



**STOUFFVILLE LIONS CELEBRATE 60 YEARS:** Mayor Wayne Emmerson, left, along with David Barthau, president of Stouffville Lions club, helps mark Lions Month by displaying the flag in the mayor's office recently. January not only marks Lions Month, but the start of the Stouffville Lions 60th anniversary in town.

Photo by STEVE SOMERVILLE

# Town still aiming for no tax increase in 1998 budget

JOAN RANSBERRY  
Staff Reporter

Despite all the talk of provincial government reform, including downloading, the municipal portion of the 1998 tax bill in Whitchurch-Stouffville could still reflect a "zero per cent" tax increase, a town official said yesterday.

Last year, the municipal part of the three-way tax bill was \$521 for the average homeowner in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Town treasurer Ed Blackburn reminds residents that the town has no control over regional or school taxes.

With a budget expected to be finalized by the middle of March, Blackburn and his staff are doing everything

they can to keep a lid on municipal taxes without lessening the quality of services.

At a special council meeting held late yesterday, Blackburn outlined how one area of provincial downloading will hit the municipal tax bill. Blackburn explained changes linked to the ratio of taxes paid on business, residential and farms.

"It is complicated," stressed Blackburn.

A few weeks ago, local residents learned that Ontario premier Mike Harris' "revenue neutral" promise translated into a \$180,000 shortfall in provincial transfer money for Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The big catch is that figure changes "week by week," said Blackburn.

Even if the province's cutback is in the range of \$200,000, which reflects two per cent of the budget, the town does have money in reserve, stressed Blackburn.

Province-wide, Harris is demanding that Ontario's 815 municipalities cut more than half a billion dollars from their budgets.

According to provincial figures, York Region will break even, and Durham Region will see a \$10.4-million shortfall, while the City of Toronto recently struck a deal with the province to lessen its burden brought on by the cutbacks.

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### Volunteer driver needed

The Newmarket & District Association for Community Living needs a driver to drive two developmentally disabled gentlemen from Stouffville/Markham to Newmarket Monday to Friday mornings.

Also, the Women's Sexual Assault Helpline for York Region begins a new in-depth training course at the end of January for line counsellors. Graduates of the course can work from the Newmarket office or from their own home anywhere in York Region.

For these and other volunteer positions in York Region, call Helpmate Volunteer Bureau at (905) 884-3839 or 1-800-363-2412.

### ADVERTISING CORRECTION

In our Record Breaking Days insert included in this newspaper, this week, please note: Page 2: Jones New York & 1928's jewellery offer should read: Manufacturer Special Offer from \$5.99 to \$39.99. Also, Special Buy, Louboutin separates not available in all stores, we will substitute with The Work Connection collection at same prices. Page 5: Daewoo VCR Bonus offer should read: Receive a Daewoo Hi-Fi VCR (Mod. #DV-K884N only) a \$319.99 value with purchase of any regular priced in-stock 32" or 35" television set at Eaton's. Offer ends January 15, 1998. Special orders and purchases made prior to January 7, 1998 not included in this offer. Page 6: 40% off candles & holders and 50% off all personal planners. Offers apply to items in the stationery department only. Page 11: kid's denim offer should read: 30% off selected kid's denim (excludes Tommy Hilfiger). Back cover-Casual Connection offer should read: 30% off selected Casual Connection mock & T-neck tops in fashion colours only (excludes black, navy, ivory and white).

We sincerely apologize to our valued customers and regret any inconvenience or confusion this may have caused.

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