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**AUGUST 1 - 4, 2002**

**ROCKHOUND GEMBOREE**

## German choir celebrates cultural ties

BY KATHLEEN GRIFFIN  
Staff Writer

Markham's cultural alliance with founder William Berczy's birthplace in Nordlingen, Germany will be further strengthened next month with a visit by the Chamber Choir of St. Georg.

The 25 to 35-member adult choir will perform at least two concerts in Markham the weekend of Aug. 23, demonstrating their demanding a capella style under music director Udo Knauer.

Choir members are looking for billets here, so they can stay in town and learn more about Markham and the

Canadian culture, said Barb Nanninga, assistant to Mayor Don Cousens.

"They are really excited about coming to Markham and they want to learn about the town," she said. "We are trying to help where we can, finding billets for them."

Last year Markham and Nordlingen signed a cultural twinning agreement, honouring the history between the two municipalities. The partnership supports community groups interested in developing more formal ties; promotes the sharing of significant social, cultural and civic issues; and encourages musical and student exchange programs.

"We are the only community in Canada that knows specifically where our ancestors came from," said Markham's official historian, Lorne Smith, at the time. "We share a rich historical relationship."

In 1794, William Moll Berczy convinced 64 German families to leave their homeland and travel across the great sea for a new life in the New World.

They settled in the Town of Markham, joined ten years later by the Reesors and other Mennonite families who made their way from Pennsylvania.

Nordlingen is an ancient walled city more than 1,000 years old, with a population of about 20,000. The Lutheran St. Georg's Church is one of the biggest gothic hall churches in southern Germany.

Concert dates are Friday, Aug. 23, 8 p.m., at Ebenezer United Church and Sunday, Aug. 25, 7 p.m., at the Bethesda Lutheran Church.

Anyone who can spare a room and offer a welcome to choir members for the Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights that weekend is asked to call Ms Nanninga at 905-477-7000, ext. 7510.

## York cops help at World Youth Day

BY ROGER VARLEY  
Staff Writer

By the time World Youth Day activities come to an end Sunday night, members of York Regional Police will have contributed hundreds of hours of volunteer service.

Insp. Richard McCabe said 111 members of the force — uniformed officers, auxiliary police, court security and civilians — volunteered to work during the festival on their own time.

He said the uniformed officers were mainly involved in providing security, as well as crowd and traffic management.

The force itself contributed by providing transportation for the volunteers to various World Youth Day venues in co-operation with York Region Transit.

"We're very proud we have these 111 volunteering their time," said Insp. McCabe, noting that some had signed up for duty as far back as January.

Few of the World Youth Day activities spilled into York Region, although the large WYD cross has been in the region "on and off".

A march by young pilgrims planned for today through York Region, down Keel Street from Rutherford Road to Downsview, was cancelled because of the summer heat. Pilgrims are using GO Transit instead, said Insp. McCabe.

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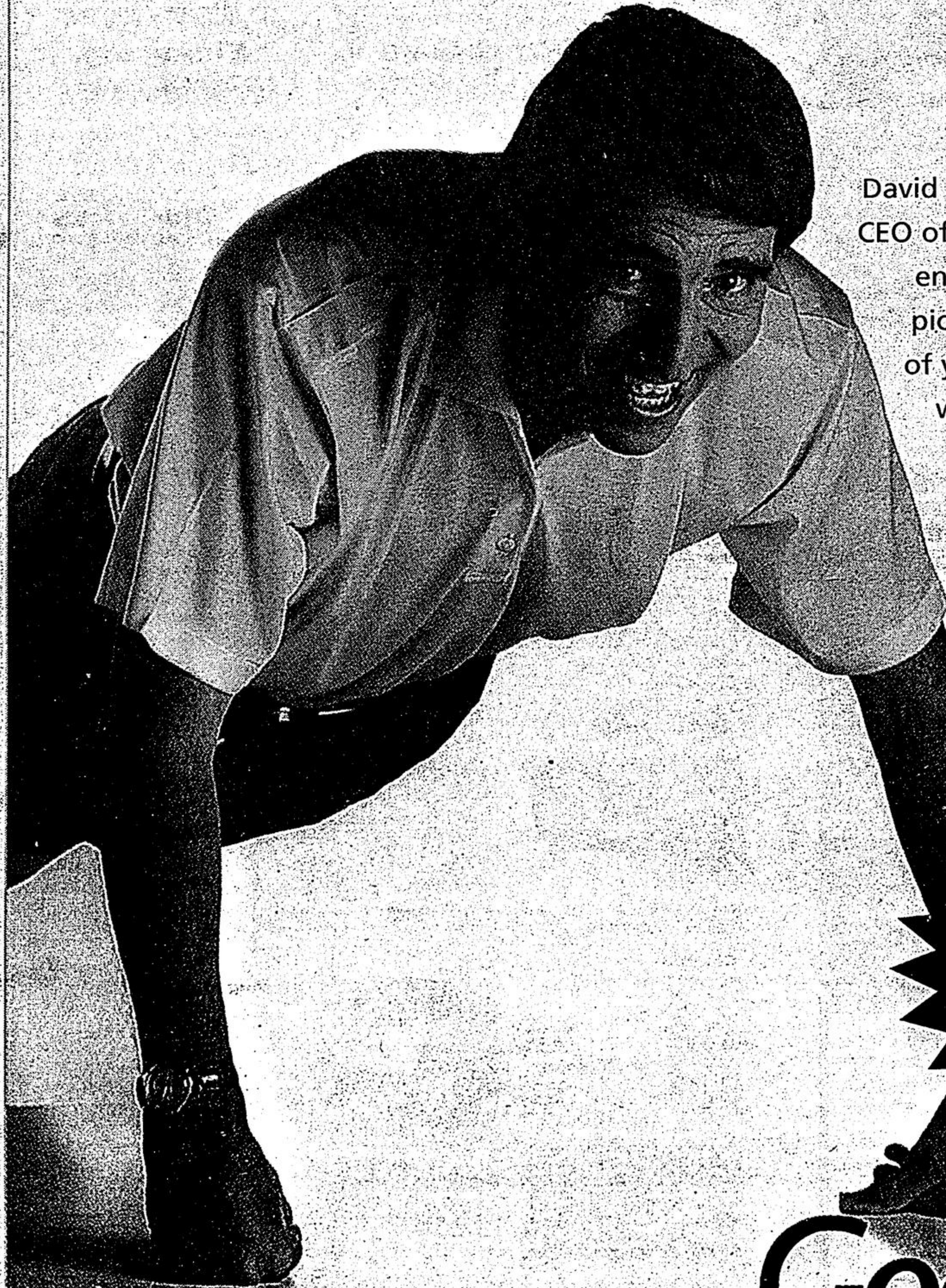
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