to be a volunteer teaching assistant for the Halton Board of Education's summer school program, but I haven't heard yet whether I have the job," Fleet said.

"I would like to be a teacher and so this is great experience, even if it doesn't pay. The kids totally accept me and it's rewarding when you see improvements in their work."

Come fall, Fleet will be back at York, having switched his major from English to Geography.



CHRISTMAS SHOPPING: Brenda Schrepf got a jump on the Christmas season at the Trinity United Church garage sale on Saturday, buying a jolly old St. Nick. (Tom James photo)



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Retirement won't change Ena Gibson

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

She may be entering retirement, but Ena Gibson's love of life won't allow her to change her day-to-day approach.

After 27 years of full-time

teaching, the past 17 at McKenzie-Smith Middle School, the language and social science teacher has decided to enjoy life in a different light.

"I'm going to enjoy life each day just like I do teaching," said

Gibson minutes before being treated to music by the school band and a multitude of heart-warming farewell speeches last Wednesday in the school gym.

"My husband Jim and I will do more work with our video business," she added. "I also want to do some crafts, and with 5 and 7-year-old grandsons, I hope to be the kind of grandma I'm supposed to be."

With retirement comes emotional goodbyes to colleagues and students.

"I love my Grade 8s," said the personable Gibson, who has spent the past few years as a part-time guidance counselor. "I give them a hard time, but it's only because I want the best for them."

"The staff has always been fantastic. We worked well together and although it's a small staff, we banded together and worked hard. They've been very supportive."

And they're losing a very special person.

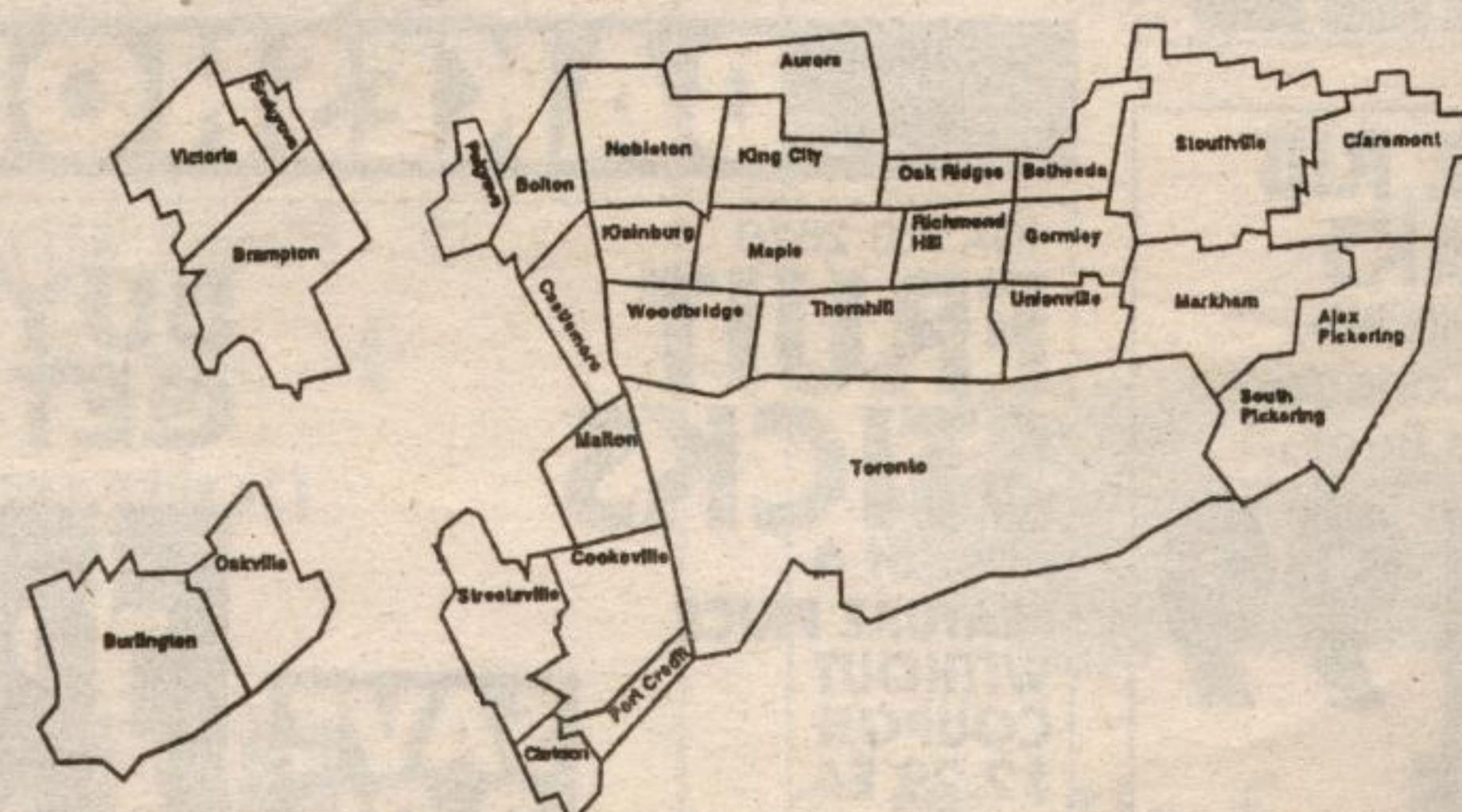
"It's been an honour working with Ena. She will certainly be missed in the guidance department," offered teacher Kevin Dorscht.

"It's always rough moving on, but we always welcome in the new ones," Gibson stated.

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