

New home for Chamber

• from CHAMBER on page 5

She said the two children's centres, which provide programs and services for kids and parents, will likely find one united location in the near future.

The United Way of Milton, currently located in the Halton Community Credit Union building on Main Street, will also move to the tourist centre, Ms Reynolds said.

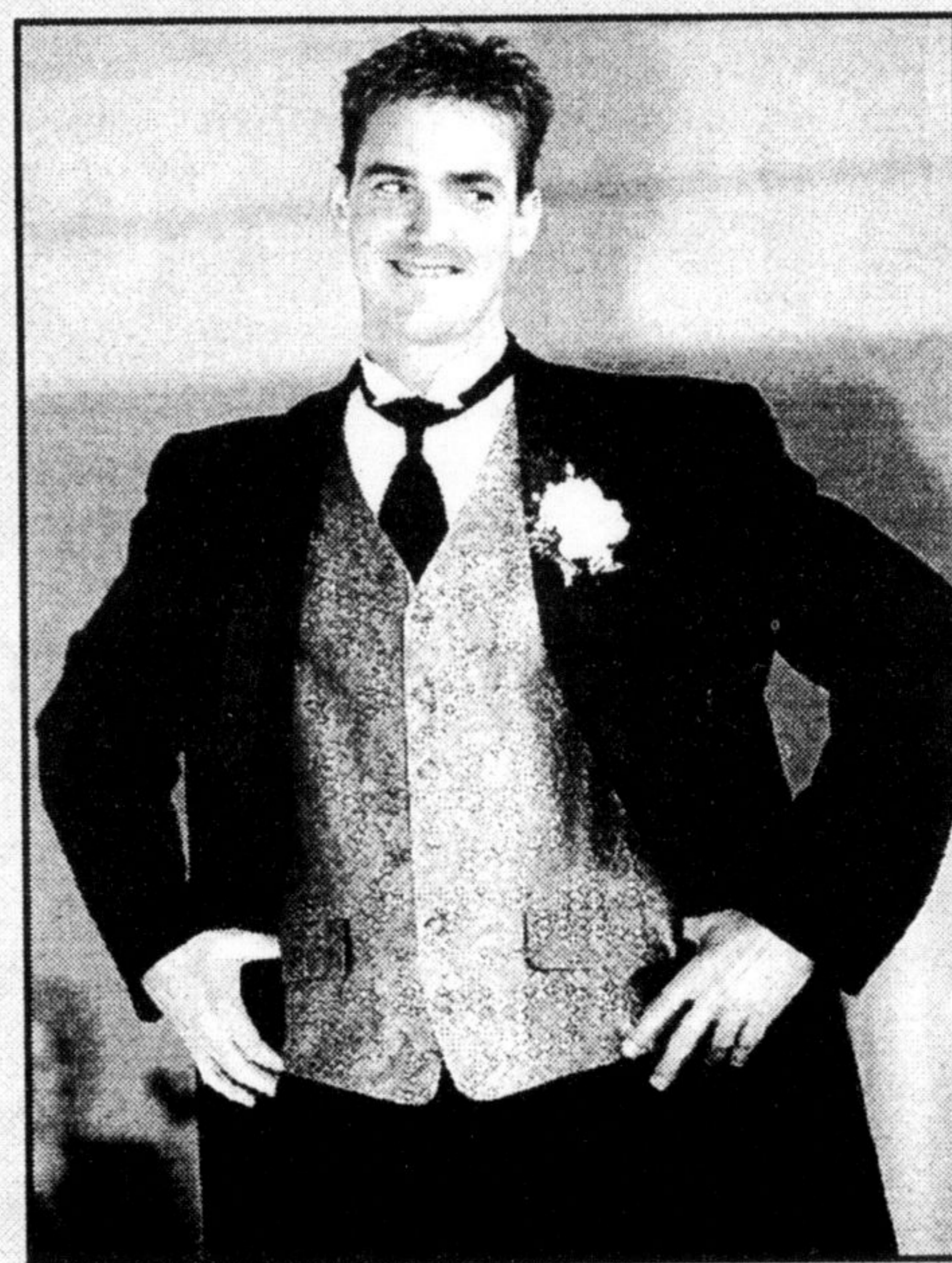
Meanwhile, the Chamber has signed a five-year lease at its new location, the former home of the Halton Regional Health

Department, Ms Martin said.

The group representing 389 businesses will move into about 1,000 square feet of space on the main floor.

Due to the move, the Chamber offices at Chris Hadfield Park will be closed as of Wednesday and will reopen at the new location Easter Monday, April 13.

The Chamber was located on Bronte Street until 1974 when it moved to Steeles Avenue and Martin Street and began operating a tourist centre.



What to wear on the big day

Future brides and grooms got ideas on what to wear during and after their walk down the aisle Sunday afternoon during the Bridal Show at Milton Leisure Centre. The event, sponsored by Patrick Event Planning, featured men's, women's and children's formal wear plus travel outfits and honeymoon lingerie.

Photos by GRAHAM PAINE

Malbouef, ratepayers group ready for round two

By STEVE LeBLANC

Special to The Champion

Rick Malbouef will once again go to bat for a reduced municipal council, only this time he'll have support waiting in the on-deck circle.

The Ward 2 and 4 regional councillor is fairly certain a decision will be reached when the downsizing issue returns to town council Monday night.

While his first bid met mainly with deep-seated opposition from highly defensive colleagues, Mr. Malbouef hasn't abandoned hope just yet.

"I don't see how they (opposing councillors) can delay or defer this again," the first-term councillor said.

"Some councillors have been quite defensive about downsizing and I don't expect to change their minds, but I would hope the other new councillors (Cindy Lunau and Lieven Gevaert) would support it, as should others who campaigned for it during the election.

"I'm hoping as many interested people as possible attend Monday's meeting."

Milton Ratepayers support move

Supporting Mr. Malbouef's plea for fewer elected representatives is the Milton Ratepayers Association — who've advocated such a move since their 1996 formation.

Spokesperson Pat Kelly said that he feels council should be pared down to seven mem-



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PAT KELLY

bers; one town councillor for each of Milton's four wards plus two regional councillors and the mayor.

Presently council includes the mayor, two regional councillors and eight municipal councillors, two for each ward.

"Toronto's municipal government has one councillor per 39,000 citizens while Milton has one per 3,200 citizens. We feel this is just too many representatives, especially in a town that isn't growing," remarked Mr. Kelly.

It's a trend

With Burlington having already reduced its council and Oakville and Halton Hills considering the same move, the Ratepayers Association questions why Milton council is so reluctant to follow such a "highly supported" trend.

"Through our surveys we couldn't find anyone who didn't believe we have too much government. Is everyone else really wrong and Milton council right in its views on downsizing?" the Ratepayers Association questions in a three-page

letter to Mayor Gord Krantz and councillors.

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Downsizing, the Milton Ratepayers contend, would not only equal cost savings directly related to councillors' salaries but through reduced staff and consulting demands as well.

Councillors overtaxed

The idea that remaining councillors would have to assume fulltime duty to offset responsibilities does not hold water with the taxpayers watchdog group.

Said Mr. Kelly, "Burlington moved to full-time politicians but it is our understanding that none of these people gave up their full time private enterprise jobs.

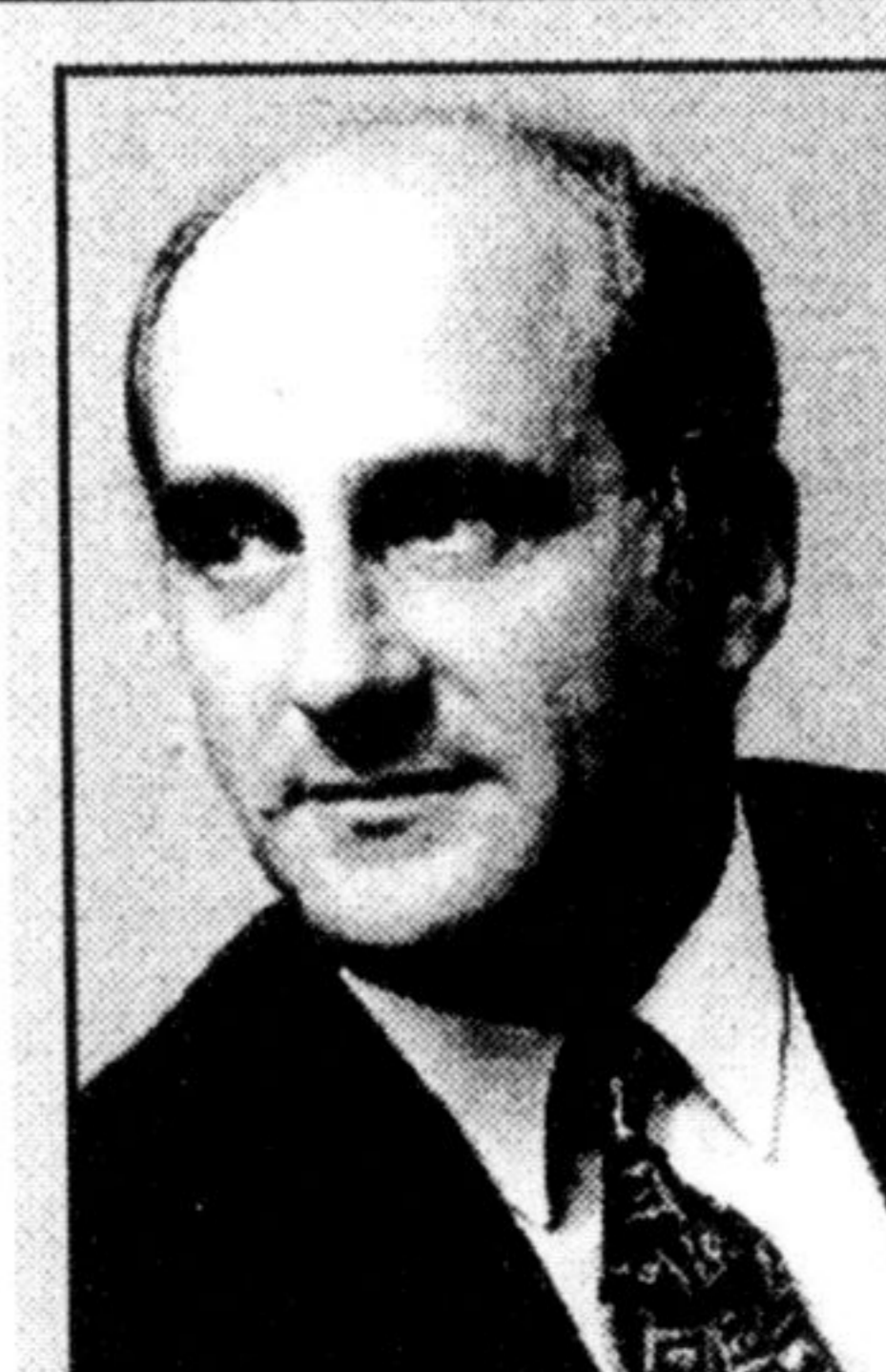
"With the exception of regional daytime meetings this suggests to us that in the case of Burlington councillors this is still at best a good paying part-time job."

Some councillors — when challenging the reduced council bid — have stated they are already overtaxed by committee work, which would become even more time consuming should their ranks be trimmed.

Mr. Kelly said his group doesn't buy this notion either.

Since its inception the Milton Ratepayers Association has charted councillors' duties and members "aren't impressed" with their attendance records.

In their letter the group suggests councillors are often no more than observers on these com-



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mittees because they are not personally involved in the related activities.

Mr. Kelly said moving towards one ward, one councillor representation would not compromise democracy and any claims that it would be "ridiculous."

Council's excessive use of in-camera sessions, he said, is the real stumbling block to a truly democratic system.

Represented by Mr. Kelly and president Paul Scherer, the Milton Ratepayers Association will reiterate these views Monday night.

Debate continues

The downsizing debate will follow what Mr. Kelly feels is a redundant update on the Halton Urban Restructuring Plan (HUSP).

"How many meetings do they need on HUSP, which can't go ahead until the developers put in their money," slammed Mr. Kelly.

"What a joke."