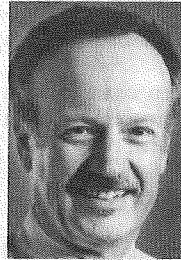


New publisher passionate about journalism, community

By PAM DOUGLAS
Special



Dana Robbins

of the United Way of Burlington and Greater Hamilton, and once his obligations are fulfilled, he'll be looking to get involved here in similar fashion, he said.

"A big part of my life, and I actually do a fair bit of professional speaking on the subject, is about poverty," he said. "It's a subject that is very dear to my heart. And, in general, working with marginalized communities. There's always lots and lots of demand for work in those areas, so I'm sure it will be somewhere in that vein."

Previously, Robbins has served on the Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction. He sits on the board of the Canadian Newspaper Association and has won numerous awards.

But, right now, he's busy settling in here,

River Media in 2006, which publishes the *Waterloo Region Record* and *The Guelph Mercury*.

After two years there, he returned to *The Spectator* as publisher.

Robbins became known as "Mr. Hamilton," a strong advocate for the downtrodden and marginalized. He has six months left on his tenure as chair of the board

trying to learn from the "experts" already in place at the various newspapers for which he's now responsible. With more than 700 employees, he readily admits getting acquainted will be no small feat.

His official title is vice-president/

regional publisher of Metroland's Peel and Southwestern Ontario Region. It includes *The Brampton Guardian* and *The Caledon Enterprise*.

Robbins lives in Hamilton. He's married with three teenaged children.

The new publisher of *The Mississauga News* says he's eager to learn about the community and meet the people who live here.

"Certainly, I'm going to do my best to stitch myself into the community because it's all about building community, and that's what keeps me in the business — the belief in the community," said Dana Robbins, 52.

"I like to get out and walk the streets and drive around and talk to folks. It's my way of learning about a community. I need some time to do that."

Robbins believes community newspapers should be connected to its readers.

"I believe that, at its core, journalism is about building communities," he said. "When you think of what actually defines a community, it's our shared experience, it's our shared sense of public life and that's what media is about, it's about chronicling all of that. So, I feel very, very strongly about that."

Robbins grew up in Red Lake, Ontario. He graduated from the journalism program at Ryerson University in 1982 and took his first job in the business as a sports reporter. He worked his way up to eventually become editor-in-chief of the *Hamilton Spectator*.

From there, he became publisher of Grand