

Talent showcased at concert

Some of the brightest performers in York Region will be showcased at a benefit performance next Saturday.

The event features winners from the York Region Newspaper Group's annual Celebration of the Arts talent search.

The competition, brainchild of publisher Ian Proudfoot, rewards winners with \$1,500 bursaries, studio recording time and other prizes.

The event will highlight last year's bursary winners in dance, vocal and instrumental music.

Previously, such a gala was meant as a newspaper customer appreciation event, but the group is opening it to the public.

"The public should have the opportunity to see the quality of talent in York Region," talent search vice chairperson Marsha

Winton said.

The intent of the talent search and bursary program is to broaden support for arts in the community.

The benefit, which raises money for the bursary program and talent search, is at the Newmarket Theatre, on Pickering Crescent (off Mulock Drive) at 7:30 p.m. For tickets, call 905-953-5122.

—Simone Joseph

More budget cuts needed: Heath

From page 1.

seven years.

But Thursday's cuts don't go far enough, according to Markham Regional Councillor Jack Heath.

"We're down to 6.1 per cent, but that's still not good enough," Mr. Heath said. "This budget has been described as ambitious and maybe that's the problem; maybe we're trying to

do too much."

Finance chairperson and Markham Mayor Don Cousens, who issued a call last month for a 5-per-cent limit on any regional tax hike, believes there may be room for more trimming.

"We've come a long way, but now we must ask ourselves where else can we make cuts responsibly," he said.

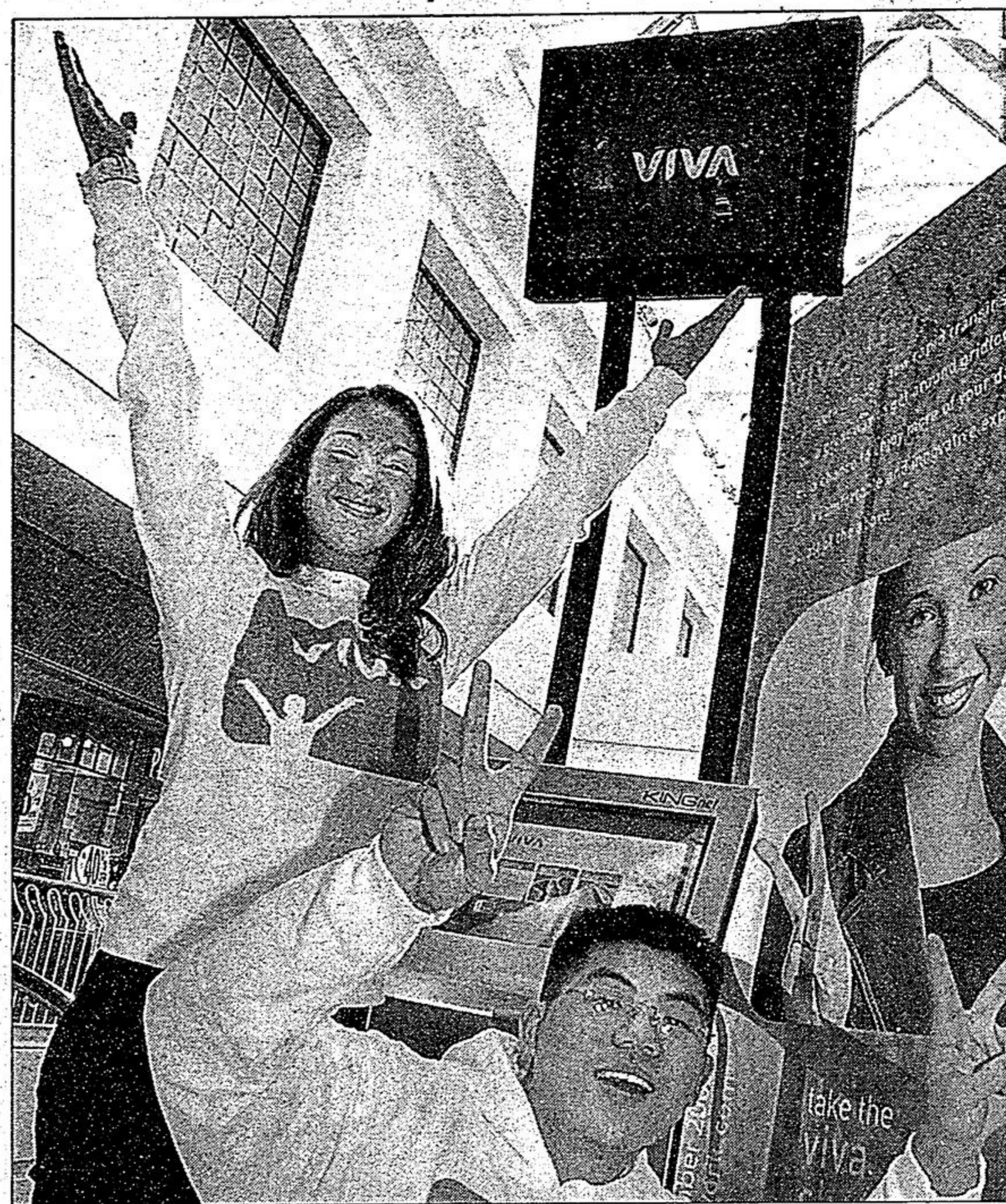
Councillors also discussed the region's contribution to the GTA social welfare pool, which

will top \$85 million this year, \$7.5 million more than 2004.

Regional chairperson Bill Fisch said the 6.1-per-cent tax hike would drop to 4.8 per cent if council opts to freeze its contribution at the 2004 level.

"It's still an option for council to consider," Mr. Fisch said following Thursday's meeting. "The big question is what happens if we take that \$7.5 million out of the budget and then the province orders us to pay it?"

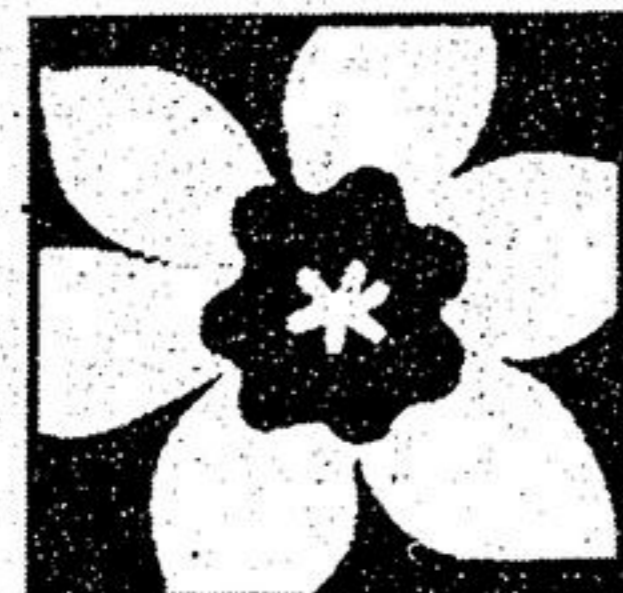
CREATIVE, WITH ATTITUDE



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Sarah Lieberman and Lawrence Cheung are both part of Team Viva, a campaign to encourage people to participate in a name recognition promotion called the Viva Challenge, with York Region's rapid transit. Judges will decide which participant created the most creative 'V' using their bodies to win prizes. The Viva Challenge has arrived in shopping malls, community centres and invites residents to be photographed making a V or submit a digital photo to www.vivayork.com

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