

## Weathering an economic slowdown

Two weeks ago we had winter—snowy, cold and miserable. Now, after one week of rain we have been thrust into the throes of summer.

It's a summer that seems long in coming, despite the mild, short winter.

Getting nice weather a little earlier than usual provides a chance to assess our summer activities before summer actually arrives. There's summer travel, events and local projects which have to be given their proper due.

Coming out of a slow economy, it's tempting to be a little extravagant, however, I believe a better strategy is to secure the home front first. The summer of 2002 should be a year where we travel locally, spend money at home and generally remember the beauty and wonders in our own backyard here in Halton.

It appears we have weathered an economic slowdown that was as short and shallow as predicted. The fundamental changes to Ontario's economy over the last several years have given us an economic cycle where now, we are likely the last into any slowdown and the first out. However, for those people affected by the recent economic storm, they are still recovering from the loss of income and the unpredictability in their lives.

In some respects we are all recovering from the unpredictability in our lives engendered by the events of September 11. Only now are details of border security issues becoming concrete as business and government struggle to cope with

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Ted Chudleigh

security in a post-9/11 world.

The Ontario government has weighed in with a reconfigured Ministry of Public Safety and Security.

Essentially, these security issues have been given a high priority. As a first step, the new minister, Bob Runciman, has begun the process of establishing a civilian emergency force to be called upon in times of crisis to help with security and emergency response.

The Ontario government has a couple of issues high on its priority list for the upcoming session of the legislature. The OPSEU strike will be settled. A budget will be presented and privacy legislation will be dealt with. The new privacy legislation will establish the parameters necessary for more government business to take place in a high tech environment.

So, summer has come early, but maybe not a moment too soon, as a number of important issues will be resolved or able to move forward.

—Ted Chudleigh is the MPP for Halton

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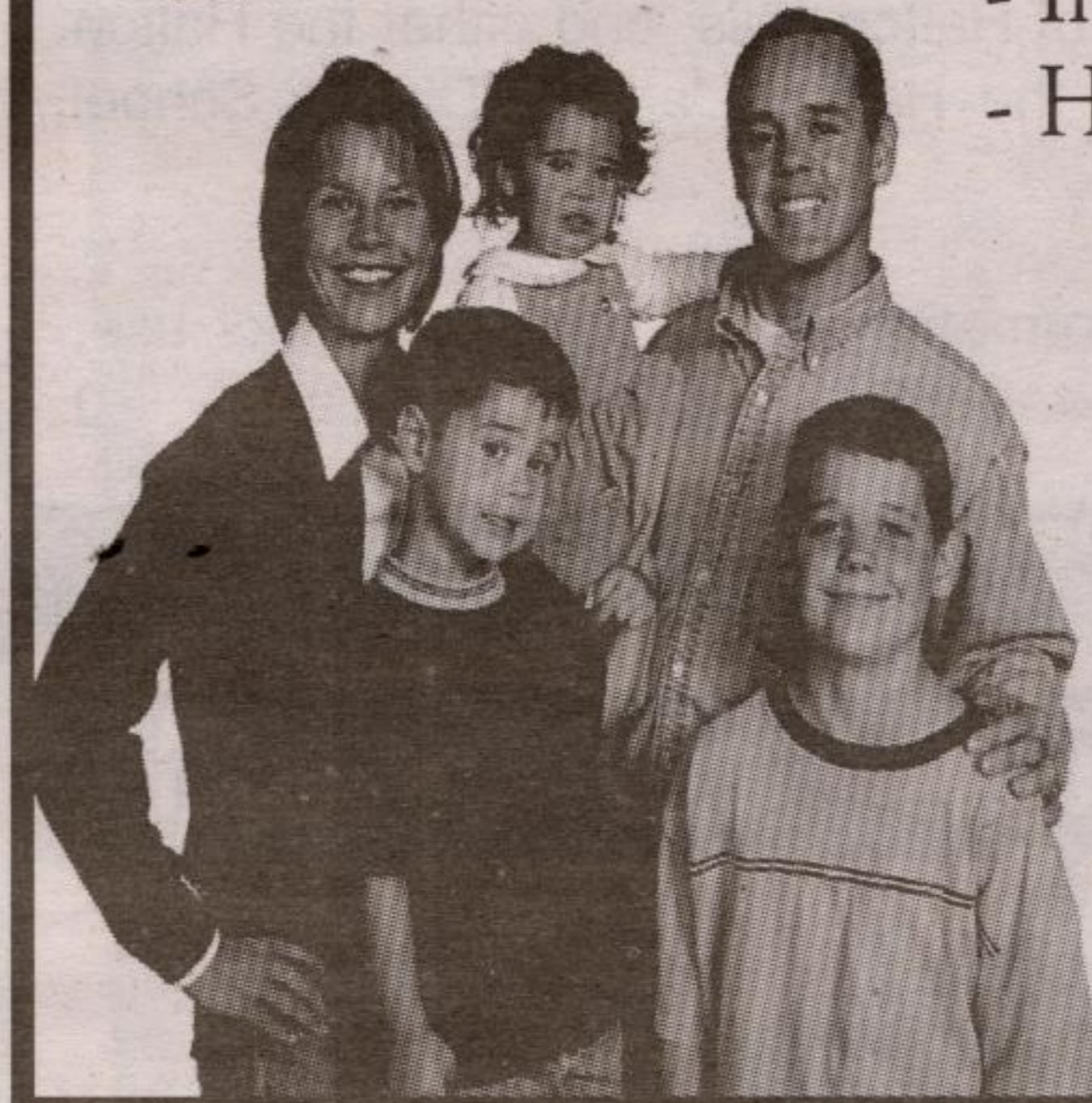
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