



Trade ya

Maple Hill Tree Services employees transport bags of food donated by Miltonians, who received free firewood in return. About 50 people came for wood and left more than \$1,500 worth of food behind. From left are Rob Rowe, Andrew Frederikse, Philip Vanwassenaer and owner Greg Hill. The Ninth Line firm annually holds the charity event for the Salvation Army food bank. Inset, as the food came in, workers cut up more wood.

Photos by Graham Paine



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Christmas crunch

Last minute rush expected

By KAREN SMITH
The Champion

Local merchants report Christmas sales are as good or better than last year and they're looking forward to the last-minute rush.

"I think we still have to experience the big rush this weekend," said Vera Delacourt, operator of Delacourt's china and gift shop downtown.

Milton Mall sales in November were "exceptionally good," said mall manager Marion Shannon, and time will tell if December follows suit.

While the mall hasn't appeared overly busy, "the people that are here are here to buy," she said.

Sales at Zellers during November and the first part of December have been "strong," said store manager Bob Clutton. "It should be a good last weekend."

Some local merchants reported that shoppers came

early to their stores.

Anita Mangotich, operator of the Gold Connection on Main Street, said men came through the door sooner than ever this Christmas to purchase jewelry for the women in their lives. She also said her holiday sales overall have improved this year.

Christmas items at Canadian Tire have sold well and purchases are slightly up from last year, said the Market Drive store's general manager David Shuvera.

However, the lack of snow has put a damper on the store's sale of weather-related items such as shovels, Mr. Shuvera said.

Robert Newman, operator of Robert Newman Shoes, is another merchant whose sales have been affected by the weather.

While Mr. Newman reported Christmas sales as "great," he indicated they'd be "fantastic" if there was more snow. That way he would sell more boots.

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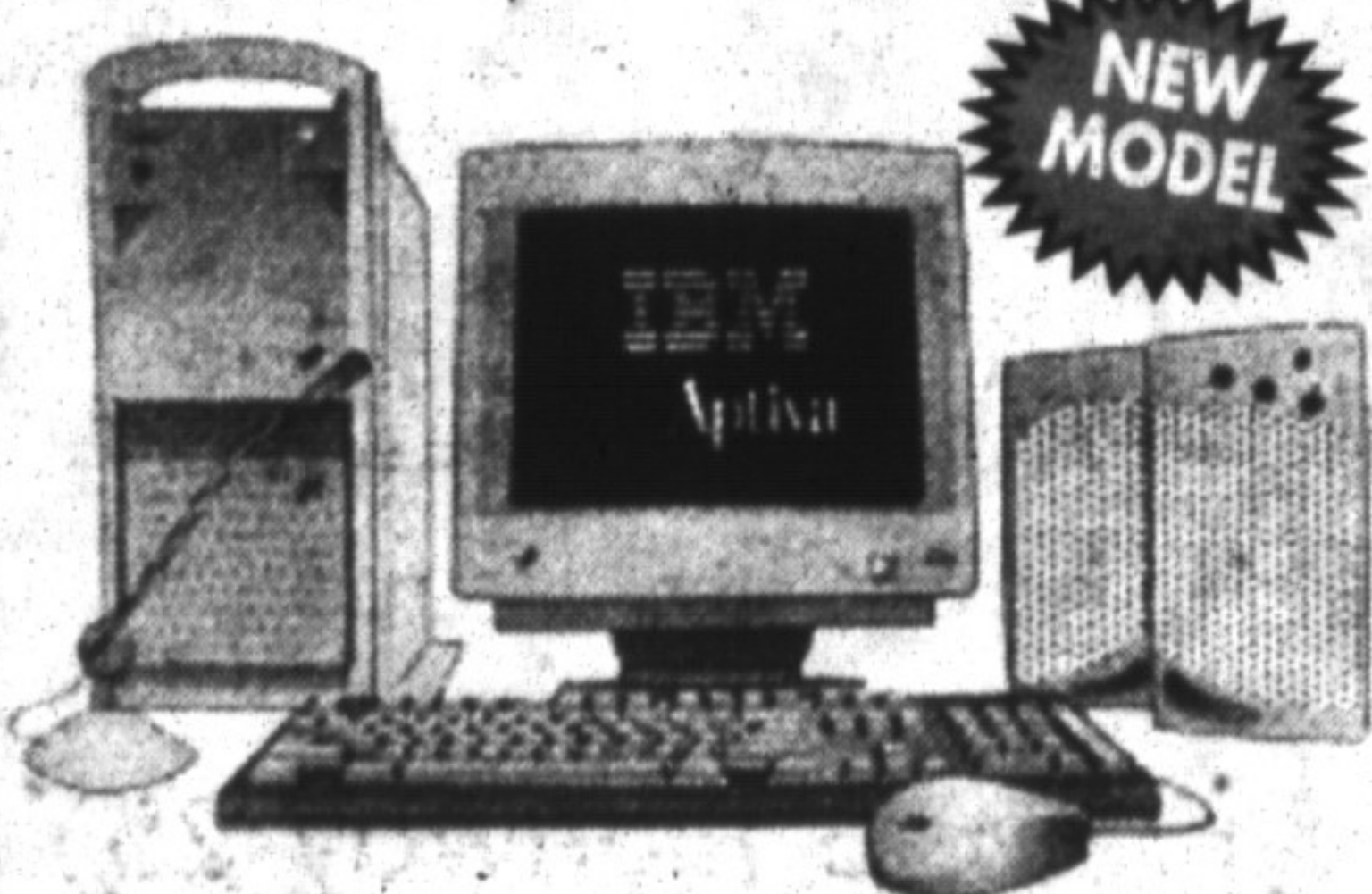


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