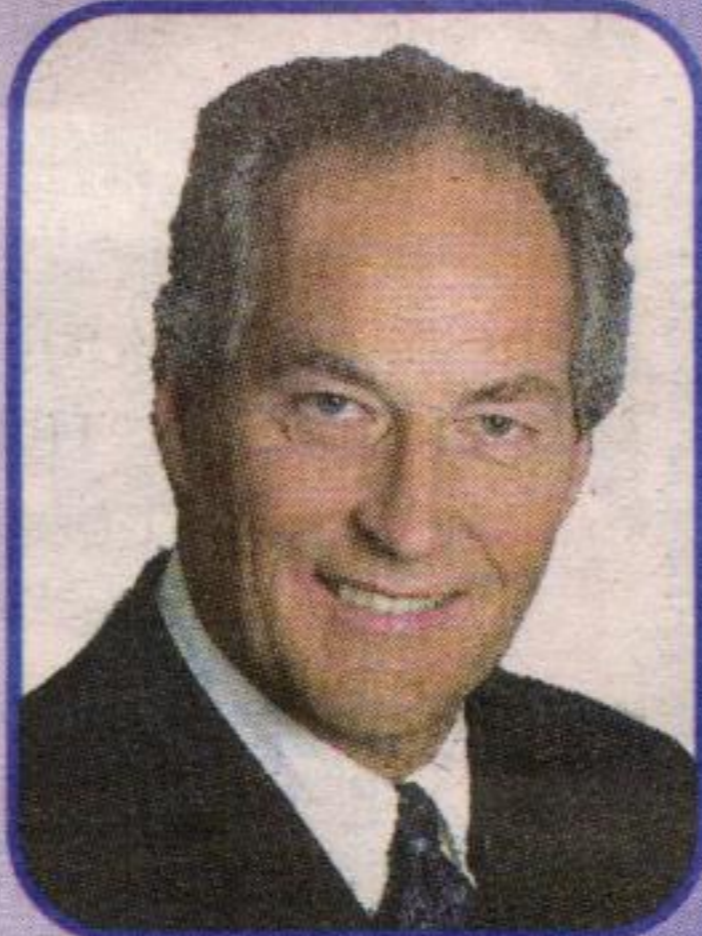


Queen's Park Report

Ted Chudleigh, MPP Halton



Remember the guy who explained, that he continually hit himself because it felt so good when he stopped?

It seems Health Minister George Smitherman is taking a similar approach towards our health system. He keeps beating on hospital budgets, hospital administrations, doctors, new facilities, and new approaches to health care delivery. Can he be lashing out so those health care providers will be happy when he stops?

Given that Ontario's Liberals will soon have to deal with new teacher contracts, perhaps Mr. Smitherman's approach in health care is calculated to also send a message to the education unions.

The Premier has increased spending in Ontario and tabled a deficit for this year; so he can ill afford to provide significant wage increases to any of the broader public service.

Plans for a new Oakville hospital on Dundas near Third Line have been alluded to but nothing concrete has been forthcoming. This much needed hospital will serve all of Oakville and Milton and the rural areas of Burlington and south Milton. Promised improvements to Milton's hospital have also been ignored.

Given the growth in north Oakville and north Burlington, in addition to the growth in Milton, these projects must proceed quickly. However, the Liberals have put a pro-

posed ban on sushi, a ban on pit bulls and a ban on public smoking far higher on their agenda than making basic health services available to Halton residents.

I understand their interest in taking on the evils of tobacco, on dealing with dangerous dogs and on keeping the world safe from fresh fish, though I might not agree entirely with their methods. However, their failure to handle the health care file is appalling. It's a file that they themselves identified as their top priority, and that they promised up and down, they would handle with the deftness of Baryshnikov.

While Mr. Smitherman might like to handle health care with the grace of ballet, he is rather more like an amateur tap dancer who goes faster and faster and makes more and more noise to keep you distracted from his deficiencies.

Of course a promise from a Liberal is a miraculous thing. It quickly loses weight and substance until there is nothing really left at all, except a hint of what might have been, blown away by the slightest breeze from any real issue that arises.

Perhaps that is why the Liberals have become suddenly interested in fish, dogs and tobacco.

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Lowndes Holdings Corp. announces the temporary closure on December 16, 2004 of the Carriage House Information Centre, located at 515 - 11th Concession Road East. The information centre has been open since September 23, 2004 and has been the venue for neighbours and other interested parties to inquire about the company's proposed dolostone quarry. It is expected to resume operation in the Spring of 2005.

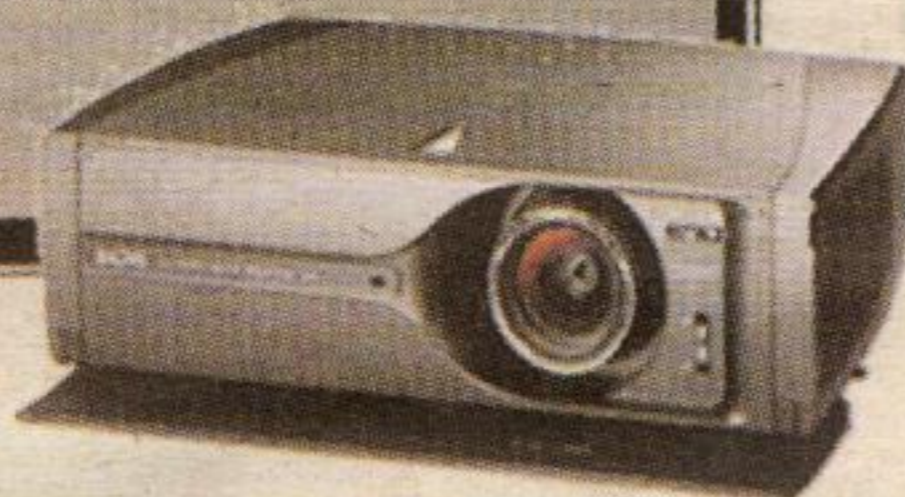
Neighbours and interested parties may continue to contact Lowndes Holdings to inquire about the project or express concerns by mail, telephone or email at the address provided below.

David Lowndes
President
Lowndes Holdings Corp.
Box 241
Carlisle, ON
L0R 1H0

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