

Wednesday, August 21, 1991

Municipal election campaign taking on new look

By BENDUMMETT
The Herald

Candidacy declarations in Wards 2, 3 and 4 in Georgetown clearly indicate the Nov. 12 municipal election race is running full steam ahead.

In Wards 2 and 3 Regional Councillors Joe Hewitt and Pam Johnston, respectively, have declared their candidacy. In Ward 4, non-incumbents Peter Norton and Ron Chatten have declared their candidacy for the position of Town Councillor. The four new candidates bring the total of those running in the upcoming election to nine.

During an interview Friday, Ms. Johnston said she has decided to run for another term as Regional Councillor because she doesn't see her job as finished.

If elected for another term, the six-year political veteran will focus attention on ensuring Georgetown's expected growth is controlled, the Town's water supply is protected and the Acton dump proposal is prevented from going ahead. The 42-year-old mother of four has served a term as a Town councillor and one as Regional councillor, both for Ward 3.

On the issue of future development in Georgetown, Ms. Johnston said she supports housing intensification in order to provide the population growth needed to support the downtown Georgetown area.

For instance, Ms. Johnston said she wouldn't be opposed to housing other than single family homes on the empty Maple Avenue property beside the North Halton Golf and Country Club, providing the public would be open to the idea.

Local ratepayer group, Residents Active in Development Decisions (RAIDD), which was formed over concern with future development on this property, is adamantly opposed to any type of development on the Maple Avenue property other than single family homes.

Asked if RAIDD represented the public view in this case, Ms. Johnston said no. The community is comprised of all people in Halton Hills, she said.

Ms. Johnston said she would be open to single family homes on the Maple Avenue property if the development had one common entrance off Maple Avenue as is the case with the Gardiner Drive development also off Maple Avenue.

If elected, Ms. Johnston hopes to sit on the Halton Police Services Board - the local agency that oversees police operations in the Region.

"I'm concerned that we (North Halton) get a consistent level of police service with the south (Oakville and Burlington)," she said.

According to Ms. Johnston's press release, the life-long Halton Hills resident would also like to continue her work with the Region's Children, Seniors and Finance committees.

"Strong support for issues affecting the family will ensure our Halton Hills' environment remains a safe place to live," Ms. Johnston writes in her release.

Like Ms. Johnston, Ward 4 Regional Councillor Joe Hewitt, 42, has served as a Town Councillor for three years and a Regional councillor for three years.

Asked why he is running again, Mr. Hewitt replied, "I think I can provide economic and financial leadership, and a vision for the Town based on my knowledge and experience not only on council but also as a former building and fire inspector and law clerk."

Mr. Hewitt's vision for Georgetown calls for proper development of the Guelph corridor.

Currently 70 per cent of retail development on Guelph Street is

an "eye sore," concerning what commercial property should look like, he said.

He suggests the Georgetown Downtown Business Improvement Area be eliminated and replaced with a Guelph Street Business Improvement Area. Council would work with this group to ensure existing and future development complements the Town's major roadway.

"People label me as pro-development and I am," said Mr. Hewitt. Development will happen in Georgetown no matter what, said Mr. Hewitt, so it is important it is done in a way that benefits the Town.

From a Regional perspective, said Mr. Hewitt, fighting the Acton dump proposal will be a key issue. "We have to get that out of the way to bring some normalcy to the waste management issue," he explained.

Mr. Hewitt is married and has four children. Aside from his council duties he is a firefighter with the City of Mississauga.

Unlike Mr. Hewitt and Ms. Johnston, Georgetown resident Ron Chatten, 53, who has chosen to run in Ward 4, has no political experience. However, having lived in Georgetown since 1966 and worked in both Acton and Georgetown as an educator, he believes he knows the town well.

Mr. Chatten, who is currently an elementary school principal in Oakville, said Monday the central issues in this election campaign won't be isolated to particular wards, instead they will be community-wide.

A major issue, said Mr. Chatten, will be controlling growth. Growth is inevitable but it must be "controlled and planned," he said. That means ensuring new development proposed for a location is in keeping with the existing housing type, he explained.

For instance, single family homes should be located on the empty Maple Avenue property in Georgetown because this type of development conforms with the area's existing type of housing, said Mr. Chatten.

Mr. Chatten said the current council has done a good job but he has decided to run because "I'd like to be part of what will go on in the next few years."

"You can't sit back and be critical of what is going on if you

are not willing to get involved," said Mr. Chatten.

One of Mr. Chatten's major goals is maintaining in town "what it already does well. I think people in these economic times don't want a lot of expansion of services. People don't want taxes to go up every year," he said.

Another candidate running in Ward 4, life-long Georgetown resident Peter Norton, 47, plans to focus his attention on issues such as the Acton dump proposal, and affordable housing.

To address the lack of affordable housing in Georgetown Mr. Norton advocates the establishment of a trailer park. "I've seen them (trailer parks) in Florida and they are beautiful if done properly," he said.

If elected, Mr. Norton said he would approach real estate agents to determine where suitable land could be found in town to locate a mobile home park. Mr. Norton served as a Ward 2 Councillor from 1982 to 1988. Since then he has served on several town committees including Activan and Pits and Quarries committees.

Married with two children, Mr. Norton is currently a sales consultant with a carpet design company in Mississauga.

Another goal Mr. Norton supports is the construction of a Georgetown Senior's Centre.

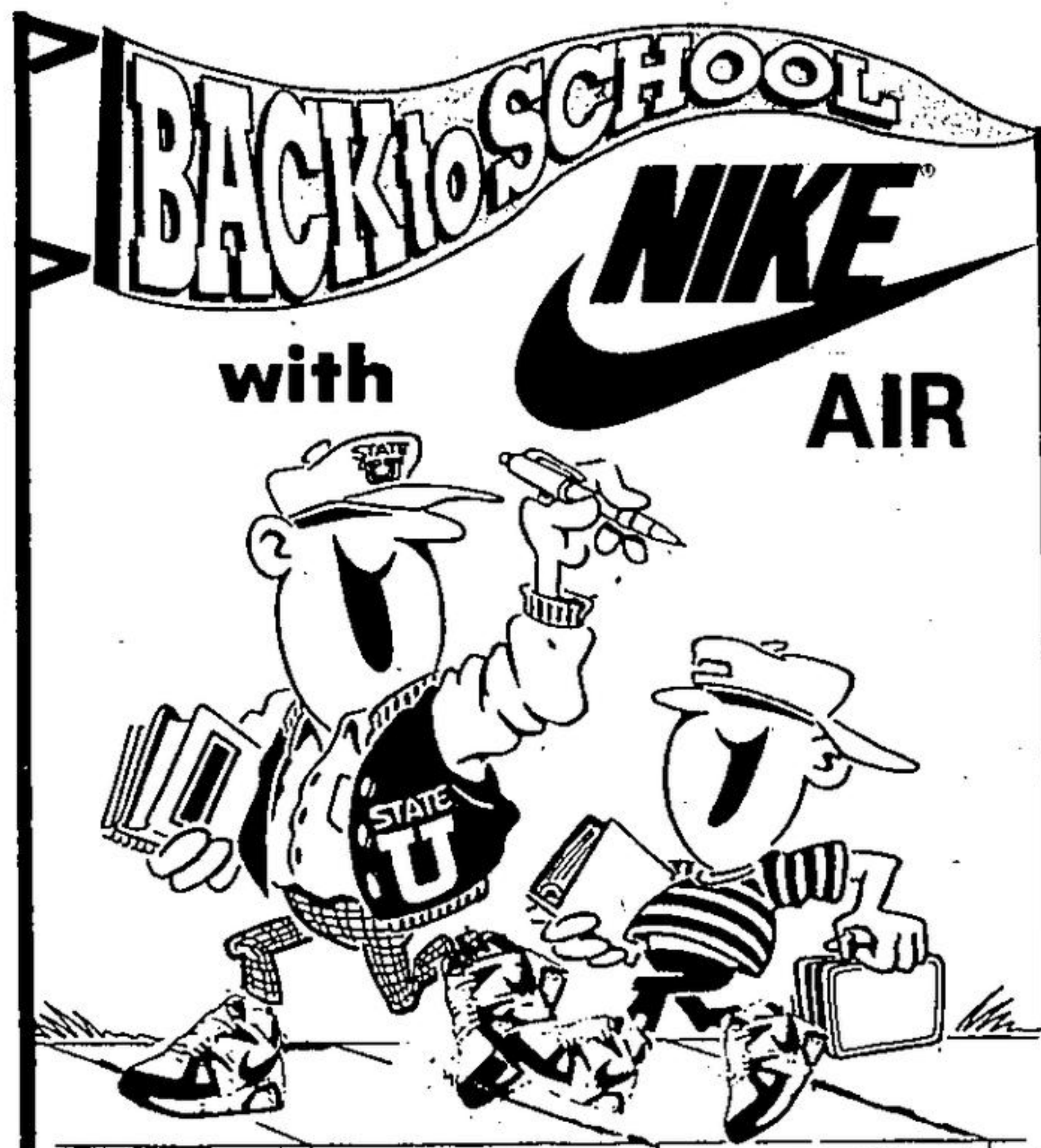
"There are a lot of seniors in the community and they need a place where they can meet and be active," he said.

On the issue of Georgetown's industrial base, Mr. Norton said Georgetown needs more industry. To achieve this goal, he said, more industry will be required to be located in the Georgetown south area, since this is the closest location to Highway 401. It is Georgetown's distance from the 401 that has discouraged businesses from locating in the area, he said.

If elected, Mr. Norton would keep the lines of communication between council and the local ratepayer groups open. "The groups have good ideas," he said.

In his Ward, Mr. Norton is concerned with improving the Ninth Line and ensuring more walkways and gutters are installed along streets.

Asked why he is running, he replied, "I care about the community."



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YMCA spells kids fun

Swimming lessons and recreational swimming are a fun part of the YMCA day camps at Kelso Conservation Area in Milton. Just ask Darren Yorke of Milton and Billy McDonald of Georgetown, who, despite cooler temperatures Thursday, made the most of their recreational swimming time. Most of the YMCA camps are winding down for the summer but kids aged 4 to 14 can still register for the last week of day camp, sailing camp, riding camp, creative arts camp, computer camp and circus camp for the week of August 26. For more information on registration or the camps available, call the Georgetown YMCA office at 877-6163 or the Acton YMCA at 853-1070. (Herald photo)

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