

Co-drivers in fatal crash plead guilty

By KAREN SMITH

An 18-year old Milton woman has pleaded guilty to being criminally negligent in last summer's tragic car accident which claimed the life of Carly MacNeil.

The 17-year-old driver, also charged in connection with the June 13 single car crash, pleaded guilty to a lesser charge of dangerous driving in Milton Provincial Court, January 31.

The two girls, who were sharing control of a 1984 Honda Accord when the fatal accident occurred will be sentenced March 27. Aged 16 and 17 at the time, their identities are protected under the Young Offenders Act.

Crown Attorney Laurie Jago told the court, MacNeil, a Grade 11 E.C. Drury High School student, died after the car she and five other teenagers were riding in hit a hydro pole and overturned. The 16 year old was thrown from the car.

The young driver, originally charged by Halton Regional Police with dangerous driving causing death, was the only occupant of the car wearing a seat belt.

Celebrating the end of the school year, the group of friends were on their way home from Emerald Lake -- a popular Flamborough swimming and picnic area, she said.

Court heard the youths, before leaving on their excursion, had asked a Milton man to buy liquor for them, which he did. The 20 year old man was sentenced to 14 days in jail and one year probation.

When it was time to come home, according to Jago, the youth who had borrowed her parents' car for the day, informed her friends, she had too much to drink and couldn't drive.

Instead, she operated the standard transmission vehicle's clutch, gas, brake and stick shift from the front passenger seat of the car while a sober youth who had only her learner's permit, steered. The four other passengers, including MacNeil, were in the

back seat.

The teens had been driving for about 15 minutes when the passenger sharing control of the vehicle decided to pass a car full of friends travelling ahead of them on Five Sideroad, east of First Line, Milton.

Jago told the court the impaired youth grabbed the wheel and pressed the gas. Immediately, the car went out of control and rolled over.

Dave Page, the driver's lawyer, said he suspects Crown attorney Jago will seek prison terms for the girls, a sentence he hopes his client can avoid.

"I'll be pitching to keep her out of jail," he said. "She's already paid a high price."

Jago, who said she doesn't speak to the press, would not comment.

(Karen Smith is a news reporter with our sister publication, The Milton Champion.)

School boards to cooperate

Halton Board of Education wants to team up with the Halton Roman Catholic School Board to look for ways to make it through the tough economic times together.

In a January 21 letter to the separate school board's new chairman, Irene McCauley of Halton Hills, public school board chairman Dave Coons suggested a meeting take place of a joint-board committee.

"We both have a challenging year ahead of us," Coons wrote McCauley.

"Obviously our key issue will be this very difficult budget year. The committee would like to meet with you as soon as possible to investigate areas in which the two boards can co-operate to reduce budget expenditures."

Education directors Bob Williams (public) and Cliff Byrnes (separate) will arrange the meeting.

Over 1/2 million fire damage in January

The amount of damage caused by fires in Halton Hills in January was more than 20 times higher than in past years.

Last month, \$584,500 worth of damage was done, including the Halton Hills Convention Centre on

Hwy. 25 and a house fire in Acton. by comparison, in 1991, the total damage during January was \$22,000 and in 1990 it was only \$1,100.

The number of fire alarms nearly doubled this January when there

were 45 alarms compared to 23 in '91 and 16 in '90.


There were no injuries or fatalities due to fire in January during any of the previous three years.

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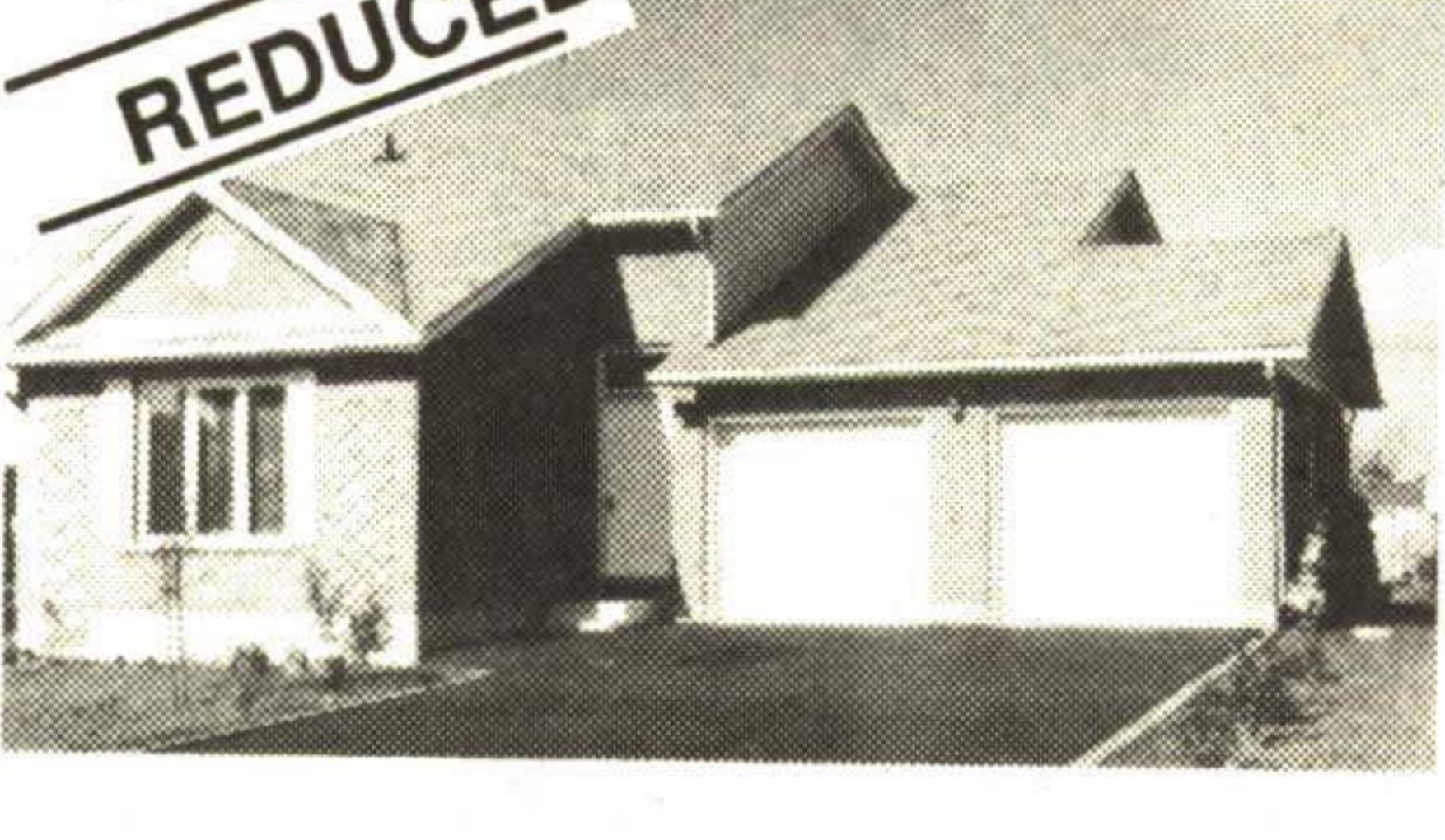
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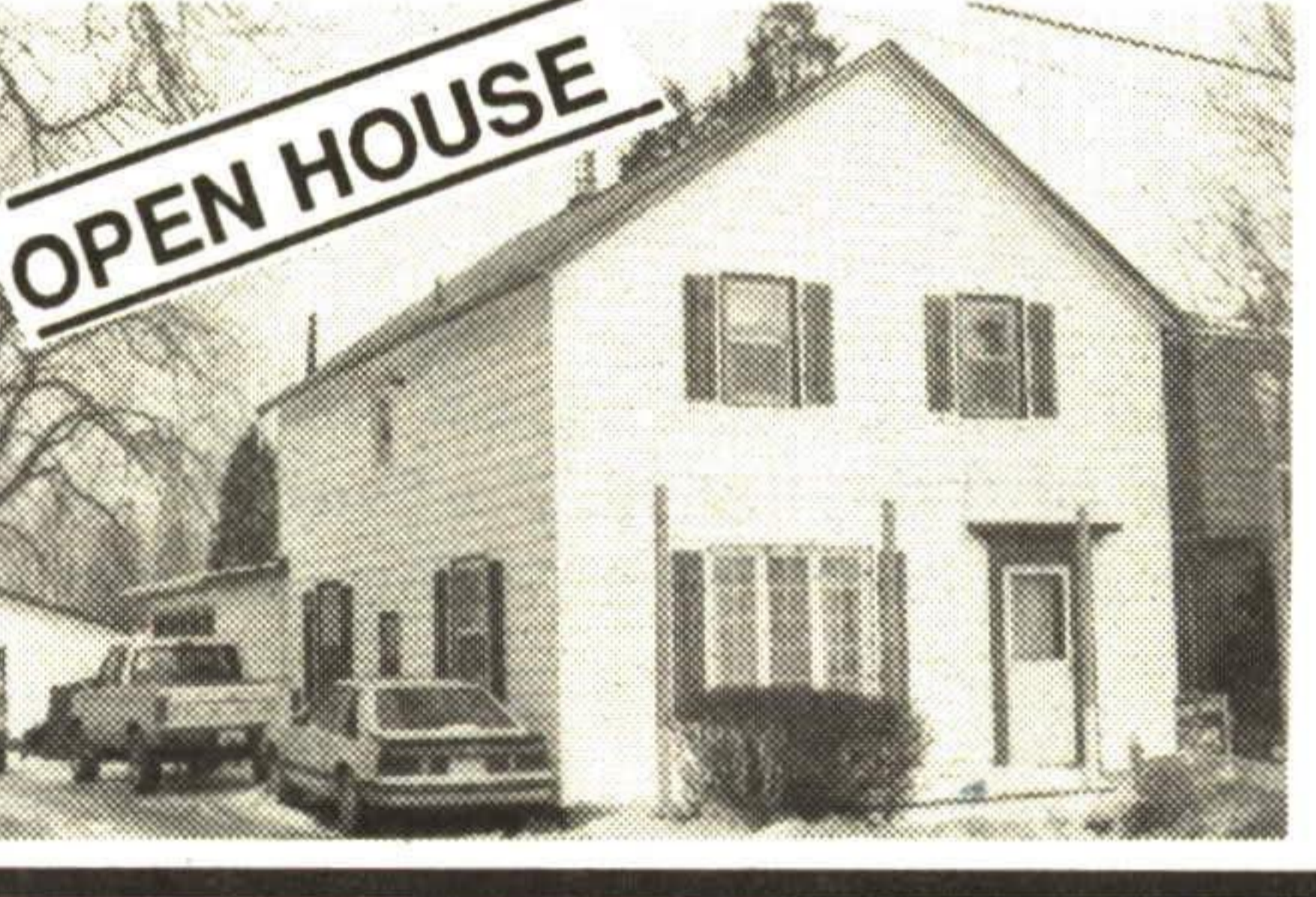
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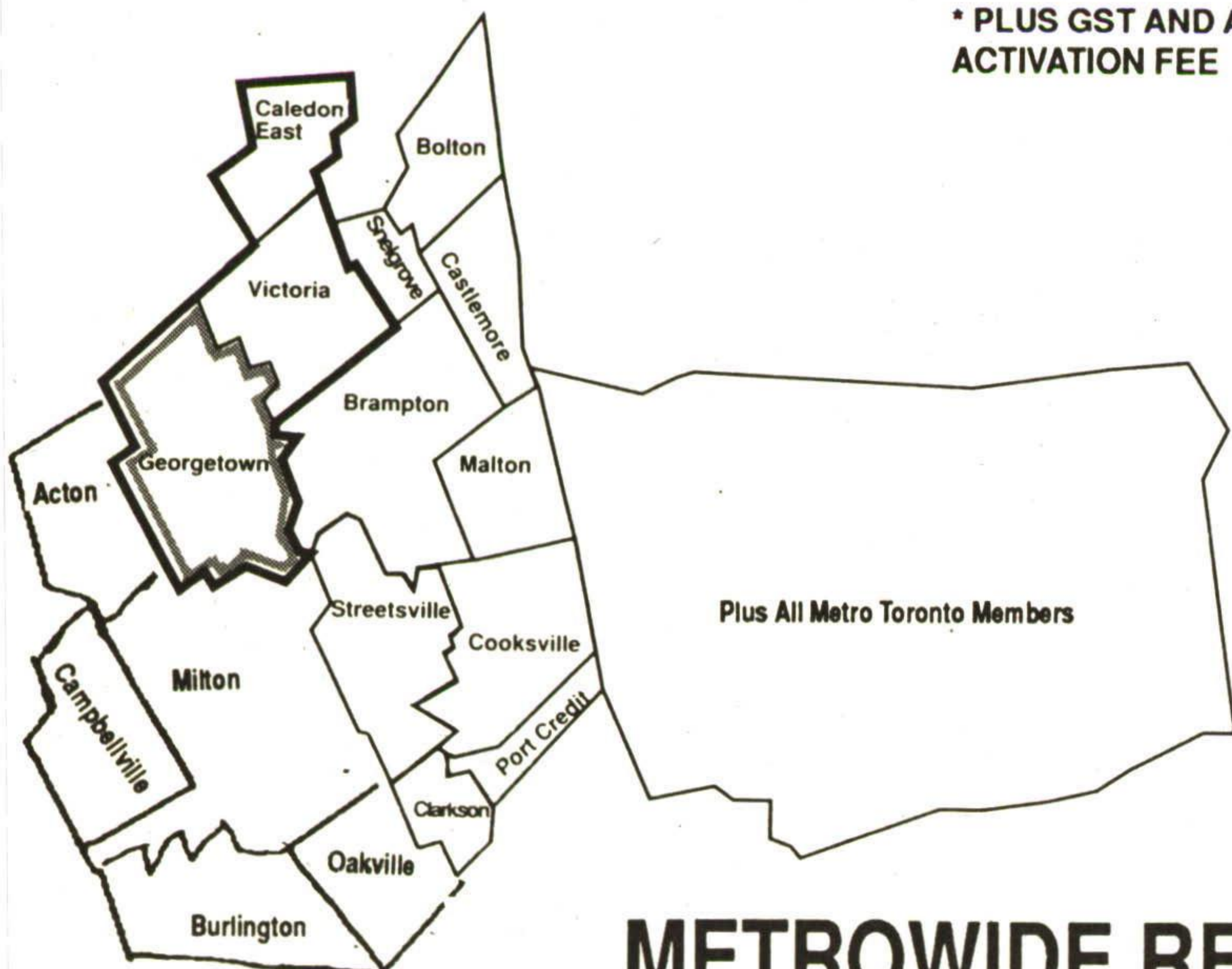
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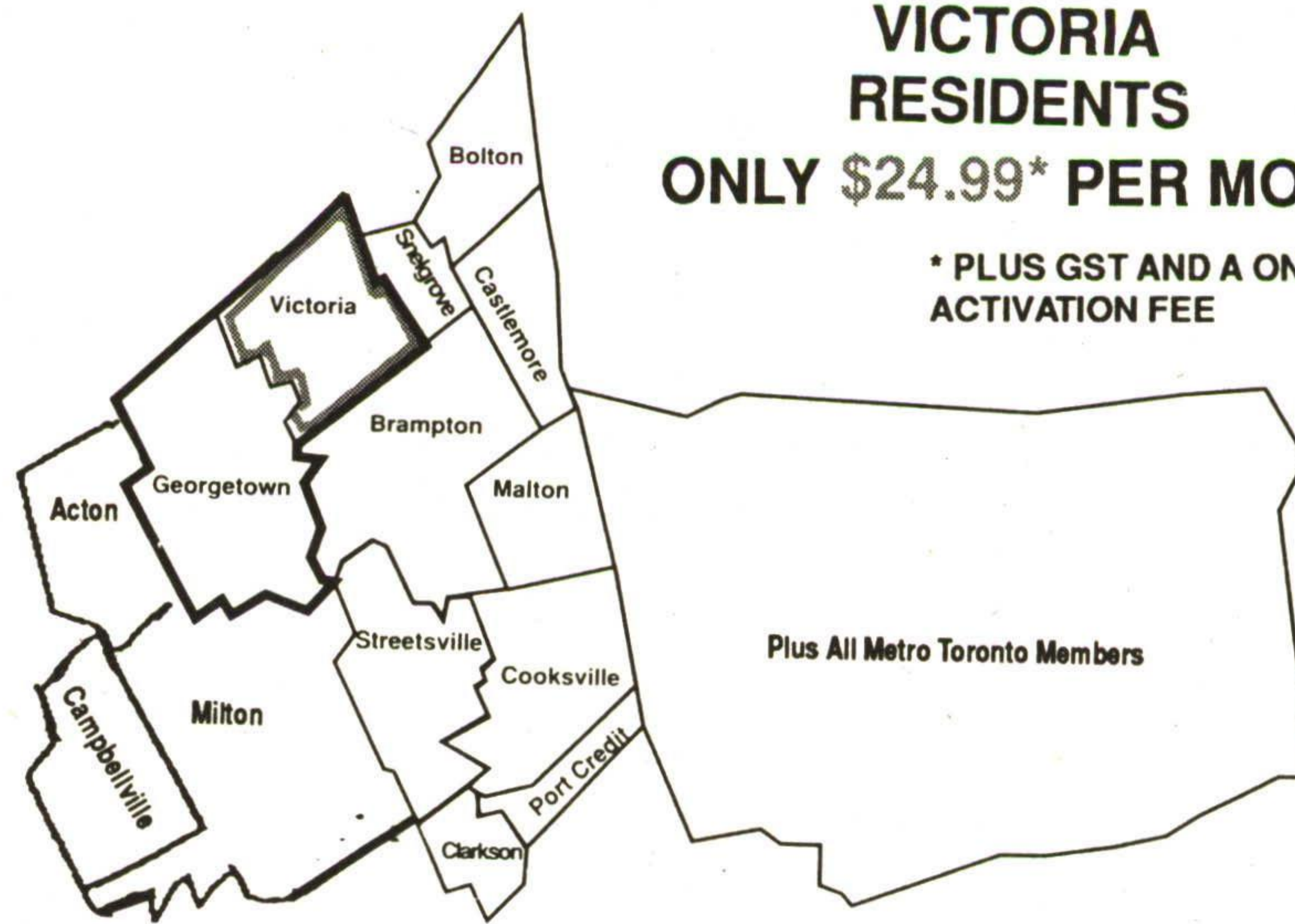
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