

Bus use could swell to 75,000 annual rides: report

• from TOWN on page 2

Then buses would run hourly, but the routes would depend on people calling in.

And the vehicles themselves would have to be revamped to two small, 21-passenger buses, costing about \$70,000 each.

But councillors are fighting a losing battle if they hope to make transit pay for itself, warned Mr. Prentice.

"For every dollar you spend on transit, you won't get one dollar back," he said. "You might get 35 cents back. That's the reality. Transit does cost money."

And the Town won't save cash by running buses only in the morning and late afternoon, when usage is heaviest, he said.

"These gaps interfere with people's travel," he said.

"In actual fact, you discourage use of the service."

Instead, fare integration with GO Transit and encouraging links to Mississauga could help bolster usage.

But boosting the system won't be of much use before the population grows, said Councillor Wally Hunter.

"I'm certainly not satisfied with what's being presented in this report. I think there's too many holes in it that don't solve our problems without critical mass," he said.

But today's service is not viable, even for the current population, countered Mr. Prentice.

"The service today really doesn't perform well at all," he said.

"If you continue with it, you're going to continue to see a decline in usage. Status quo is really a downward spiral, and that's really the bottom line."

But the report's claim that use could swell from 51,000 annual rides in 1999 to almost 75,000 by the end of 2000 was greeted with skepticism by Councillor Rick Malboeuf.

And increasing usage will come at a cost to the Town anyway, he added.

"What scares me is if we increase the number of rides, we could find ourselves in a big hole," said Mr. Malboeuf.

"The more people we can convince to use

transit, the more it's going to cost the general taxpayer."

That's why now is the perfect time to make transit decisions, he added.

"The problem with most municipalities is they're in too deep," he said. "We have the opportunity to get out of the business with little collateral damage."

But loss is just part of the transit reality, said Councillor Art Melanson.

"It's the age old problem of supply and demand. We supply the system, but the demand isn't there," he said. "I doubt any municipal transit system is cost effective, but we have to keep on trying."

MILTON MALL

Stop and win!
Find ballot to enter for a
\$500 shopping spree or men's
18 speed mountain bike

*Happy
Holidays*

Open House

SUNDAY, DEC 12
2 - 4 PM
234 Commercial St
\$239,900
Angela Silcock in attendance
Royal LePage Real Estate
Services Ltd., 878-8101

SUNDAY, DEC 12
2 - 4 PM
25 3rd Line
\$369,000
Jack McCrudden in attendance
Re/Max Blue Springs Realty
(Halton) Corp. 878-7777

Mirasol Spanish Services

R. Davison, B.A., M.A., B.ED.

The Year 2000 Spanish Class

Mondays: 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. Jan. 17 - Apr. 24

Taught in Milton

- * Small classes
- * Intense conversational practice
- * Guest native speakers
- * Coffee & Cookies
- * Private lessons
- * Kids' program on Saturdays



Call R. Davison at 876-3057

Art Lessons

by
Albert Casson

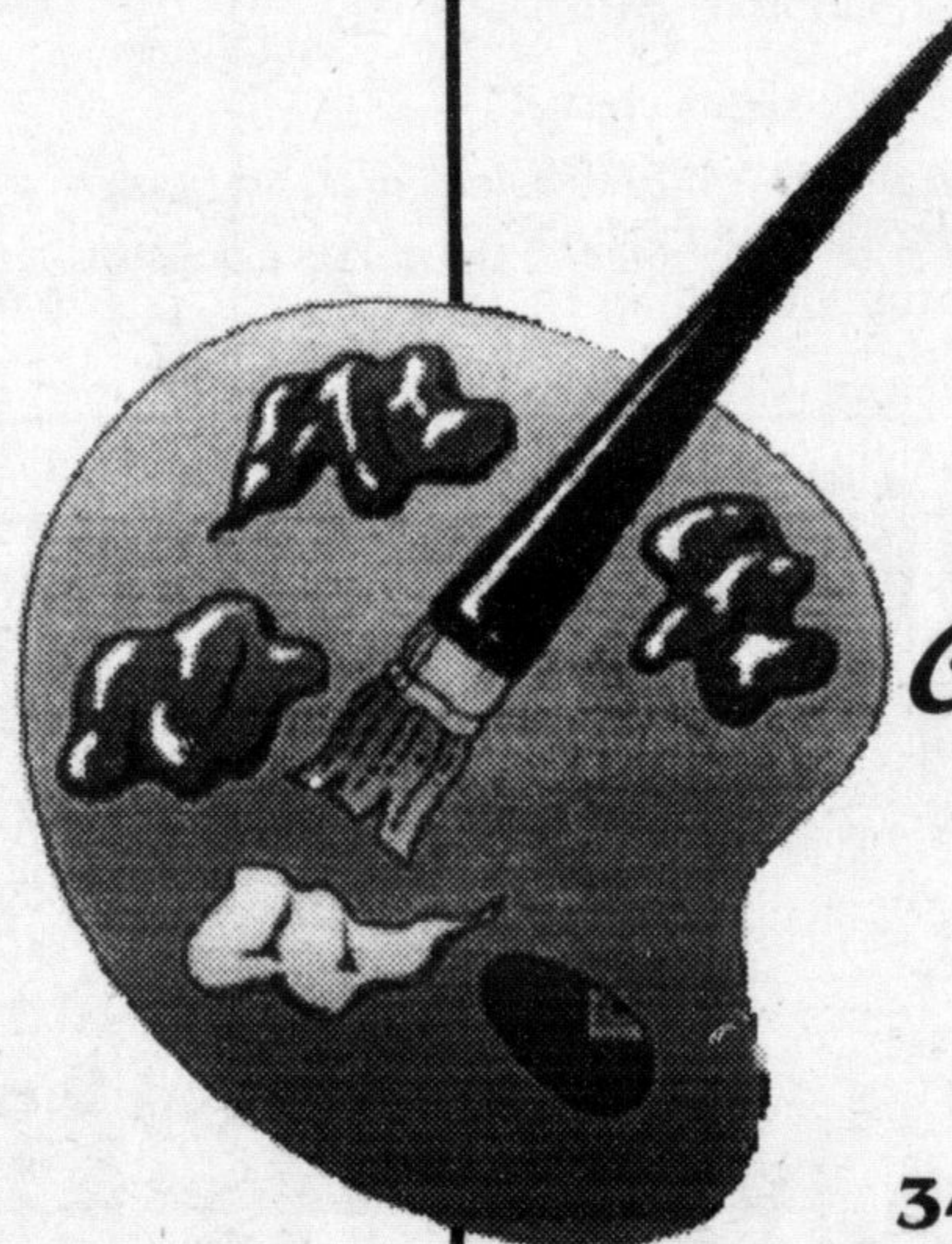
Professional artist for
27 years

Learn to draw from
one of the best.

Christmas Gift Vouchers
are available

Call now and book your
lessons.

(905)878-4087



Albert Casson's Pre-Christmas Sale

We are moving in the
New Year.

Help us reduce
our inventory
All in stock framing
at cost.

CASSON'S CLASSICS

HOURS
Tues.-Sat.
1-5:30

348 Bronte St., Unit #14, Milton