

# Outlook on Halton Hills

## MP wants to know what your feelings are

It seemed like visiting people would be a good way to start off 1989, so Dorothy and I spent New Year's Day touring around this huge, new riding of Halton-Peel.

Three mayors were having levees - receptions at which they put on those chains of office and invite people in for a glass of something. In Georgetown, Mayor Russ Miller was serving a non-alcoholic kind of champagne. In Milton, Gord Krantz offered cider and coffee, while in Burlington, Mayor Roy Bird had eggnog on tap.

After a day like that, after talking with dozens of people and the better part of three municipal councils, I'm struck by how different our communities are - and yet, how similar. From the towering Burlington city hall building to the view of fields that Caledon Mayor Emil Kolb enjoys from his office, it is truly a long way. But I also know we're glued together by a number of common concerns, and goals.

Most of us are working, middle-class people. We play by the rules; pay our taxes; struggle to afford homes; and look forward to the future. Most of us don't expect government to give us hand-outs, but we also expect the guys in Ottawa to look out for our interests.

For the past six weeks, that has included me. As I told you before, the first four of those weeks involved getting to Ottawa, getting established, and then getting the free trade legislation through the House of Commons.

Now, it's on with the future. And on to tackle some of the obvious problems which brought me into



**On The Hill**  
With  
Garth Turner

politics in the first place.

In my former life, one of the things I did was write newspaper columns on money, business and the economy. Many times I used those columns to blast the feds for letting the mortgage on Canada get out of hand. That mortgage is called the deficit - the amount of money we have to borrow each year because Ottawa always spends more than it collects in taxes.

As we borrow, the national debt grows. And as that increases, so do our annual mortgage payments.

This is the score right now:  
-The government will have to borrow about \$28 billion to get through this year.

-We owe more than \$345 billion as a country - some of that to banks and people who bought savings bonds. But most of it is owed to foreigners who purchased government securities. Within three years we'll owe \$400 billion.

-It takes a third of all taxes collected just to pay the interest on the debt we already have. From last April to last October alone, we spent \$18.7 billion paying that interest, about \$2.5 billion more than in the same period a year earlier.

In fact, it costs us about \$53,000 a minute - every minute of every day

to carry this mortgage on Canada. And most of that money is being sent to investors out of the country.

To my mind, this is nuts. It seems like we're bleeding to death. And I resent one of every three of my tax dollars being spent on something as useless as debt service charges.

It is clearly time we started getting the national house in order. Because if we don't, the dollar will inevitably fall, while interest rates and inflation rise. Life here in Bolton, Burlington, Acton, Georgetown, Caledon and the rest of the riding won't feel so good. We only have to look to South American countries to see the results of over-borrowing. The first folks to get whopped are those in the middle class.

So, now that I'm in politics, and in the government, it's time to do my part.

I've spoken with the finance minister, Michael Wilson, and over the next few weeks I'll be working with him on things like the next phase of federal tax reform. Sometime in March he will likely have a budget ready to table in the House of Commons, and that reform could be a big part of it.

The reality of paying down Canada's mortgage is that we'll have to raise taxes or lower spending. Neither option will feel very good, and politicians like me know how steamed people get when they are asked to pay more and take less.

Anybody who read my words before I went for this job knows that I slammed governments of all stripes for endlessly raising taxes.

It seemed like the easy way out, when government spending just kept on increasing.

I know Canadians expect a lot from Ottawa. But I also know we realize what kind of a future lies ahead if we borrow more billions and face unbearable mortgage payments.

A number of people have told me they were sorry this issue didn't come up during the election campaign. They would have liked hearing where the candidates and the parties stood on cutting the deficit and reducing the national debt.

To my mind, there is nothing more critical - except making sure we protect, and promote the en-

vironment. Both will irreversibly shape our national future. Neither can be ignored.

No easy answers - so I'd appreciate your thoughts. Are there areas where you think we can cut back on government spending? Do you think people would stomach higher taxes, if they were targeted to reduce the deficit?

Please let me know. You can write my Ottawa office, without a stamp: Garth Turner, MP, House of Commons, Ottawa K1A 0A6. Or drop me a line at home: Box 387, Campbellville L0P 1B0 - but then you'll need to spend 38 cents.

I'll try and make it a good investment for you.

### Increased funds for program

Barbara Sullivan, MPP for Halton Centre, has announced a \$37,350 funding increase to expand a family violence counselling program in Burlington. The annual assistance will be provided to COHR Family Services, (Burlington Counselling and Human Relations Institute).

Mrs. Sullivan said that the funding is in addition to the \$98,100 in annual funds provided to the agency by the Ministry of Community and Social Services, for family violence counselling services. The increase will allow the agency to hire another counsellor to better meet the needs of women who are abused, men who abuse, and children who witness abuse in their homes.

The funding is part of a \$1.8 million increase in provincial government support for family violence counselling services. Spending on family violence counselling by the Ministry of Community and Social Services now stands at \$5.7 million annually. Total provincial government spending on family violence services is \$33.5 million, a 15 per cent increase over last year.

### Grant helps museum keep up

In 1988, The Halton Region Museum, just west of Milton, received a \$3,976 grant from the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture and Communications.

These funds have been supplemented by the Regional Municipality of Halton and used to purchase much-needed equipment to assist museum staff with the conservation of Halton's artifact collection and promotion of Halton's heritage.

Among the items purchased were a psychometer and thermohygrograph (devices for measuring and recording temperature and humidity) a light meter, humidifiers, storage cabinet, microform reader, display system, camera and photographic projector and screen.

The purchase of this equipment will allow the Museum to improve its conservation, promotional and educational programs. Staff are now able to monitor and record temperature, humidity and light levels in all six buildings and in the offsite storage area in Milton. Researchers, staff and volunteers will use the microform reader to scan documents, thereby furthering the preservation of original archival material.

The display system, projector and screen will be used for offsite activities and presentations.

**CYCLE & SKI**

The snow is here,  
Tune up your gear!

Alpine Tune-up \*19.95  
Binding  
Installation . . . \*20.00  
Oakley Eyeshades  
Now In Stock!!

\*\*\*\*\*

71 MAIN STREET SOUTH  
GEORGETOWN

Entrance Off Rear  
Parking Lot **873-2441**

## NELL'S

### DRIVING SCHOOL

*Approved by the Ontario Safety League*

**NEXT COURSE**

**Feb. 6-Mar. 1**

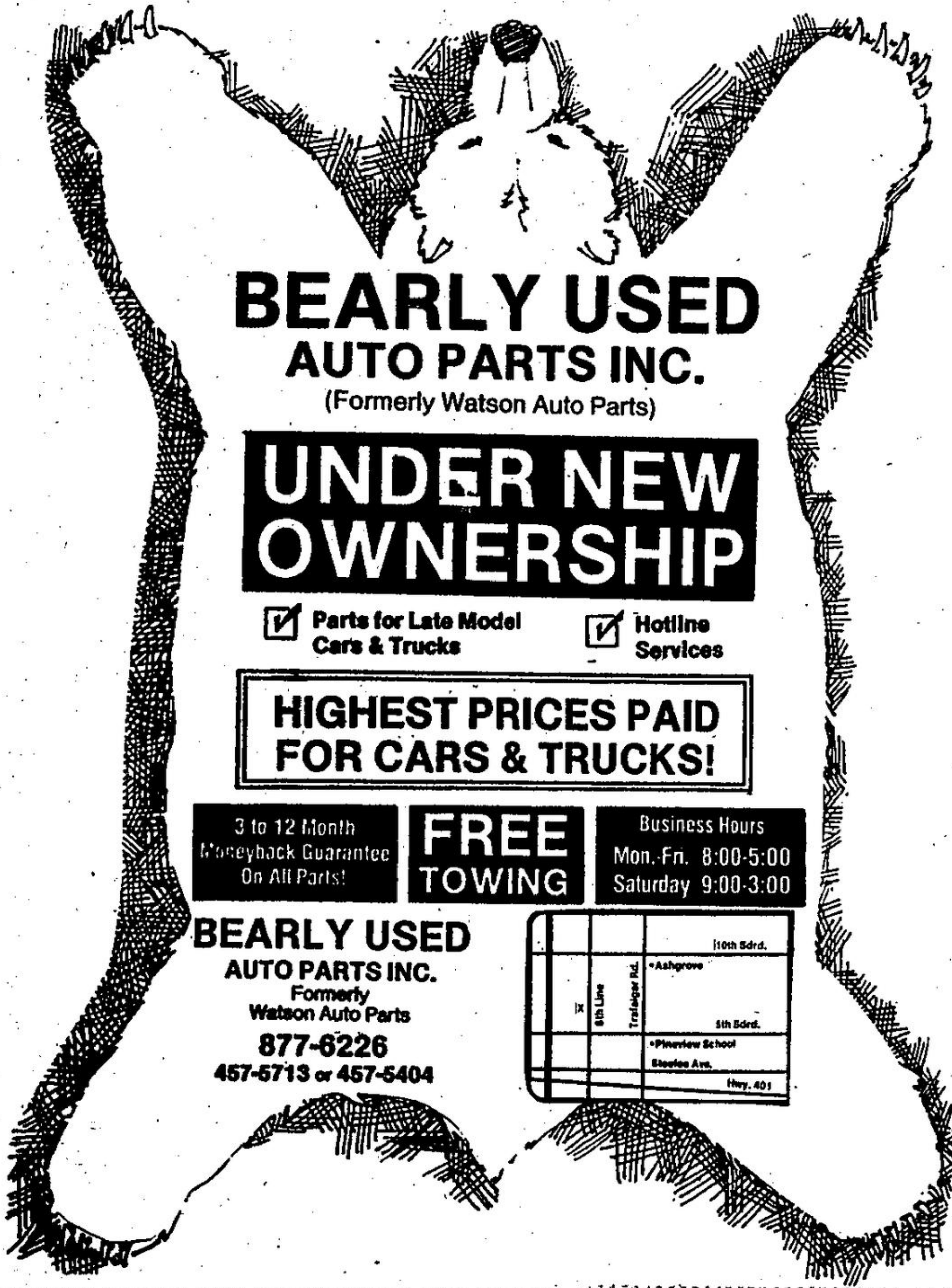
**Monday-Wednesday**

**6:30-9:30 p.m.**



**For Information  
About Courses or  
Private Lessons:**

**PHONE 877-2671**



## BEARLY USED

### AUTO PARTS INC.

(Formerly Watson Auto Parts)

UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP

Parts for Late Model Cars & Trucks

Hotline Services

HIGHEST PRICES PAID FOR CARS & TRUCKS!

3 to 12 Month Moneyback Guarantee On All Parts!

FREE TOWING

Business Hours  
Mon.-Fri. 8:00-5:00  
Saturday 9:00-3:00

**BEARLY USED**  
**AUTO PARTS INC.**  
Formerly  
Watson Auto Parts  
**877-6226**  
**457-5713 or 457-5404**

			10th Sdr.
		Ashgrove	
IX	8th Line	Trailridge Rd.	5th Sdr.
		Pineview School	
		Steeles Ave.	Hwy. 401