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Physiotherapy clinic hit by cuts

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

A publicly-funded Stouffville physiotherapy clinic may have to turn away patients as a result of the provincial government's social contract legislation.

Stouffville Physiotherapy Clinic, located on Main St., has been told it will likely have to limit itself to patient volumes based on the past three years if

clinic owners across the province are successful in convincing the government to allow them to be self-policing in terms of social contract cut backs. But the clinic's new owner Joe Lee, who took over in mid September of this year, is arguing the clinic should be exempt from such a base control mechanism because he has upgraded the facility since taking over, greatly increasing its

patient load. According to Lee, the approximately 100 publicly funded physiotherapy clinics in Ontario have been told they must split \$39.3 million in OHIP contributions over the three year period which began last April 1.

The majority of clinic owners voted in favor of the self-policing base control mechanism, which Lee said will serve to

protect their larger volumes.

Lee said since his clinic is the only public operation from Lake Simcoe to Steeles Ave. to the north-south, and from Pickering to Richmond Hill to the east-west, he should be entitled to expand upon the patient load maintained by the previous owner, who was semi-retired.

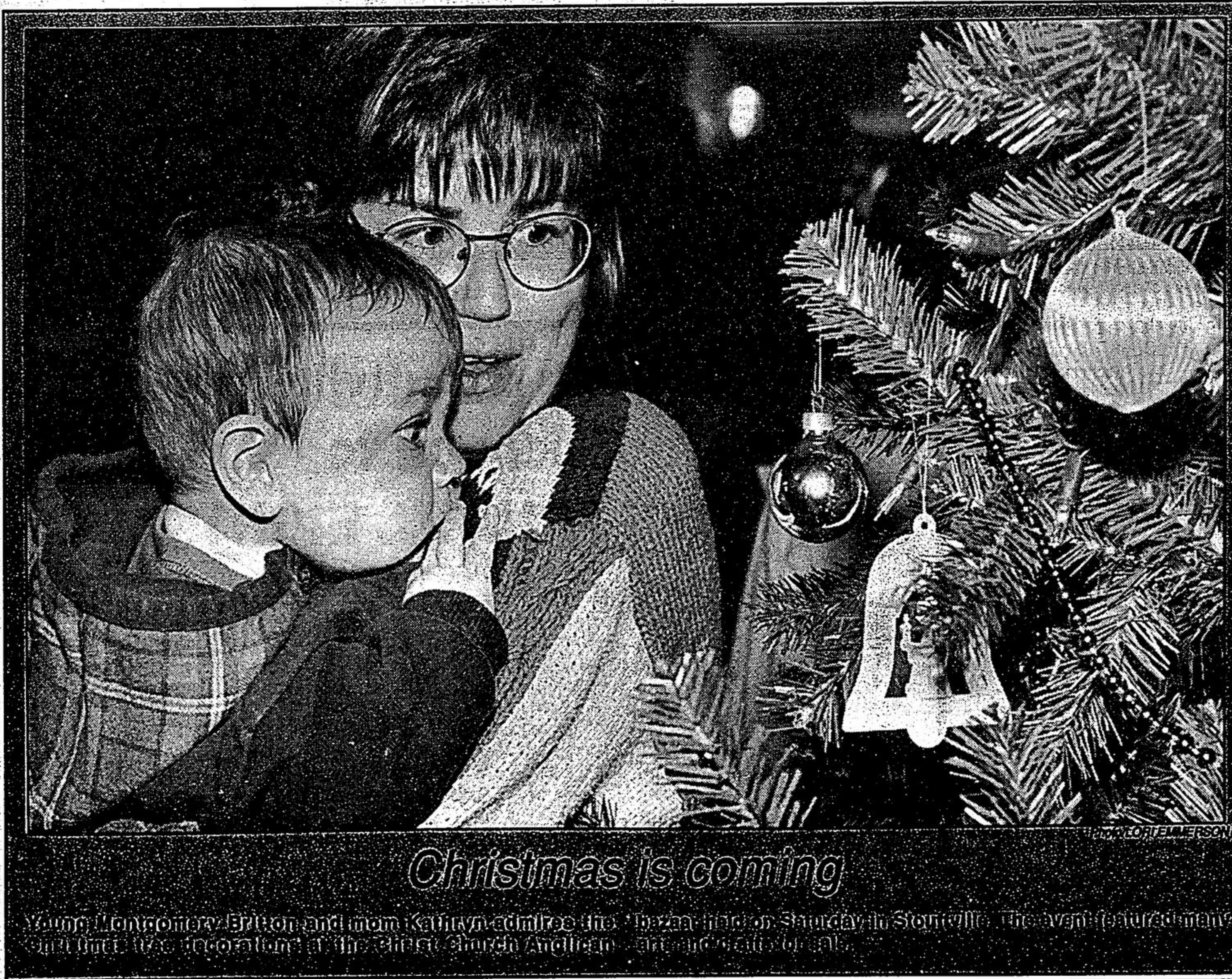
"It's very unfair for this clinic to be judged based on the past three years," he said. "I will

have to turn patients away if the government accepts the proposed base control mechanism."

Lee said he supports the government's initial suggestion that a call back mechanism be used by the publicly funded clinics. Under such an arrangement, individual clinics would be required to pay back the government based upon their percentage of the total remuneration package if the \$39.3 million figure was exceeded.

"I would rather take my chances on the call back formula," said Lee. "I'd lose some income, but at least we could carry on. I'm not asking for extra funding. The \$39.3 million is there, and I think we can live with it."

Lee said he has been advised (Please see page 3)



Christmas is coming

Young Liam Conroy-Brown and mom Kathryn admire the tree at the Stouffville Library on Saturday. The event featured many crafters, information on the Stouffville Anglican Church and a craft fair.

Prentice calls for fed inquiry into postal cuts

One local politician is calling on the federal government to conduct a full review of Canada Post's decision to end retail service at Stouffville's downtown post office.

Ward 6 councillor Ken Prentice will ask for council support next week to send a resolution to Prime Minister Jean Chretien, Minister responsible for postal affairs, David Dingwall and Markham Whitchurch-Stouffville MP Jag Bhaduria requesting the federal government's

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Recreation

More power given to town parks advisory board

TRACY KIBBLE
Staff Reporter

Stouffville politicians agreed this week to give added recognition and strength to its recreation board after much wrangling and debate.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board (PRAB), which was formed five years ago in conjunction with the town's recreation department, will now make recommendations directly to council, it was decided Tuesday night.

The decision to change PRAB's terms of reference came through staff recommendations which said the committee had the "need, desire and interest to be an integral part of the delivery system of recreational services, additions and improvements," stated a report for recreation director, Marlene McKee Wetheral.

During a delegation, PRAB chairman Casey van Maris told officials the group "feels frustrated and very ineffective" with the current set-up.

"The groups feels that they have served their apprenticeship and feel that we now deserve to become a committee of council," van Maris said.

He asked that PRAB be given the opportunity to make monthly recommendations; to hold decision-making power; to be Stouffville's voice for recreational matters; and to form the town's framework and links with other groups and with council.

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