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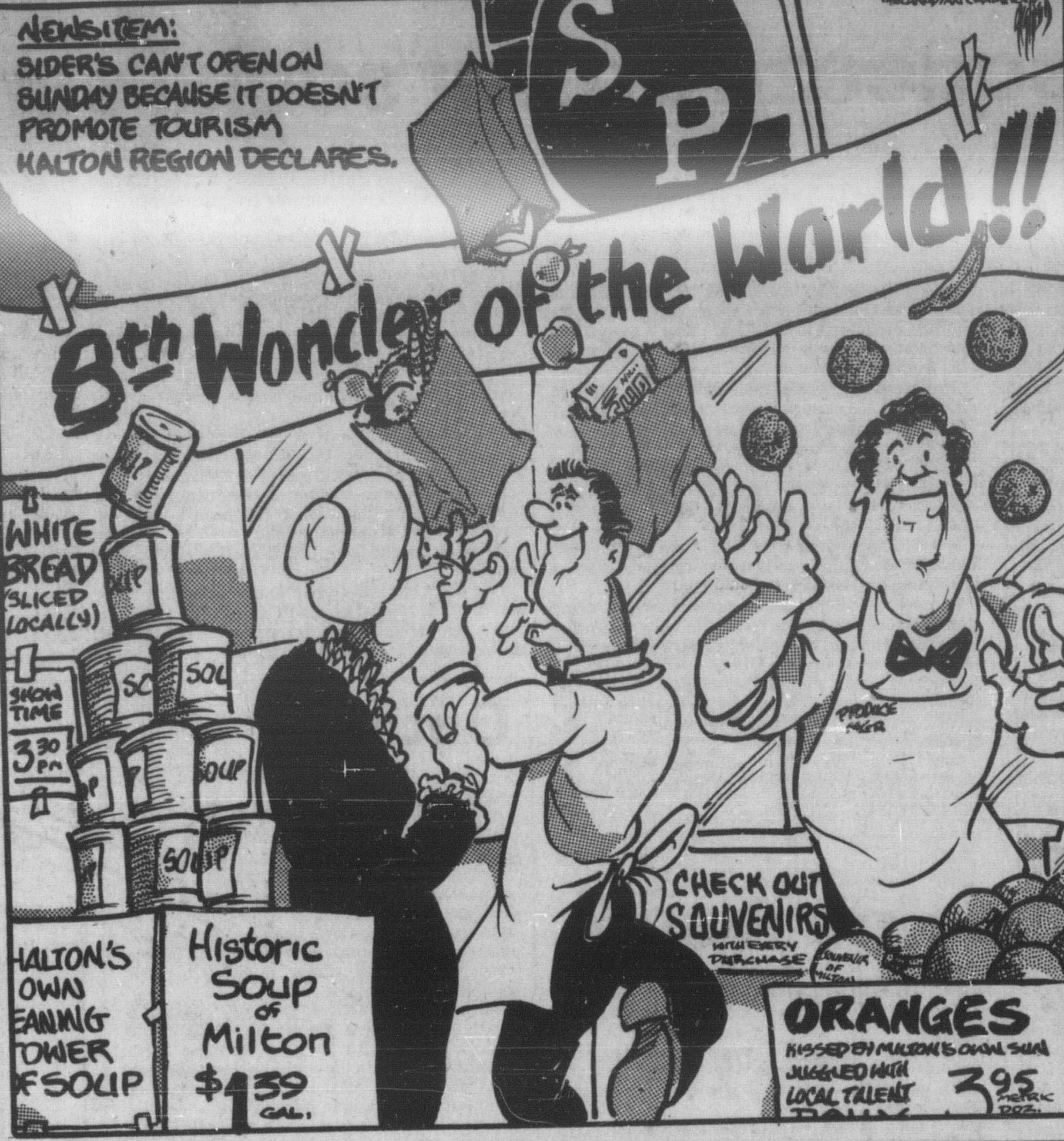
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Editor's Note: A.J. Casson

WITH JOHN CHALLINOR



If somebody was looking for the stereotypical Canadian grandfather, Group of Seven master painter A.J. Casson would undoubtedly be the comfortably ruffled patriarch they envisioned.

Sitting on his favorite, well worn couch in his comfortable Toronto home, A.J. Casson provides colorful vignettes of Canadian life—both verbal and on canvas—between puffs on his ever-present cigarette.

Dressed in a flannel lumberjack shirt, blue dungarees and a wool sweater, Mr. Casson appears very content—laid back, if you will.

And, despite the amount of art his public and he would like to get out while he's still able to paint, this man makes the time to talk about his Canada and his memories of it.

When one considers the impact Mr. Casson has had on Canadian art and the attention he commands in this, the autumn of his life, there is a certain sense of guilt in taking an hour of his time to talk about his life.

But, like my own grandfather, you would begin to believe when he begins to

remind that he has all the time in the world.

His face, with its deep wrinkles and his deeply set, dark eyes, serves to dramatize whatever piece of history he is relating.

He, like all grandfathers tend to be, is a master storyteller.

His hands, which have masterfully orchestrated his imagination during the more than 60 years he has painted, also serve to illustrate his conversation.

The excess green oils, scratched off the canvas of White Pine are probably still in his fingers.

His stories, although not nearly as widely appreciated as his art works, should be chronicled with his works for future generations to benefit from.

Writer Barry Broadfoot had the right idea when he toured Canada, tape recorder in hand, to get senior Canadians' impressions about the Depression for his book, *The Lost Years*.

Mr. Casson is a worthy candidate for a biography that goes beyond the picture book variety now available about him.

Although my knowledge of the man is

fairly intense, my station in journalism does not permit me the time to do a book about Mr. Casson as it should be done.

I don't know that he would approve of such a venture—his time is just too valuable and it would certainly take more than the hour I spent with him one Tuesday morning.

It certainly would be entertaining writing—I know how much I have enjoyed writing about Mr. Casson the few times I have had the opportunity to do so.

In next week's edition of *The Canadian Champion*, I'll provide you with a one hour slice of this great man's life as I interpreted our conversation a week ago. Space limitations did not permit me to run the story and pictures I have from our conversation this week.

I'll also have a review of the recently released film documentary about Mr. Casson entitled "The Only Critic Is Time."

Watch for it. I hope you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed talking to Mr. Casson and writing about this stage in his great life.

Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

From the March 4, 1981 issue
Metropolitan Printing and Publishing Ltd. has acquired the shares of Inland Publishing Co. Limited, effective Feb. 27. The sale of shares, at \$13.5 million, puts Inland's 13 weekly newspapers, including *The Canadian Champion*, under the Metropolitan banner. Inland will continue to be operated on the present basis, as a subsidiary of Metropolitan, said John Baxter, President of Metropolitan.

After a two-year struggle to convince the Ministry of Health Milton had outgrown its hospital's ability to treat our population, expansion and renovation plans have been approved by the ministry. S.A. Allen, Chairman of the Hospital Board said it's been a long struggle.

Members of the Halton Regional Conservation Authority have started deliberations on the 1981 budget which may be preliminarily set at \$2,681,714. This is 1.5 per cent lower than the \$2,856,837 budget of 1980.

A report on what to do about sewage sludge in Halton is suggesting some of it be "de-watered" and made into cakes which can be put into garbage dumps.

Milton Fall Fair took top honors with a display entered at the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies convention last week in Toronto.

20 Years Ago

From the Thursday, Mar. 8, 1962 issue
The first work on the reconstruction of the CNR's Burlington-Milton-Georgetown-Brampton-Vaughan Twp. railway line will begin near Milton this spring—possibly later this month—project engineer J.L. Cann told members of Halton County Council Tuesday afternoon.

The line is to be reconstructed and partly double-tracked to prepare for the heavy freight traffic expected in 1965 when the Vaughan Township terminal yard is opened. County Council asked Mr. Cann to appear Tuesday to explain how the reconstruction will affect Halton municipalities.

Milton Recreation Commission Tuesday approved a tentative budget of \$4,834.47 and agreed to call for a joint meeting with the Milton Arena Board to discuss a recreation director.

The committee had received a resolution from the Arena Board indicating they were prepared to pay \$2,000 for the "full services of a recreation director suitable to the Arena Board from October 1 to April 30."

For the second year in a row, Peter Andrews of Campbellville Public School has been named Nassagaweya Township school's top public speaker. Peter won the township competition Monday when seven Campbellville and Brookville students competed for the honor of going on to the county finals in Acton.

50 Years Ago

From the March 3, 1932 issue
Mrs. William Durnan will be in charge of the millinery store opening on Saturday next, March 5th, in Miss Carroll's old stand.

Hundreds of starlings, resting on practically every tree, pole and Hydro standard, have been noticed in the district recently.

The business section of Main Street has been greatly improved by the cutting down of the large Manitoba maple tree near Hillyer & Co's store.

Hilton Dale of Hamilton was yesterday committed to jail for 10 days on a charge of cruelty to animals heard before police Magistrate Bill at Brampton. Dale was fined \$10 several weeks ago, but failed to remit the fine to the Brampton court and was committed to jail in default.

The Young People of Milton and Bethel United Churches competed in plays, which are under the jurisdiction of the Young People's Association of Halton Presbytery, last Monday night, the Milton society winning by 79 points to 68 for Bethel. The successful players put on a mystery play of ancient setting, which was entitled "The Mystery of Vansdale Tavern" and was quite cleverly done. The play put on by Bethel Young People was a one act farce entitled "Popping the Question" and was quite amusing. A very enjoyable evening was spent by a well-filled house.

75 Years ago

From the March 7, 1907 issue
On Tuesday a green "Alaska sable" skin was mailed in Milton Post Office to a city furrier. The perfume was so overpowering that the postmaster had to store the package in a room in rear of the office until the mail went out.

Robert Stewart, postmaster here, has sold his 150 acre farm, the old Stewart homestead, in the Scotch Block, Esqueving, to Thos. Snow of Norval for a price of \$8,500.

Mrs. C.E. Galloway has returned home from Kentucky, accompanied by her daughter and grandchild, of that state. J.R. McKinney of the Red Cross Drug Store has come back from Toronto to resume charge of the business. Mr. Learn, his late assistant, has gone home to Berlin and has been replaced by Mr. Roddick of Toronto.

Last week Wm. E. McCready, Milton visited Simcoe and exchanged his Percheron stallion for another one. The name of the new horse is Lampeste and he has only been in this country a few months, being imported directly from France. Mr. McCready had him on exhibition at the McGibbon stables on Saturday last, and according to the opinion of the judges, he is the finest model of a Percheron ever seen in Halton since the days when old Rival first introduced this now famous breed into the country.

Social service budget

Halton councillors will achieve a false economy if they cut too deeply into the budgets of social service agencies when making final decisions on grant requests this week.

Members of the health and social services committee spent all of a sunny Saturday listening to more than 50 agencies make requests totalling \$575,879.

The essential problem facing the councillors now is to trim those requests to fit the \$422,319 budget that is available for social service grants this year.

During the lengthy process of hearing applications, some councillors wondered at the number of paid staff being employed by some agencies and the size of salary portion of some of the budgets.

When final decisions are made there will no doubt be strong temptation among some councillors to cut budgets, thinking volunteers can pick up the slack.

This is a false economy and will likely result in the closing of some agencies, to the benefit of no one.

It seems obvious that some Regional councillors on the health and social services committee have no clear idea what type of agencies they are dealing with.

The constant harping over volunteers and the number of paid staff is perhaps the best example of this.

Social services today involves more than simply a little understanding, such as was once available from clergymen.

A high level of training and experience is required for most of

the functions performed by these agencies—in short they are not the jobs that can be carried out by even the most dedicated of interested amateurs.

As has been pointed out to the councillors, cutting back on support for the community agencies may result in an added burden on those services provided by the Region over which it has no discretion, such as welfare.

Another of the arguments raised at this time of year is that the Provincial and federal government should shoulder a greater share of the responsibility for financing these admittedly essential services.

That may or may not be a valid contention—experience teaches that hand outs from the senior levels of government are usually accompanied by a fairly detailed list of requirements and operating guidelines that take away the local nature of the service and render it indistinguishable from the bureaucratic bodies operated directly by government.

Practically all of the agencies seeking support from the Region are worthy community efforts, worthy of support by a local level of government.

Causing them extra financial hardship, beyond that already resulting from the lack of a United Way campaign in north Halton and the failure of campaigns in the south to reach their goals, will only have a detrimental effect on the quality of life in this community and result in few real savings for taxpayers.

What you deserve

There's an old saying that people get the government they deserve. It's certainly true in Canada and was never more clearly demonstrated in this area than at Halton MP Otto Jelinek's public forum on Thursday evening.

Government bashing, particularly at the federal level, threatens to take over hockey as the national pastime. Canadians are very upset with the performance of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's Liberal government and public opinion of the man and his government has not been lower since he was defeated in May 1979 by Joe Clark and the Progressive Conservatives.

Decima Research analyst Allan Gregg calculates the federal government would fall and fall badly if an election was called at this time.

Yet, given the opportunity to get some answers, insight and reaction from fellow Canadians about Canada's current economic plight by Mr. Jelinek and other residents the vast majority of Miltonians refused.

About 75 of a possible 25,000 bothered to show up and talk intelligently about Canada's problems and how they might be resolved.

Mr. Jelinek was pleased by the reaction he received Thursday night and by the reaction the federal government is getting across Canada generally. He viewed it as Canadians finally reacting to the onerous position they are in.

Frankly, we don't see it that

way. The reaction to his public forum really demonstrates how Canadians feel about their country.

Given the opportunity to participate in a forum or actually tell the government where it is going wrong and how we are being affected, we won't.

This attitude is also prevalent at election time. Most Canadians don't vote in an informed manner—the majority of us never meet our MP before his or her election—or afterwards.

The 75 people who came to Mr. Jelinek's forum care about Canada, are concerned about its future and their future and didn't expect their MP to have all the answers.

He admitted he didn't have all the answers. But, like they, he had some ideas as to how their problems could be solved.

And, that is democracy in action. There is little doubt that the majority of those people went home that night feeling important, if not somewhat relieved they had a say in how government should be operated.

If nothing else, the forum permitted them to vent their frustrations with other Canadians they know share their problems and have their sympathy.

There is something to be learned from all of this and it is simply this. The betterment and change of our current economic problems requires participation, constructive criticism and viable solutions.

We, on behalf of all Canadians want to hear yours.

People in our past

POLITICIAN AND BUSINESSMAN JIM KERR



JIM KERR

Calgary has at least one thing in common with Milton—its native sons are quickly becoming outnumbered by its newer residents.

Jim Kerr is a rare commodity—he is one of Milton's few native sons.

Born in the station house on Commercial St. in 1941 (Milton would not see its first hospital, on Martin St., for another seven years, let alone Milton District Hospital, which came in 1959), Jim literally grew up on Main St.

His father, a pharmacist, ran a drug store (the business was sold in 1961 and became *Elsley Drugs*) on Main St. and

the family lived on top of the store. A student at Milton's only public school, Bruce Street Public School, and Milton's only high school, Milton District High School (now Martin Street Public School), Jim followed that up by attending Lakeshore Teacher's College and Waterloo Lutheran University, where he obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree in business—with particular stress in economics.

He taught public school in Brampton (where he taught two of Ontario Premier Bill Davis's children) and Mississauga over a 14-year period, ending his career in 1974 as a vice-principal.

Wanting to make a contribution to Milton, Jim entered politics as a Town councillor in 1972.

Realizing he couldn't continue to balance his teaching career with politics, Jim pursued a successful example of mixing one's career with politics shown by former Milton Mayor Brian Best and got into real estate.

He served four years on local council and two years on Regional council before being defeated in 1978.

He served on the steering committee for the formation of Regional government, and continues to be a member of St. Paul's United Church, chairman of Milton's first Community Day and served on various safety councils.

Asked whether or not he would consider running for office again, Jim said he "might."

"But, I wouldn't consider it this time," he smiled. "I won't be running this year—there's no guarantees in politics and I'd have to have sufficient money in

the bank."

Jim concentrates much of his time running the Milton office of Bayley MacLean Real Estate Ltd., which he opened in September 1979, and teaching a mortgage financing course for real estate agents at Sheridan College (on behalf of the Ontario Real Estate Association).

With respect to the town he grew up in, Jim says he doesn't "like 100 per cent of what I see." I prefer a small urban-rural community as opposed to something that is large like Mississauga—something that just keeps growing and growing and growing," Jim says. "I'm not in favor of any more development. I'm not in favor, at this point in time, of Shipp Corp. developing on the other side of Thompson Rd. I'd like to see the boundaries remain where they are now."

Jim says Milton's downtown core and Milton Mall provide the kinds of shopping variety that appeals to all types of shoppers.

"Let's hope that we can retain the small town atmosphere," he says. "I enjoy the parks and recreation facilities that we do have. We are close to Toronto, yet far enough away from its congestion—we have the best of both worlds."

Jim says the future of Milton looks very promising.

"The price of housing and the quality of life are going to increase because Milton is such a desirable place to live," he says. "Milton will always be a desirable place to live—we have a real variety of housing. We didn't have that 10 to 15 years ago."