

# The nuts and bolts of the hardware business

## Milton's Home Hardware

By DONNA DANIELLI

Although he had more than twenty years of experience in the hardware and building supply business, when Angelo DeMedicis first saw Schuyler Home Hardware Building Centre, he knew that he had stumbled onto something special. "This store spoke to me as soon as I saw it," says Angelo. Angelo and his wife Vincenza purchased the store in January 2002, when the name changed to Milton Home Hardware Building Centre. First on the agenda for Angelo and Vincenza was the updating of the store's exterior and interior look. With valuable input from their staff members, they quickly got to work and the store's exterior was redesigned and painted to conform to the Home Hardware colours (red and white) recognised nationwide. Next came the interior of the store. The floor plans were redesigned, new signage and flooring, and the shelves merchandised. A 500 square foot barbecue deck was also built to provide year round service of barbecues, parts and accessories.

"With all the changes made to better serve our customers, we still wanted to retain that small town feel when you shop in our store," says Angelo. In keeping with this image, look carefully around the store and you'll find a tool wall complete with a display of antique tools, as well as a six by

25 foot photo retrospective of black and white photos honouring Milton's history. "We're a small town store with deep roots in Milton". Those roots go all the way back to 1948, when the McKim brothers first opened McKim Hardware on Main Street. Angelo proudly points out a yardstick hanging in his office advertising McKim's Hardware and its original phone of TR8-9222. Looking at a phone dial, the letter T is represented by the number 8, with the letter R represented as 7 and thus TR8-9222, the original phone number of McKim's Hardware in 1948, translates to 878-9222. Add the area code 905, and you have the current phone number of Angelo's store, more than fifty years later.

### "WE STILL WANTED TO RETAIN THE SMALL TOWN FEEL"

In 1964, the McKims, along with 122 other small hardware store owners, joined together in Walter Hachborn's (one of the original founders of Home Hardware) vision of a united hardware store chain to form the Home Hardware family of stores. Today, there are over 1,000 stores across Canada. The certificate welcoming McKim Hardware to the chain and signed by Mr

Hachborn hangs proudly in Angelo's office, alongside a photo of Mr. Hachborn and Milton Mayor Gord Krantz at a ribbon cutting celebrating the store's move to its current location at 385 Steeles Ave. in 1976. At that point in its history, the store was owned by the Schuylers who had purchased it from the McKims in 1972. The Schuylers owned the store until 2002, when Angelo and Vincenza purchased it.

Angelo credits his staff with much of the success of the smooth transition during the purchase from the Schuylers. Between General Manager, Al Kiernan's 32 years hardware experience at this store, Hardware Manager Art Bruce's 30 years experience in the hardware business of which eight years are at this store, Lumber Manager Bill Karn's 30 plus years in the business of which 19 years are at this store, and Angelo's 20 plus years experience in the industry, the result was a team that certainly knew its business. Angelo stresses that input from all of his 45 full and part time staff members was taken into consideration during the store's renovation.


Milton Home Hardware sits on two and a half acres of land, with 20,000 square feet of retail space offering a wide variety of products. The store is a one stop shopping centre for do-it-yourself customers and contractors. From the electrical, plumbing, painting, lumber, kitchen and bath departments, "Help is close to Home" with all your home improvement projects. Ms. Fern Evans, Kitchen and Bath Designer, can help design your dream kitchen. Home Installs Manager, Ms. Dale Brace is available to discuss all your home renovation installations (kitchen and bath, windows, front entry doors, garage door openers, etc). As well, the Gourmet Shop is a chef's paradise with its rows of gleaming kitchen accessories, small appliances and gift items.

Currently, the store is decked out for Christmas, with a huge selection of ornaments, artificial trees, decorations and accessories. Christmas is very much on the mind of Angelo and his staff as they prepare for their part in the upcoming Milton United Way Christmas House

Tour. Milton Home Hardware Building Centre has signed on to provide the exterior decorations of one of the houses on the tour. "We like to give back to the community," explains Angelo, who will also be sponsoring a float in the Milton Santa Claus parade, and has donated a defibrillator unit to the Milton Leisure Centre. The Chamber of Commerce also honoured the store in 2003 as Employer of the Year. Angelo is quick to express his appreciation for the support the community has given his store. "We have a saying that new customers are special and old customers are extra special," says Angelo. He also adds that his staff is what makes his store special. "Vincenza and I have a vision, but it is our staff who carry it out everyday on the sales floor providing great customer service and product knowledge to our customers from the moment they walk into our store and from the time they check out. They work hard to ensure that we are your neighbourhood store, where you can find everything from little nuts and bolts to big ticket items," explains Angelo. "If we don't carry something in the store, we can order it in for you."

"You have to always be thinking ahead and trying to present something different," says Angelo of his store's philosophy. Recent store promotions have included the "Ugly Kitchen" \$10,000 dream makeover contest last January and more recently, the "Rescue My Bathroom" \$5,000 bathroom renovation contest. Currently, we have the "Skeletons in Your Closet" contest to win a \$2,500 built in closet organizer. Contest draw to be made November 15, 2004. No purchase is necessary and ballots are available in the store. In appreciation for their continued patronage, Angelo has a special Christmas gift for his customers. Beginning November 15, 2004, fill out your ballot and drop it off at the store for a one-week all-inclusive vacation for two to the Mayan Riviera, Mexico. No purchase is necessary. Contest closes December 19 and the draw will be held on December 22. "This is a great community," sums up Angelo. "I enjoy coming in to work everyday meeting my customers and working with great staff."


# A Christmas Gift from



## Enter to WIN an all inclusive 1 week TRIP FOR TWO to MEXICO

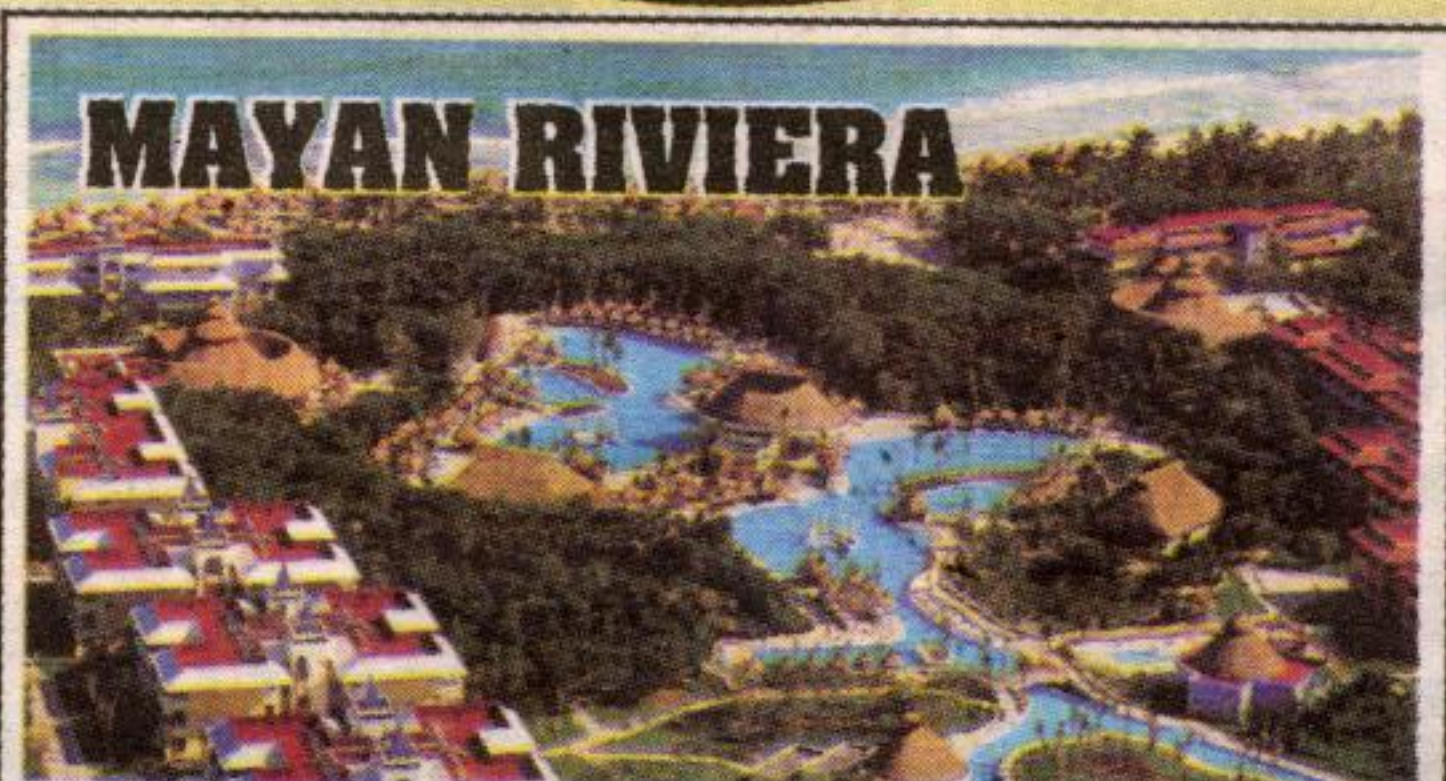
Ballots available in our store

**NO PURCHASE NECESSARY**



This is my way to thank you for your continued patronage

Angelo De Medicis  
Dealer/Owner




**MAYAN RIVIERA**

Entries must be in by December 19, 2004

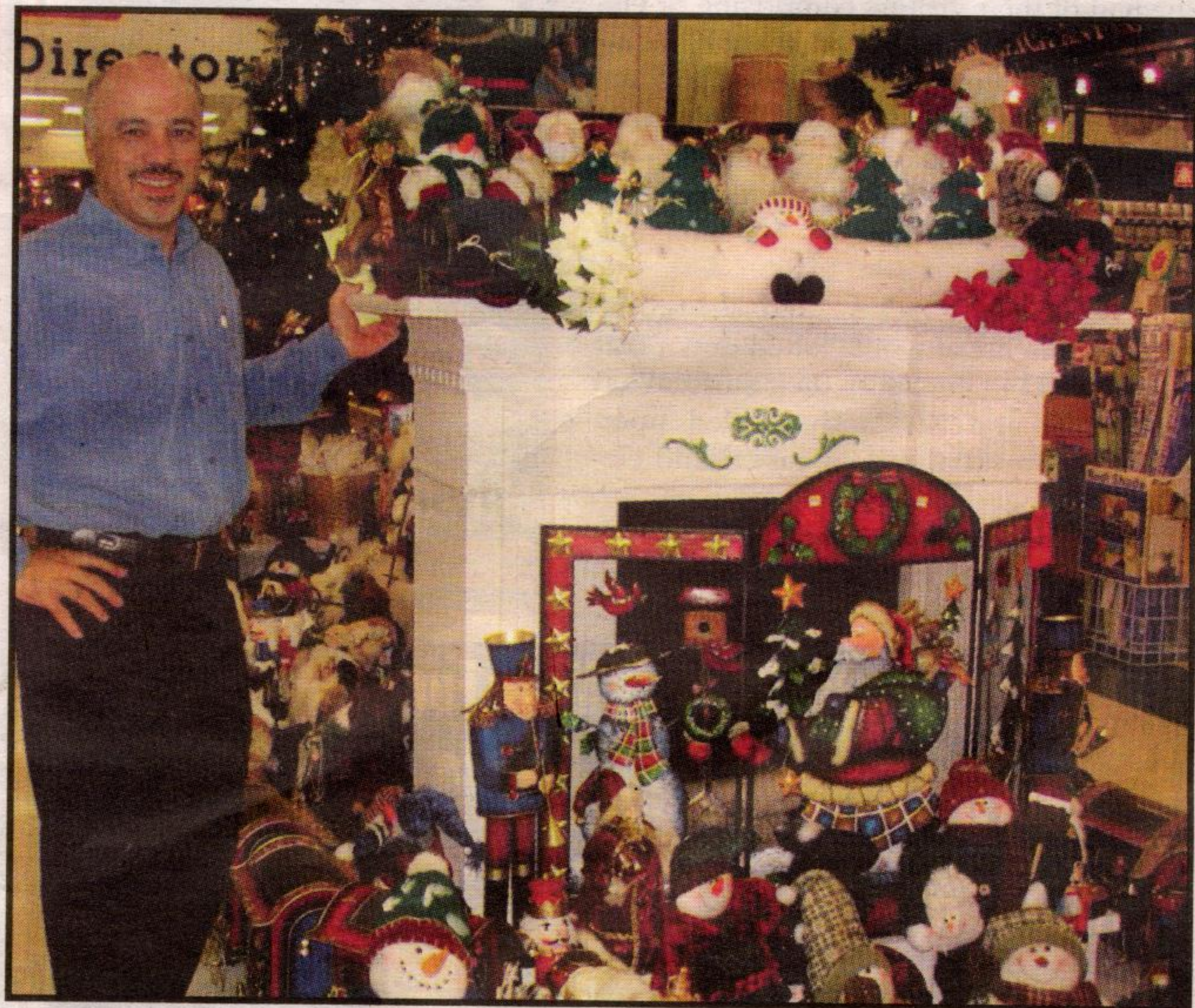
**DRAW DATE: December 22, 2004**

Contest exclusive to:



### MILTON HOME HARDWARE BUILDING CENTRE

385 Steeles Ave. E. 905-878-9222



Angelo DeMedicis poses with the wide variety of Christmas items available for sale in his Home Hardware store.