



Love that coffee, Tim

John Malinosky, (left) proprietor of Tim Horton's Donuts in Georgetown was joined by a number of special people Wednesday as he hosted "Coffee Day" during which all coffee sales were donated to the Tim Horton Children's Foundation, which operates a number of children's camps for under-privileged children. Among those joining John, included (from left) employee Tammie Harren, former hockey star Dave Tataryn, and former Hamilton Tiger Cat, Steve Kearns.

TED BROWN Halton Hills Weekend

Welfare growth rate slows by 50 per cent

By ROB KELLY
Special to The Independent/Free Press

The growth in Halton's welfare rolls has fallen to half the pace of a year ago, regional social services commissioner Bonnie Ewart said Monday. The rate was down to 12 per cent by early 1992, as opposed to 24 per cent for the beginning of 1991.

It is "a somewhat more optimistic picture," said a cautious-sounding Ewart at the regional health and social services committee meeting. "We still have caseload growth. But there's a distinctly slower pace."

One of the measuring tools used by regional officials to gauge welfare trends - the number of phone calls to the department - has shown a marked decrease. At the end of 1991 roughly 530 calls per day were streaming into Halton's welfare office. The total has fallen to approximately 400 a day.

However, the end result is still a consistent trend toward higher welfare rolls. In March, more people than ever were counting on the system. There were 3,452 cases in

Halton. Each one can represent a family, and the rule of thumb is that there are two people on welfare for every case.

Welfare caseloads have been steadily, at times dramatically, increasing since the summer of 1990 in Halton. From January 1991 to January 1992, Halton's case burden shot up more than 56 per cent. There were 2,136 cases at the beginning of 1991 and 3,337 at the start of this year.

Almost three-quarters of the people on welfare are considered employable, Ewart said, but can't find jobs. Currently 72 per cent are deemed to be capable of working, up from 61 per cent at the same time last year. A related statistic indicates that the turnover rate - the number of people getting off welfare in any given month - has slipped too. It's down to 46 per cent of the caseload. Last year it was 49 per cent and in 1990, 61 per cent.

Ewart also pointed out that while unemployment insurance claims were down slightly in March from March '91, the unemployment rate went up from 9.9 per cent to 10.5 per cent.

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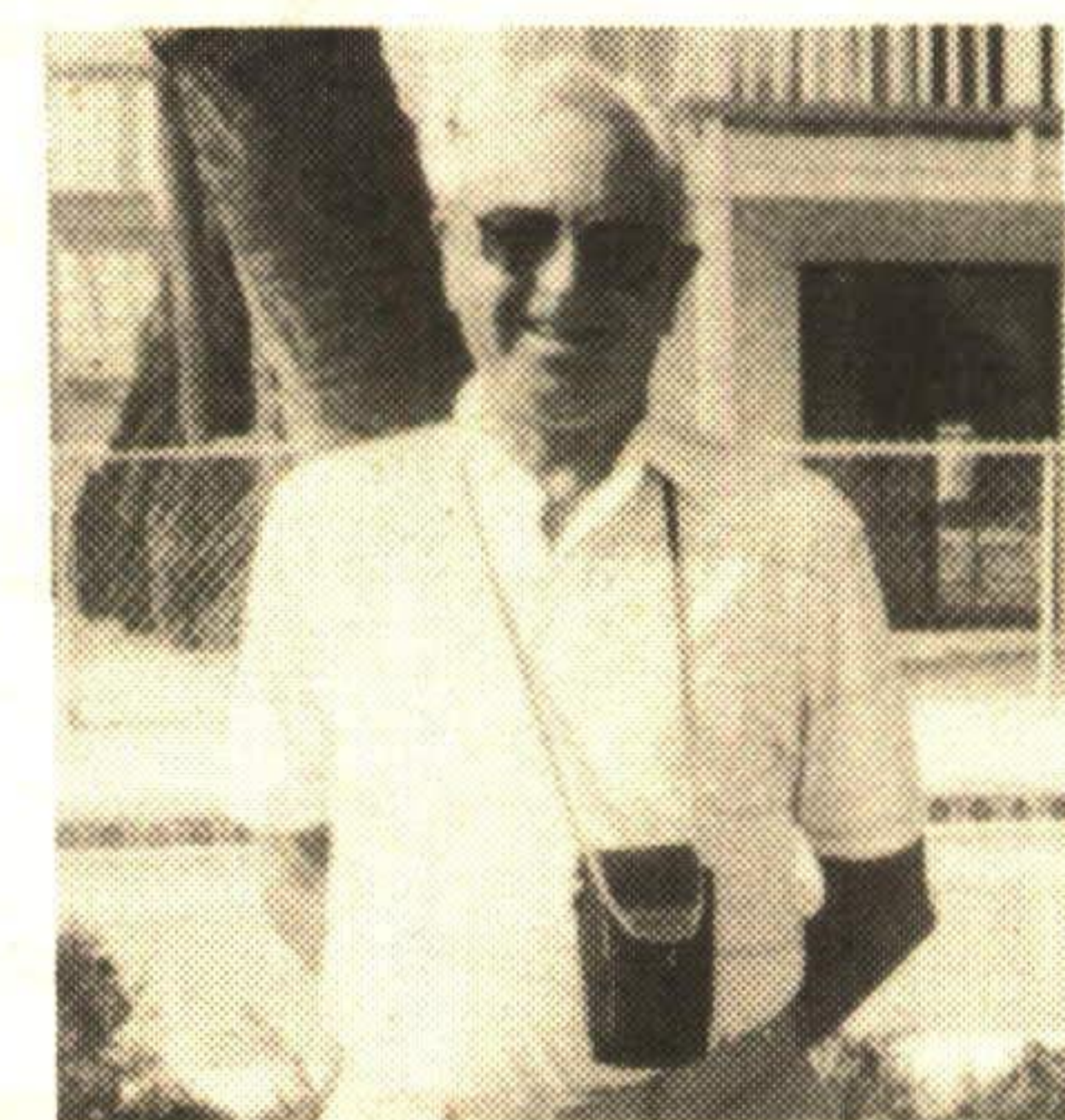
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