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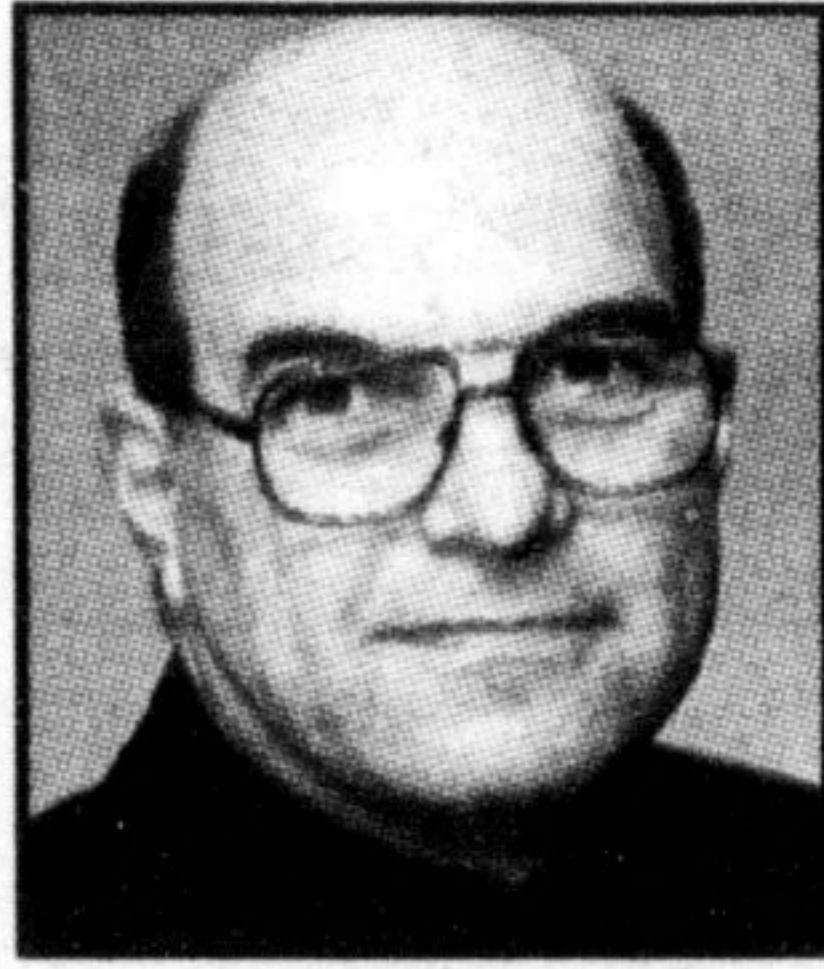
28 Pages

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Deoni is in court

Catholic school Trustee Joe Deoni will return to court July 13 after making a brief appearance yesterday.

Mr. Deoni, 59, of Steeles Avenue, who faces a fraud charge, was remanded to July 13 in Ontario Court (provincial division) to set a trial date.



Joe Deoni

Mr. Deoni's lawyer told the court he's still waiting for full disclosure of evidence in the case. Acclaimed last fall to the position of Milton school trustee (English) from the Halton Catholic District School Board, Mr. Deoni was charged in March with fraud over \$5,000.

The charge alleges that Mr. Deoni took approximately \$43,000 from Industrial Ceramics Ltd. on Nipissing Road, where he worked on contract as a bookkeeper from 1992 to 1997.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Spring sack shuffle

Leanne Eppinger and son Malcolm, 4, hobble their way to the finish line in one of the sack races featured at Saturday's Martin Street Spring Fling.

Council moves cautiously over Mohawk casino

By BRAD REAUME

The Champion

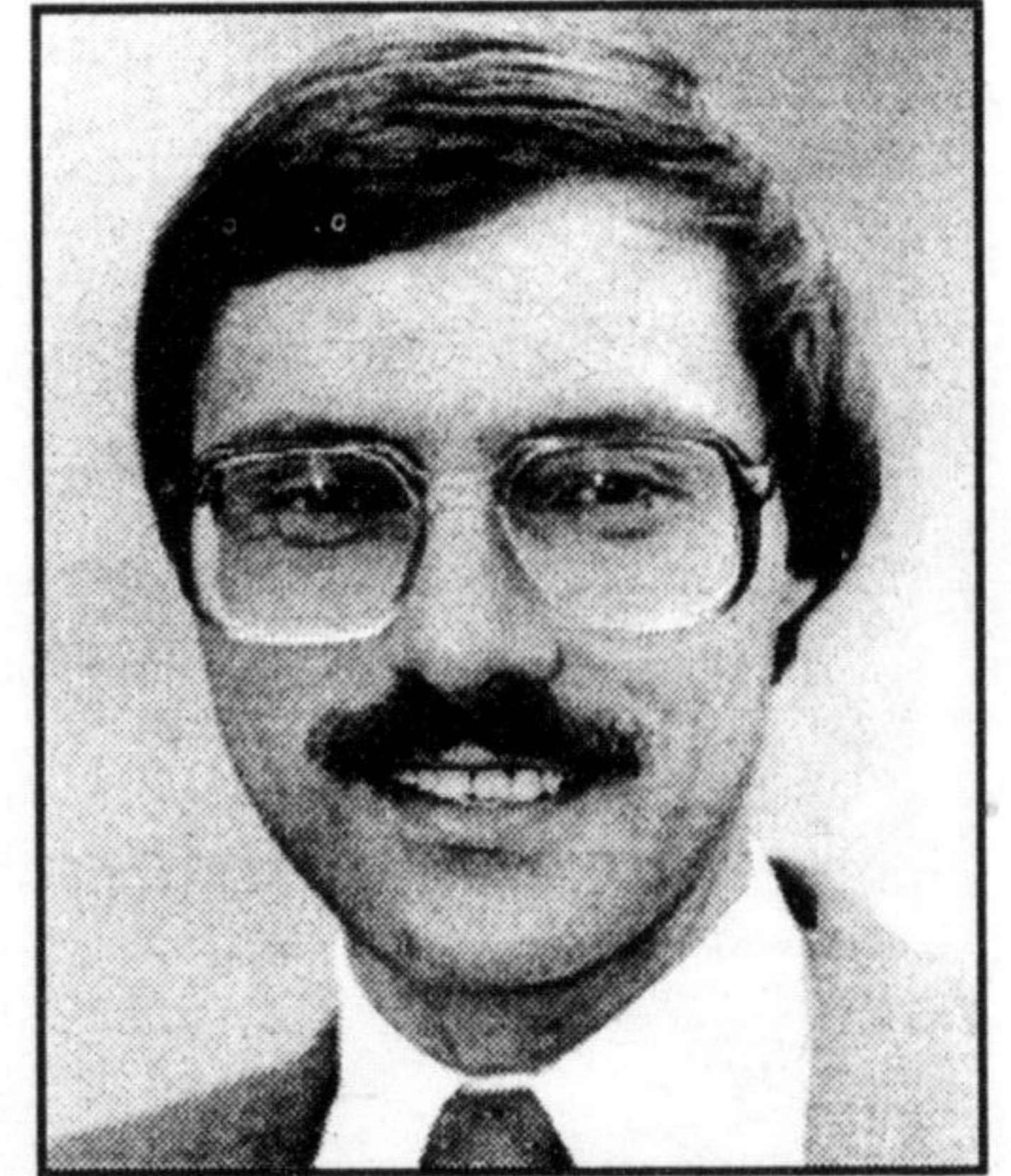
In a 5-3 vote Monday Milton council has decided to consider proposals for a charity casino, with the understanding there is still an option to say no.

At issue is the formula for distributing the casino proceeds and the potential loss of bingo profits, which currently go to local charities. There was some concern that casino proceeds would not be as substantial as bingo profits.

Evidence suggests that bingo attendance will drop if a local casino opens.

"It worries me if local schools or the hospital aren't eligible," said Jim Leworthy, representing the Milton Bingo Charities Association. "They are already in a number crunch."

Mr. Leworthy asked council to defer the issue for three weeks, saying nobody was in a position to make a decision so early in the process. Councillors explained that approval of Milton being a casino site would simply begin the process, and no final decision was being made. All charities which have provincially recognized non-profit status are eligible to receive funds, according to Rick Dykstra of Ontario's Gaming Secretariat.



Ron Furik

While all charities in Ontario will benefit, charities in the host municipality get a larger proportion of the gaming proceeds, Mr. Dykstra explained. In addition the municipality itself gets an additional payment to spend as it sees fit, he said.

Some councillors wanted clarification on the complex method for distributing proceeds. Hard numbers are not possible to obtain because payments are based on percentages of profit and per capita payments to charities.

The need for approval stems from the provincial government plan to introduce 36 permanent and eight temporary charity casinos in Ontario. The plan requires the approval of each host municipality.

Before Monday's meeting only 15 municipalities across the province had agreed to host a casino while more than 200 have voted against the idea. Ontario has more than 600 municipalities.

Mr. Dykstra said the old system of roving Monte Carlos produced only about 10 per cent of the anticipated profits from the new casinos.

With council approval the Ontario Jockey Club will put forward a plan to open a charity casino at Mohawk Raceway, which would be operated by cruise line Carnival Hotels and Casinos.

Florida based Carnival runs Casino Rama near Orillia and was selected by the province to be one of eight operators. Steven Kates of Carnival was on hand to explain their approach to the

• see CASINO on page 20

NEWSLINES

Fun in the park

Family fun will be featured at Victoria Park during the Milton Community Resource Centre's annual fundraiser tomorrow.

The organization will host the Family Fun Fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Town Hall park.

The event will feature puppet and magic shows by Jimbo the Clown and special visits from Barney and Winnie the Pooh.

Games, crafts, raffle and a silent auction will also be featured. Refreshments will include a barbecue lunch and sweets in the tea room.

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