

Brass Tacks – Editorial

Time for a new(s) diet

Eat crumbs long enough and you'll start to believe they're a feast.

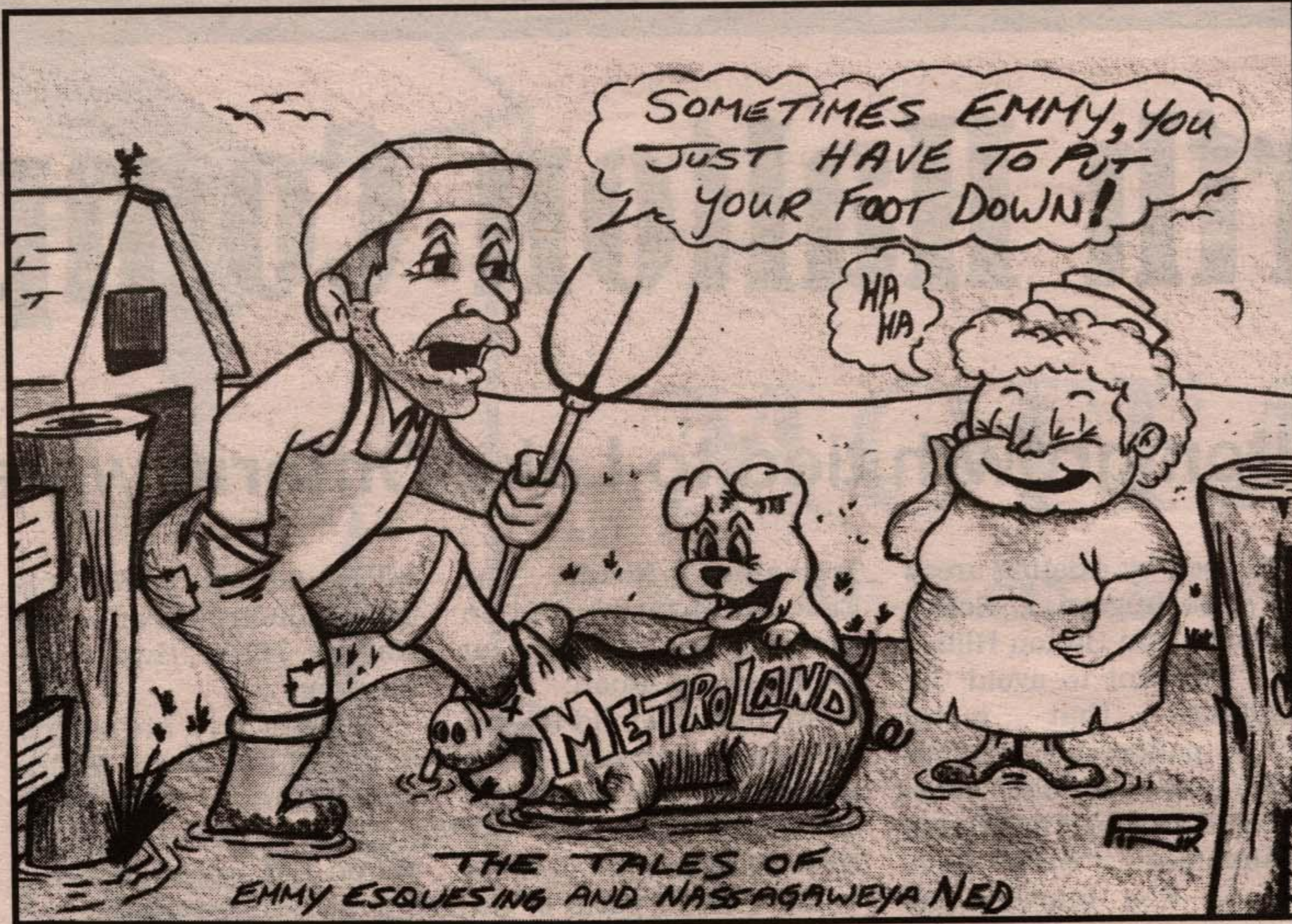
Rural readers now picking up the first issue of The North Halton Compass are about to get a serving of some community news that they can sink their teeth into. The Compass has been established to compete with this area's established newspapers for the hearts and minds (and maybe even the stomachs) of the people living in the rural areas of North Halton. And that shouldn't be so difficult considering what the competition's been spoonfeeding their readers lately.

This area's traditional papers, the Georgetown Independent & Free Press and the Milton Champion are now owned by Metroland Publishing. Both publications have a favourite recipe; throw in lots of ads, a little sprinkle of news and garnish with colourful inserts. The recipe is simple: the more ads force-fed to their readers, the more money they make.

But where's the news? Typically, sixty-six per cent of the content in these papers are display ads. The remaining forty-four percent are articles usually urban in focus and usually written by reporters from outside the area. Add in the advertising inserts and presto! A watered-down version of a community newspaper.

Poor fare indeed! What makes these publications even tougher to swallow is that the countryside around Acton, Georgetown and Milton enjoyed excellent coverage and topnotch reporting when the Acton Free Press and Milton Champion were published by the Dills family.

In those days not that long ago community news came first. The editor, reporters and even the printers of the Champion and Free Press not only worked in the community but also lived and died here. Their sons and daughters attended area schools, sang in the



church choir and played on the local softball team. The people associated with Dills Publishing had a stake in the community. Their newspapers reflected a personal commitment that could never be dictated from head office in downtown Toronto.

At the Compass, our goal is simple - provide our readers with a meat and potatoes publication that they can sit down with once a month and catch up on what's going happening around them. We will strive to present our readers with a plateful of community news that is both fair and equitable within a traditional manner. We certainly will be carrying advertisements, but the Compass prefers to treat them as icing on the cake, not the main ingredient.

The Compass won't dazzle its' rural audience with colour, it won't subject its' readers to a bellyful of ads, but we will attempt to serve up a little "food for thought" editorially.

The paper will be distributed free in the mail throughout Nassagaweya, Esquesing and in the south end of Eramosa Townships the third week of every month. I think we've bit off enough to chew at this time.

Compass staff is committed to at least matching

our articles with the paper's advertising content. However, to keep this commitment, any volunteer subscriptions would be appreciated from the community. But we'll understand if our readers wait and see if the paper sticks to the ribs before sending in a cheque. We'll also mail directly to our friends in town and former residents now living outside the area. (please see our handy-dandy Compass Business Flyer at the bottom of this page for classified ad and subscription forms).

So here we are! Drop us a line and let us know what you think. In the April issue, letters from our readers will be welcomed and published under "The Blue Springs Soap Box". Compass staff would appreciate your comments, suggestions and story ideas. We realize that only with input from our readers can we at the Compass succeed with our goal of publishing a true community newspaper.

We hope our readers enjoy "Idle Pursuits", "Shoobox Memories", "Everyday Heroes" and the local business profile. Our plans are to include these features every month and mix the subjects up equally throughout the area the Compass is dis-

tributed in. However, our readers should consider these regular features as an appetizer only. There's plenty more to come as the paper grows in the months ahead.

There is no charge for personal notices in the "Of Kith & Kin" section or for community events to be listed in North Halton Happenings. Just send them along to either myself or one of the paper's contributors and we'll do our best to get them published. To launch the "Country Classified" section in the next issue, we'll publish all garage sales free of charge in April.

Those associated with this little kitchen table newspaper plan on "surveying the past, present, and future of Nassagaweya and Esquesing Townships" and surrounding areas for a very long time. We believe that it's a great community we now have the privilege of serving and one that deserves the best newspaper possible.

For our readers that live on the farms or on lots from the original homesteads; or in the villages and hamlets that dot this unique area, it's time to have a community newspaper that they can call their own.

It's time for a new(s) diet.

The North Halton Compass

Reach then a soaring quill, that I may write
As with a Jacob's staff to take a height
CLEVELAND

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The North Halton Compass is published during the third week of each month. Copy and advertising deadline is the 15th. In case of an error or omission in display and classified advertisements, space allowance will be granted for the portion of the advertisement in which the error occurred. It remains the customer's responsibility to notify the Compass of errors and the publication will not be responsible for incorrect ads after the first insertion. All editorial and advertising content is copyrighted and the sole property of The North Halton Compass.

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"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world. The unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man."

George Bernard Shaw

Compass Business Flyer

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VOLUNTARY LOCAL SUBSCRIPTION
including Acton, Georgetown, Milton
Rate: \$20.00 (12 issues)
Name:
Address:

OUT OF AREA SUBSCRIPTION
within Canada
Rate: \$30.00 (12 issues)
Name:
Address:

CLASSIFIED AD'S
Rate: Up to 30 words - \$10.00
each additional word - \$0.30
Deadline: 14th of month
Name:
Address: