



COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Two zip for gov't

Score two for entrenched government and zero for public will during the course of the last week in Milton.

Not that we expected anything different.

Joyce Savoline, the chair of Halton Region, was on hand locally doing damage control after surrendering to the provincial government over the chlorine issue. Mayor Gord Krantz backed her up, emphasizing that while it was tough luck that Milton lost this one, not much could be done and it was time to run up the white flag.

Also at Milton council, the status quo will prevail, with more than enough councillors to go around, despite the efforts of newcomer Rick Malboeuf to trim the bureaucratic sails a little.

A modest tip of the hat to Wally Hunter and John Challinor, however, for their futile attempt to cut back councillor pay. This is a wrong-headed approach, but their hearts seemed to be in the right place.

On the chlorine issue, Ms Savoline made certain she underscored the point that Halton Region had never passed a resolution supporting chlorination of Milton water. Big deal. They weren't exactly leading the fight against it, either. That was up to Jane and John Q. Citizen, thank you very much.

With regard to Milton council size, municipal politicians decided bigger was better. The implicit argument here is that there is more than enough important work to go around for everyone. That would be a strong rationale if everybody on council was equally willing and able to apply themselves to such weighty matters. But they are not.

A smaller, solid nucleus would have been better, even if they got paid more money. Money isn't really the issue here, since it doesn't matter much one way or the other at this government level.

Speaking of representation on panels and such, tokenism appears to be on display at the Halton District School Board, which will admit to students to its deliberations — the public ones anyway, not the closed-door sessions.

Clearly, if one has read the report published in last Friday's paper, some trustees have already adopted a condescending view of the student-representatives, fretting that two on the board could be "double the work (Burlington's Sheila Flook)."

Is it any surprise, though, that trustees such as Ms Flook express skepticism? Would you let high school students take part in management meetings for your organization? Apparently this is fallout from Bill 160. It is also a nonsensical proposition.

Since teenagers can vote, perhaps one or two of them should be made members of Premier Mike Harris' cabinet as well.

Or, at least Milton council.

Rob Kelly

A thought for awards

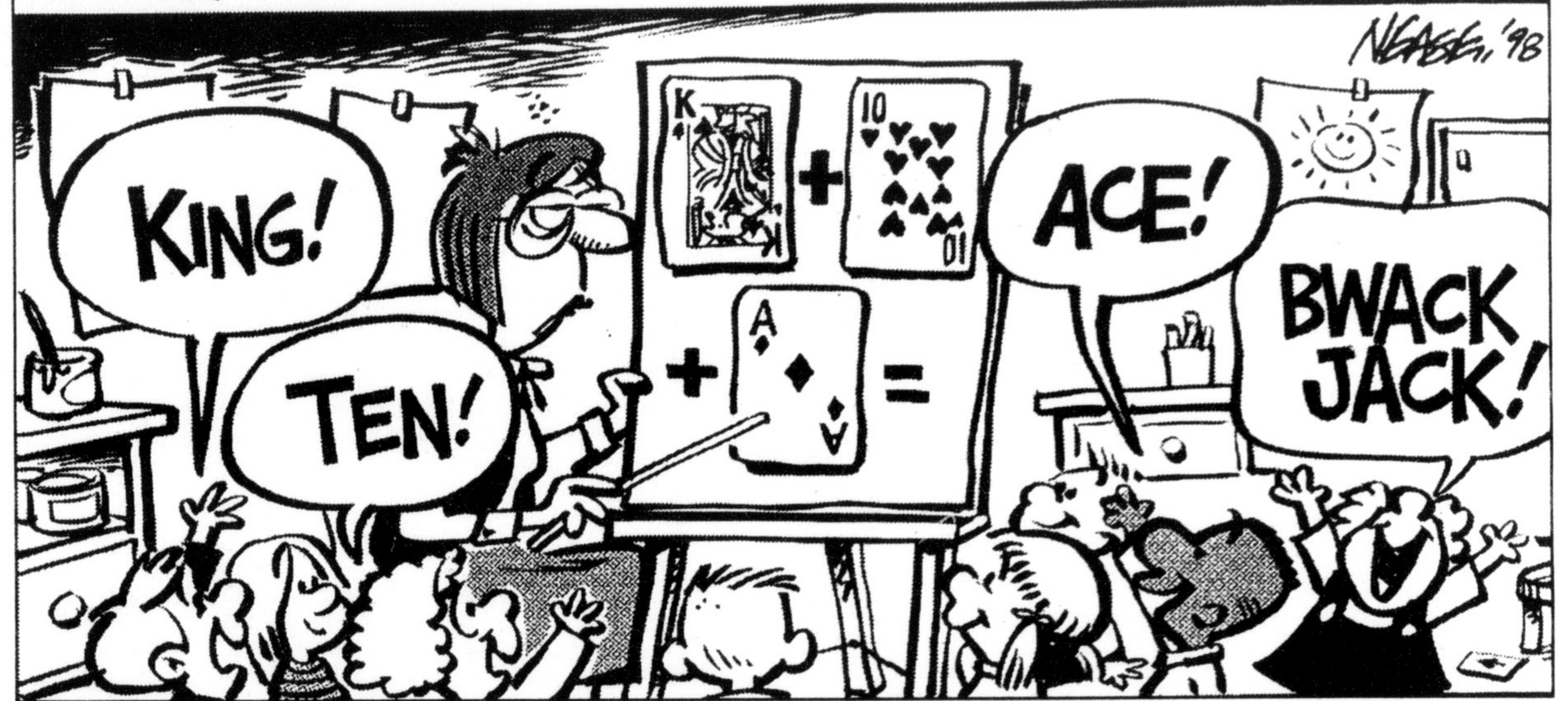
The next time nominations for the Chamber of Commerce annual awards come up, somebody should keep in mind the contributions made by the local Jr. A hockey club.

Granted, it is not a volunteer organization nor one built around non-profit work. But is one of the premiere clubs in its competition category from an athletic perspective. It is also well and responsibly run, a source of civic pride and, perhaps most importantly, a solid conduit to higher education for some players.

The Milton Merchants send student-athletes to some of the best American universities. These kids are scouted by the schools because Milton is a powerhouse team. It is also worth noting that Merchant management puts heavy emphasis on academic development through university scholarships.

Milton sits poised to compete for the provincial championship. Next spring, the Merchants should be a lock for some sort of community award, as well.

R. K.



OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Reader comes down on Reed over Liberal flag vote in House

(The following letter was sent to Halton MP Julian Reed and a copy was filed with The Champion.)

Dear Mr. Reed:

I have read with interest the copies of letters from the Johnson family and your reply in the March 24 issue of The Canadian Champion.

Like the Johnsons, my husband and I were appalled to see the Liberal party, with the exception of only two members, vote with the Bloc on the Canadian flag issue.

Here is a party whose main objective is to separate the Province of Quebec from Canada, and the Liberals have the audacity to side with them on such an important matter.

How do you rationalize casting your lot with such traitors? In true political fashion you attempt to justify the actions of the Liberal party by citing an incident with the Reform member from Medicine Hat, which of course based on your version of the story was wrong and should have been dealt with immediately.

But it was in no way an excuse for your vote. The question put to you was very simple. Does the Canadian flag have a place in the House of Parliament?

The answer was apparent to the vast majority of us out here — a most empathetic yes. This flag belongs anywhere in this country, including Quebec.

The Bloc must still be gloating -- for they had their way with you Liberals once again. I must admit, though, I found some comfort at the party's expense while watching the closing ceremonies of the recent Winter Olympics.

The Separatists must have really got their knickers in a knot when they saw our athletes from all provinces carrying that huge flag, obviously with enormous pride.

Your attempt to portray yourself as a proud Canadian falls short of the mark. In future, Mr. Reed, on issues as fundamental as our Canadian flag, don't consult with the Bloc, randomly call some of your constituents for the correct answers.

Elizabeth Harrison
Milton

Today's education system has abandoned our children

Dear Editor:

It was quite a long time ago that we stopped saying the Lord's Prayer in all of our schools, and at the same time stopped teaching Christian values.

We did this because we are "nice" Canadians and did not want to offend people of other religions. We love our neighbours.

Unfortunately, at this time there was an economic decline and parents found it necessary for both to work. Tired parents, with television providing an easy way to keep the children quiet, meant that the necessary teaching of knowing right from wrong was not done.

We "nice" Canadians are now scratching our heads wondering why we have gang warfare in our schools.

It is not only Richard Hodgins who is (and I quote) "standing in hell," but all who have allowed our education system to abandon our children.

Rodney T. Ramsden
Milton

Pud

by Steve Nease

