

# E. C. Drury School will hold pilot program to teach sign language

By PAULINE JOHNSON  
Queen's Park Bureau

TORONTO - The Ernest C. Drury School in Milton for the deaf and hard-of-hearing has been chosen to conduct a pilot program on teaching American Sign Language as an optional language of instruction, Education Minister Sean Conway announced on Wednesday.

Classes in ASL will start at the school in September, and the project is expected to be expanded to schools in Belleville and London in September, 1991.

The province will spend a total of \$670,000 this year in starting the program.

Part of the money, \$380,000, will be spent to beef up staff levels and resources at the three provincially-run schools, Conway said.

Improvements at the schools will include added home-visiting programs, board consultation services and sign language training for parents and staff.

Studies in ASL will be offered at the Milton school to students at the pre-school, nursery, kindergarten and Grades 1 to 3 levels.

American Sign Language is different from the English sign language often taught to service clubs and youth organizations. It involves facial and body language to convey concepts and meanings and is widely used as the language of choice among many deaf people.

The training of student teachers of the deaf at the Sir James Whitney School in Belleville will cease. Instead the teachers are to attend an as-yet unnamed university facility of education where they will have the opportunity to gain specialist qualifications and

take a Masters degree in deaf education.

The provincial government will also provide bursaries to encourage deaf people to take studies in deaf education.

Richard Johnston, the NDP education and skills critic, has been pushing for the use of ASL as a tool of instruction in all schools.

He said yesterday, he is "not exactly overwhelmed" by the introduction of only pilot programs in schools specially designated for the deaf and hard-of-hearing.

The Ontario Association for the Deaf also said it was shocked and disappointed with the pilot project and would continue to press for passage of Johnston's bill, Bill 122.



## 50th Anniversary

Mayor Russ Miller (centre) made a presentation on behalf of The Town of Halton Hills to Ross and Iva Knechtel of Acton on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary celebration at the Board of Trade Country Club in Woodbridge, Saturday, June 2.

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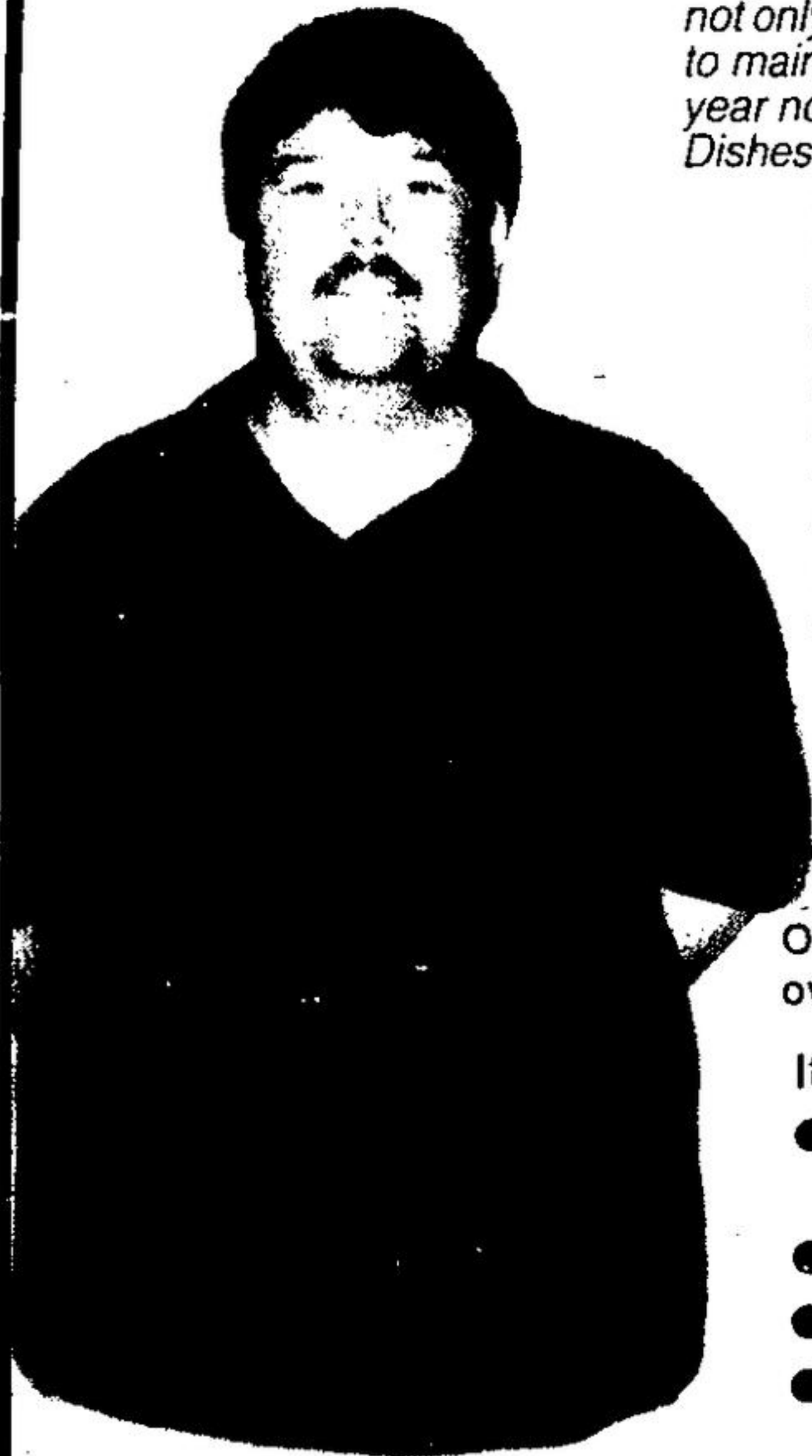
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## Graduate

Second Lieutenant Kevin Wayne Corney received a bachelor of engineering degree in fuels and materials management and a commission in the Canadian Forces during graduation ceremonies held on May 19, at the Royal Military College of Canada in Kingston, Ontario. Second Lieutenant Corney joined the Canadian Forces on June 21, 1986 and enrolled at R.M.C. under the Regular Officer Training Plan. Second Lieutenant Corney will serve as air navigator in the Canadian Forces. The degree was conferred by E.R.A. Murray, Commandant of the Royal Military College of Canada.

