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GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

O CHRISTMAS TREE, O CHRISTMAS TREE: Eleven-year-old Mitchell MacDonald carries on a family tradition, choosing a Christmas tree with his grandparents. Here, he hauls out his choice — a spruce — at Clembrook Farm on Derry Road.

Fund still has long way to go

Slow as the molasses in a gingerbread house. Unfortunately, that's how The Champion's Christmas Bureau Fund for the Salvation Army is coming along.

To date, we've received donations totaling \$8,505.86 — a far cry from our goal of \$25,000.

Fund organizer Sheena Cameron is scratching her head wondering why people are reluctant this year to give toward the fund, which has been a Christmas tradition at The Champion for about 25 years.

Money goes toward Christmas dinners with all the fixings for local families in need.

Last year, \$21,418 was collected.

Residents can drop off donations at The Champion office, 875 Main St. E., between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday to Friday until December 21.

Georgetown trustee new chair of board

By Tim Whitnell
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

Trustees with the Halton District School Board have elected a rookie to lead them at the start of a new four-year term.

First-year trustee Gillian Tuck Kutarna of Georgetown defeated veteran board member Peggy Russell of Burlington for board chair for 2006-07 in a vote conducted during the inaugural meeting and swearing in of the new board Wednesday.

The results of the balloting by the 11 trustees weren't made public, as is the board's custom.

The position of board vice-chair went to

second-term Burlington trustee Janie Hames, who was acclaimed.

Tuck Kutarna wouldn't comment on whether she was surprised to beat out the experienced Russell but did say that all trustees discussed the process previously and that she knew she would be going up against Russell for the chair's job.

A family and special education lawyer in Georgetown, Tuck Kutarna said in the past she



Gillian Tuck Kutarna

handled clients connected to the Halton school board. The potential for conflict of interest means she won't handle such cases in her current role with the board.

"I expect to carry a reduced caseload," she said.

Married to Jim Kutarna and a mother of four children in grades 3 to 9 in the Halton public school system, the 44-year-old Tuck Kutarna stressed teamwork and accountability in her inaugural address to the board and the public audience.

"We're in the service industry. Our clients are children and their parents. Our only job is to meet their need for an excellent education.

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