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Town bylaw enforcement doubles up

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

The Town has doubled its municipal bylaw enforcement team.

Two officers have been hired to take the place of Ian McNally, who retired Friday.

But that doesn't mean the Town is suddenly cracking down on bylaw benders.

And the budget hasn't been beefed up to accommodate an additional officer.

That is because two officers were always meant to be working the bylaw beat, said Town clerk Helen Lisi.

"We always had two," she said. "We haven't hired additional staff."

But when a longtime bylaw officer retired in 1998, only Mr. McNally was left to do the job on a full-time basis.

"He basically carried the load of enforcement on his own for 32,000 people," said Ms Lisi.

That was despite a council direction approving the hiring of a second officer at

• see BYLAW on page 3

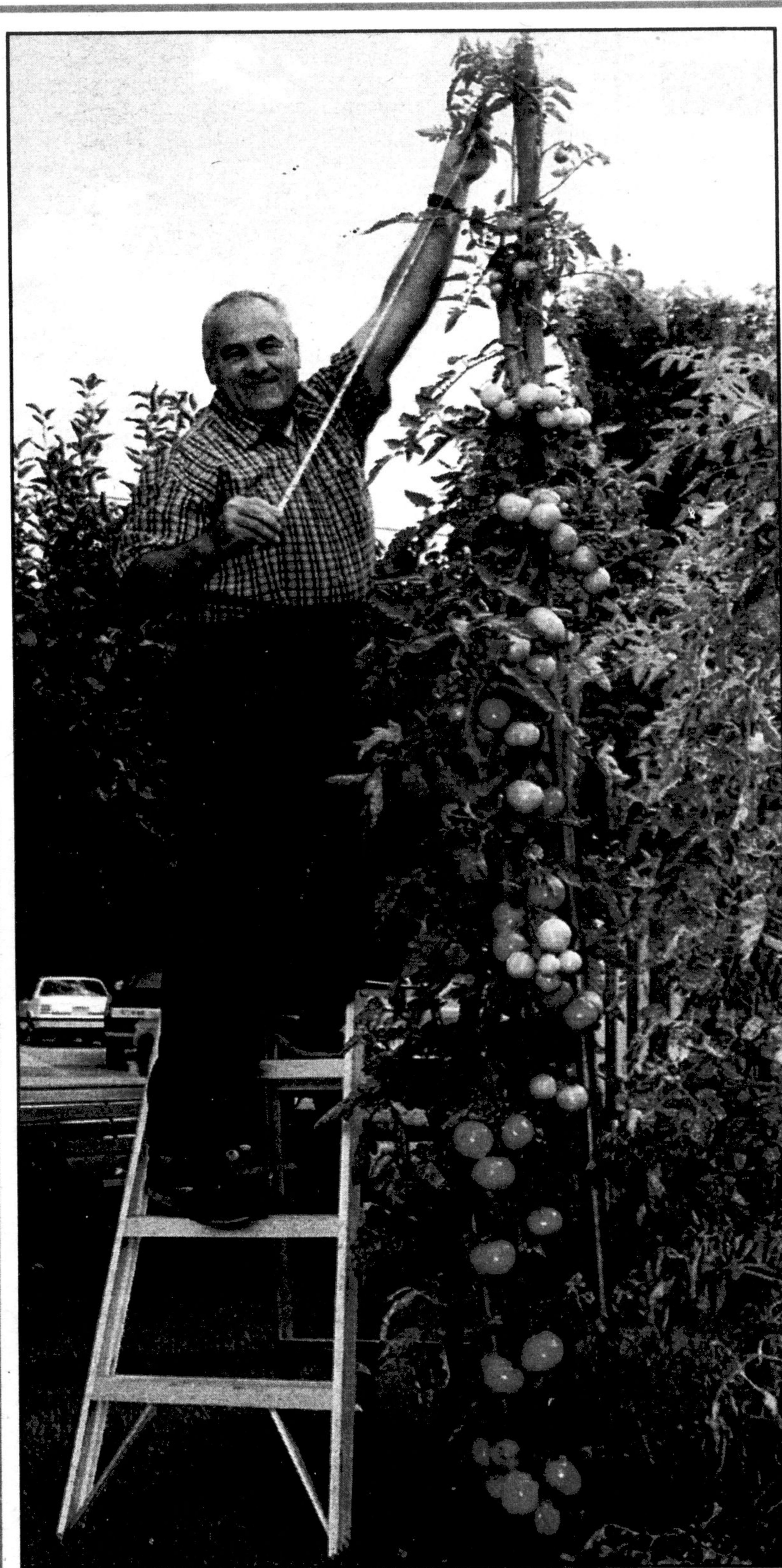


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Towering tomatoes

Filippo Trento of Oak Street has to use a ladder to get to the top of his giant tomato plant, which stands 10 feet tall in his backyard.

Milton Hydro bill increase is inevitable

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

As town council debates whether to buy or sell Milton Hydro, one thing is certain — the customers are going to pay.

Average bills are set to increase by eight to 11 per cent no matter what decision the Town makes, Marvin Stemeroff, director of Deloitte and Touche, told council recently.

Mr. Stemeroff has been acting as a consultant for the Milton Hydro Transition Steering Committee, appointed by council in January.

The committee was formed in response to Bill 35, or the Energy Competition Act. The bill aims to inject competition into every aspect of the electricity industry, including distribution, retail and generation.

The idea is to garner savings in the long run by cutting down

on industry fat.

But first, Ontario Hydro's massive debt has to be paid down.

Doing that will pad the average home bill by \$7 to \$9 per month.

And the rate hike is expected to continue for up to 20 years.

Although final numbers aren't known, the debt has been estimated at \$39 billion. Of that, approximately \$23 billion will be passed on to be paid down by the ratepayer under Bill 35.

In the past, hydro was a publicly owned, not-for-profit corporation.

But new owners have the option of running it as for profit (subject to caps by the Ontario Energy Board), not for profit or something in-between.

If sold, the new owners would almost definitely opt for the maximum 11 per cent rate hike, Mr. Stemeroff said.

Judging by its recent vote,

• see TOWN on page 2

Enrolment drop puzzles board

By TIM WHITNELL

Special to The Champion

Student enrolment is down significantly this year but senior administrators with the Halton District School Board are baffled as to the precise reasons.

Trustees at last Wednesday's board meeting were told 285 fewer elementary pupils than anticipated are in the public education system for the 1999-2000 school year.

In most years, student enrolment projections made by staff and the actual number of students in the system are very close.

There are 27,520 elementary students enrolled in the Halton public board this year while secondary figures, though not finalized, are expected to be around 16,000.

The bulk of the nearly 300-student drop-off in enrolment

• see TEACHING on page 5

NEWSLINES

Advice available

Interested in giving your youngster a leg up? The Milton Community Resource Centre will host the Developmental Early Identification and Prevention Program Monday, Oct. 4.

The 1 to 3 p.m. clinic will offer consultations for children aged 5 years and under in any or all of the following areas: speech/language, hearing, learning, behaviour and motor skills.

Advice on helping children reach their full potential will also be available. For more information, call 876-1244, ext. 10.

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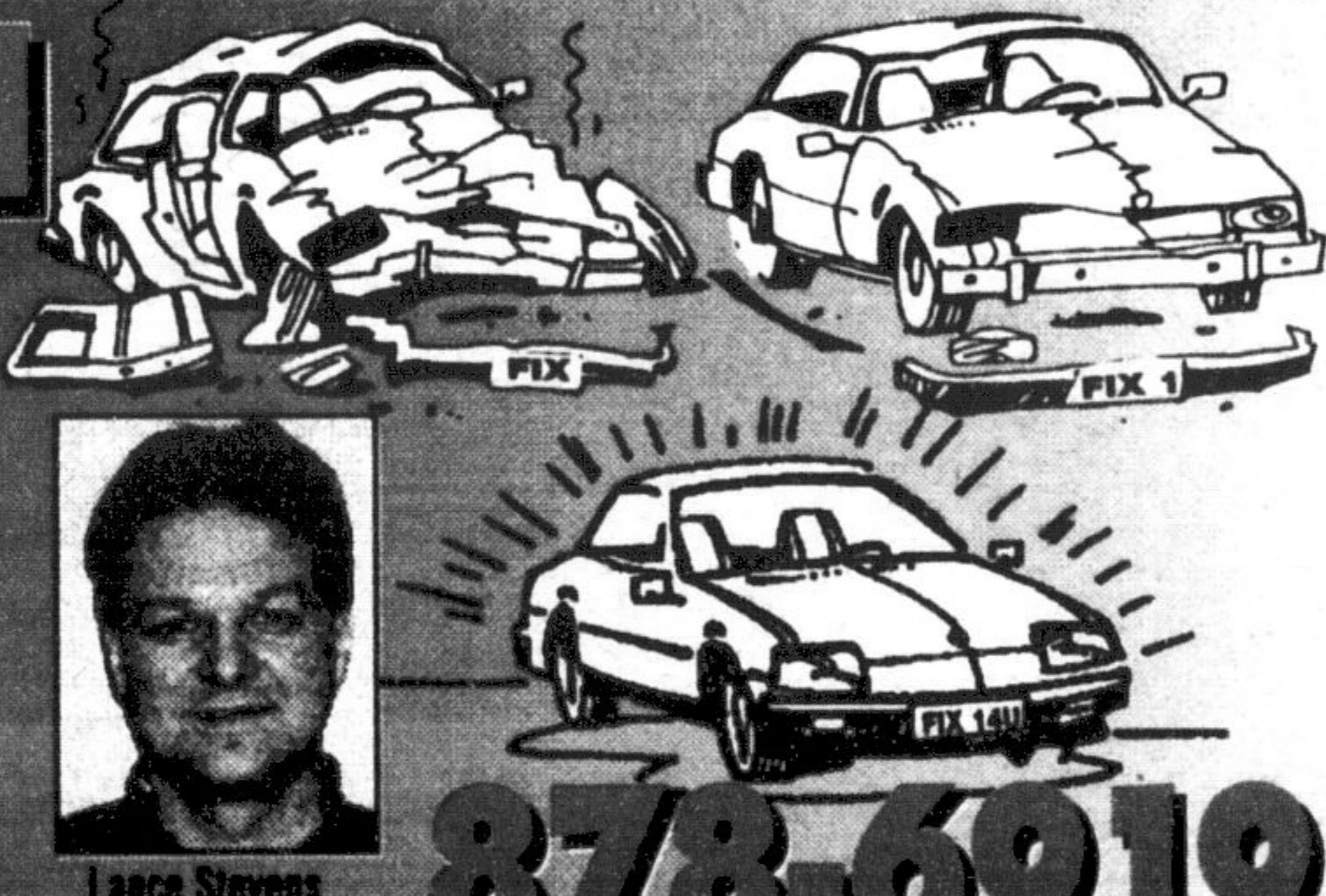
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