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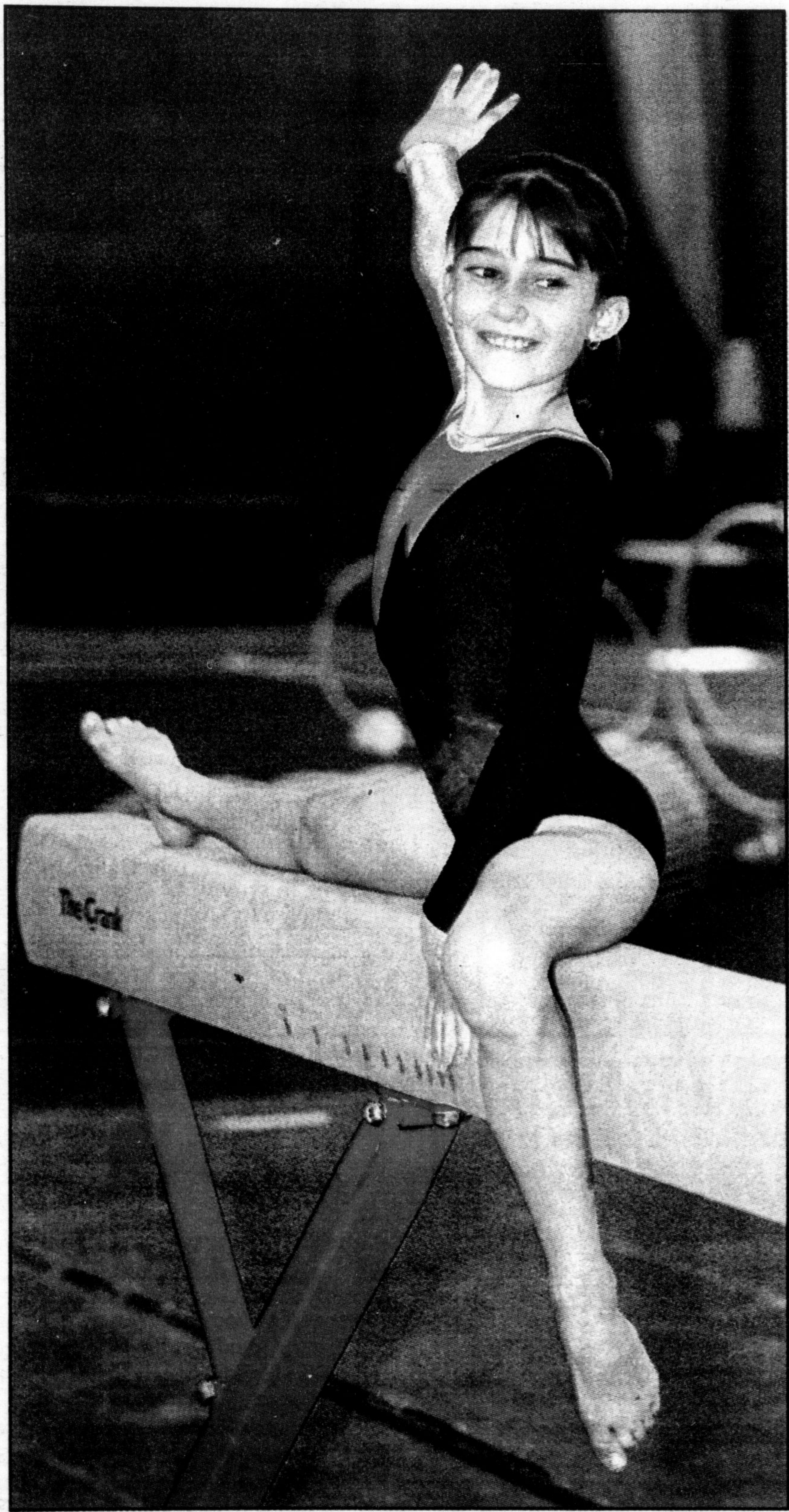


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Strutting her stuff

Eleven-year-old Christina Shipowick showcases her beam routine Sunday during the Milton Springers' Gymstrada at E.C. Drury High School. The event featured performances by both competitive and pre-competitive gymnasts. For more Gymstrada photos, see page 18.

Many guns like murder weapon, defence argues

By IRENE GENTLE
 Special to the Champion

A killer stood behind a wooden outhouse and fired at least four bullets into it, a firearms expert told a Milton court.

Four spent cartridge shells and two unfired bullets were found behind the outhouse of Fred Sheppard, 77.

Mr. Sheppard's bullet-torn body was found in the outhouse of his Steeles Avenue property in early March, 1995.

Police board proposes hike of 8 per cent

By HOWARD MOZEL
 Special to The Champion

After being painted a dismal picture of life on the force thanks to a budget freeze, the Halton Regional Police Services Board has endorsed an 8.3 per cent hike.

Chief Peter Campbell and his staff were directed by regional council to develop the freeze scenario — or \$3 million in cuts — and last week the board was confronted with the layoffs, low morale, service reductions and more that would result.

"If we do this ... we gut this organization," said Chief Campbell, who stated clearly he would not recommend the reductions. "If we did some really draconian things, that's what we'd come to."

All but one board member, John Taylor, voted in favour of the \$43.5 million budget which — without

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Keith Madeley, 25, a former boyfriend of Mr. Sheppard's granddaughter Lori, is charged with the murder.

Firearms expert Finn Nielson, formerly of the Centre for Forensic Sciences, told the court the bullets were likely fired from a .22 long calibre rifle such as a Lakefield 64B.

Mr. Madeley purchased a Lakefield 64B .22 calibre semi-automatic in late 1994.

The unfired bullets found by the outhouse were of the same type as unfired bullets found at the Gagnon residence, where Mr. Madeley had been living at the time of the murder, and up until his April arrest. In contrast, court heard that the bullets could not have come from a .22 calibre Mossberg owned by Fred Sheppard.

"Just as we all have fingerprints, so do all firearms have their own individuality," said Mr. Nielson.

Mr. Nielson testified that sawed-off gun parts, including the butt and stock of a .22 found in a remote region of the Gagnon property, could also have come from a Lakefield 64B.

In cross-examination, defence lawyer Dirk Derstine argued that the rifle owned by the accused is one of the most popular weapons in Canada, and the bullets and gun parts could have come from any rifle of that make.

"At the centre we used to refer to them jokingly as Canada's favourite murder and suicide weapon because we saw them so often," agreed Mr. Nielson.

In other testimony, Brian Gagnon, son-in-law of Fred Sheppard, appeared confused and nervous during his cross-examination Monday.

Mr. Gagnon seemed reluctant to answer questions as to whether his wife Susan had expressed to him a dislike of her father's longtime live-in companion, Pearl Johnston.

In previous testimony, Ms Gagnon told the court she disliked Ms Johnston because she believed the woman had run through her father's bank account and then left

• see OFFENCE on page 4



NEWSLINES

Meals on Wheels needs help

Milton's Meals on Wheels desperately needs volunteers.

The non-profit organization is looking for both drivers — for Wednesday, Thursday and Friday deliveries — and volunteers to serve food to seniors in apartment buildings on Thursdays.

All volunteer positions run from 11 to 12:30 p.m. If you can help out, call Mary Cooke at 878-6639.

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