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## Ron Furik uneasy as big money turned over

By IRENE GENTLE

*The Champion*

Here today, gone tomorrow.

That's how councillor Ron Furik feels about \$118,000 in provincial money. It made a whistle stop at a recent community services advisory committee (CSAC) meeting before being parceled off to a variety of non-profit organizations.

It's ironic that municipal councillors agonize over small amounts of money but approve CSAC blitzing through more than \$100,000 in a day, Mr. Furik said at a recent municipal meeting.

"We effectively walked into that meeting and spent \$118,000," he added.

The money is Milton's share of a \$40 million handout from the Ontario Lottery Corporation to help local charities survive the transition from roving Monte Carlo events to permanent charity casinos.

In Milton, 41 organizations applied for the funding. Town staff winnowed that number down before passing their work on to CSAC for fine tuning.

When it recently landed before council-

• see WINDFALL on page 10



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## Wait for it

Young Mark Pinder anxiously awaits a drop of sap from a tapped maple tree at Mountsberg Conservation Area during the early days of maple syrup season. See page 8 for more photos.

## Baby ward could be up and running by the summer

By IRENE GENTLE

*The Champion*

A new obstetrician could be delivered to Milton District Hospital as early as this Sunday.

If so, Milton's baby ward could be up and running by the summer, predicted Dr. Don Robertson, chair of the search committee and associate chief of staff for Halton Healthcare Services, which runs the newly amalgamated Milton District and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial hospitals.

"We are finally going to conduct the interviews with the candidates on March 7," he announced at a recent Halton Healthcare Services board meeting.

A search has been on for a new obstetrician since Dr. Sushil Suppal withdrew from the position after his contract expired last November.

At the time, Dr. Suppal was on call 24 hours a day.

Dr. Suppal's withdrawal led to the closing of the maternity ward and the launching of a \$25,000 headhunt by the Niagara-based recruitment company MedFall Inc.

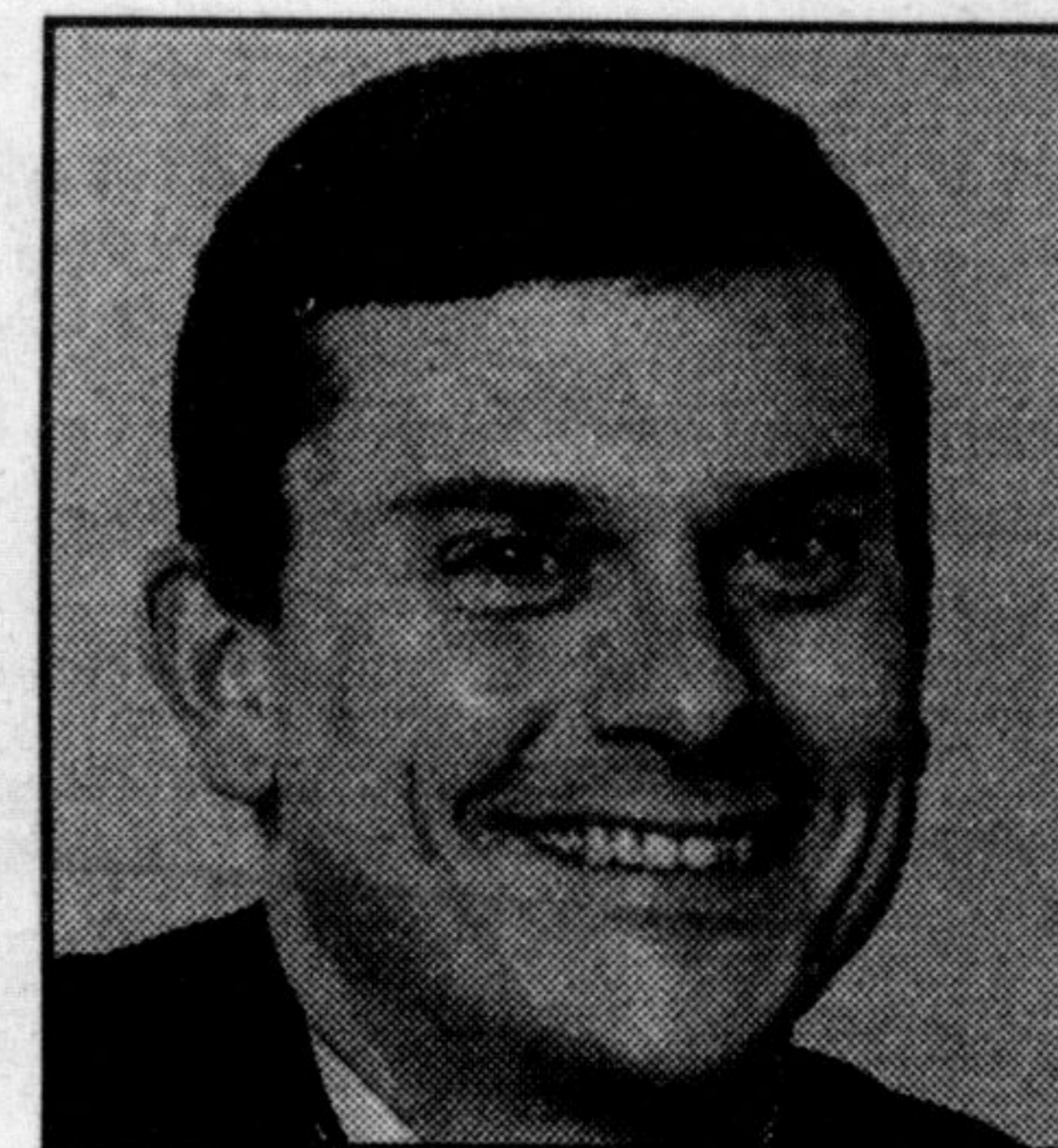
Since then, pregnant Milton women have been taken to Oakville or Burlington for their care.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Oakville Trafalgar January figures showed there were 160 births at the hospital, the highest number for that month in five years. Now, months after Milton's maternity ward shut down, Dr. Robertson is confident that a hiring decision will be made on the day of the interviews.

"We're hoping to make a decision on Sunday," he said. "The two candidates are keen so we think it can be done."

If so, an announcement of the hiring could come as early as next week.

The news was hailed by



John Oliver

Halton Healthcare Services president John Oliver.

"We know there has been some concern with people worrying about obstetrics," he said.

In the past, the search has been marred by controversy, with some local doctors saying that Halton Healthcare Services is not willing to put up the kind of money that would attract obstetricians to the town.

Dr. Robertson said the difficulty has more to do with the demand outnumbering the supply.

"Obstetricians are in short supply," he said. "There's less of them going to school."

Despite the difficulties, Medfall came up with a short list of 10 candidates. That list was then pared down to three for the interview date.

At the last minute, it was shortened yet again to two, after a third candidate accepted a position elsewhere.

## NEWSLINES

### Books wanted

The Milton chapter of the Canadian Federation of University Women is now accepting donations for its annual giant book sale.

Proceeds from the event, scheduled for March 26 and 27 at Milton Mall, will go toward local scholarships.

Books in reasonable condition can be dropped off in bins at Zellers and Milton Public Library.

### WEEKEND INSERTS

• A&P • Biway • Campbellville Foodland (Rural) • Canadian Tire • Cashway • China House (P) • food Basics • Future Shop • halton Hills Leisure Guide • IDA (P) • IGA (P) • Joggers • M&M Meats • Maxi & Co • Radio Shack (P) • Sears • Vito's Pizza (Rural)

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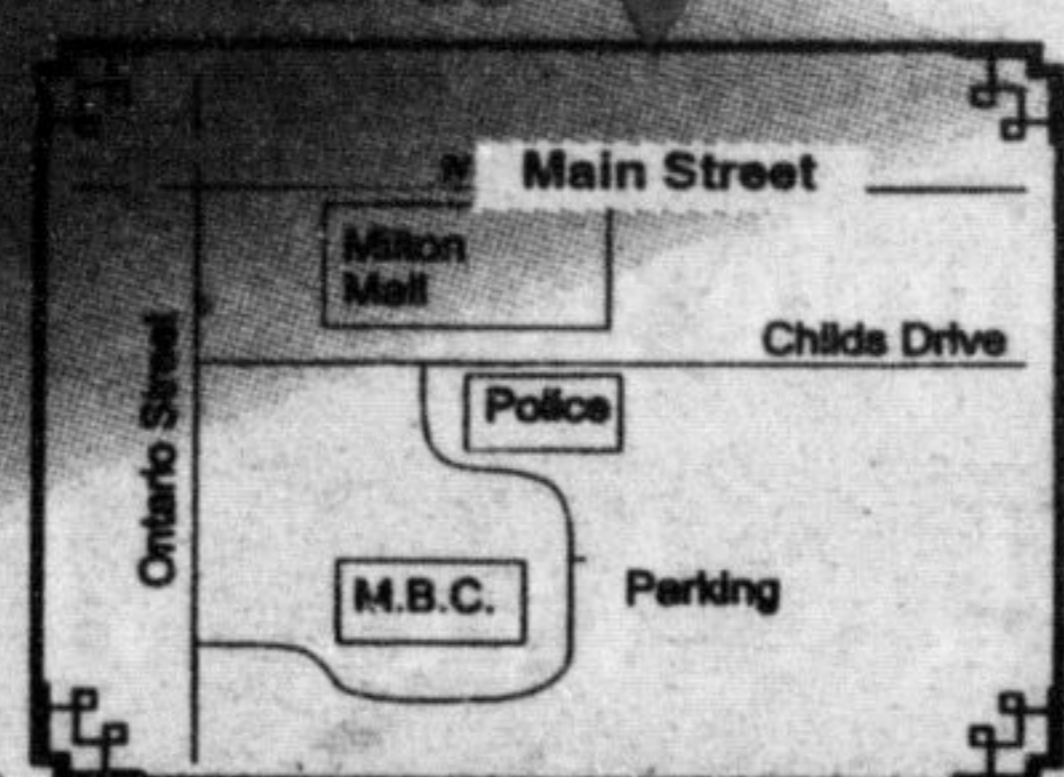
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