

# Councillor will adhere to new policy, but defends claiming mileage for bike use

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Davis said Wednesday he'd "go with the policy of the day", not claiming for his bicycle mileage any longer. But he said he would continue to use his bicycle on council-related matters.

In 2004, Davis, a local councillor, claimed the highest amount—\$1,549—in "Other" expenses of all 10 councillors, according to 2004 remuneration and expenses report.

About 80 per cent of the Other category is for mileage, parking and Hwy. 407 ETR fees. The level of reimbursement (now at 44 cents/km) is based on a survey of Canadian Automobile Association's average costing of operating a motor vehicle (gas, wear and tear, depreciation) in the Greater Toronto Area, said Treasurer Ed DeSousa.

Davis said that Chief Administrative Officer Bob Austin had questioned him earlier this year about his mileage claims. The councillor had told the CAO he had "mixed up records" of both bicycle and vehicle use, but the CAO continued to approve the expenses, said Davis.

Austin said he had questioned Davis in July after he saw him arrive at a town-hosted event on

his bicycle in June. He continued to approve the expenses because of the wording in the personnel manual, "personal vehicle."

*'I can't imagine that anyone who is really devoted to improving means of transportation because of a responsibility to the environment... would expect to be paid for that.'*

—Ward 2 Councillor  
**Joan Robson**



The councillor, a self-described environmentalist, said he rode his bicycle to many town events and meetings for exercise and to get a car off the road.

"I can't imagine that anyone who is really devoted to improving means of transportation because of a responsibility to the environment, that is not someone who would expect to be paid for that," said Ward 2 Councillor Joan Robson.

Ward 2 Councillor Bryan Lewis added this is an reim-

bursement to recover money you've expended in the course of your job; it is not a financial gain.

But Davis said it's a matter of fairness. While he acknowledges that the wear and tear on his bicycle is not at the same scale as a car, there are costs involved and expense claims should be reflective of that. Even an electric car—a motor vehicle—has different fuel consumption rates from a regular vehicle.

"Where do we draw the line? Well, obviously they drew it last night," Davis said wryly.

Bonnette said while he would not discourage anyone from riding a bicycle to an event, he did not think that should be claimed as an expense.

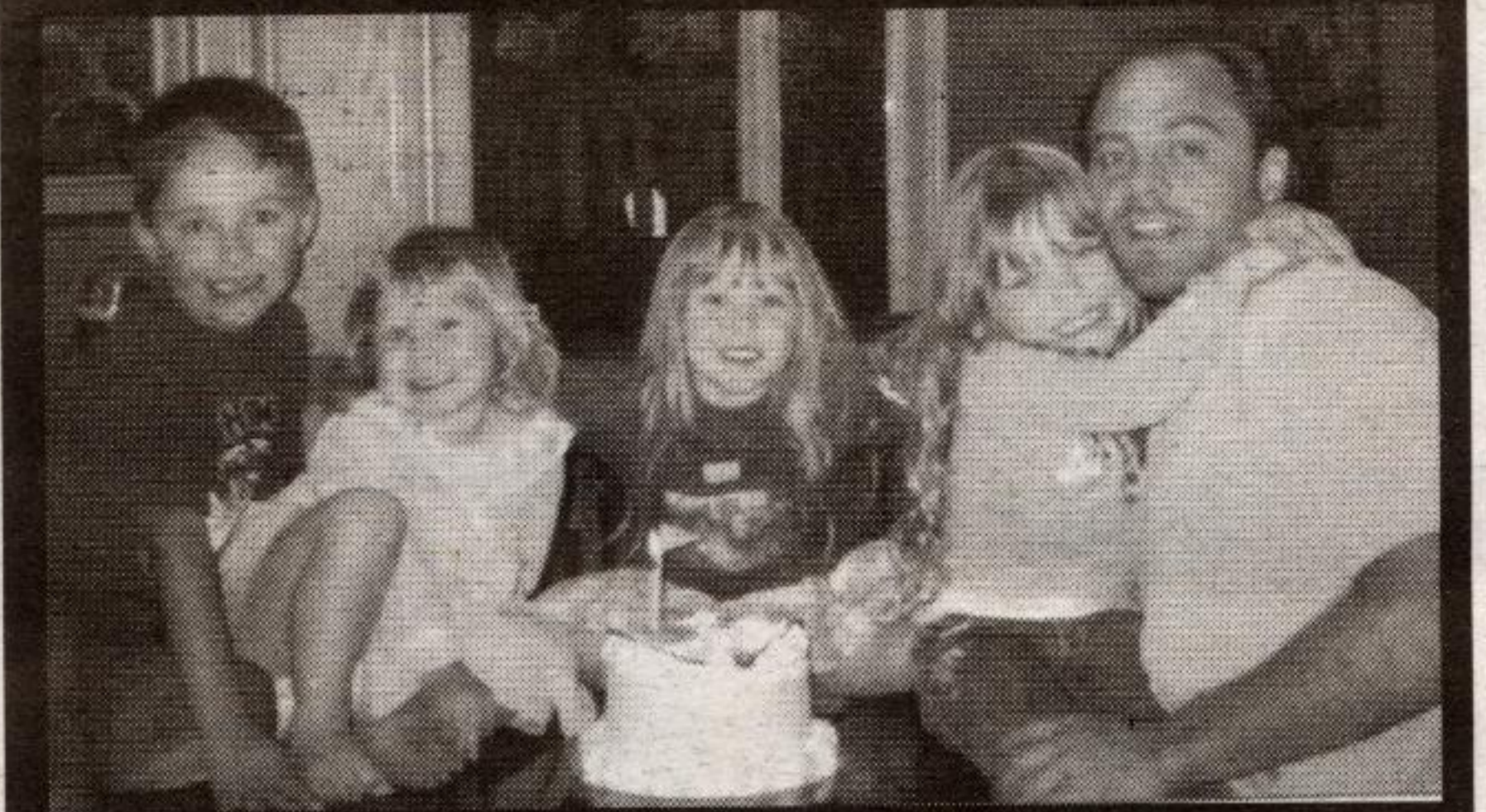
"If you don't tie up a loophole, anything is possible," the mayor said.

In 2004, Bonnette topped all of council with highest expense claims—\$2,574.15. Other high expense remittances went to Acton local Councillor Mike O'Leary at \$1,177.74 and Wards 1/2 Regional Councillor Clark Somerville, \$1,286.38. Davis's Ward 3 colleague Moya Johnson and Ward 4 local Councillor Ron Chatten were the lowest, claiming only \$45.45 each.

—By Cynthia Gamble, staff writer

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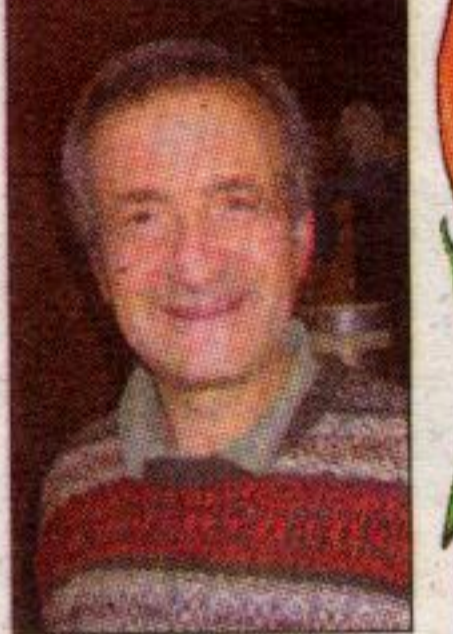


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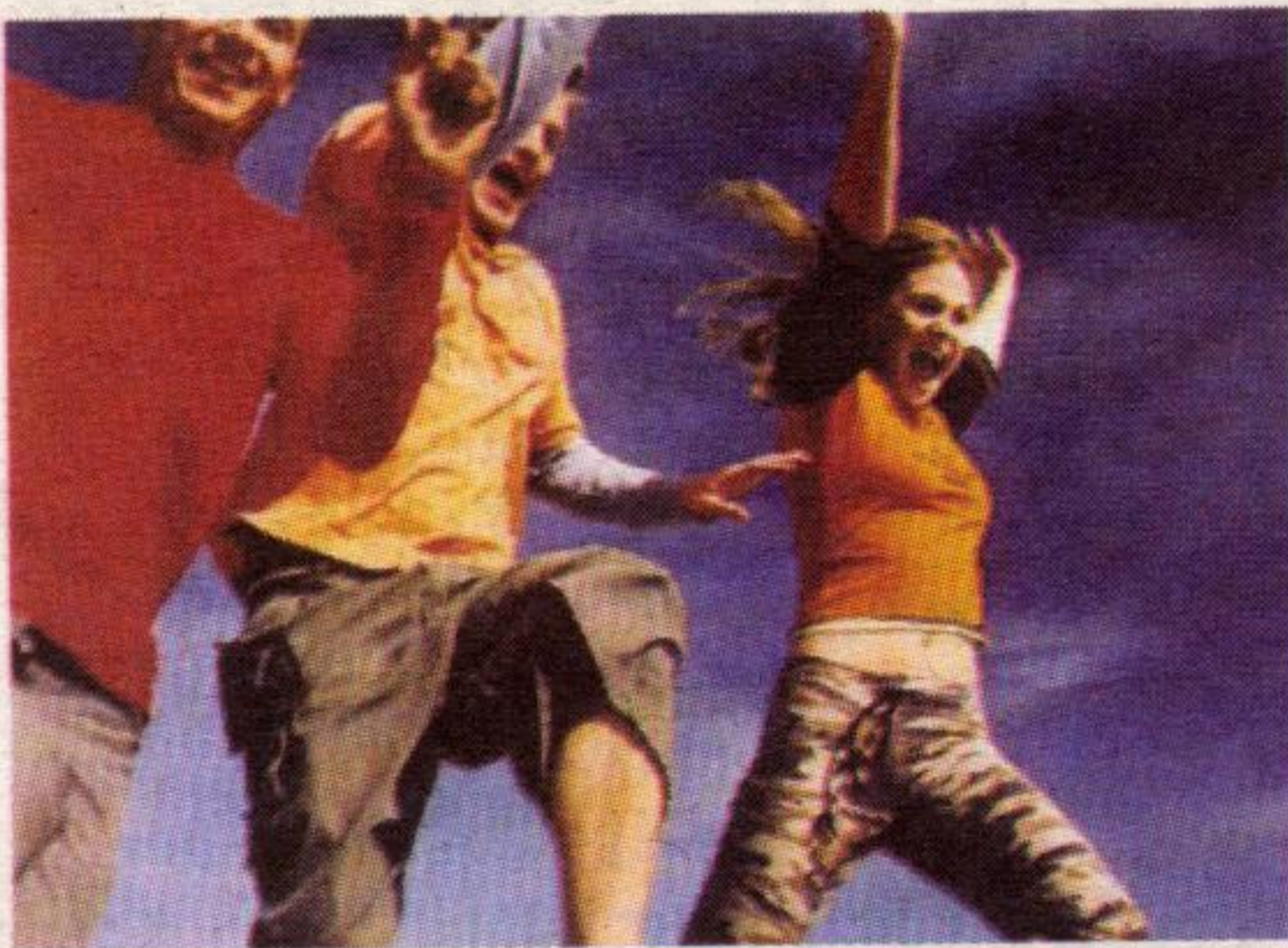
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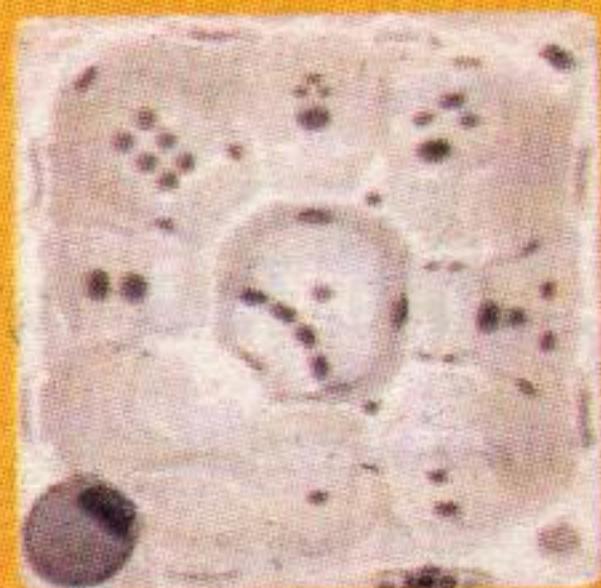
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