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**READING BETWEEN
THE LINES?**

Milliken Mills library Summer Reading Assistant Joyce de Juan holds up a prize for the draw for children involved in the Summer Sleuth Reading Club on Thursday afternoon. The program wound up that day with awards for the participants.

**Markham's
Steelcase
avoids layoffs**

BY JEROME WATT
Staff Writer

Markham's eighth largest employer, Steelcase Canada, will avoid the bulk of the layoffs announced last Tuesday by company officials at its head office in Grand Rapids Michigan.

The office equipment manufacturer announced it will lay off between 600 and 700 factory workers as well as 300 to 400 middle management employees within the next three months.

"We're talking about 4.3 per cent of our workforce (worldwide)," said Jim Mitchell president of Steelcase Canada. "The bulk of layoffs will be in Grand Rapids."

Mitchell said poor economic conditions in the office equipment market have resulted in the announced layoffs.

Slavek Vidakovic, an employee at the Markham plant, is taking a wait-and-see attitude when it comes to layoffs.

"Everybody is going to get their fair share (of layoffs across the company)," he said. "How far it's going to go I don't know. If we're lucky some work will come in and we won't get hit as hard."

Vidakovic isn't too concerned about losing his job because of his 20 years of seniority at the company.

"I'm not worried about it," he said. "Younger people might be."

Vidakovic said that the chair manufacturing department doesn't appear to be experiencing a slowdown but other departments aren't doing as well.

John Elliott, another employee at the company isn't too concerned about losing his job either. He said he will wait and see what's going to happen as well.

The blow of the layoffs will be softened by an architectural wall system the plant will begin producing, according to Mitchell.

The wall system was produced at the company's Ohio plant before it closed in February and production was moved north to the Markham plant.

Mitchell isn't sure when the industry will rebound.

"Nobody has a crystal ball," he said.



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