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3 Testing your character:
 Dealing with loud cell
 phone talkers, litterbugs
 and slow-footed drivers.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR
EVENT: Pre-parade breakfast with Santa
WHEN: Saturday, 9 a.m. (905-640-1461)
WHERE: Christ Church Anglican, Sunset Blvd.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library



17 Hitting the links
 and the books:
 Golf scholarships abound
 for Canadian girls.

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THURSDAY, DEC. 5, 2002

TO REACH US: (905) 640-2612

York Region CAO on stand at MFP inquiry

*Lastman fingers Garrett
 in computer deal*

BY JEFF MITCHELL
 Staff Writer

York Region Chief Administrative Officer Mike Garrett is expected to take the stand today to answer allegations he oversaw a controversial computer deal that cost the City of Toronto millions of dollars more than anticipated.

Two days ago, Mr. Garrett was fingered by Toronto Mayor Mel Lastman as the top bureaucrat in charge of striking a deal with MFP Financial Services Ltd.

That deal, which cost the city almost twice as much as the \$43 million originally anticipated, is the focus of an inquiry that began this week.

Mr. Lastman was the first witness; he spent three days on the stand, being grilled by lawyers for the numerous individuals who have been granted standing.

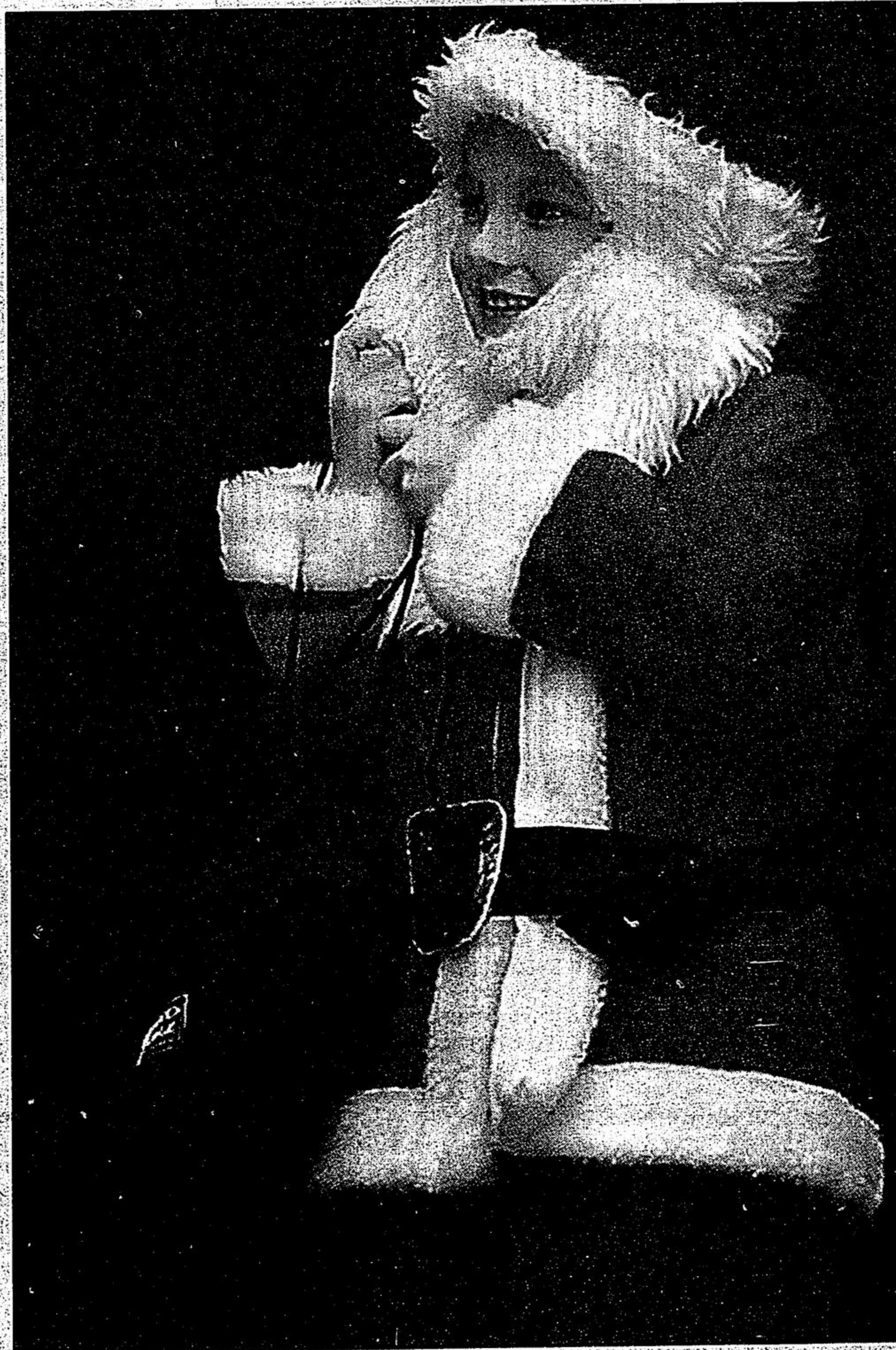
On Tuesday, under questioning from the lawyer representing former city treasurer Wanda Liczyk, Mr. Lastman said it was Mr. Garrett who was responsible for initiating the computer deal with MFP.

Mr. Garrett was not available for comment yesterday.

But regional chairperson Bill Fisch vouched for Mr. Garrett, who assumed the job as York's top bureaucrat in July. Mr. Fisch said the region carried out due diligence in hiring Mr. Garrett

See YORK, page 11.

Santa Jr. on stage



PHOTO/JASON CHOW

Braeden Halse appears in the Mother Goose Academy pre-school Christmas pageant at Springvale Baptist Church in Whitchurch-Stouffville Tuesday. "Santa" returns to town this Saturday for his annual parade, starting at 2 p.m. at the Tenth Line and Main Street and heading west to the Novopharm plant.

Seniors win bid for old town hall

*Quick council decision has
 Councillor Carroll fuming*

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
 Staff Writer

The Silver Jubilee Seniors' Club can move into the first floor of Stouffville's old town hall thanks to a quick decision by Whitchurch-Stouffville council Tuesday afternoon.

Local politicians had spent about an hour listening to presentations by representatives from the arts, theatre and seniors' communities at the meeting.

The decision didn't sit well with all the councillors. A visibly upset Mark Carroll, councillor for Ward 2, said, "We just spent three years dealing with arts and culture with this building, and now in one night, we give it to the seniors!"

Town staff will be meeting with Silver Jubilee Club representatives shortly. "We will see what their needs are," said Councillor Peter Dobrich. "The interior has to be done to what they want." The building has to be used by the maximum number of people, since it is a town building, the councillor added.

Council did not make a decision on the second floor.

When the seniors move, the current Silver Jubilee Club, a converted post office at Main and Market streets, can be rented out or sold by the town for additional revenue, Councillor Steve Pliakes said in an interview.

The Clock Tower Theatre Association has been working for a number of years to raise funds to turn the building into a full-fledged theatre and cultural facility and has leased the

See ARTS, page 5.

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