



BEARY GOOD! We caught ASSIC's Cathy Gerrow reading "The Big Hungry Bear" to young Michelle Thompson, 3, recently at the Acton Parent-Child Resource Centre.

Cuts taken in stride at Resource Centre

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Quality and hours of service at the Parent-Child Resource Centre will not be affected by the recent cut of \$3,700 in funding through the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

In fact, the centre's general manager was taking the news in stride before Christmas.

"I wasn't terribly surprised," commented Mary Piercy from her upstairs office at the Band Hall. "We're a very positive resource in the community. We have a reasonable amount of equipment and will absorb this cut with behind-the-scenes costs.

"Part of the reason I'm sitting here calmly is because the cut is part of next year's budget."

Piercy said most of the \$3,700 would have been used for equipment, since the centre has a lot of fixed costs in the program.

This latest blow was softened by the centre's efforts in the last five years to rejuvenate the equipment and expand the book resource and toy-lending library.

Piercy said this was not done for impending or future cuts, but for the quality and survival of the program. The centre allows youngsters to interact with others and gives caregivers or parents time to know others with children.

Piercy has said this is peak time for her concern on the future of the local program, which began at the old YMCA building before moving to the Band Hall six years ago.

"It's a very uncertain climate. I'm unsure of what the future holds. Community support is more important now than it was two years ago," she revealed.

The centre is open four hours on Mondays and Wednesdays (9:30 to 11 am and 1 to 3 pm), and 10:30 am to 2:30 pm on Fridays.

Two thumbs down for review

BY KAREN WETMORE
The Acton Tanner

Both Mayor Marilyn Serjeantson and Acton's sole regional councillor Rick Bonnette have strong opposition to recommendations made in an independent survey of Halton Regional Council.

The regional review was conducted by Harry Kitchen, an economics professor at Trent University and was recently presented to Council for future debate. Kitchen's report lists five changes to the Council's current status, including cutting the number of councillors to 18 from 24.

Reducing the size of Council would come from a new ward system, according to Kitchen's report. For Halton Hills this would mean losing two councillors, leaving two in Georgetown and one to represent Acton, rural Halton Hills and rural Milton north of the 401.

"Acton's going to get shafted from this," said Bonnette. "It would create a huge ward, including Glen Williams, Norval, Stewarttown and Limehouse."

Cutting councillors may sound

like a money-saving device, but to Bonnette, it's a drop in the bucket. The overall budget for the region is \$200 million. Taking away six councillors at an \$18,000 annual salary cuts region expenses by less than one per cent.

Kitchen also recommended mayors should be excluded from Council. This doesn't sit well with Serjeantson, who in the current system, automatically has a seat on Regional Council.

"I think mayors create a liaison between the Region and the Town," she said. "How can I be responsible to my constituents if I'm not on Regional Council?"

Serjeantson added the new ward system dissects the northern section of the Region, while leaving the south intact.

"I think the people of the north have trouble relating to the south as it is," she said. "Kitchen has no understanding of the rural area in Halton Hills."

Other recommendations in Kitchen's report include:

- The chair should be elected through a general vote by the peo-

ple. Currently, newly elected councillors choose a chair at their first meeting.

- Regional councillors should be elected to Regional Council and not sit on local councils at the same time, as is current practice.

- Regional councillors should be part-time and meetings should be held in the evenings, in fairness to those with other daytime jobs. Meetings are now held during the day, although councillor positions are part-time.

Pop piano

A one night workshop on pop piano is offered at Acton High Jan. 18, from 7-10 pm.

Pop Piano is designed for adults 16 or older who want to learn how to play the piano but don't want to invest a lot of time or money. Ability to read treble clef is recommended. The cost is \$20. Call the Rec & Parks Hotline, 873-2600, ext. 262 to register.

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