

Coffee house not "belly up" just yet, but needs more \$ \$ \$

Milton's supposedly "belly up" Milton Youth Council coffee house is not as "belly up" as Councillor Dr. Ivan Hunter claimed at a council meeting two weeks ago. "We may be down, but we're not out yet," MYC executive members Paul Perrott and Brian Green told The Champion in an interview this week.

Short on funds and long on apathy, the coffee house project is still plodding along. Its future appears to hinge on a federal government Opportunities for Youth grant the Youth Council has applied for. They asked for \$5,549.50 and both Mayor Brian Best and Halton MP Rud Whiting are doing their utmost to support their bid for the federal funds.

Halloween disturbance
By the way of background, Milton Youth Council was formed this winter in the aftermath of the near-riot on Milton's streets Halloween night. That night gangs of youths roamed the town tossing tomatoes and eggs at cars, people and buildings; several windows were broken; 31 charges were laid by police; and Mayor Brian Best finally read the Riot Act to quell the disturbance.

Milton Council met with a representative group of young people to discuss the problems and a Youth Council was suggested. It was soon formed and the executive decided to try opening a coffee house where the youth could meet, dance, talk and listen to music. Through Mayor Best they were able to rent a former furniture warehouse on Nipissing Rd. for a period of three months, at \$150 per month rental. Milton Council donated the \$450 rent for the first three months.

But the Youth Council found the building needed more repairs than they had estimated. They asked for financial help from service clubs and individuals and received some, but the cost of materials, the lack of manpower and other problems with the building soon slowed their progress to a snail's pace.

Depends on grant
They applied for the federal grant and, at Milton Council's meeting this week asked for \$800 to get heat installed at the coffee house so renovations could continue.

Is there any alternative? Only one—the people of Milton, young and old alike, must buy memberships and it will take a pile of pre-sold membership tickets to get the doors of the coffee house opened.

Memberships are \$3 for three months and they don't take effect until the coffee house opens. The Youth Council has tried to sell them to the young people but practically everyone has refused to buy a card until they see what they're getting.

"The kids refuse, almost unanimously, to help us or to buy advance memberships," complained Perrott. "They don't want to invest their money in something that's not open yet, but we can't open until we get the money," adds Green.

Open to adults
Adults can buy memberships, too, to help support the coffee house project. But even the adults are reluctant to invest \$3 in the hope of getting a place where teenagers can go. Rotary Club of Milton members were asked to make a personal contribution to the coffee house and 24 of them bought a membership card. Other than that, the executive members of the Youth Council are the only ticket-holders to date.

Mrs. Kathy Hodge of Milton, a social worker with the Oakville branch office of Addiction Research Foundations, learned of the coffee house problem a few weeks ago and has been working

with the Youth Council in trying to get it going. She accompanied Perrott and Green to the interview with The Champion. "The kids all say there is nothing to do in Milton. They do need something to do," she said. But she was also disappointed in the lack of support from those who claim they need a coffee house. "This would really open people's eyes and show them it CAN be done," she added.

ARF will help
The ARF will continue to assist the Youth Council after the coffee house opens, she said. ARF has offered the loan of equipment, films and speakers "anytime."

Financial support isn't the only thing lacking, claim Green and Perrott. The young people of Milton have repeatedly turned down the Youth Council's requests for help to clean up the coffee house and install new furnishings and equipment.

"We did get about 30 out one weekend, but most of them just came to drink coffee," says Perrott. "They weren't too interested in working." On other occasions the Youth Council has tried to line up a work crew but most of the young people were "busy".

Cold inside
Winter weather and a lack of heat in the building were probably part of the reason behind the lack of helpers. Those

who have worked on the coffee house did so under trying conditions. "It was as cold as 20 degrees in there. It was freezing. The roof leaks and the water on the floor was frozen solid. One night we tried to paint but the paint froze," says Perrott.

The Youth Council representatives said they were disappointed in the attitude of some of the town councillors, and especially Dr. Hunter. "He should have asked to see what the kids are doing," said Mrs. Hodge. "He hasn't been to see us or the building."

"None of the councillors have," added Green.

Scapegoat?
Perrott said he was afraid many of the councillors felt giving the Youth Council \$450 for the first three months' rent of the coffee house was a test, to see if they could get it open and operating. "We don't want to sound ungrateful but when people give you money, knowing full well that an even greater amount is needed, it appears to us the sum of \$450 was a scapegoat. Then if the project failed, the Youth Council would be given the blame."

Councillor Hunter's statements at the March 13 council meeting about the coffee house being "belly up" and the \$450 going "down the drain" shocked the Youth Council members. "That kind of publicity really hurts,"

said Perrott. Perrott claims some earlier publicity, a story in The Toronto Star, also hurt the Youth Council. In the story he was quoted as saying the Halloween night fracas in town was brought on by police harassment of the young people. Perrott says the newspaper, misquoting him, but many who read the story believed it.

\$1,000 for heating
Heating is the main problem at the coffee house right now. They figure it will cost \$1,000 to install proper heating. Some gas boilers were donated but the installation will be expensive. They listed \$2,700 worth of furniture and furnishings among their needs when they applied for the Opportunities for Youth grant. Part of the grant would apply to future rental of the building.

Compounding their problems, someone broke into the coffee house a few weeks ago and stole a radio, a hammer and three heaters which were on loan to the Youth Council from Oakview Developments, owners of the building. Although they believe they know who was responsible, they cannot prove it.

Who has helped them to date? The Rotary donated \$200 and bought \$74 worth of memberships, the Legion Auxiliary has promised to donate \$50 to buy coffee urns, the Optimist Club gave \$100 and several private individuals have sent cash donations. The Youth Council will be meeting with the Lions Club soon. Reeve Ron Harris and Deputy Reeve Bob McCuaig have also been a big help, they said. Several individuals have promised to donate used furniture but they haven't picked it up yet because they have no place to store it.

Entertainment at the coffee house won't cost anything, the Youth Council members reported. A local band and several folk singers have offered to perform without charge.

The need for such a project is obvious but it will require more support if it is to survive, they said. "Everybody wants a coffee house, but nobody wants to work for it," suggested Green.

Mrs. Hodge said the coffee house was a good project and the Addiction Research Foundation was happy to work with such groups "as a preventive measure."

"It will help keep the young people busy so they won't turn to alcohol or drugs," she felt.

Parents welcome
There are many young people in town who are not interested in sports, pointed out Perrott. The coffee house would serve their need for entertainment as well as being a gathering place for young people and adults to talk things over. They emphasize there will be no age limit at the coffee house—parents are just as welcome as the teenagers and young married couples.

"The coffee house would provide a service to the town, because it would help keep the young people off the streets. It would also answer the merchants' problem of 'protecting their businesses'. And thirdly, it would give the young people a place to go in a comfortable and inexpensive atmosphere," said Perrott. "If only the young people weren't so apathetic and hypocritical..."

He estimates there are over 1,000 potential members in Milton and district—there are 1,000 in the high school alone, plus many more young people who are working. "We have done all that

is humanly possible to do inside the building. Until we receive more donations (in the form of memberships) from the youth, we can do no more," he said.

Rent due soon
The Youth Council's current financial picture shows they collected \$843 and spent \$712

(including rent) leaving a treasury balance of just \$131. The three months' rental which was paid by the town council will expire on April 30. The Youth Council expects to hear whether their bid for a grant was successful or not, around the middle of April. They don't think they

will be able to obtain the cash right away, but they're hopeful. Until then, therefore, it's a case of selling more \$3 advance memberships, or folding up. "We can't do much more on moral support, such as it is. We need more capital, and right now," concluded Green.



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Speaker reveals gardening tips

President Stewart Lockie welcomed members to the March 20 meeting of the Milton and District Horticultural Society held at the Union Hall. He announced the convention would be held June 16 and June 17 in Kingston.

People wishing to donate door prizes for the annual flower show should contact Mrs. Lockie. Addison Woodley introduced the guest speaker, Ivan Roberts from the House of Bulbs, Guelph. His subject was "Gardening under lights."

Mr. Roberts explained the different kind of bulbs to be used in the fixtures and the effect of each on plant growth and blooms. 14 to 18 hours of light a day is sufficient. The lights should always be turned off at night. Flowers grow at night.

He also advised the use of a timer. Proper humidity and air circulation is a great help in raising good flowers. He then explained the composition of soil mixture for different kinds of flowers. Types of fertilizer and their particular use.

Importance of perlite, vermiculite, and peat moss was stressed. How to sow different kinds of seeds and how to root slips.

Mrs. Goodall thanked Mr. Roberts for his interesting talk.

Winners
The monthly flower show results are as follows.
Class 1. "The Ides of March", I. W. J. Thompson, Mrs. E.

Britton, Mrs. D. Downs.
Class 2. "He is Risen" and 1. Mrs. A. Colling and Mrs. Margaret Thompson. 3. Mrs. E. Britton.

Class 3 "Garden in Glass Container", Mrs. A. Colling, W. J. Thompson and Mrs. Margaret Thompson.

Class 4. "Three forced branches" Mrs. A. Colling, Mrs. Lois Parker and Mrs. D. Downs.
Class 5 "Flowering house plant," Mr. Tinkler, Mrs. A. Colling and Mrs. D. Downs.

Four women hurt in crash

Four Stratford women were injured in a four car collision Monday, March 20. The scene of the accident was Highway 401, west of the Sixth Line Oakville.

Lorenna Calvert suffered lacerations, Evelyn Broadfoot an injured neck and multiple bruises, Florence Landreth received a fractured skull and the fourth woman, Verna Dolson suffered a fractured leg.

The four women were taken to Milton District Hospital and then transferred to Stratford General Hospital. All four women were passengers in a car driven by John Calvert of Stratford.

Charles Baynton of R.R. 2, Rockwood, Joseph Tuccitto of Toronto and Franklin Geng of Kitchener were the other drivers involved, Milton OPP report.

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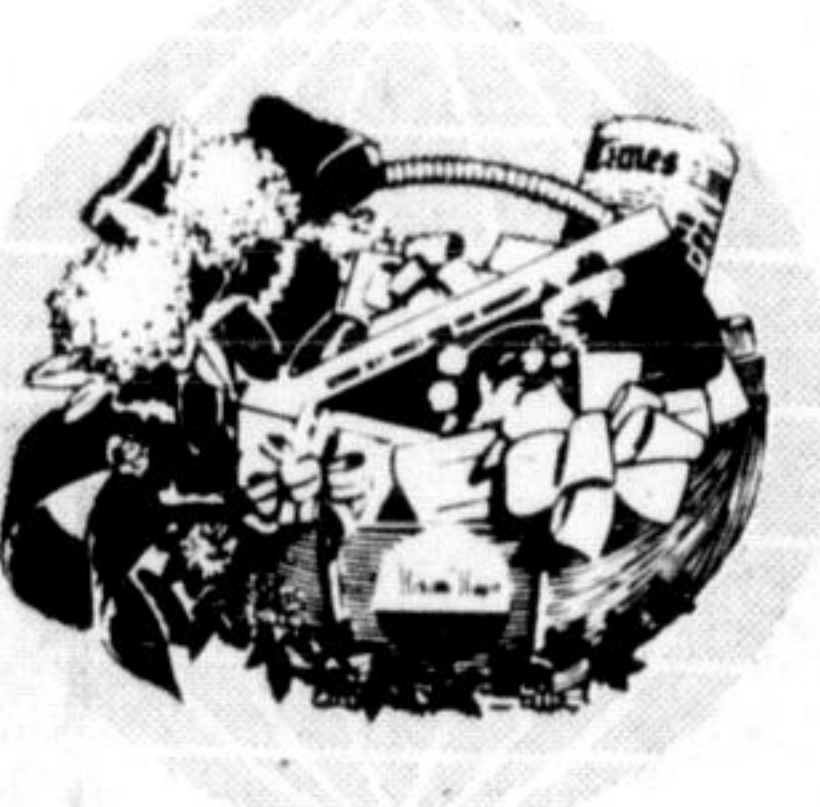
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