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3 Nationalist Maude Barlow finds 'hope' in students at a York Region high school.

ARTS & CULTURE CALENDAR

EVENT: Dragon Ball 2000 auction preview
WHEN: Friday, Jan. 21
WHERE: Pacific Mall, call 321-0777, ext. 318



15 Iridologist Hiedi Hakonson takes a deep look into the eyes of Spirit players.

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OMB HEARING, AMALGAMATION COULD JEOPARDIZE LONG-AWAITED POOL AND LIBRARY

Pool project in peril: mayor

BY JOAN RANSBERRY
 Staff Writer

If construction of the indoor pool and library doesn't get under way by September, the entire project could be scrapped, Mayor Wayne Emmerson said during a press conference yesterday.

The approved \$5.7-million twin complex project has hit a serious snag. It's now in the hands of the

Ontario Municipal Board. As well, it could get lost in the shuffle if the much-talked about amalgamation becomes a reality.

"It's too bad. The people of this community have wanted an indoor pool for a very long time," said Emmerson.

It's not been for lack of trying. The search for a spot to build an indoor pool and library has

spanned 15 years and covered a number of sites.

Last summer, council settled on Memorial Park South, a 17-acre parcel of land acquired at no cost from a developer.

Not everyone is pleased with the choice. Three residents recently asked for OMB intervention.

"I'm not trying to build a dump or a nuclear power plant or a feder-

al prison. I'm trying to build an indoor swimming pool and a new library," he said. "I'm trying to provide much improved library service and a top-notch pool facility."

The town has just been notified that an OMB hearing linked to the project will be held in the spring. The five-day hearing will not only

See MAYOR, page 3.

'Low' pay hiked for regional politicians

Councillors' salaries jump to \$34,500

BY LISA QUEEN
 Staff Writer

Faced with a brain drain caused by "low" salaries, York Region politicians and managers are getting hefty raises this year.

Consultant Bruce Martin of William Mercer Ltd. said York is running the risk of losing top employees to other regions and the private sector because salaries haven't kept pace.

And he argued councillors' wages should follow.

However, while staff pay hikes will be phased in April 1 and Aug. 1, council has delayed any political increases until Dec. 1, when the new term of council begins.

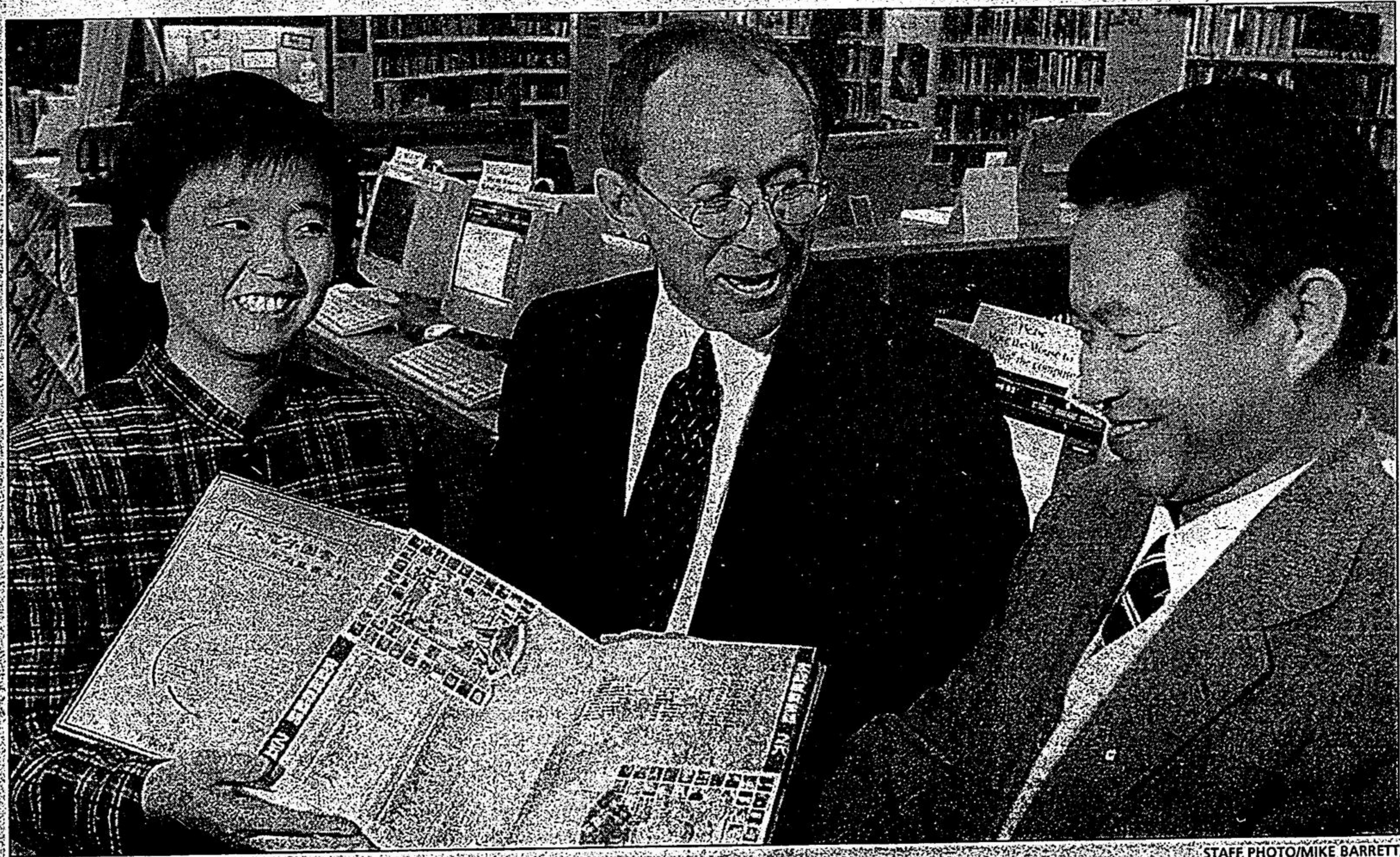
Because the province is killing the one-third tax-free portion of all municipal council salaries, York's politicians had already agreed to offset the higher taxes by boosting their paycheques to \$31,600 from \$23,613 and the regional chairperson's salary to \$123,350 from \$92,232.

Because the salaries will now be fully taxed, their take-home pay remains the same.

Or it would have, until councillors agreed last week to increase the wages for the next term of council.

As of Dec. 1, regional councillors will earn \$34,500 and the chairperson will receive \$134,550. All but the chairperson

See SALARIES, page 5.



STAFF PHOTO/MIKE BARRETT

GIFT OF READING

Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library chairperson Owen Graig (centre) accepts a copy of the Chinese Electronic Library from distributors Linxia Li and Tony Deng. The library contains more than 3,000 books.

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