



An investigation by the Ontario Fire Marshall and Halton Regional Police detectives continues to discover the cause of a blaze that levelled almost half of Country Pete's furniture store on Highway 25 near Five

Sideroad, last Thursday evening. Although firefighters arrived within minutes of receiving the call, the fire was out of control by the time they arrived and continued smoldering for the next 36 hours.

Country Pete's

Fire destroys closed firm

By LINDA KIRBY
Champion Reporter

An investigation by the Ontario Fire Marshall's office and Halton Regional Police detectives has failed to turn up the cause of an estimated \$500,000 blaze that demolished half of Country Pete's Furniture Store on Highway 25 near Five Sideroad Thursday evening.

Arson has not been ruled out, according to fire officials.

The store, which went into receivership June 28, was under the watch of an outside security guard at the time the fire broke out.

Frederick John Titus, a security agent employed by Pinkerton's Security Service, called Milton OPP over his CB radio a few minutes before 9 p.m. when he noticed smoke pouring from the north side roof area of the empty furniture showroom area.

Just one hour earlier, the building had been recorded as secure by the guard, following the departure of a visitor to the business premises, said police.

Police did not disclose the name of the visitor, but confirmed a number of people had entered the building hours before the fire and that police were questioning each of the people.

Although firefighters arrived at the scene within minutes of receiving the call, the fire was burning out of control.

Within a few hours, the front brick wall caved in, reducing the building to a pile of smouldering rubble.

Milton firefighters worked through the night to put out a number of small fires and were called back several times the next day when "hot spots" suddenly started up again.

On the day of the fire, a quantity of furniture had been unloaded into an adjacent furniture storage building.

A fire wall between the two buildings is credited with saving the second building from similar ruin.

Although a quantity of furniture received extensive heat damage, approximately \$50,000 worth of bedroom suites in carton boxes were saved.

Halton Regional Police estimate total damage at approximately \$500,000.

A 24-hour police guard was set up on the premises for most of the weekend to "protect evidence" and keep away sightseers, as police detectives and Ontario Fire Marshall Floyd Rozell made their initial search through the

debris for clues as the fire's cause.

Heading the police investigation is Det. Doug McMillan from the Halton Regional Police criminal investigation bureau in Georgetown.

According to police, the buildings and property were jointly owned by father and son Umberto and Carlos Giangrande.

Public records show the pair hold a \$407,000 mortgage with the Halton Community Credit Union in Milton.

Carlos Giangrande, 26, of Milton, confirmed the property and buildings are insured for approximately \$465,000 plus an additional \$65,000 for "business interruption" (loss of business).

Country Pete's Furniture Store is jointly owned by Mike Roberts of Milton and Dan Mangan of Rockwood. The pair also own a second branch store in Hamilton.

Both businesses went into receivership last month.

At the time of the fire, the two businesses were being managed by Cooper and Lybrand Trustees on behalf of Peter Gignac, former owner of Country Pete's Furniture Store.

Mr. Gignac sold both stores to Mr. Roberts and Mr. Magan last February.

The Canadian Champion

A Metroland Community Newspaper — Serving Milton in its 125th year

VOLUME 122—NUMBER 10

MILTON, ONTARIO, WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 1982

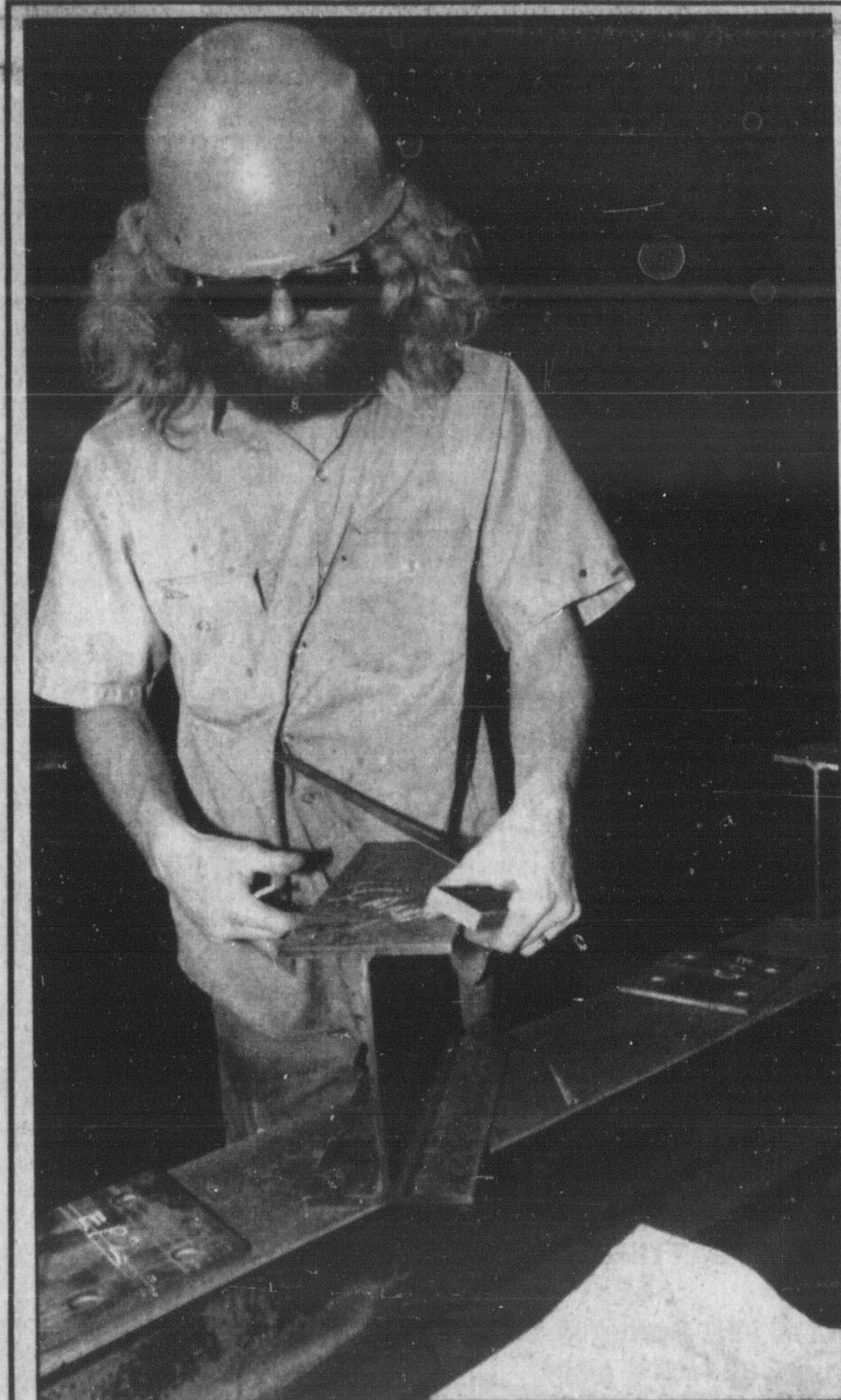
28 PAGES—30 CENTS

Ken Campbell says

Dr. Cole owes parents apology

By STEVE ARNOLD
Champion News Editor

Before Halton Regional council makes an apology to one of its employees, that employee should make a long overdue apology to educators and parents he offended more than five years ago.



Metal workers of various descriptions are getting hard to find in this country but steps are being taken to train for jobs available. Frankel Steel in Milton currently has six apprentices like Peter Cannon (above) learning skills which are in great demand even at a time of high unemployment.

Skilled labor needed

By JANE MULLER
Champion Reporter

Despite an unemployment rate of more than 10 per cent in this country, certain industries cannot find enough skilled laborers to suit their needs.

The situation is ironic but true and is on its way to being remedied through a united effort by government and industry. In Ontario, more than 60 industrial training committees have been organized on the theory of power in numbers.

Since Halton Industrial Training Committee (H.I.T.) was formed one year ago enrolment of apprentices in five areas of skilled labor, identified as critical, has increased by 60

per cent.

This fall there will be 313 apprentices at Sheridan College in Brampton compared with 55 at the same time last year, it was announced at the first annual meeting of H.I.T. Chairman Chuck Morris referred to the increase as "tremendous" and proof that the needs of the future in Canada and Halton can be met.

"This year there will be continued emphasis on getting trainees into courses. To improve these courses we need input from industry," the chairman said at the meeting he called a milestone in H.I.T.'s history.

(Continued on page 2)

According to Rev. Ken Campbell, founder-president of the Renaissance movement, Halton's medical officer of health, Dr. Peter Cole, owes an apology to high school principals and parents he called "paranoid" during a controversy in 1977.

At that time, Rev. Campbell said, Dr. Cole was trying to start a Birth Control Week campaign in Toronto High schools and, rather than seeking approval from the Board of Education for the plan, he went directly to school principals.

When 11 of them refused to take part in the program they were termed "paranoid" by Dr. Cole, employed at that time as director of family planning by the Toronto Board of Health.

Rev. Campbell said his complaint was not with the teaching of birth control methods, but with the moral approach that Dr. Cole would take to such a project.

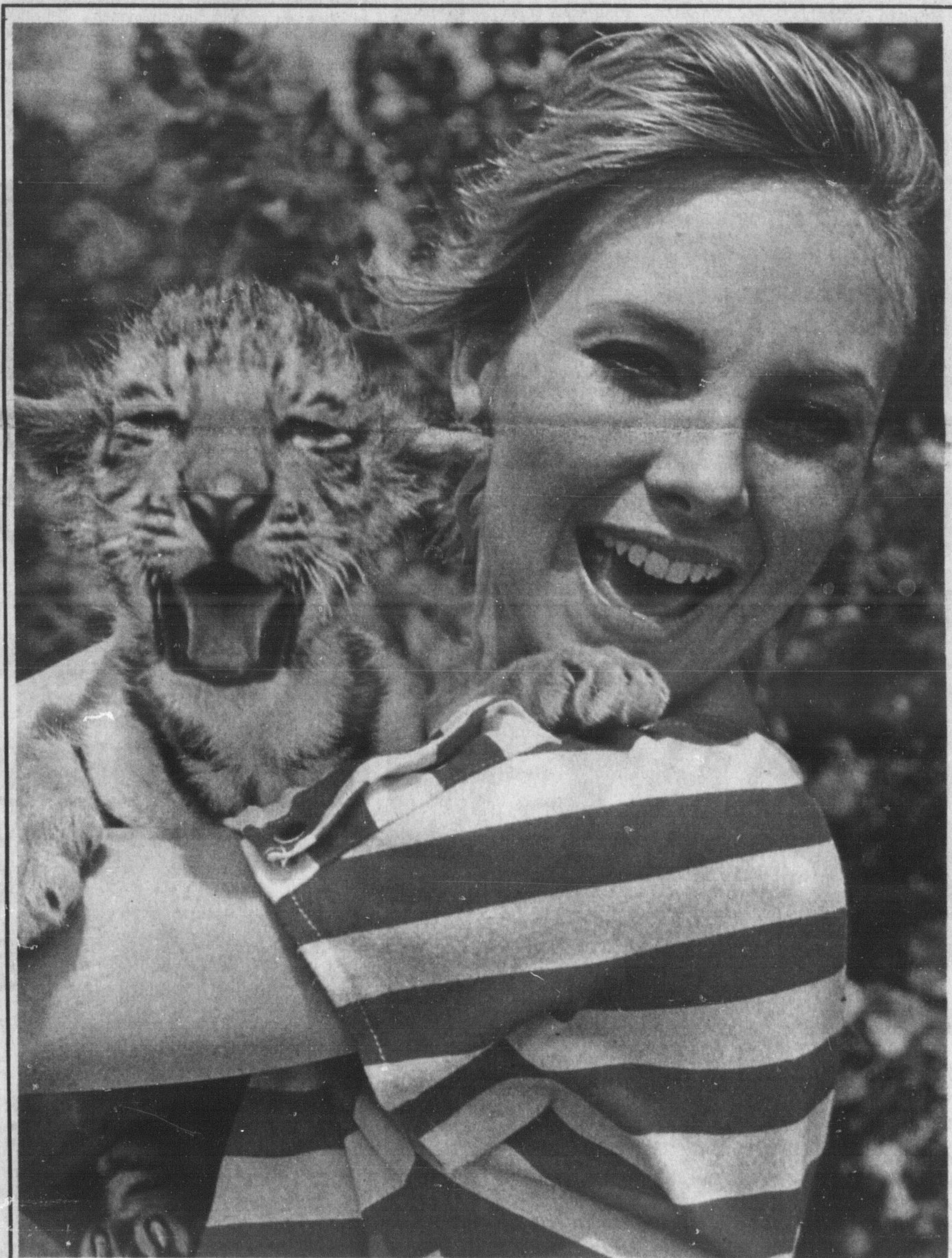
"He wasn't going in to the schools to advocate birth control based on the Judeo-Christian principles of self control, but to advocate birth control based on the assumption that everyone is doing it," he said in a telephone interview.

Rather than teaching school children how to engage in premarital sex without fear of disease or pregnancy, Rev. Campbell said, they should be taught about the value of self control.

Dr. Cole has been under fire recently for allegations that he used strong arm tactics in conducting an inspection of an Acton rest home to ensure that patients were being properly cared for.

Following an investigation of the allegations levelled by Milton Wards and Regional Coun. Bill Johnson, Regional council voted to extend an apology to Dr. Cole for the "unfounded" allegations made against him.

Dr. Cole is currently on vacation and could not be reached for comment on the statements made by Rev. Campbell. Also see Our Readers Write on page 5.



(Champion photo by Murray Rosin)

Catch that tiger!

A tiger cub shows 1981 Sunshine Girl of the Year, Kym Williamson, of Milton, a roaring good time at the African Lion Safari. The cub certainly had something to roar about as this Saturday is Milton day at his home in Rockton where visitors go wild. Discount tickets are available at local

businesses displaying signs for Milton Day at the African Lion Safari sponsored by the Milton Chamber of Commerce. The 500-acre drive through wildlife park features more than a thousand exotic animals and birds.

Champion now narrower width

If you thought there was something different about today's edition of The Canadian Champion, but you couldn't put your finger on it—well, you did, inadvertently.

Following the lead set by the Canadian daily newspaper industry, The Champion has followed suit in narrowing its width by one inch.

A broadsheet, The Champion will remain the same length, but will be narrower, permitting readers improved ease of handling.

Like other newspapers that have narrowed their margins, increased newsprint costs have been cited as the main reason for the move.

Inside today's Champion



Tennis Courts

New tennis courts being constructed for the Milton Tennis Club should be ready for play by the third week in September. For story, see page C3.

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Welfare dad gets cheque

Scraping the painted slogans of protest from his car last week which declared discrimination against male mothers, was a symbolic gesture for Barry Bryant.

For 15 months the Georgetown man has been trying to obtain financial assistance to enable him to stay at home and care for his three-year-old son Kristoffer. The single father's efforts were finally rewarded last week when he received his first welfare cheque.

When he first applied for welfare assistance more than a year ago he was told to find a job and leave Kristoffer at a day care centre but the boy, then two, could not cope in the day care centres where he was placed on a trial basis.

Since that time his father has been fighting for equality which would make him eligible for the same benefits paid to single mothers. With no income except a \$26.91 monthly family allowance cheque, Mr. Bryant has been staying with his mother who has provided a home for him and his son.

Mr. Bryant says he does not know why his local welfare office is now paying him benefits he was told several months ago he was not eligible for, but suggests the turn about has something to do with a change in family benefits legislation which introduced father's allowance July 1.

Although the cash has finally started to flow, Mr. Bryant feels he should be compensated for the 15 months he has been without an income. He will meet the welfare division of the Ministry of Community and Social Services in Ontario Supreme Court September 8 in an attempt to obtain back payments he feels are due to him.