

Region softens stand on Greenlands

BY DONNA DANIELLI

Last year, when Halton's Directions Report identified and categorized a large number of north Halton's woodlands in such a way that they could not be developed, there was an outcry from rural landowners.

Over the past four months, the Region's staff and councillors participated in a number of workshops with the rural and agricultural community. Local farmers criticized the recommendations in the Directions Report, and even a Town of Milton staff report called the recommendations "regulatory to the point that flexibility and vision is uncertain at the local level, resulting in requirements that not only affect the local municipalities' financial viability, but also Milton's future land-use directions."

Regional staff listened carefully at all the workshops, encouraged public input into the process and has, as a result, recently released another document, Response to Comments on the Directions Report. This report is available on the Region's website at www.region.halton.on.ca and at local libraries. As well, all those who provided input have been sent a letter from Regional staff outlining the changes that have been made in the recommendations.

"We have a lot of engaged parties in this process," explained Commissioner of Planning and Public Works, Pat Murphy. "They

know that we're listening to them, and we're responding to them." Milton Regional Councillor Barry Lee concurred with that, saying: "We got off the rails a little bit early on. There was a misconception of the Directions Report, but people were listened to and changes were made in the report."

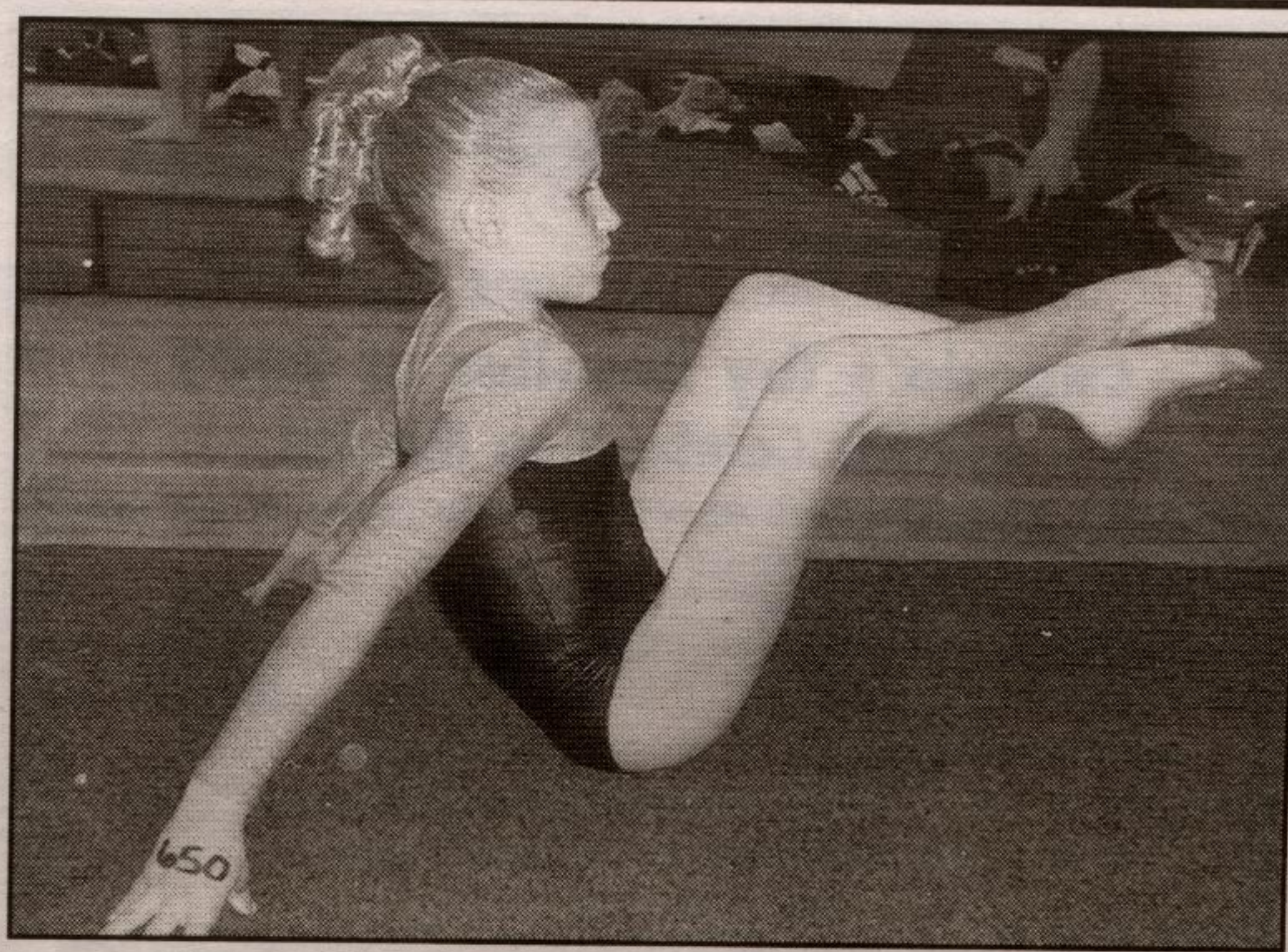
The new recommendations have changed the definition of woodlands. As well, staff is recommending that the Region implement a proactive stewardship program to promote tree conservation, replanting and reforestation on a voluntary basis.

Local farmer Jamie Fisher, who has worked closely with the Region's staff to address the controversial issues, applauds the Region's efforts as well as its intentions to contact by mail each Halton landowner who will be affected. Under the original recommendations, over 12,000 farmers would have been affected whereas now, under the latest set of criteria, there are just over 2,500. "The words are much clearer, and they're much more definitive now," states Mr. Fisher. "What they have agreed to is to drop or modify the Environmental Impact Assessment requirements so that all permitted uses don't need a study. The reality is that it won't impact agriculture or rural residents unless they try to change the zoning."

Mr. Fisher did, however,

encourage the Region's staff and Councillors to think ahead to the next Official Plan Review, five years from now. "The Official Plan process has gotten to the point where we're negotiating each time how much we'll give up as part of the process. I think we need to cap how much an individual has to give up as part of the next Official Plan process," he argued. "We should be rewarding good environmental stewards, not punishing them. If our goal is to have a viable, natural heritage system, we're not going to do it by making the landowner mad every five years."

Public input on the Response to Comments on the Directions Report is encouraged by Regional staff. All comments received by April 25 will be considered in the preparation of the final report that will go to Council members in May. It is important to note that the Official Plan Review is still a staff document. Public meetings will be held on the final document on Wednesday, May 21 at 7:00 p.m. in the Halton Hills Council Chambers, and on Thursday, May 22, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at Halton Regional Centre. The Region's Planning and Public Works will discuss the report at a special evening meeting at Halton Regional Centre on June 18, and the Regional Council will place the report on its agenda at a special meeting to be held June 25.



Five Milton Springers gymnasts qualify for the Ontario Championships

BY BLAIR DAVEY

Chelsea Bennett (above), Jaimi Fellows, Stephanie Deumer, Julie Gagnon and Brittany Schrader have qualified for the Ontario championships after their successes at the third qualifying meet that took place at Brock University on March 29 and 30.

Liberal Barbara Sullivan is ready for upcoming provincial election

BY DONNA DANIELLI

Halton will see a familiar face in the next provincial election. Although Brookville's Barbara Sullivan has been out of the political spotlight since serving eight years as the Member of Provincial Parliament for the Halton Centre Riding (1987 - 1995), she has once again stepped in as the Liberal candidate for the area.

"The new riding covers a large part of the riding that I used to represent," explains Mrs. Sullivan, referring

Mrs. Sullivan brings to her candidacy an extensive and varied resume. She combines a background of journalism, business and public affairs with an extensive record of public service. She has served as chief of staff and principal secretary to the Treasurer of Ontario, and as president of a public relations and marketing agency. As a member of Canada's international election observation team, Mrs. Sullivan has



monitored elections in Slovakia. Also she is a recipient of the Confederation Medal for Citizenship.

to a time when the current Halton riding was divided into four separate ridings. "Many of the issues continue from when I was a member though. Education, health and the environment - these all are still a continuing concern to the people in the community."

Mrs. Sullivan has a history of volunteering her time to community organizations. She is currently a Trustee of the Hamilton Health

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Fabulous photos praised by enthusiastic crowd

BY DONNA DANIELLI

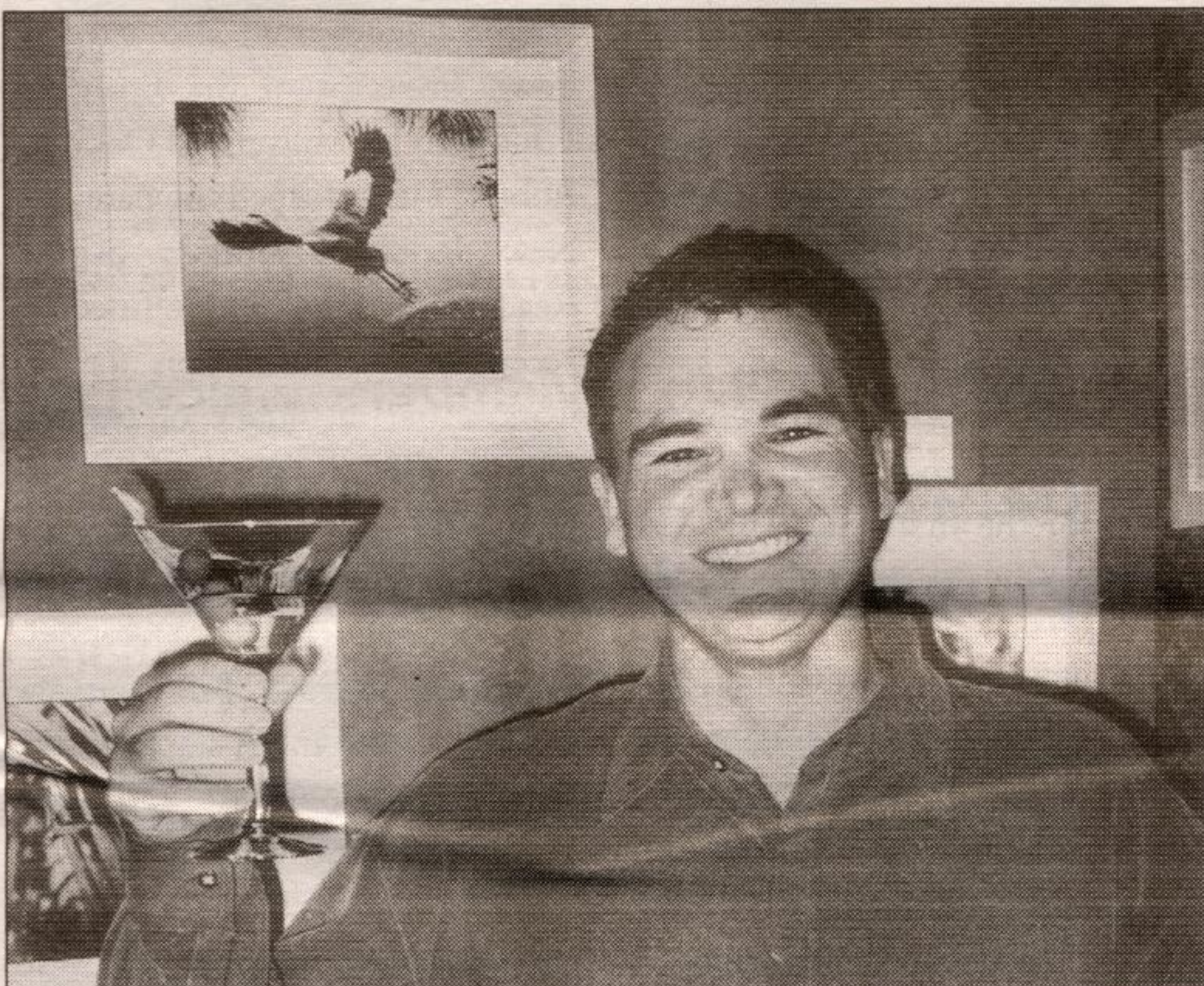


PHOTO BY DONNA DANIELLI

He's a local businessman, landscaper, public speaker and writer, but now Sean James can add a new title to his already impressive resume - professional photographer. Over sixty people recently attended the opening of Sean's new photography exhibit, Apples In The Snow, at Manhattan's Restaurant in Guelph. Over a dozen unique and original works were represented in the exhibition ranging from cityscapes to nature photos to still-life photos.

"It's a series of coincidences captured on film", explains Sean. "If I had to pick one word to describe them all, it would be organic."

Sean's work will remain on exhibit at Manhattan's, 941 Gordon Street, Guelph, throughout the spring. Each numbered and signed print is available for sale - framed and on archival paper. Sean is also available for hire as a portrait photographer and can be contacted at 905-876-4852.

Good Friday Morning Breakfast

at the Eden Mills Presbyterian Church on April 18th from 8 - 10:30 a.m.
Adults \$5.00
Children 5 - 12 years \$3.50
Children under 5 years Free

Vendors needed for Trunk Sale

May 3, 2003
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