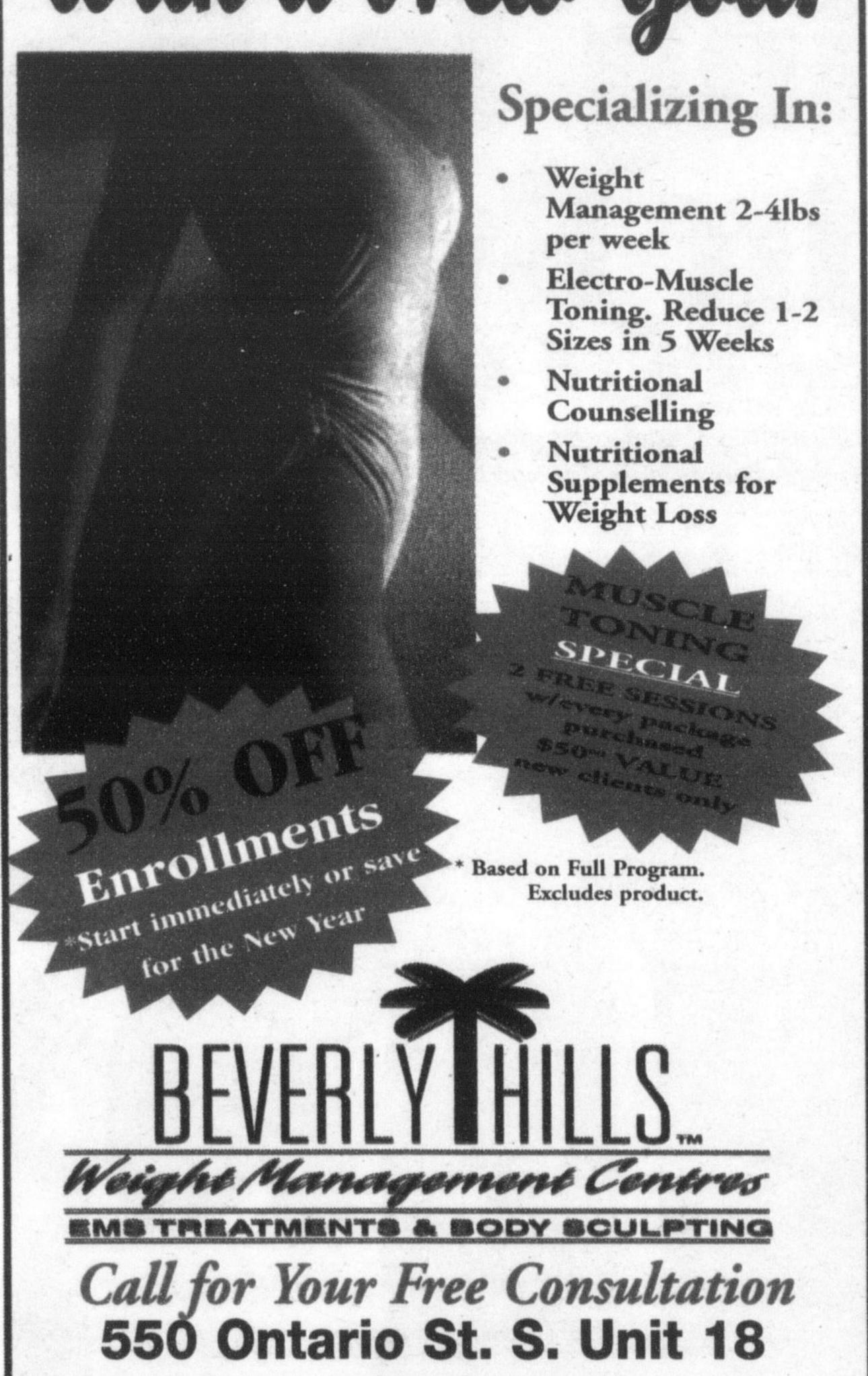
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Ring in the New Year Local retailers report good sales despite the slow economic times

By FANNIE SUNSHINE

The Champion

Despite Milton's lack of large retail stores, the outlets in town cleaned up nicely this Christmas season.

Scott Weir, manager of Zellers at Milton Mall, said Christmas sales went very well.

"Fashion, footwear and our seasonal lines were up to 50 per cent off. With the electronics there were some discounts but not a lot. Our numbers were up across the board."

Although Boxing Day sales ended last week, the store's clearance sales go until the end of the month. Then it's time to think about the spring and summer lines, he said.

"We really try to please the customer. We weren't surprised at how well our sales were this Christmas. We like the patronage of

the town."

Canadian Tire also did well on both pre and post-Christmas sales, said general manager David Shuvera.

"Our auto tires are on sale right now, along with a wide selection of other products. (This week) storage related products, like Rubbermaid, will go on sale. We're starting to clean and tidy up the store through January and February."

And although the store sold a lot of electronic items, household appliances, sports equipment and snow-related items still line the shelves.

"We've seen a start on our winter related products, but it still hasn't picked up yet. People generally need to see snow before they buy toboggans or GT Snowracers."

Michelle Schouten, manager of Suzy Shier, said customers started flocking to the store a week before Christmas.

"Up until Christmas Eve it was nuts," she said. "P.J.'s, housecoats and sweaters were our main sellers. (Sales) were better than I hoped for."

With the Christmas rush over, business has slowed down but still remains steady, Ms Schouten said.

"Our fall merchandise is on sale until January 6. Then we'll get our spring stuff in. It was a good season."

Radio Shack also experienced a swarm of pre-Christmas shop-

"It went a lot better than expected," said Josh Nejasmic, manager of the electronics store. "The big sellers this year were cell phones, CD players, MP3 players, PlayStation, digital cameras and satellites."

Cables and batteries for merchandise were on sale last week, he

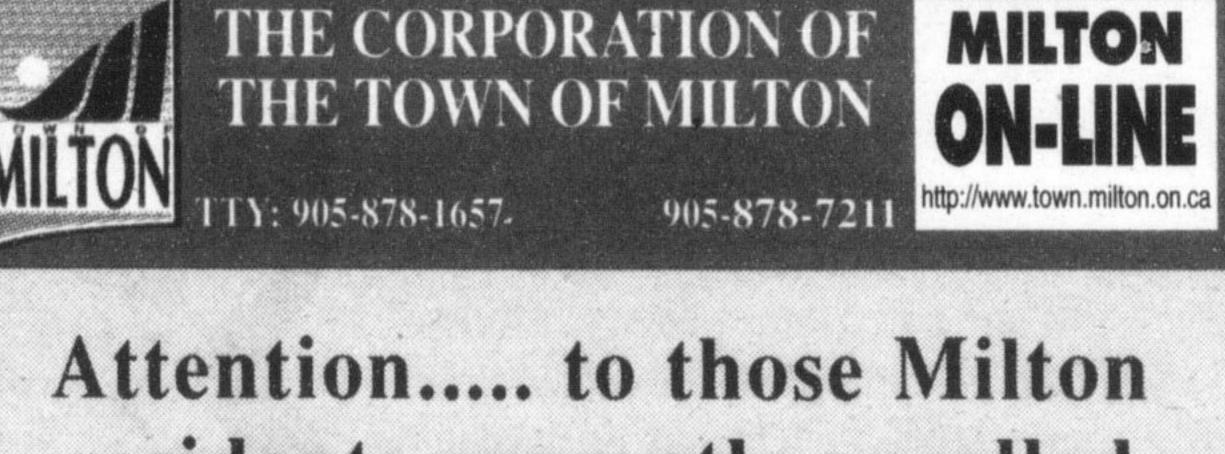
"We try to keep all the popular items in stock. I was hoping it would be a little busier but I can't complain."

But the same can't be said for Spokes 'N' Slopes.

"Needless to say, with the lack of snow, most Miltonians do ski and until there's snow on the hill people really don't think about buying skis and boots," said owner Matt Burger, adding gloves, ski pants and jackets would normally be big sellers this time of year. "(Sales) were a little slow before Christmas. You almost need something to trigger people into shopping. In this case, it's snow."

But sales did start to pick up several days after Christmas when Kelso opened, he said.

"The lessons started on the hill. People are now bringing in their" skis for tune-ups and realizing their boots don't fit and they need a new pair. Now it's all starting to move because of the cold weather and the ski hill is open. I was a little disappointed before Christmas but I knew (the cold weather and snow) would come."



Attention.... to those Milton residents currently enrolled in the monthly Pre-Authorized Tax Payment Program (PTP)

Effective 2002, the withdrawal schedule for all monthly participants in the PTP program will be revised. Withdrawals will take place on the first business day of February and each month following until November; for a total of ten withdrawals. A schedule will be mailed to you shortly advising you of the amounts for the first five withdrawals.

Please note that no changes have been made to the installment plan (i.e. four withdrawals on the standard four dates.) Should you require further clarification, please contact Corporate Services direct at (905) 878-7252 ext. 2193



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