

Library seeking book donations

Milton Public Library workers are hoping to give Milton children the gift of imagination this Christmas.

For the first time, CUPE Local 932, which is the library union, is collecting children's books to be placed in Salvation Army Christmas hampers.

New books aimed at children 12 years and under are being requested. They can be dropped off in a collection box in the library foyer.

"We wanted to get a book and a toy," stressed library spokesperson Janice Marshall. "It's not replacing a toy. We spoke to the

Salvation Army and they thought it was a great idea."

Once donated, the toys will be taken to the Sally-Ann, which will distribute them in their hampers. It's a new tradition the library union is hoping to continue. The library is located at 45 Bruce St.

Crime-fighting group gets its funding back

By IRENE GENTLE

The Champion

An annual Nassagaweya newsletter featuring crime statistics and safety and security tips won back funding from town council recently.

Despite a decade-long history of receiving a grant for the newsletter, a change in funding criteria had left the Nassagaweya Community Consultation Committee (NCCC) empty-handed for its 1999-2000 edition.

But the council vote November 22 reversed the decision by the Community Services Advisory Committee (CSAC), which was charged with allocating the Town grants.

The committee had nixed the NCCC's application based on new Town rules that limited grants to leisure-related services.

"Because of changes to the grant program we didn't qualify," said Mike West, chair of the NCCC, which publishes the Rural Watch newsletter.

But he appeared at a November 15 community services committee meeting to launch a plea for the return of the \$675 grant.

"I don't want to criticize anything but it seems to me that safety and security is a worthy task," he added.

Without the Town funds, the volunteer publishers would have been forced to either give up their annual effort or resort to selling advertising space.

We thought it was not our job to go out and solicit funds," said Mr. West. "But we'd like to continue what we think is an important message."

But some councillors expressed discomfort at arbitrarily changing a decision made by CSAC — a citizens' committee — especially when its ruling was based on council's own dictates.

"It would appear to be a technical glitch that didn't even allow the citizens to consider the group," said Mayor Gord Krantz. "I'm always cautious about reversing what citizens have done. I'm hesitant to overrule their decision."

He asked that staff review the wording of the mandate to allow groups such as NCCC some consideration.

But that wouldn't get the 1999-2000 newsletter printed, Mr. West pointed out.

"We still need the money," he said.

Reversing the ruling of a citizens' group sends a bad message to the community, Councillor Rick Malboeuf worried.

"My concern is we give this committee a mandate, they follow that mandate, then we reverse it," he said.

But councillors are the final decision-makers and groups such as the NCCC have a right to make their appeal, said Councillor John Challinor.

"The reality is that every organization has a right to come forth to council. We are the final arbitrators," he said.

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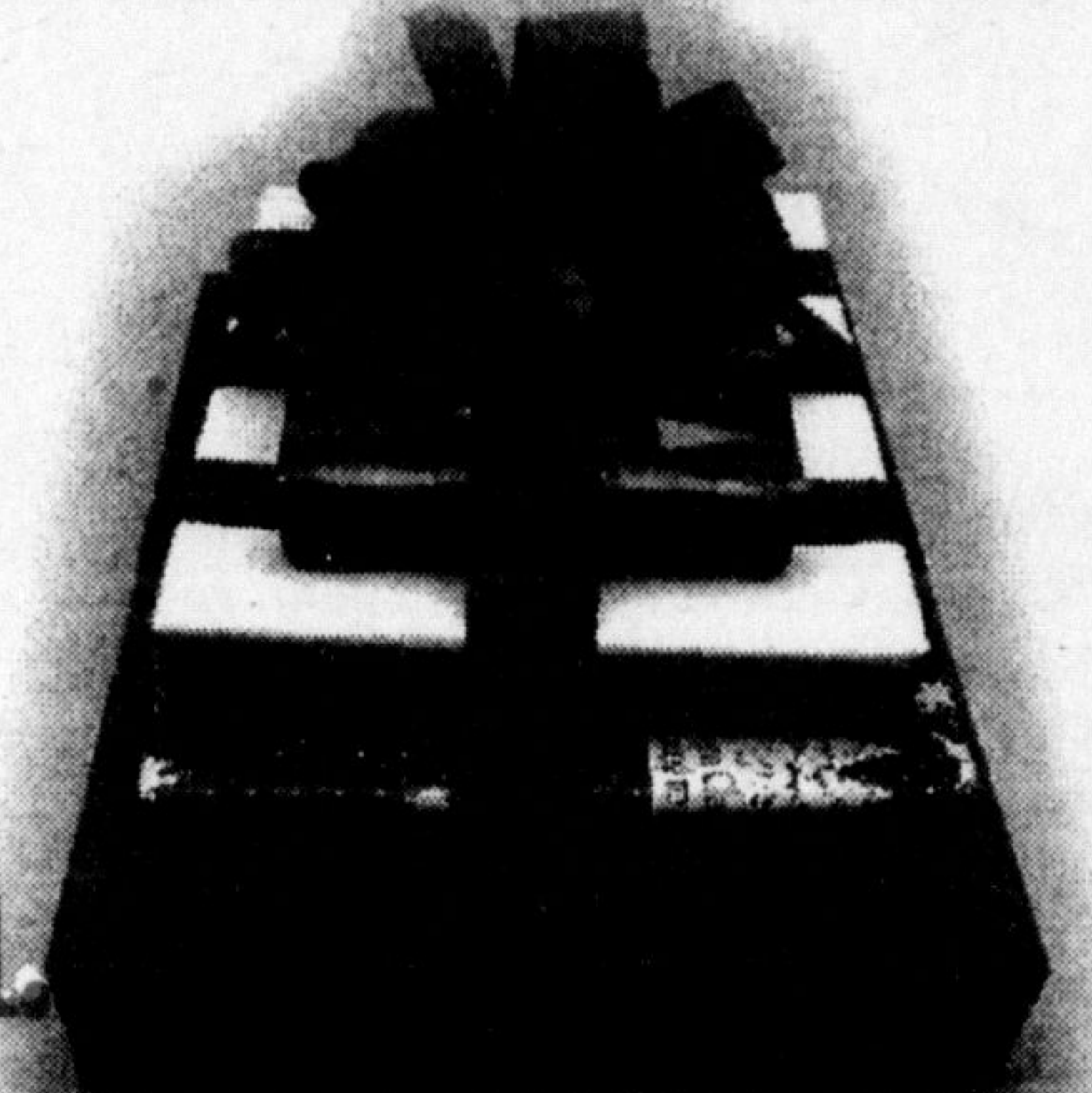
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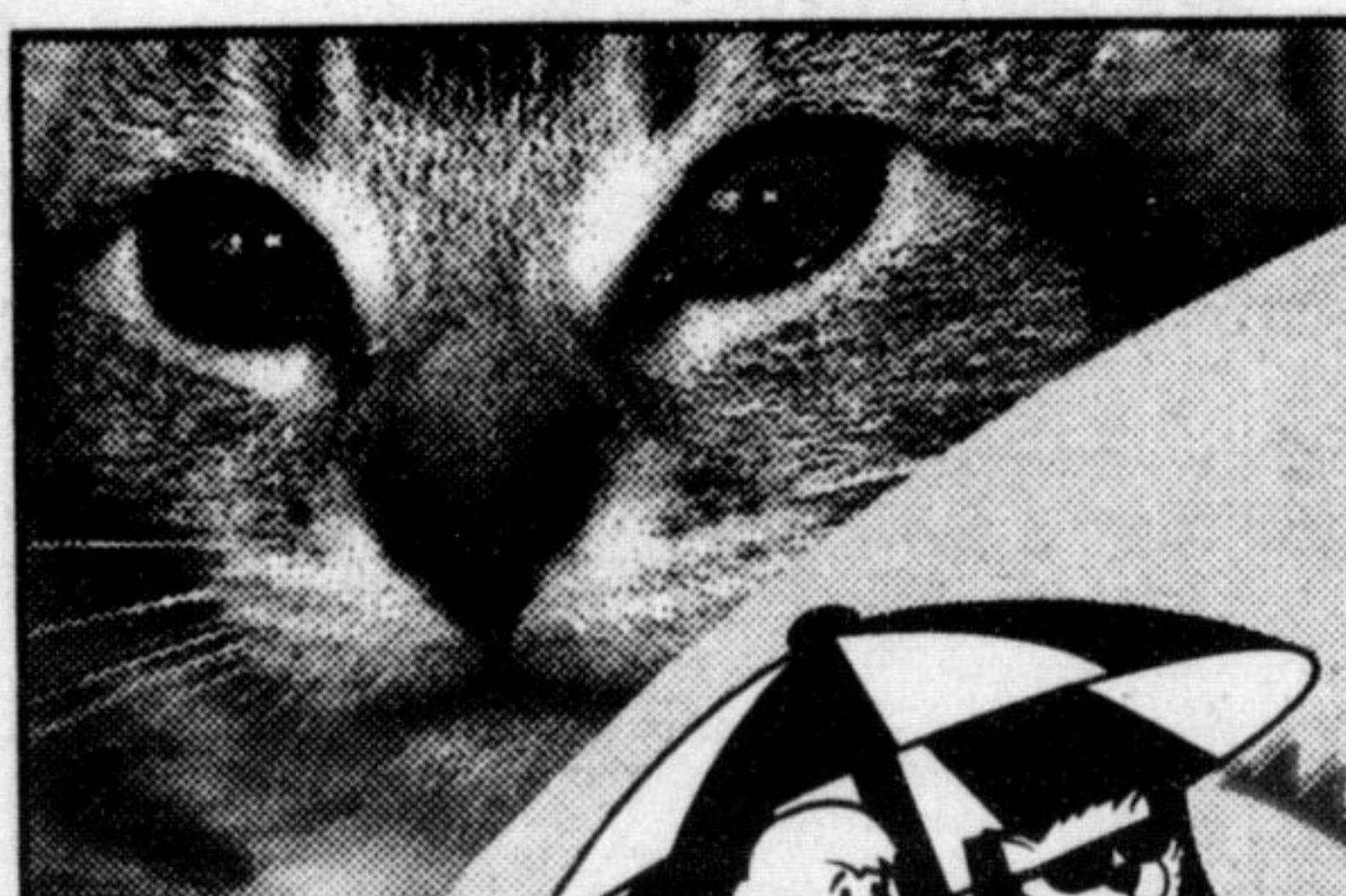
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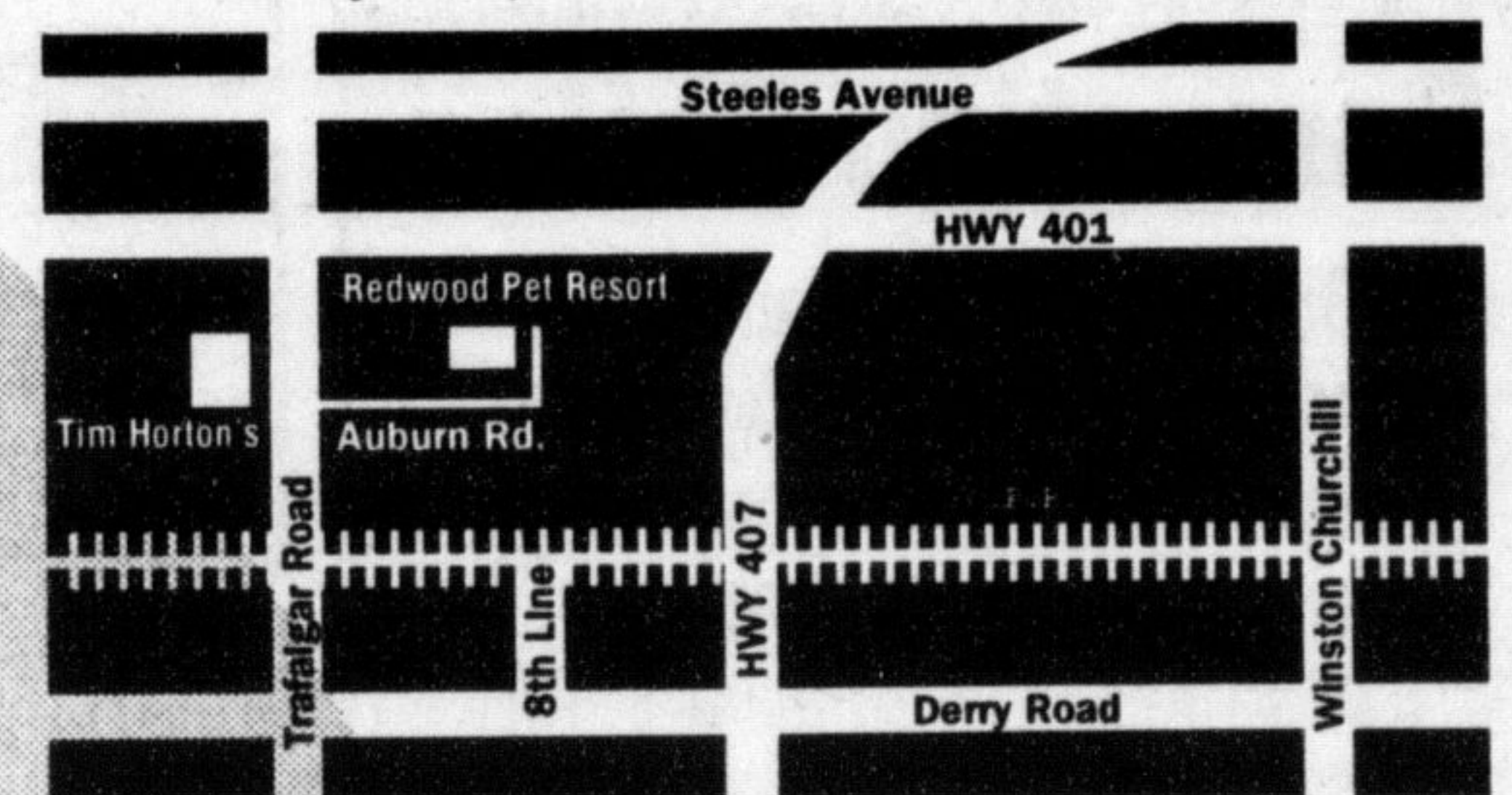
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