

Urbanski chosen to head regional social services

By IRENE GENTLE
The Champion

When Adelina Urbanski left Windsor she was a small-city girl looking for a new start. Today she is Halton's newly-appointed commissioner of social and community services. That makes her responsible for 590 staff and an annual departmental budget of more than \$113 million. It carries with it an annual paycheque in the range of \$84,000-105,000. Not bad for the woman who left her hometown for love and relied on chance and talent to find her way. "I was married and my husband got a job up here," recalled the now 39-year-old Ms Urbanski. "I thought 'that sounds like the place

to go. I'll find an opportunity when I get there." Armed with a degree from the University of Windsor, she found her opportunity fairly quickly, working in the chief administrative officer's (CAO) office at Halton Region. That was 15 years ago. "I was doing special projects and emergency planning then," she said. "The CAO's office had a lot of things in its bailiwick at the time." Within two years Ms Urbanski had hooked up with the department she now heads. "She's no stranger to our organization," commented Halton's current CAO, Brent Marshall. "The last couple of years have seen changes in the department. She's taken a lead role in major corporate projects." Ms Urbanski proved she wasn't afraid of

change when she packed her bags and moved from Windsor. She isn't afraid of it now, either. "I look forward to the challenges, and there are going to be many," she said. "I think we've just seen the tip of the iceberg in terms of the changes that are coming." In her new role, Ms Urbanski will be in charge of income and employment services, including Ontario Works, welfare and family benefits. Children's services and senior centres such as Milton's Allendale also fall under her umbrella. "There's change going on in all of the sectors we're involved in," said Ms Urbanski. Much of that comes from provincial downloading. Under downloading, many social services have been passed down from provincial to

regional responsibility. That has resulted in a major overhaul of the departments themselves. "We're still sifting and sorting what this exactly means," she said. In her new role Ms Urbanski is looking forward to promoting her particular love, the 'Healthy Baby, Healthy Children' program. In that, babies are screened at birth to help Halton learn who will need special support in the future. "The program is fairly new but it's doing some great things," she said. Another focus for Ms Urbanski is the growing senior population. "The senior area is really undergoing major growth. We're thinking of expanding in all areas," she said.

Correction

A story on Friday, Nov. 6 incorrectly stated seven books deemed controversial had been approved for senior students at Halton public high schools. However, the books, which would be used for individual or small group study, have not yet been approved by the board. At a previous meeting, the list was tabled to make trustees aware of the books. Now, board members will be given a few weeks to review them. The books under consideration and their authors are as follows: Beach Music, Pat Conroy; Boy's Life, Robert McCammon; The Horse Whisperer, Nicholas Evans; The House of the Spirits, Isabel Allende; The Piano Man's Daughter, Timothy Findley; The Power of One, Bryce Courtenay; and Stones From the River, Ursula Hegi.

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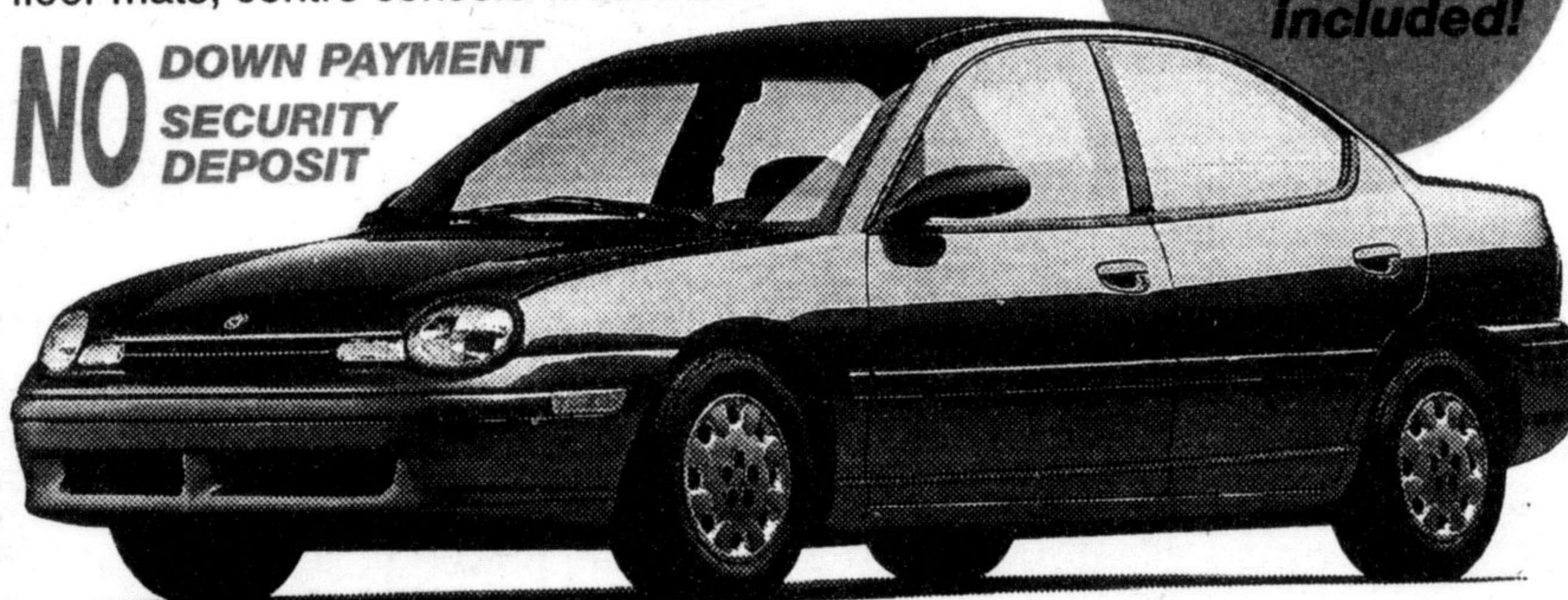
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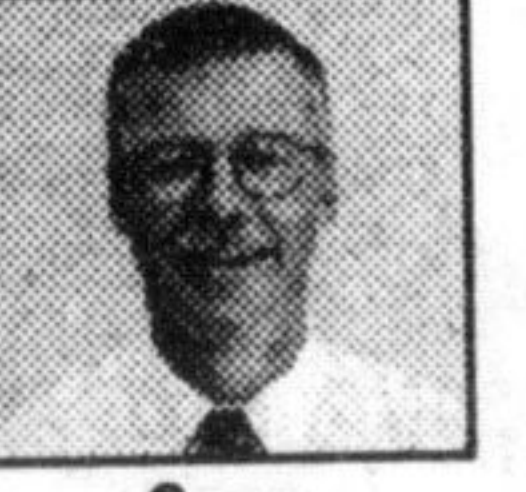
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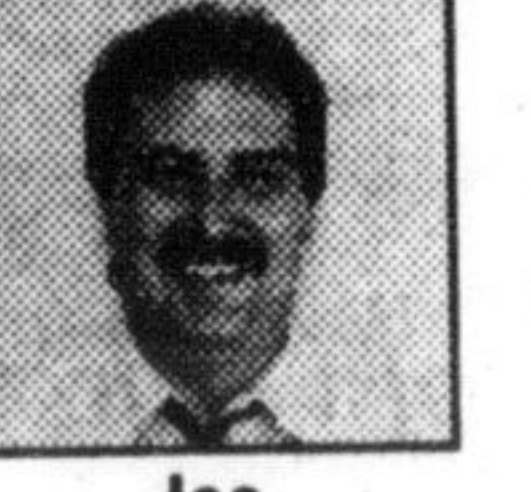
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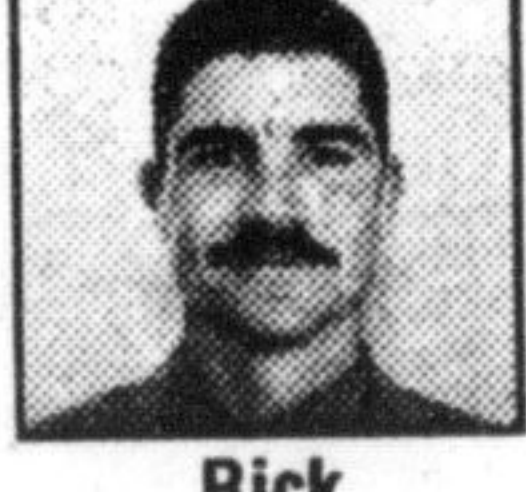
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