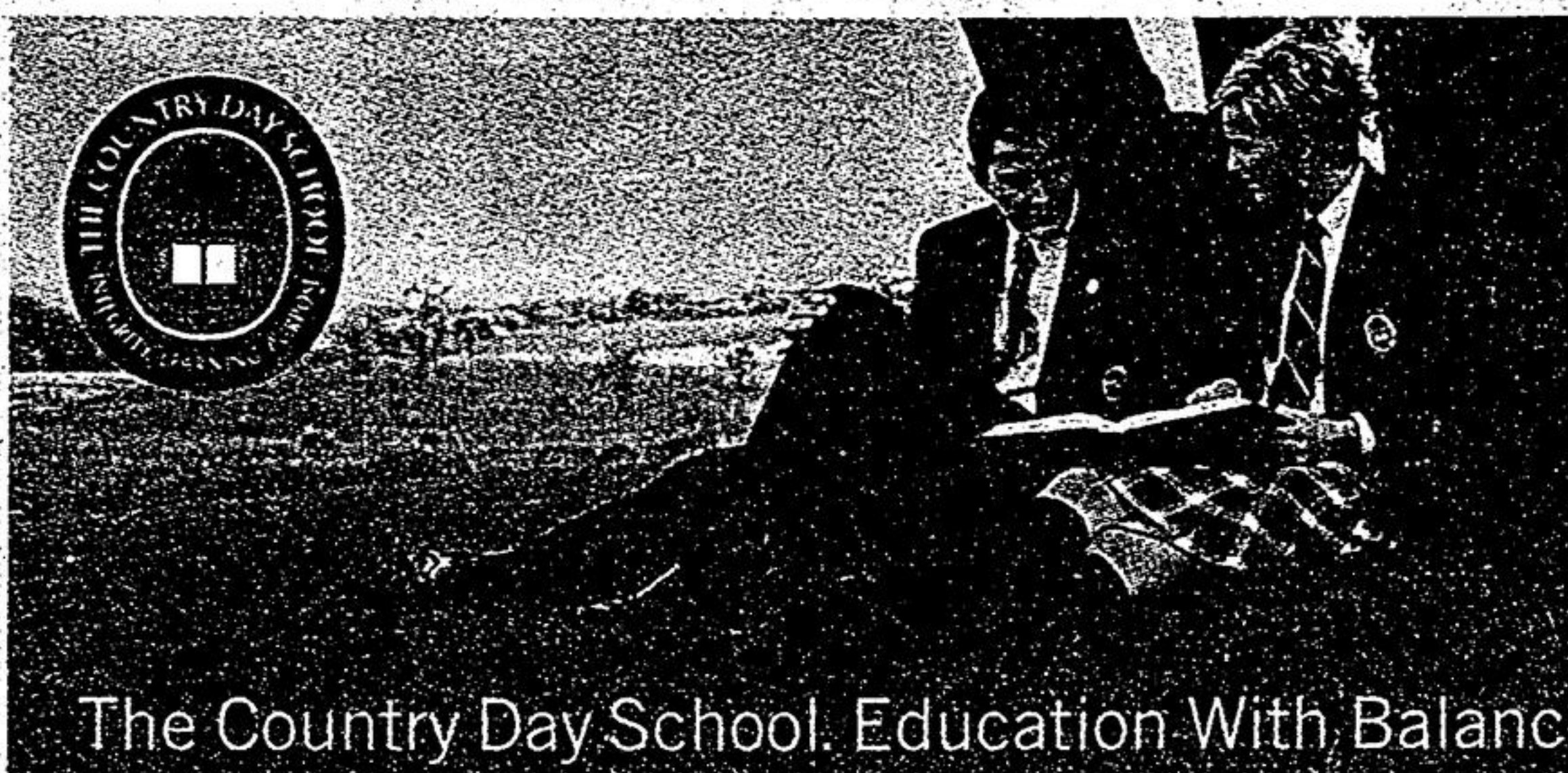


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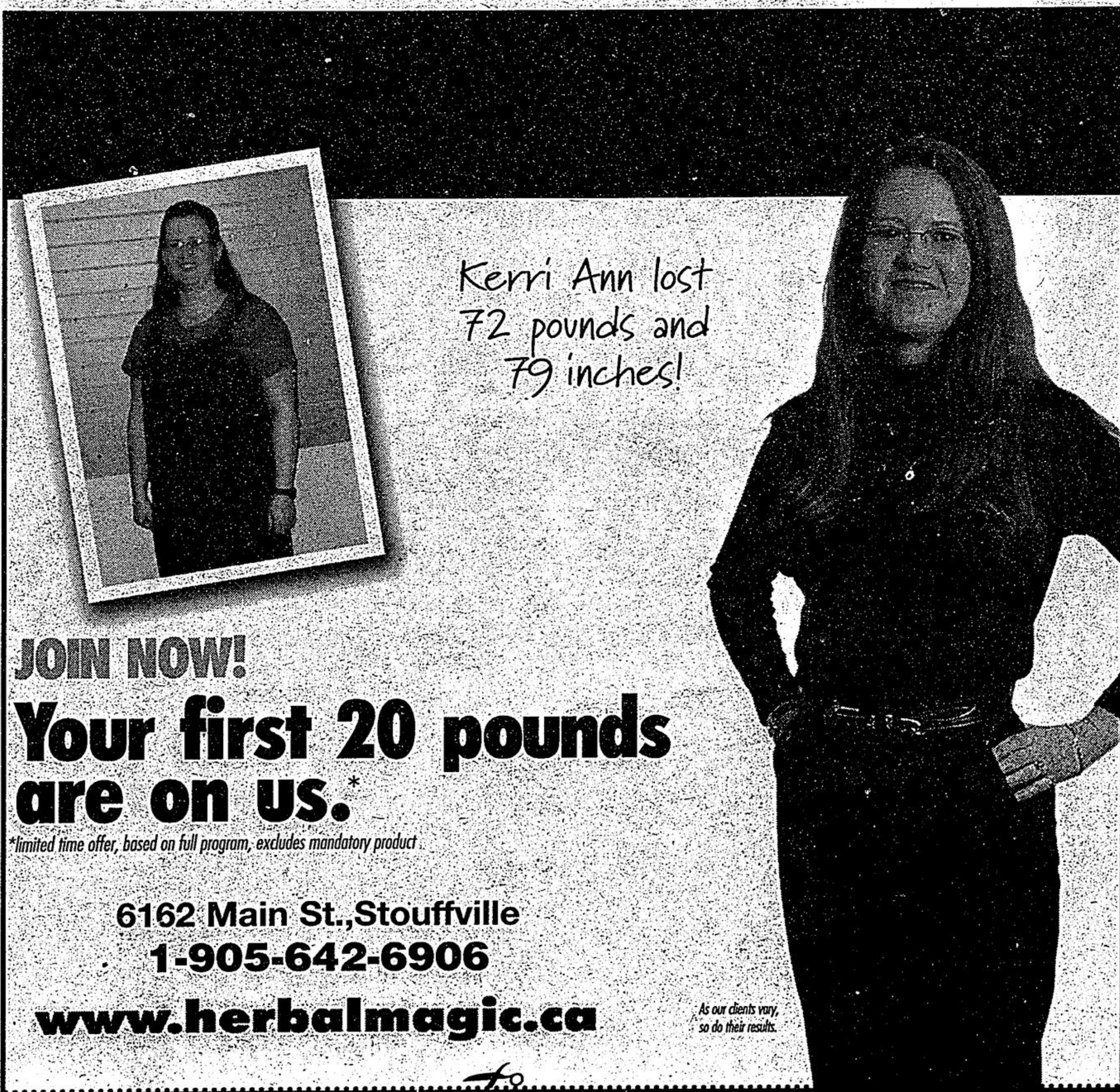


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# York bigger than Ottawa, Edmonton

BY ROY GREEN  
 Staff Writer

**We're No. 6.**  
 Even with a slight drop in York Region's population growth in the first six months of this year, the region is the sixth-largest municipality in Canada; bigger than Ottawa, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Quebec City.

The region's mid-year economic review pegs the population on June 30 at 903,600, an increase of 14,000 since January and 30,700 more than June 30, 2004.

Annual growth rates in recent years have ranged between 35,000 and 40,000, said John Waller, director of long range and strategic planning.

The report, which has been published on a semi-annual basis since 1995, also puts the region in 6th place nationally in the number of residential building permits. The total estimated construction value of those permits was \$1.22 billion, 9 per cent higher than 2004.

More importantly, according to Mr. Waller, was the increase in industrial, commercial and institution-

al construction here, which increased from \$328 million to \$371 million in the past year.

"ICI construction is up to over 30 per cent of the total, which means we're getting balanced growth," Mr. Waller said. "It's a very strong performance."

Even the fact population growth was down somewhat can be seen as a mixed blessing, said Newmarket Regional Councillor Tony Van Bynen.

"With housing starts down a bit, maybe a bit of a hiatus is a good thing; it might allow us to catch up with infrastructure demands," Mr. Van Bynen said.

Newmarket, with the smallest geographic area, also has the highest level of multiple unit dwellings at 37 per cent, compared to the regional average of 27 per cent.

"Newmarket is running out of land and we've got to grow up rather than out," he said, paraphrasing Ontario's Places to Grow policy. "For us, there's no places to grow."

## A Complicated Kindness: Truth in Fiction

The Community Mennonite Church and Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library are co-hosting a book study on the popular book, *A Complicated Kindness*, authored by Miriam Toews. This book is about a young girl growing up in the conservative Mennonite community of East Village, a fictional town based on Steinbach, Manitoba, the community where Miriam Toews, herself, was raised. This story is not autobiographical, but since it emerges from Toews' personal history, it raises questions for both Mennonites and non-Mennonites alike. How much of this story is true, and what parts?

To help explore this question, Linda Wall, a Mennonite from the GTA area, will be leading a discussion on this book. Wall grew up in the same Mennonite community in Manitoba as Toews and even went to the same Mennonite church as Toews. Wall is about fifteen years older than Toews and they didn't know each other, but Wall's grade six teacher was Toews' father, so she is quite familiar with Toews' family and Mennonite background.

Wall claims there are layers of truth to be found within the book. From Wall's perspective, Toews has taken some historical pieces from her background to write a novel. As the story progresses, she weaves in threads of truth to create a new story. The overall message, one could also say, does express some valid truths.

Please join us as Wall helps us separate out what is truth and fiction in this intriguing book. The book discussion forum is being held on Thursday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room at the library.

**Community Mennonite Church**  
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