

# Halton's moving on

BY DONNA DANIELI

Residents of Halton are moving faster and going further than they ever have before. A study by the Region of Halton staff shows that eight out of every 10 residents over the age of 16 own cars, giving Halton the highest car ownership ratio in the GTA. There has also been a significant increase in the number of trips a day, the distance travelled for work purposes, and overall auto usage.

"Our lifestyle is changing,"

explains Ho Wong, Manager of Long Range Planning for the Region of Halton. "We need pedestrian-friendly development, more transit usage and more transportation choices." This changing lifestyle and the accommodations to it were the focus of a Transportation Workshop held by the Region on January 15th. More than 50 residents and council representatives crowded into the Hearth Room at Halton Region Museum to

provide their input on Making Connections: Transit for Halton. Issues addressed included suburban developments that place overwhelming emphasis on the use of the automobile for travel, the congestion levels on roads, and the increasing costs and declining performance of public transit. Also discussed were Halton's aging population, the growing number of single parent households and the increasing number of flexible schedules requiring more mobility choices.

Gridlock and the lack of inter-regional transit options were the main concerns presented by the residents. The traffic congestion and lack of transit opportunities are leading to commuter frustration, higher car emissions, an increased volume of traffic in residential areas, rural roads being shafted by commuters and farm vehicles, and a widening gap between those who can and those who cannot afford cars. Key suggestions included the development of a transit system connecting Milton and Halton Hills to Oakville and Burlington, bike paths, and a new GTA/Halton inter-regional rapid transit network.

"Halton's transportation solution lies in public transit," according to Mr. Wong. "Cars and roads alone cannot solve our transportation problems. The challenge is to make public transit work in Halton." The workshop attendees agreed but some questioned the regional government's ability to implement recommendations. "Mass transportation is so

important and yet we never seem to move past studies of it," said Oakville resident Hank Rodenburg. "We never seem to make the first step in implementing these studies." Oakville councillor Allan Elgar concurred with this opinion and added, "This is where the smoke and mirrors come in. This has been on the books since 1991 and yet nothing has really been done about it yet."

Milton councillor Cindy Lunau offered a unique solution to reinforcing the need for an effective transit system. "Make it mandatory for each regional and local councillor, as well as all planning staff, to get from point A to point B using public transit," she offered. "I'd say that less than five per cent have been on public transit in the last four years. If you want to understand what's holding things back, put them on a bus."

Jane Clohecy, Director of Transportation and Planning, told the workshop, "This is one step in a very extensive process. We know that we are reaching the limit of road expansion and that we need to change the focus to different ways to get around."

Information on Making Connections, or any of the other studies pertaining to the Official Plan, is available on the region's website at [www.region.halton.on.ca](http://www.region.halton.on.ca). Public input on the review is expected to conclude at the end of January and recommendations on the Official Plan Review will be made to the regional council in March.

## Scotiabank celebrates 100 years in Milton



PHOTO BY BRENDA MATHIES

On January 20th, Scotiabank in Milton had an Anniversary Party to celebrate its 100 years of service to the town. The party was a walk back in time for many employees and patrons with original artifacts, old newspaper clippings and photographs on display. Pictured above are former employees of the Campbellville Branch: Judy Brouwer, Gwen Brown, Barbara Mathies, Evelyn Watson and Doreen Bill-Langstaff (seated at the original bank manager's desk).

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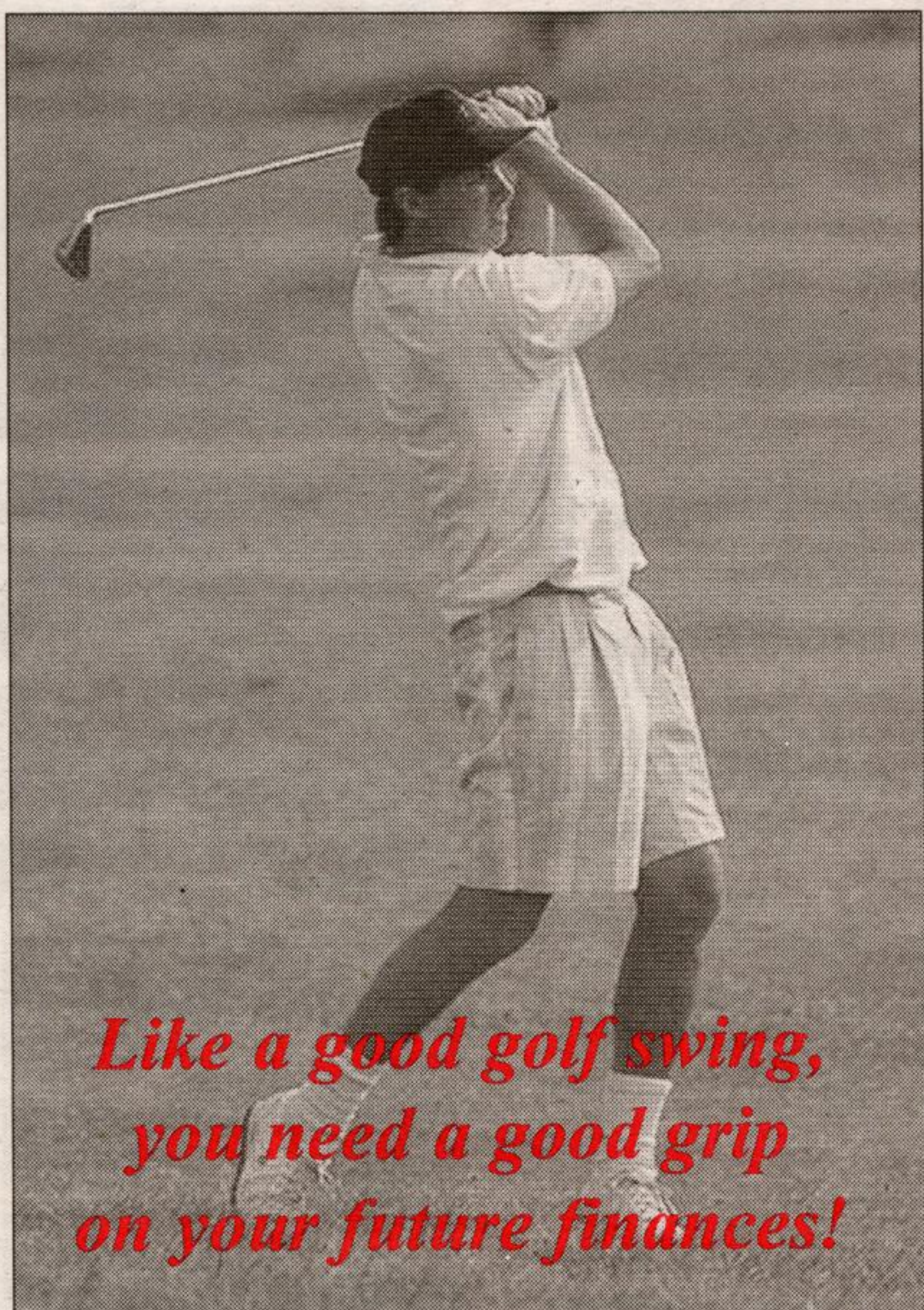
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*Like a good golf swing, you need a good grip on your future finances!*

Have you finally reached the stage in your life when you can take a breath? The mortgage payments are under control and you're able to do some of the things you've been putting off like take the family to Disney World, redo that 70's bathroom with the avocado tub, or make an investment to use up the RRSP carry forward that's been building up.

Take a moment now to think about how you see your retirement years. Do you see yourself working beyond 65 because you have too much energy and you want to keep your marriage intact, or would you like to be on the golf course 5 days a week?

Whatever your preference, having a plan with measurable goals and deadlines will improve the odds that you'll be able to continue with the lifestyle to which you've become accustomed, long after the pay cheques stop coming in. After all, that's what we're all working toward - a comfortable lifestyle now with financial security in the future.

It is possible to balance your present lifestyle with future security. I can probably help you maximize your RRSPs AND renovate the bathroom. My name is Melissa DeBrouwer, and I'd be happy to design that financial plan for you. After the plan has been developed and implemented, we'll update and revise your plan as your needs change, and I will monitor your investments and their progress. Call Jackie today for an appointment.

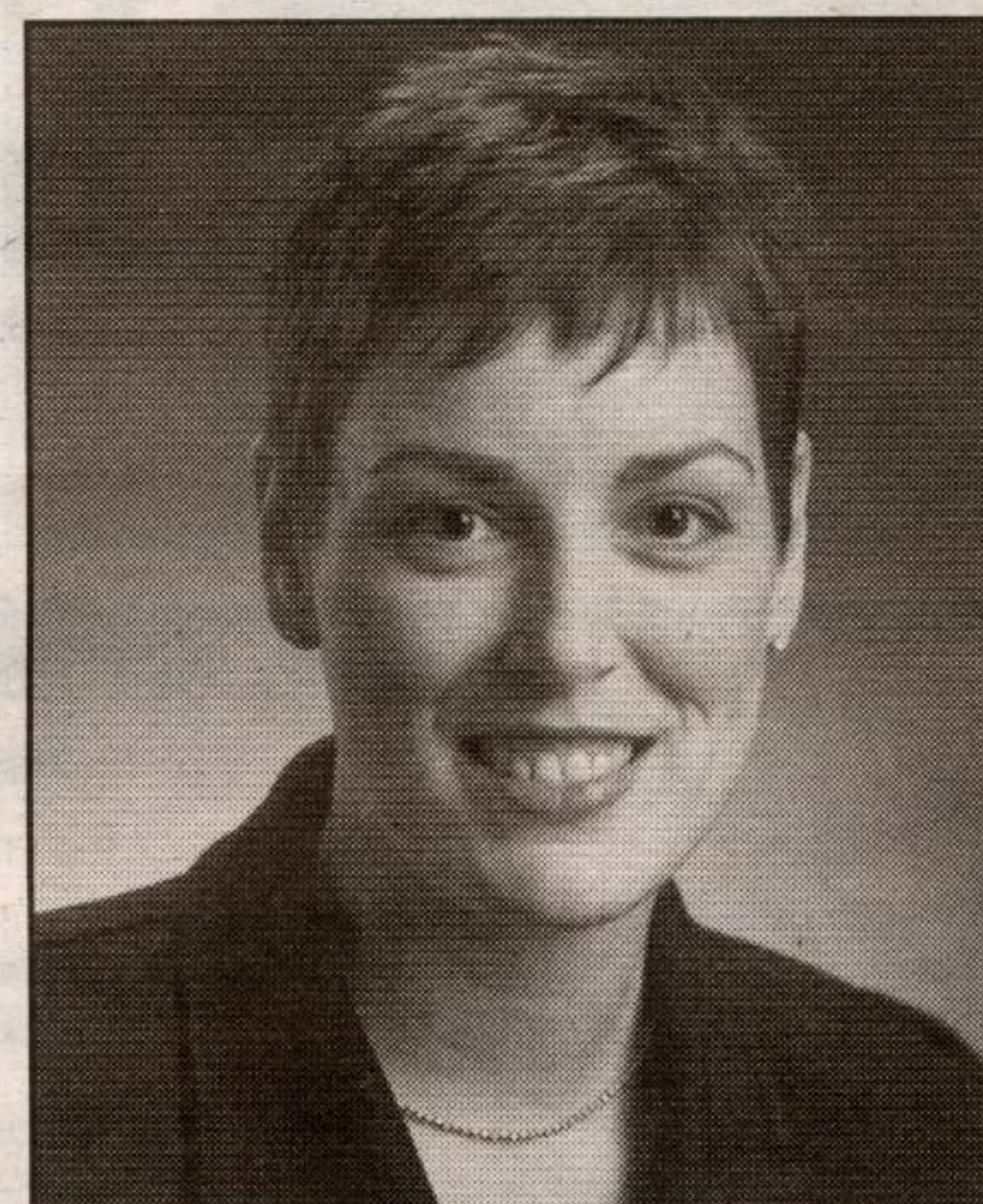
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