



# Weekend Champion



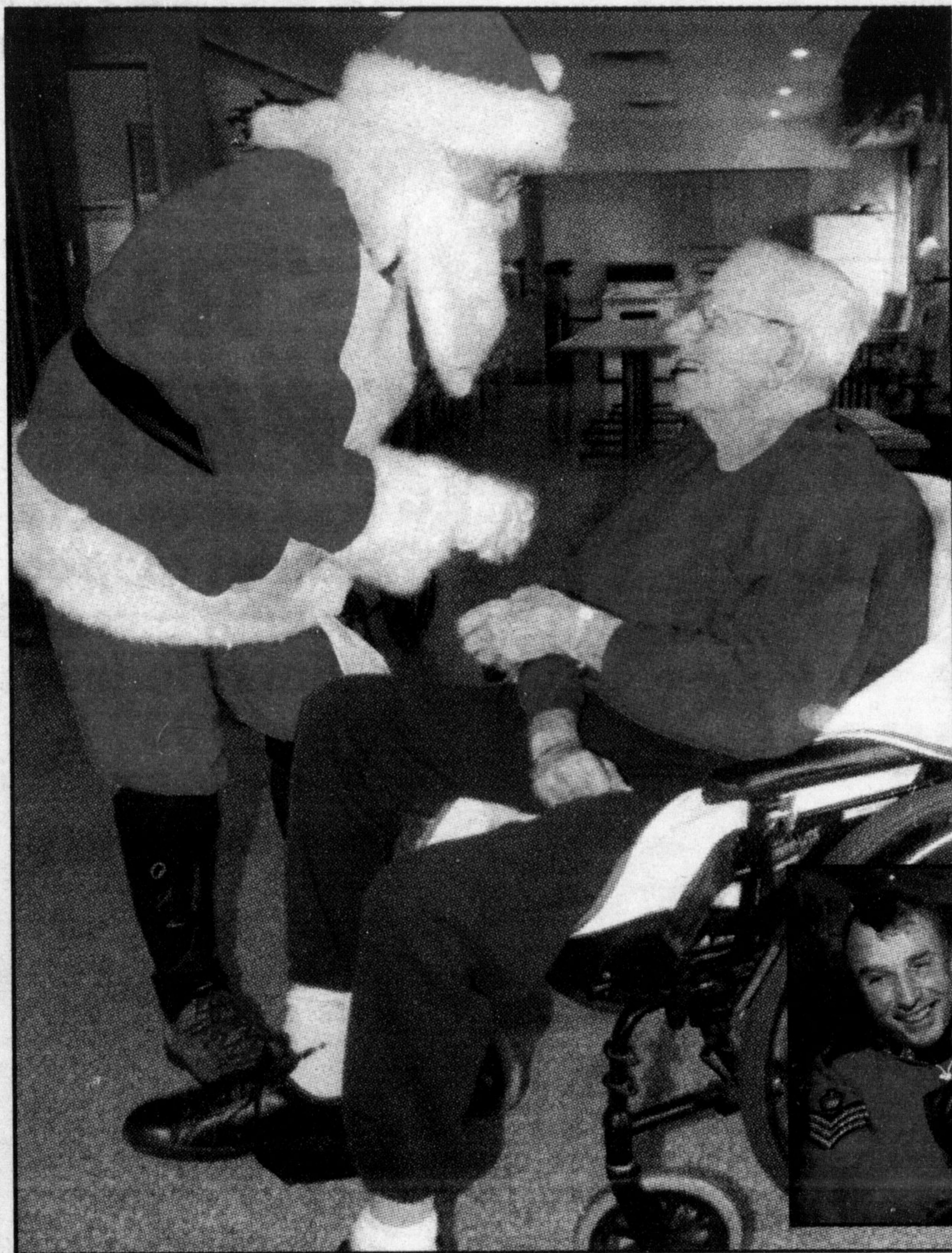
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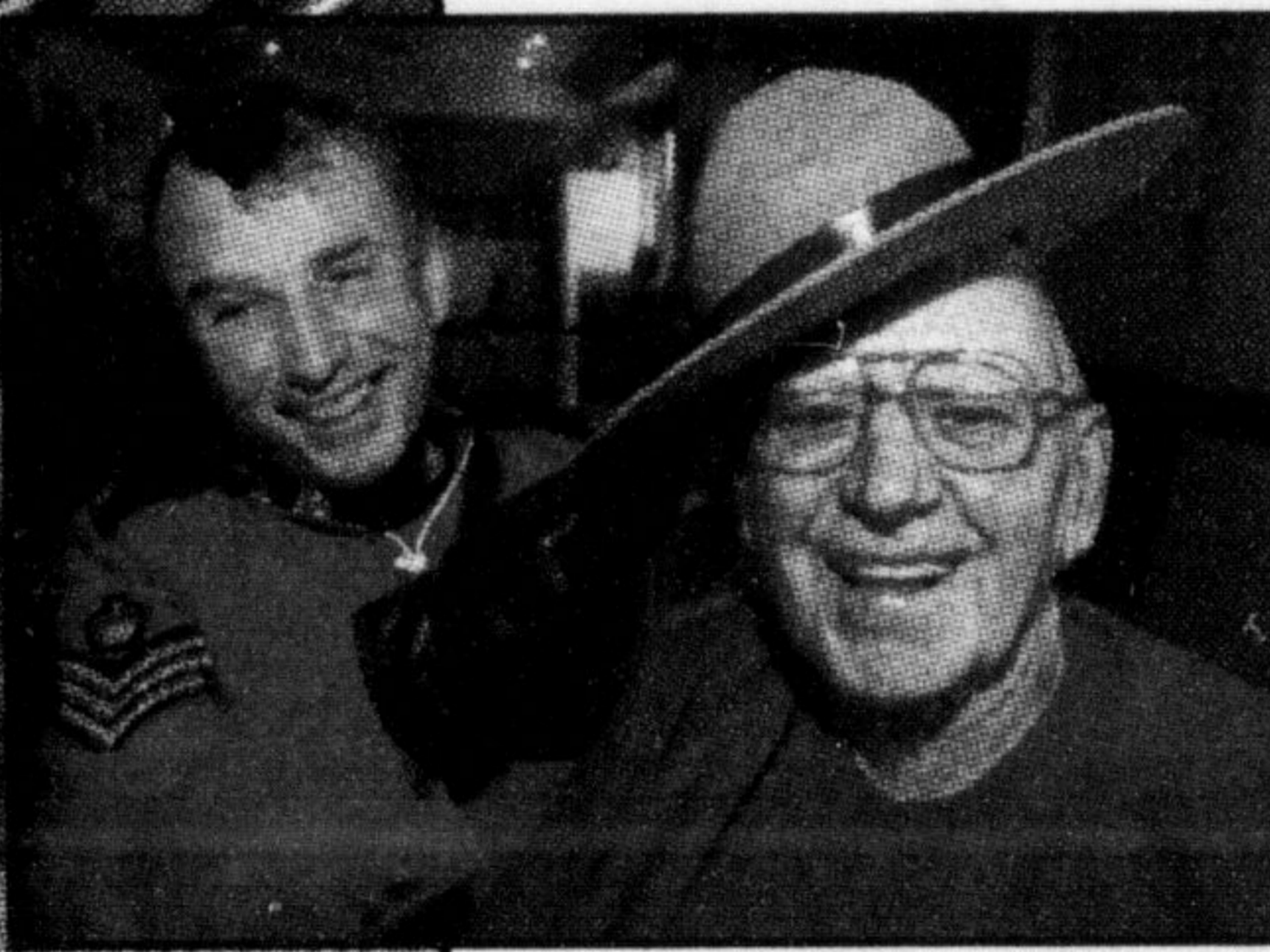
75¢ (GST included)



## Special visitors

The RCMP and Santa Claus made their fourth annual Christmas visit to the patients and staff of Milton District Hospital Tuesday morning. Santa handed out candies to patients like 78-year-old Don Martin, who also enjoyed another thrill of trying on Mountie Sgt. Len Lanza's Stetson.

Photos by  
GRAHAM PAINE



## Council wants closer look at property deal

By BRAD REAUME  
*The Champion*

Town council has deferred consideration of allowing a second house on an Eighth Line property pending a broad investigation.

Property owner Tony Martins built a new home on the 15-acre parcel, council heard last week, with the promise that an existing home would be torn down upon completion of construction.

He has not torn down the home and now wants to use it to house farm help, council heard. Neighbours advised council that another building on the property is already used for that purpose.

Council heard Mr. Martins farms an additional 125 acres in another location. He operates an intensive market garden from the Eighth Line location, according to senior planner Anne Bouck.

Mr. Martins had previously applied to operate a slaughterhouse, Ms Bouck said. She added Mr. Martins had applied for a land severance in 1991 and appealed to the Ontario Municipal Board, but never scheduled a hearing on the matter.

Halton's health department is concerned about operating two homes on

water services only meant for one.

In addition, Mr. Martins was not assessed development charges for the new home because it was expected to be merely replacing the first house.

Ms Bouck suggested a temporary use bylaw be adopted to allow for the use of the original house.

However she said that use would have to wait until the regional health department provided clearance on the water issue and some deal was struck on development charges. Council heard full development charges would be just over \$10,000.

Councillor Brian Penman wanted to know how much of the property is currently covered with buildings. According to Ms Bouck about 10 per cent of the 15 acre parcel is covered.

A solicitor representing Mr. Martins said he was amenable to the temporary use arrangement. It was evident from his comments that the issue of development charges would have to be negotiated. Councillor Rick Day said he wanted some resolution of the development charges issue before proceeding with the temporary use bylaw. Mr. Penman said other issues should be addressed, such as a concern about the perception left with residents when the house remains standing despite an agreement.

## Laughter, criticism at board's final meeting

By TIM WHITNELL  
*Special to The Champion*

A lot of serious, sincere words, some laughter, almost a few tears, a couple of thinly-veiled digs and one overt blast of criticism essentially summed up the comments of trustees as the Halton Board of Education met for the last time.

The 17 public board trustees who showed up last week for the final meeting of their often-tumultuous, three-year term said their thank-yous or good-byes before the usual 60 or so audience members, many of them teachers.

Three of the trustees — Sheila Flook, Debbie Marklew and Ethel Gardiner — will return to duty early next year as elected members of the new district school board.

The recent teachers' strike, the subsequent board grievance against the teachers' unions, the various conflict of interest legal fees' debates, controversial school closures, lengthy budget talks, sometimes adversarial contract negotiations with teaching

groups and general philosophical differences on education were the wellspring of many of the trustees' final comments.

Board chair Linda Glover, a four-term trustee, spoke last. She concluded the various boards she served on succeeded for the most part despite trying circumstances like reduced government funding.

"Most changes we made were good for kids, despite the expense," said Ms Glover, who then went on a chronological journey of mostly crises in education during her tenure.

"We got 300 (staff) hired with government help, then came the Social Contract and we managed to get through it with five per cent teaching staff reductions then the shifting of costs to local taxpayers and school boards took the blame."

Tim Kingsbury of Milton was perhaps the most upbeat trustee, heaping effusive praise on board administrative staff. "I've worked for seven different companies and our staff are simply the best I've dealt with. You know I think we have the best

financial mind on the planet and the best (education) director in the country," he said of senior board officials Wayne McNally and Dusty Papke.

One trustee who openly slammed the board was Burlington's Sandy Van Harten, who noted she wasn't going to speak but felt compelled to do so.

"This is the most mean-spirited board in the province. It was not my intent as a member of this board to bash anyone. I've had three kids go through this board." The longest serving trustee, Halton Hills' Dick Howitt, congratulated Ms Glover on a "job well done in trying times."

Mr. Howitt added levity to the wrap-up proceedings by offering his own Top 7 reasons — Bill 160 reductions shrunk a potential Top 10 list, he joked — to look forward to life after being a trustee. Two of his more satiric observations were: No. 5 — "Time to focus on real estate closings rather than on school closings"; No. 1 — "I will be able to sleep with my favourite teacher (wife) without having a conflict of interest."

### NEWSLINES

#### Free Glen Eden skiing

Grade 5 students can send away for free skiing and snowboarding passes to Glen Eden.

The 5th Grade Ski and Snowboarding Passport Program is offered to introduce children — and parents — to winter snow sports.

The program will begin January 5. Call (905) 677-2055.

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