

## More educational controversy

(Continued from page 1)

Mr. Chudleigh went on to point out the Ontario government increased funding for special needs in 2000-2001 by \$149 million, \$70 million of which was set aside for boards to support early learning problems prior to grade three.

Another concern outlined by Mrs. Kidder, in her presentation, dealt with the new funding formula for schools.

Her research shows a school must have a minimum of 411 students for the formula to work. She went on to point out since fewer than two thirds of Ontario elementary schools have 411 students, smaller schools must cut expenditures in textbooks and librarians or close completely.

"There are no gym teachers in a third of Ontario elementary schools, less than half have music teachers and 10 per cent of Ontario boards have cut the position of teacher/librarian," she said.

Mr. Chudleigh however, pointed out the new funding formula is more fair than the old formula, as it ensures every Ontario child receives the exact same funding.

"We (Ontario government) reduced overall administration costs by reducing the number of school boards. We set maximum class sizes, set standardized tests to measure student achievement and added \$360 million in education funding in 2001-2002 over the previous years. We now spend \$13.8 billion in education per annum, the highest amount ever spent in Ontario's history."

Ontario secondary schools in particular, have undergone some drastic changes in curriculum with the removal of grade 13 and Mrs. Kidder questions the wisdom of these changes.

"Why change the curriculum in the middle? Why not implement changes in grade one and gradually

change the curriculum throughout the course of a student's public education?"

People for Education predicts as many as 10,000 Ontario students are not expected to pass grade nine or 10 under the new curriculum, which they say doesn't provide anything for students who would have previously taken general level classes.

Mr. Chudleigh countered that argument.

"The government has improved the high school curriculum by bringing it into the 21st century. We have eliminated grade 13 after the 2002-2003 school year to bring Ontario in line with the other North American jurisdictions. The government has provided additional teacher training resources to support the new curriculum at a cost of \$370 million over five years. In addition, there are enhanced apprenticeship opportunities for students."

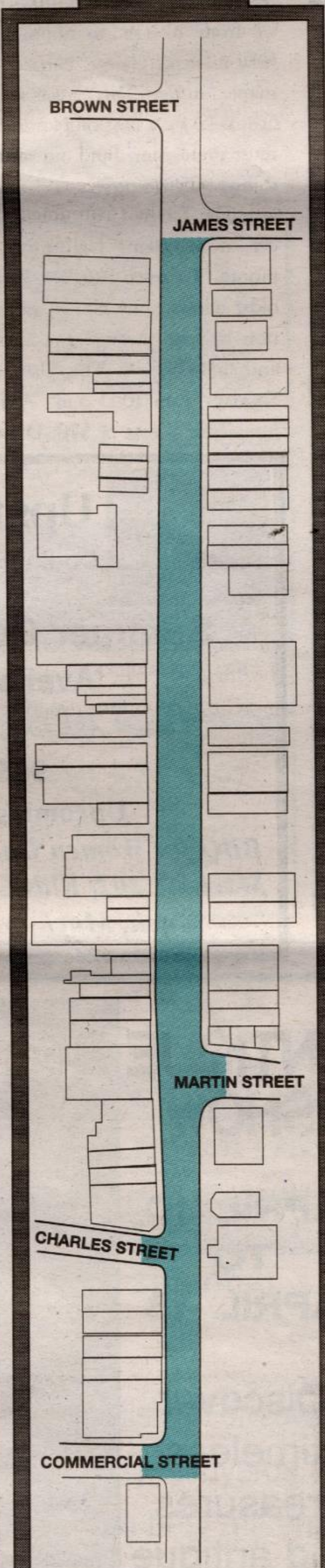
Mrs. Kidder and Mr. Chudleigh are in agreement on one thing however - the need for open communication. Mrs. Kidder recommends parents take their concerns to their MPPs.

Mr. Chudleigh maintains an open door policy that sees him respond quickly to constituents calls. As parents represent only 25 per cent of the voting public, it is important to educate non-parents about issues facing the education system.

The biggest obstacle in the education debate for Mrs. Kidder, is the assumption that you must choose a side to be on.

"We can defend the public education system without becoming defensive. We can admit that Ontario has a wonderful public education system that happens to have a few problems that need to be addressed. It is vital to shift the focus from winning the argument to refocusing on students."

# THE MAIN EVENT



Throughout the Main Street reconstruction project, the Milton Downtown Business Improvement Association (DBIA) will keep you informed about access, sales and promotion events—in every issue of the Compass.

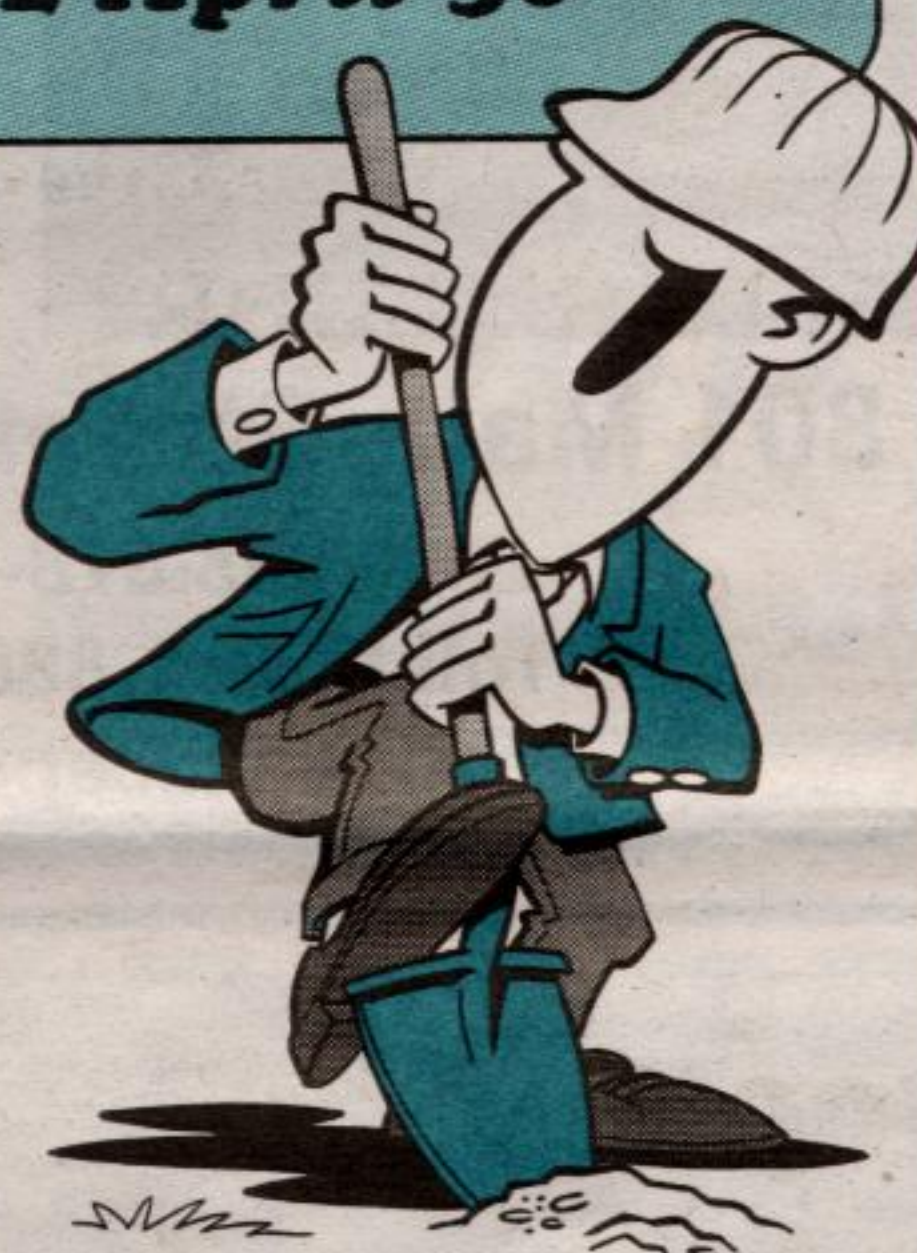
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**WATCH FOR SALES AND SPECIAL EVENTS** taking place throughout the Main Event Downtown Milton reconstruction project.

We want to thank you for your continued patronage as our downtown undergoes its transformation!

I'm the "Main Man" bringing you the news and the answers about the MAIN EVENT. So what's it all about?

The Main Event reconstruction project is a \$1.98 million joint Town/Region project that started March 11 and will take about 3-1/2 months to complete. When it's all done, downtown Milton will have:

- New, improved underground servicing & storm sewers.
- New concrete curbs, sidewalks and road paving.
- New on-street parking.
- New lighting, trees and landscaping.



The contractors, King Paving, have already removed all the old landscaping, the 'bumpouts' and sidewalks and replaced them with temporary paved sidewalks. This has given them room to excavate along the north side of Main Street to start replacement of the sanitary mains and the underground connectors to all the buildings—while still maintaining traffic flow along Main Street. After the north side of Main Street is completed, working from east to west, they will start on the south side of Main Street.

What is the construction time-table for April?

Even during construction, every effort will be made to ensure safe sidewalks for shoppers, on-street and parking-lot parking, and minimal delays in Main Street traffic

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