

# The Canadian Champion

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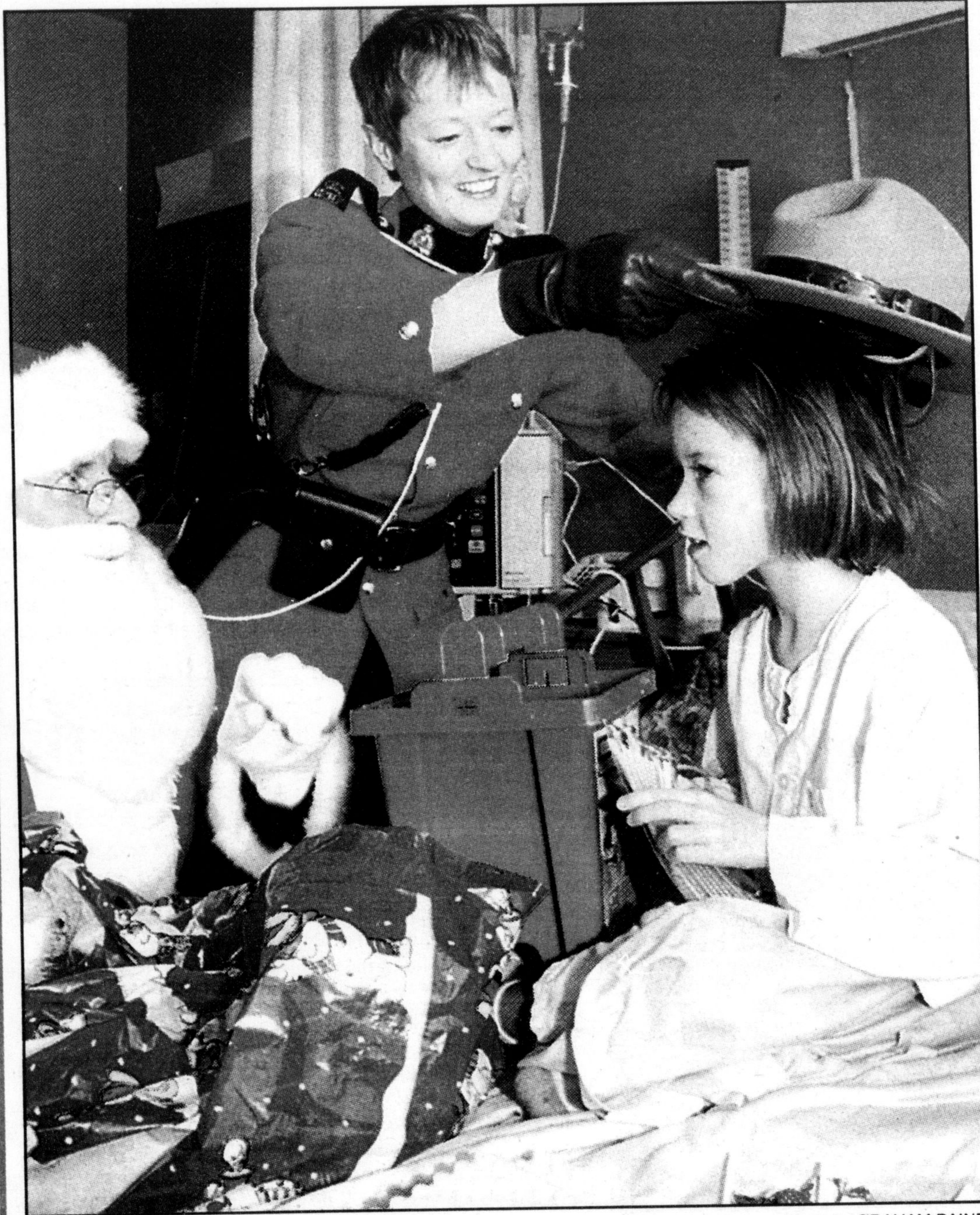


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## Hats off

Santa looks on as seven-year-old Jessica Laird tries RCMP Constable Lorna Murphy's hat on for size during the course of the force's annual holiday visit to Milton District Hospital.

## Money for Y2K problem

Milton District Hospital will get \$632,101 from the provincial government to help cope with any computer problems associated with the transition to the year 2000.

The so-called Y2K problem is widely feared to potentially compromise all sorts of computer networks and individual machines, since the year ends with two zeroes and many data banks already have a year on

file (1900) ending the same way.

The money is part of a package worth almost \$400 million aimed at preserving the integrity of health system computers after January, 2000.

Milton's sister hospital, Oakville Trafalgar Memorial, will get approximately \$3 million to cope, while Burlington's Joseph Brant is getting \$2.5 million.

## Milton cut in on action from slots

By IRENE GENTLE

*The Champion*

A deal between the Province and 12 municipalities with horse racing has paved the way for Mohawk Raceway to add slot machines. That should translate into a cool \$1.8 million for Milton, according to Ontario Jockey Club estimates.

Up to 1,200 slots could be operating at Mohawk by next June.

Under terms of the agreement, Milton will receive five per cent of the proceeds from the first 450 slot machines at Mohawk, and two per cent for each machine after that, to help pay for spinoff costs such as policing and road repair.

The horse racing industry will receive 20 per cent of slot proceeds.

The Town's portion of the money will likely also be used to cover losses incurred by non-profit groups if interest in their charity bingos dwindles.

Council will decide how the money is allotted some time in the new year.

### Slots appropriate for race tracks

The agreement contained a provincial zoning order stating that slots are an appropriate land use for race tracks.

That should put an end to a Milton Ratepayer Association's appeal on the issue to the Ontario Municipal Board, which was scheduled for next year, according to Bryan Hill of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

"The zoning order over-rides the local zoning bylaw," he said.

That was news to Pat Kelly, who filed the appeal.

"So when do I get my \$125 back?" he joked.

### What's the deal? asks Kelly

Mr. Kelly said that though he is happy Milton will rake in some of the proceeds from the slots, he has questions on the nuts and bolts of the deal.

"Does this money go straight to the municipal government or does (Halton) Region have a say?" he asked. "What's the rest of the deal?"

If he is unsatisfied, Mr. Kelly said he won't let the matter rest.

"We're stuck with it now but if we don't like it, we'll go to our MPP."

Councillor John Challinor said that he is "very pleased" with the agreement.

"I'm not at all surprised by this. I think the government has always bargained in

good faith with municipalities in terms of charity casinos," he said.

"I always knew they'd come back to the table and they did."

The deal is a win-win situation for both

Milton and Mohawk Raceway, he said.

"Mohawk pays almost \$1 million a year in property taxes. They hire 500 full-time employees and indirectly provide thousands of jobs in our community," he noted.

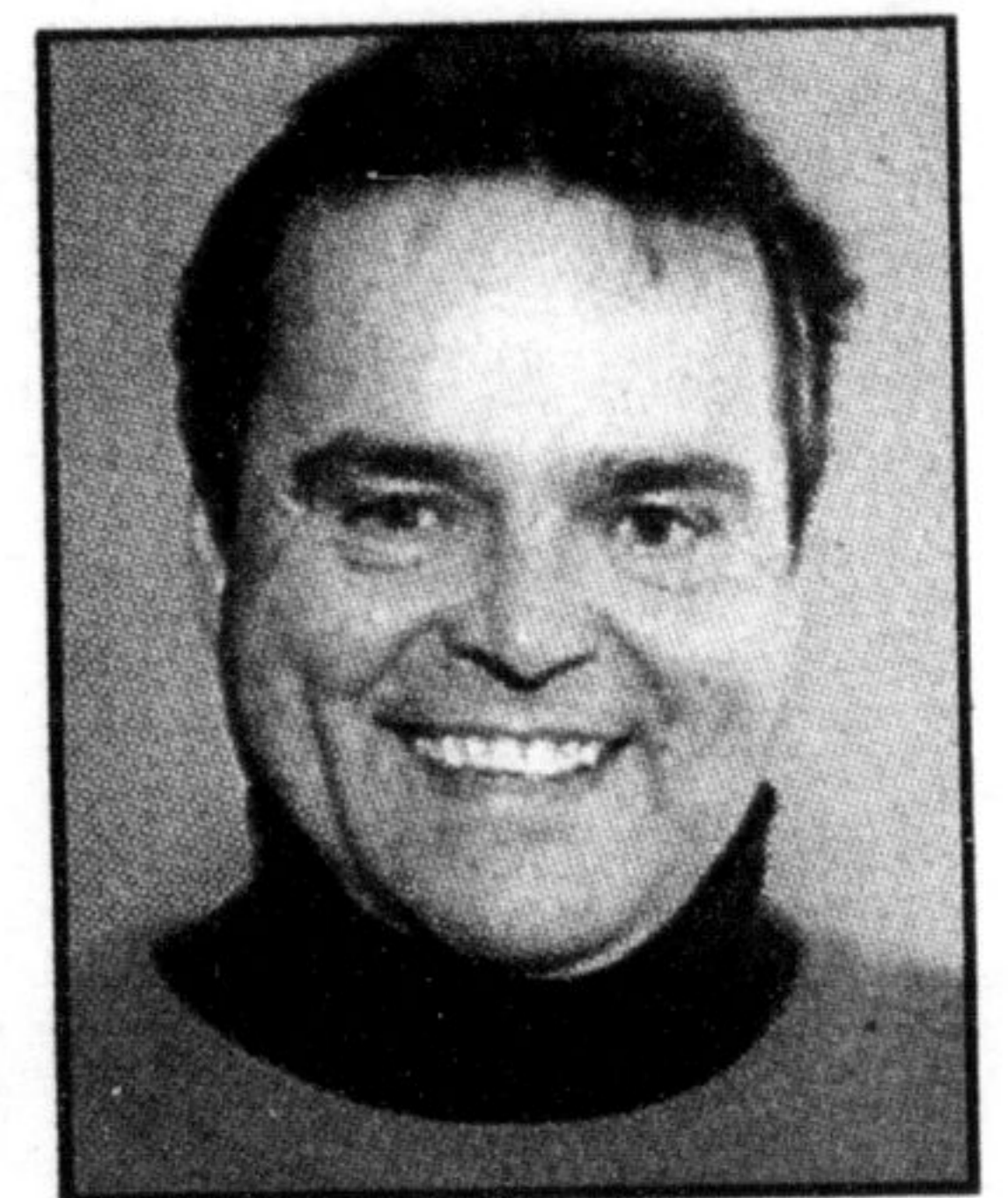
"If Mohawk wasn't there we wouldn't have the horse industry that we do."

Mayor Gord Krantz hailed the agreement as a step in the right direction.

"I am pleased with this. I supported it all the way," he said.

"Mohawk is a very important part of our community and there was always that risk of them closing down."

• see SLOTS on page 3



Pat Kelly

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