

Provincial funding will beef up Halton's RIDE program

Halton Regional Police recently received \$23,921 from Queen's Park to beef up local RIDE (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) initiatives.

Last Tuesday, Burlington MPP Cam Jackson presented the service with the cheque, which will help cover the cost of area RIDE spot checks and defray overtime or paid duty enforcement.

"The government continues to take steps that will make Ontario's highways safer for all road users," said Mr. Jackson. "The police and the government

have worked together to ensure that those who drink and drive receive the full penalty allowable under the law. It's time to end the carnage on our roadways and ensure the safety of all citizens."

In two RIDE blitzes held in May and June of this year, a total of 6,662 vehicles were stopped, resulting in 49 roadside screening tests. From these, 19 12-hour suspensions and 105 warnings were issued. Four liquor-related charges and 27 Highway Traffic Act were laid.

Ambulance donation decision is deferred

Needs assessment to be conducted first

By RICHARD VIVIAN

The Champion

Donations should be based on need rather than on a first-come, first-serve basis, the Region's health and social services committee told Regional staff last Tuesday.

Committee members deferred a recommendation to donate a soon-to-be-replaced ambulance from the Region's ambulance service division to the Oakville-Milton St. John's Ambulance Brigade.

Where is greatest need?

Staff were instructed to contact brigades in Burlington and Halton Hills to determine which brigade would benefit most from the donation.

"Not to suggest that Oakville doesn't need this vehicle and that this isn't an appropriate issue, but I'm just wondering if the same opportunity shouldn't be presented to the other brigades?" questioned Burlington Councillor Rick Craven.

The Oakville-Milton St. John's Ambulance Brigade approached staff with concerns about escalating costs in keeping its 1977 and 1985 vehicles on the road.

A staff report prepared for the meeting says the ambulance to be donated — a 1995 Dodge with 181,000 kilometres on it — would be more beneficial if kept in use by St. John's Ambulance rather than auctioned off to recover a portion of the cost of its replacement. Previous experience suggests the ambulance would provide a

\$2,500 to \$3,500 return at auction, the report states.

The Oakville-Milton St. John's Ambulance brigade operates volunteer first aid posts at about 100 community events each year and are listed as a resource in the Region's emergency plan.

Milton Councillor Richard Malboeuf said he voted to go ahead with the donation because the Oakville-Milton brigade was the one that came forward to express its concerns.

"If you go up to three people and say 'we've got an ambulance to give you — do you need it?' all three people are going to say 'yes.' Now we're stuck in the position of having to make a decision," he said. "Oakville took the initiative to come forward and say they need the ambulance — that's why I support this."

Will be re-addressed

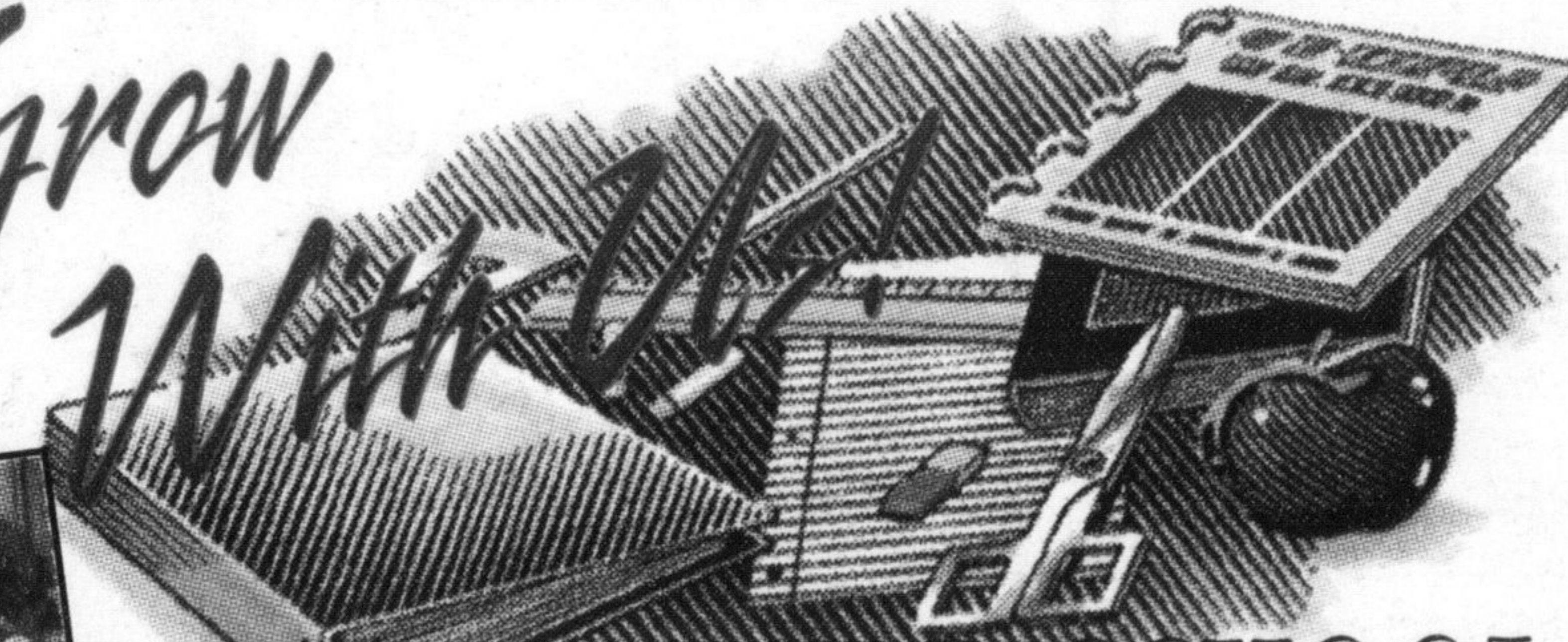
Committee members are expected to re-address the issue at next month's meeting, after staff confer with the Burlington and Halton Hills brigades.

The ambulance is scheduled for replacement this fall.

The Oakville-Milton St. John's Ambulance have also recently received support through the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

It was announced July 26 the organization will receive \$107,600 over the next three years to deliver training on first aid and life-saving skills.

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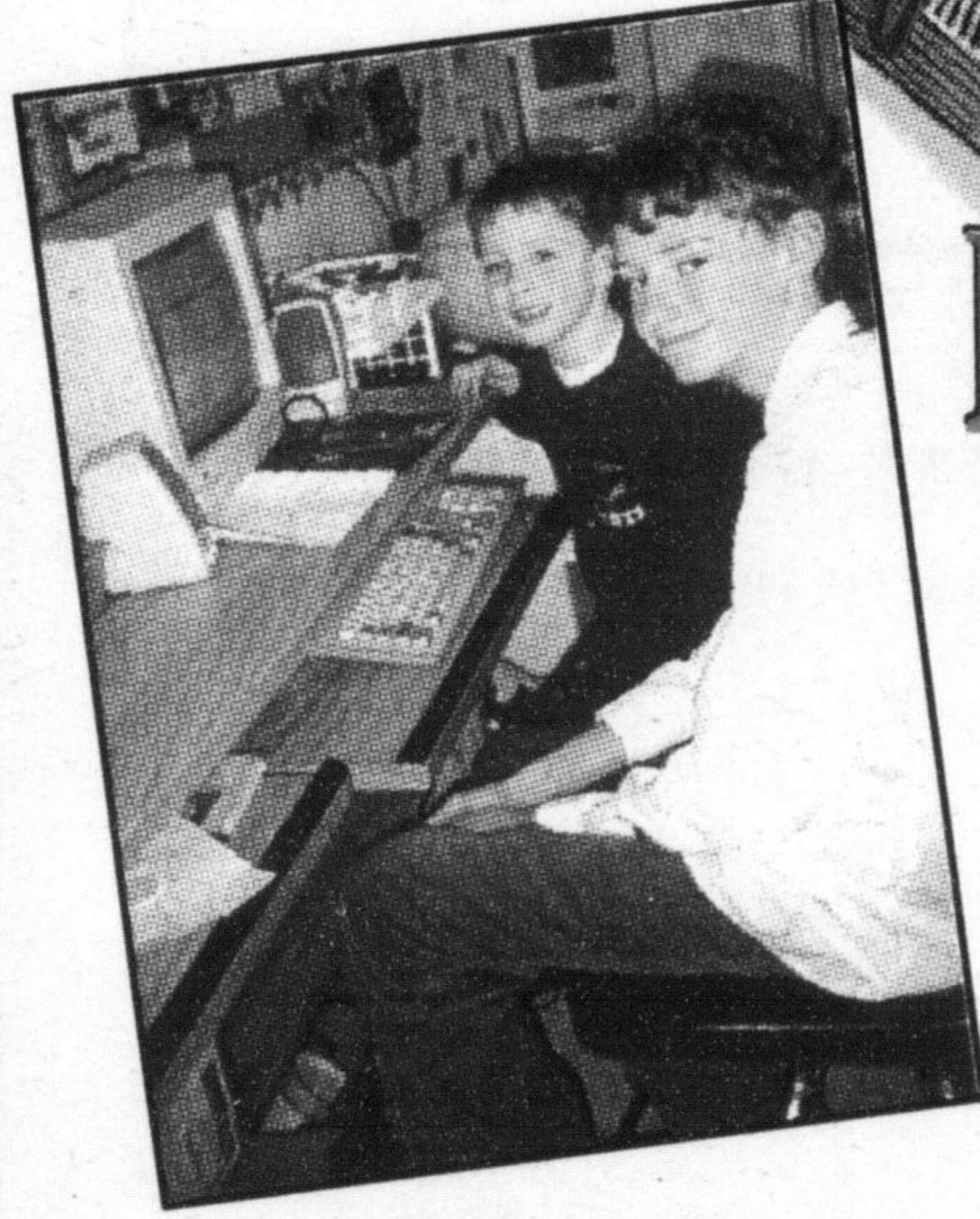
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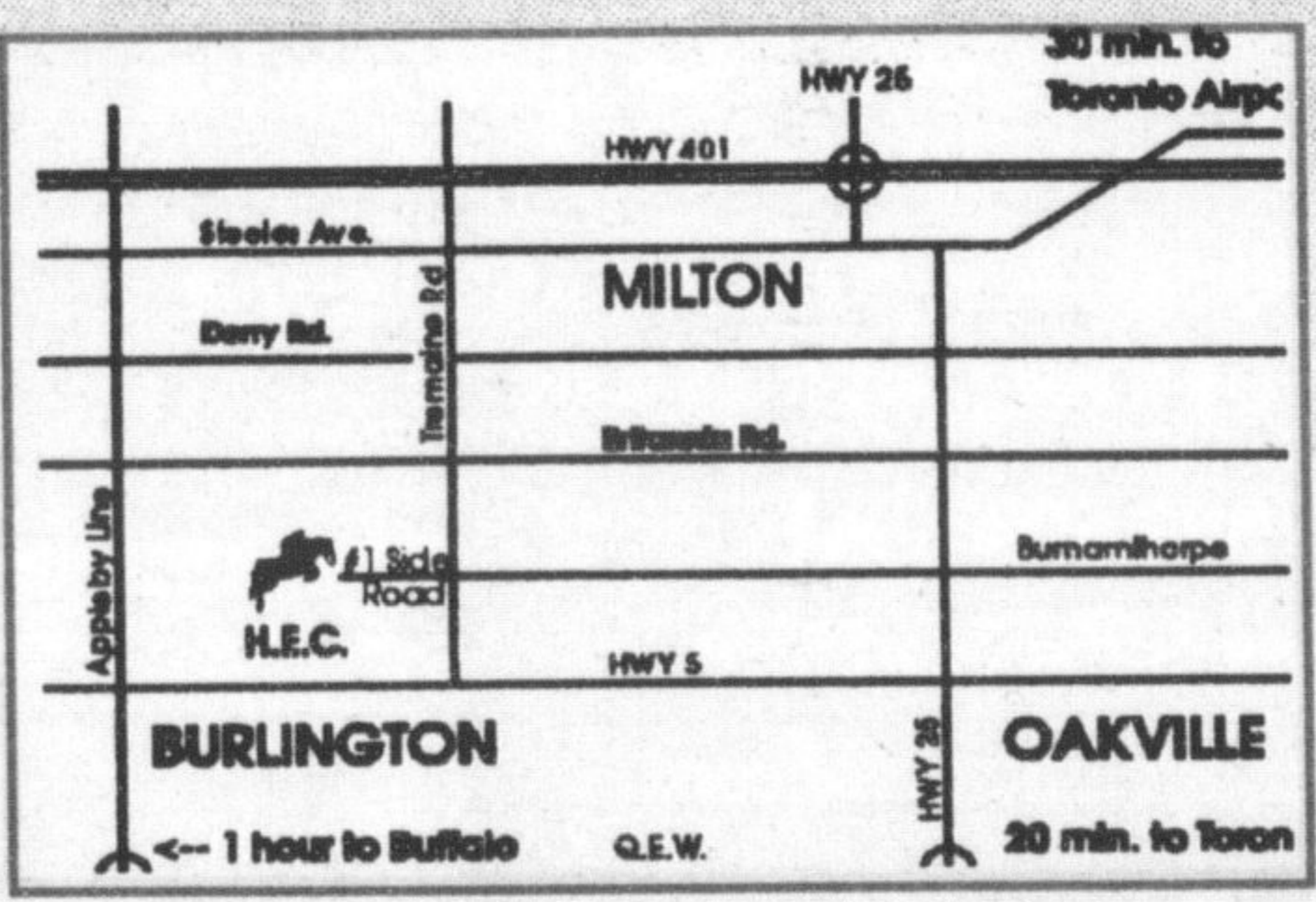

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