


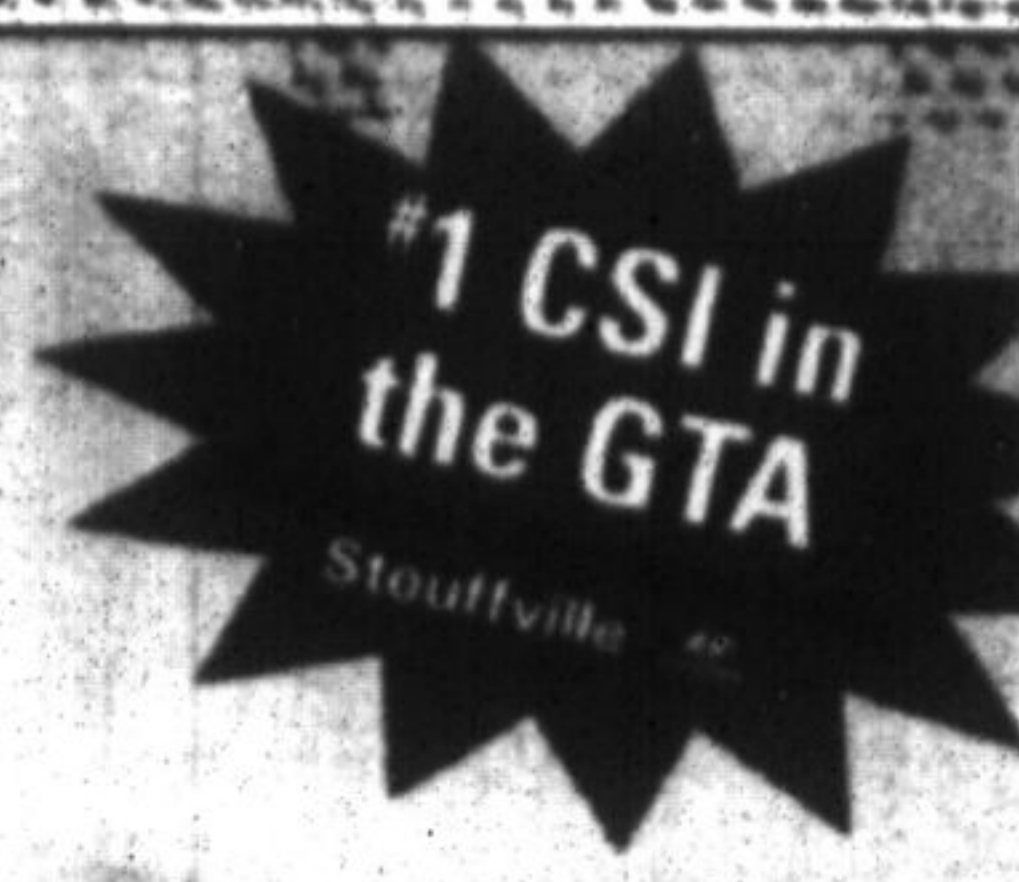
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## Stouffville








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# Mayor responding to accusations

From page 1.

being in the "back pocket of developers".

"I'm not," he said.

The 2011 celebration will be paid for with what Mr. Emmerson has left over from the 2009 event, which he said is about \$6,200.

Mr. Emmerson also announced he has decided to put money raised from his annual golf tournament towards a skateboard park. The facility is now in Memorial Park.

"To enhance it and bring in the kids," he said.

"I'm not asking for any money from the council or the budget at this time."

Mr. Emmerson plans on having a public consultation with the park's users to find out what they want in it. No date has been set.

In 2010, more than 260 golfers raised over \$30,000 at his 13th charity golf tournament.

Since the tourney's inception, the event has grossed more than \$250,000 for over 17 schools and organizations. Several other projects also shared the proceeds.

This year's tourney will be played July 20 at Ballantrae Golf Club.

*with files from Jim Thomas*

# Library expansion off agenda

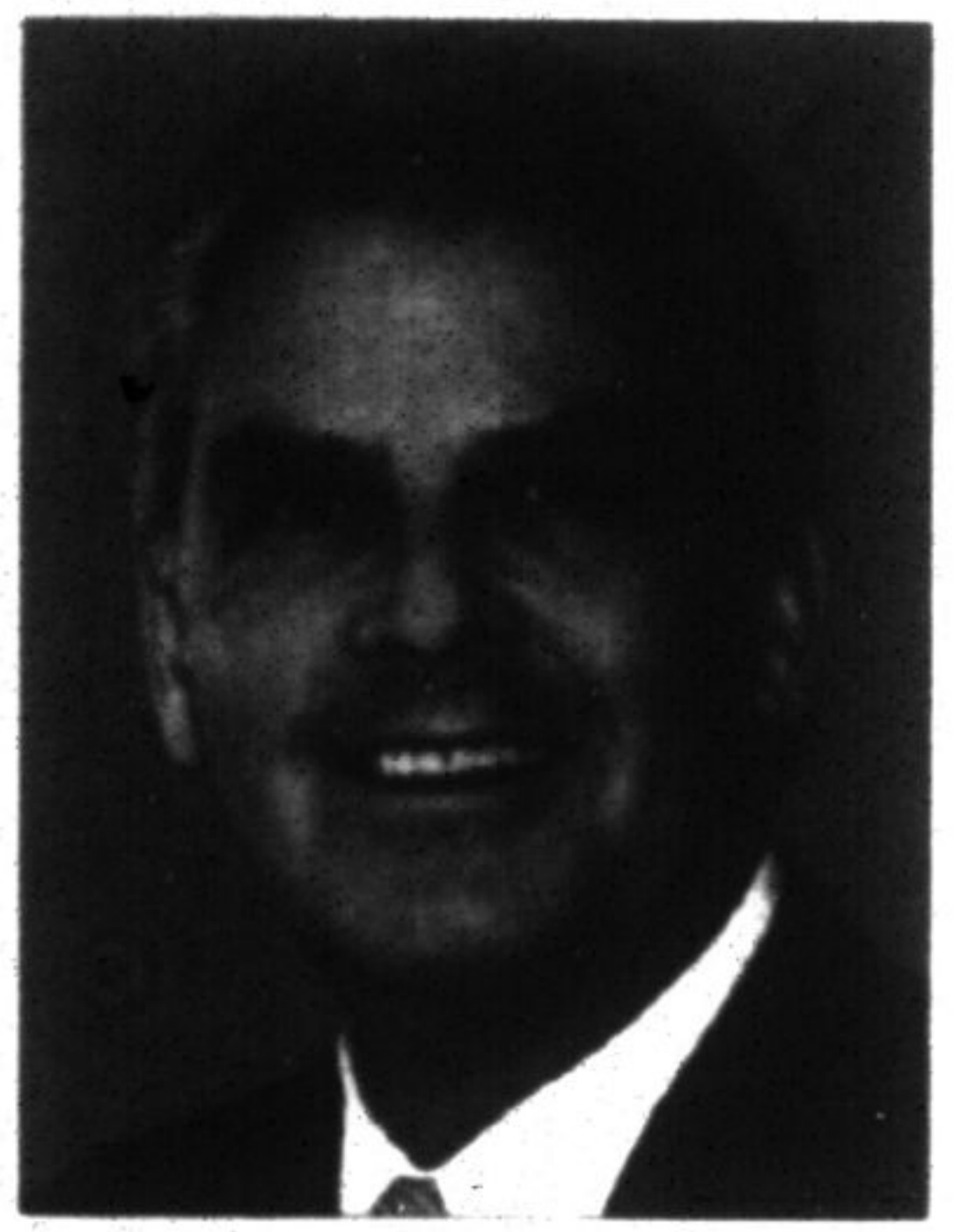
From page 1.

Aurora had 3.04 electronic visits per capita, while Bradford West Gwillimbury, another town similar in size to Whitchurch-Stouffville, had 0.33 in 2008.

"I think the people who use it, use it a lot. But in-person visits are by far the majority of our traffic and I don't think that is going to change anytime soon," Ms Nordheimer James told The Sun-Tribune.

Virtual users are logging onto the library's site to do catalogue searches, as well as check programs, download books and utilize its electronic databases.

"We're in a knowledge-based society now. Information is critical," Mr. Nordheimer James said. "The Internet is fine if you want to order a pizza, but if you want good medical or legal advice, not so good."



**PHIL BANNON:** Ballantrae town councillor critical of grant given to public library by town.

**PROVINCE BLAMED**

Despite the new hire, library staffing remains below the provincial average, which was 4.72 staff per 10,000 residents in 2008. Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library's staffing level was at 3.0 per 10,000, according to Ms Nordheimer James.

Although council approved the library's request for an 11-per-cent increase to its operating budget last week, not all councillors were on board. Councillors Phil Bannon and Rob Hargrave voted against the increase.

"The request is out of order with the other departments," Mr. Bannon said.

Part of the struggle for municipalities, according to Mayor Wayne Emmerson, is that despite being partially funded by municipalities, libraries are governed by the province and operate at arm's length, when compared to other town departments.

Ontario Public Libraries is lobbying the provincial government to increase its operating grants from \$18.7 million to \$43.9 million over two years.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library currently receives \$51,588, which is based on the town's 1995 population.

"Provincial operating grants have not changed since the mid-1990s, when they were cut by almost 40 per cent," according to Ms Nordheimer James. "The province, at present, funds only 2.6 per cent of our library's operating budget. We must rely increasingly on municipal funding."

Locally, it means a potential \$39,789 in the first year, which would be spent on new collections, online subscriptions, enhanced programming and additional community outreach services.

These community outreach initiatives, which include going to local daycare centres on a regular basis, were also questioned by council.

"I think it needs to become an actual department or whatever you want to call it, of the town," Mr. Emmerson said during last week's budget meeting.

During last year's municipal election, expanding the library was front and centre for many on the campaign trail.

"We were hoping the library would stay at the forefront of the council's agenda," Ms Nordheimer James told The Sun-Tribune, adding the town has a new arena, fire hall and town hall and potentially a new seniors and wellness facility. "I think it's time to address the library's needs."

The issue of expansion was not discussed during the budget meeting.

Ms Nordheimer James knows it is difficult for the municipality to continually pick up the province's slack when it comes to funding, which is why the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library, along with the Federation of

**HIGH USAGE**

"You can't, in this day and age, say: 'If you build it, they will come,'" Ms Nordheimer James told The Sun-Tribune. "It's a good way to get to those whose parents haven't made it a priority. That is at the heart and soul of what the library does."

Whitchurch-Stouffville has one of the busiest libraries around.

More than 20,000 residents have library cards, which is about 58 per cent of Whitchurch-Stouffville's population.

In 2008, it had 884,496 total uses, compared to the provincial average of 794,472.

The local attendance per cardholder (1.04) also surpassed the provincial average (0.6) in 2008.



# Stouffville

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