

# Councillors oppose recommendation to downsize

By LISA TALLYN  
Staff writer

At Monday's council meeting council members voted overwhelmingly, against downsizing Halton Hills council.

Ward 3 councillor Pam Johnston was the only one who supported her recommendation to reduce council by one councillor in each ward, nine other councillors and the mayor voted against it. Johnston's recommendation would have reduced the total number of representatives to nine from 12 including the mayor. The upshot would be one regional councillor and one area councillor for each ward.

"I feel strongly in the next 20, 30 or 50

years we are going to have a lot of cost cutting to do," said Johnston. "By doing this we could perhaps reduce the tax bill by 1 per cent and I don't believe it would reduce the amount of input the public has."

"Reducing the component of council would immediately reduce expenditures by approximately \$45,000 in salaries annually," said Johnston in her report to council.

Gail Rutherford was adamantly opposed to Johnston's suggestion.

"I think this is a backward step," said Rutherford in light of the town's increasing population.



PAM JOHNSTON

Rutherford added the \$45,000 cost for the current number of councillors was really cheap.

She said cutting the number of councillors would actually increase the amount of time town staff had to spend on the phone dealing with inquiries from the public, which are often handled by the councillors now.

Acton councillor Norm Elliott agreed with Rutherford.

"The idea of grassroots input is not to be destroyed," said Elliott. "Councillors make \$11,000 a year for sometimes 20 hours of work each week. The best

bang for the buck is right here locally."

Bill Robson said he couldn't support Johnston's recommendation.

"Democracy has a high price, and it seems that \$45,000 is not a high price to pay," said Robson.

Johnston also recommended the town should consider implementing a committee system, rather than the general committee system already in place, which she said would lead to shorter meetings, and a reduction in ad hoc committees.

There was some talk of putting Johnston's recommendations on hold until a report from the region focusing on restructuring was complete, but that didn't even make it to a vote.

HALTON HILLS

# WEEKEND

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News

Digest

### Church vandalized

Police are investigating damage that occurred at Maple Avenue Baptist Church sometime during the day on Tuesday. Police say five windows were smashed there causing about \$500 worth of damage, and two similar incidents occurred at the church over the last three months.

### Working holidays

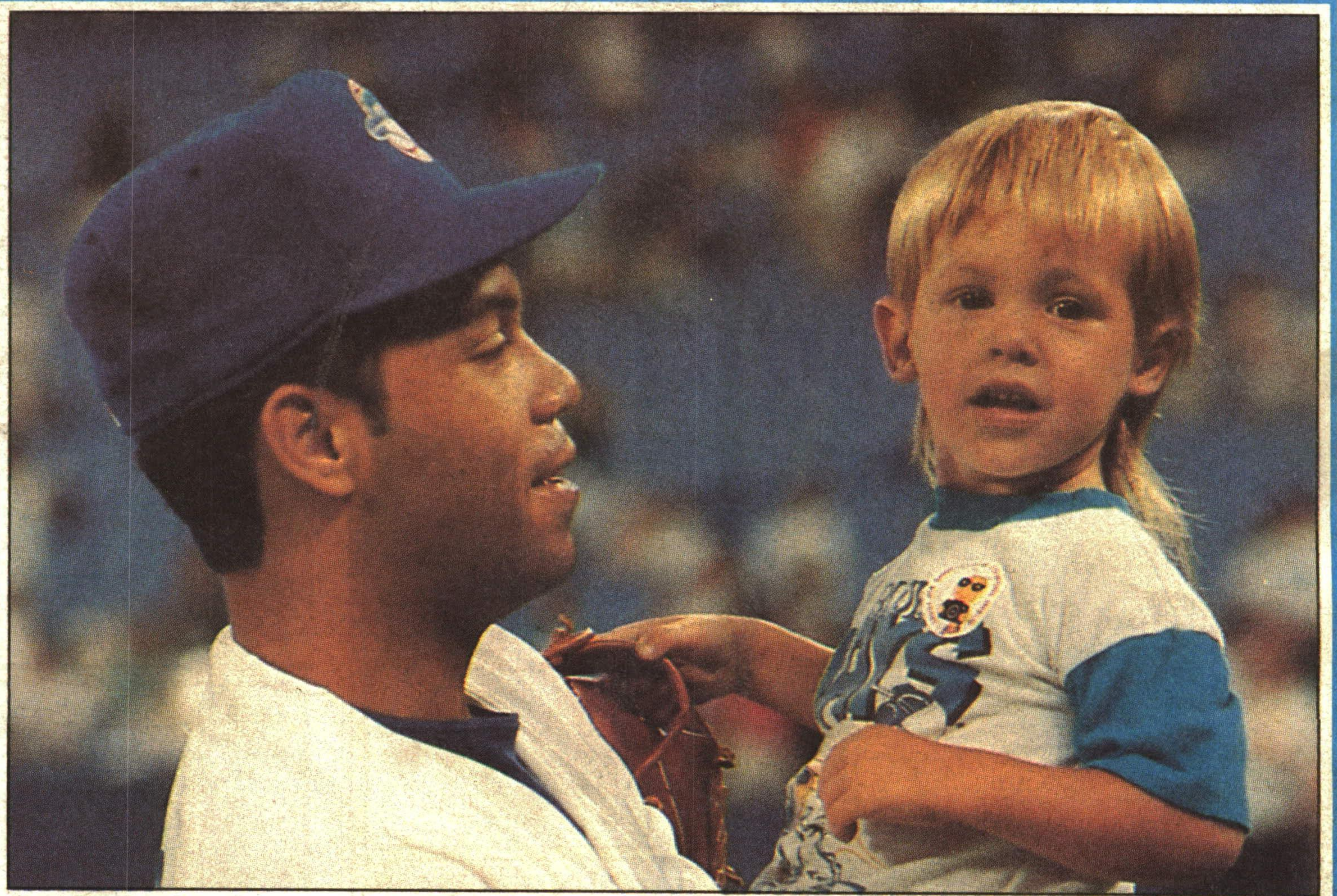
As outlined in the social contract the Civic Centre will be closed for the three days between Christmas and New Year's this winter. It will close from Dec. 24 at 3 p.m. through Monday Jan. 3, 1994. The town's public works employees, however, will be taking off August 16, August 23 and September 13 instead. Arenas will remain open through Christmas and New Year's, and communications personnel at the fire department will likely be working then, as they should be classified as essential services. The town's parking enforcement officers will also be working throughout the Christmas holidays.

### Still investigating

Halton police are still investigating the cause of the fire that occurred at the Hollywood Tavern in Norval in June.

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Wee Addam Courchesne got to meet Toronto Blue Jays allstar Roberto Alomar close up during Camera Day at Skydome July 31. The 2 1/2 year old

Georgetown resident went for a short tour around the field with the Jays star and even had a chance to play catch with Alomar. Photo submitted

## Fisheries issue hot topic at OMB this week

The possibility of compensation agreements being struck between the town, Halton Region, Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), and the Ministry of Environment and Energy (MOEE) will be at the forefront of Acton's Ontario Municipal Board hearing

this week.

A meeting was held Tuesday at the Canada Inland Water Centre in Burlington to discuss those agreements which would allow for more water pumping from the Prospect Park well, and Acton development.

Serge Metikosh, senior habitat

biologist with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans who attended on Tuesday, would not comment on the specifics of the meeting. "It was productive and some things were resolved," said Metikosh.

Benson Leung, manager of special studies with Halton Region,

who has been working with the federal and provincial agencies, would also not comment on the meeting.

Representatives from the DFO, MOEE, Halton Region, the town, Credit Valley Conservation Authority, Environment Canada, and Coscan attended the meeting.

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