

## Teachers to settle; few details released

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

*The Champion*

Students will be back in class this morning after the Halton Catholic District School Board and its 365 high school teachers hammered out a tentative settlement yesterday.

The three-year agreement — which must still be ratified by both sides — brings an end to months of labour dissension and a recent lockout of instructors.

The deal was finalized at 9 a.m. Monday after more than 75 hours of intense negotiations.

While unable to give details of the settlement, union leader Joe Pece said he was "fairly confident the teachers will be happy with the agreement.

"We're recommending that they accept the deal," said the president of the Halton Secondary Unit of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association (OECTA).

"Some teachers were locked out before they had wrapped up semester one. Many of them were back at

**"All I can say is that it's a multi-year deal which should stabilize our system."**

**JIM SHERLOCK**

school as early as this morning (Monday) getting up to date."

Teachers had recently rejected a settlement offer that included one per cent raises in September, 1999, February, 2000 and February 2001.

Board members are expected to put their rubber stamp on the deal at tonight's meeting. Teachers will vote on it later in the week.

If all goes well, work-to-rule sanctions — still officially in place — could be lifted, which will mean a return of extra-curricular activities like after school sports.

Halton Catholic District School Board Chair Jim Sherlock described the marathon negotiation sessions as a roller-coaster ride.

"We met for over 20 hours at one stretch. You think you're getting close and then things change. All I can say is that it's a multi-year deal which should stabilize our system.

"I'd like to profoundly apologize to our parents for all the inconveniences caused over the last few months."

Neither the board chair nor the union leader would offer an opinion on whether the settlement was worth all the months of anxiety, aggravation and uncertainty.

Parent Action Group spokesperson Ken Graves said he was thrilled to learn of the settlement yesterday, describing it as "absolutely awesome."

He congratulated both sides for bringing a quick end to the lockout and was confident things would return to normal.

Mr. Graves added, "I think our group had a lot to do with the resolution, through our marches and voice in the media."

The organization of 400 parents had been a vocal presence in encouraging both sides to settle.

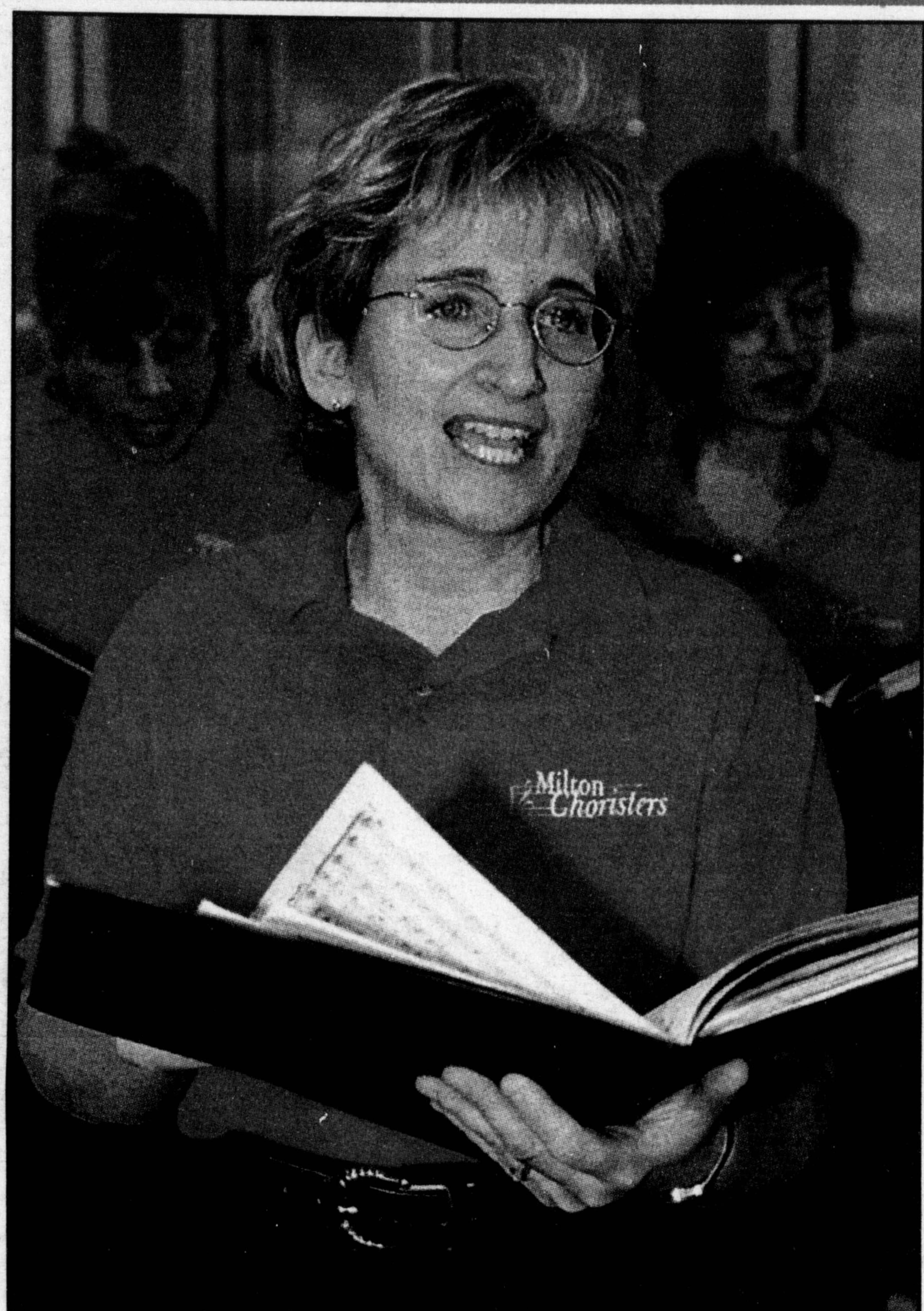


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

### Sweet sounds

Milton Choristers members perform a selection of love songs from upcoming concert 'Glory of Romance' Saturday at Loblaws. Their medley was also in celebration of St. Valentine's Day. The group will commemorate its 30th anniversary with 'Glory of Romance' this Saturday evening at Milton Alliance Church.

## Investment firm cuts ties with local financial dealer

By **IRENE GENTLE**

*The Champion*

Longtime Milton financial advisor Michael Bourgon has left a veil of secrecy and rumours in his wake after being at least temporarily turfed from the company he started less than a year ago.

His departure followed an announcement by the Investment Centre Financial Corporation (ICFC) that it has severed its relationship with Mr. Bourgon, of Bourgon Financial Services.

Mr. Bourgon is no longer authorized to conduct any business on behalf of the London, Ontario parent corporation, said ICFC senior vice-president Harry Quigley.

"We have terminated our agency agreement with

Mr. Bourgon," he confirmed. "We did have some concerns about client service."

The firm has also launched a third-party internal audit into Mr. Bourgon's on the job affairs.

The investigation is being conducted by Lindquist, Avery, Kroll and Associates, a Toronto-based forensic and investigative accounting agency.

A report on the investigation is expected as early as February 19.

Mr. Quigley said he could not expand upon the nature of his company's concerns. Nor would he discuss what kind of irregularity could prompt the agency to cut its ties to an advisor, or initiate an internal investigation.

Mr. Quigley said he could not comment on whether any client money is at risk, or speculate on the possi-

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