



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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The Milton Canadian Champion is a Recyclable Product

It's time to vote for Milton's top citizen

Milton has no shortage of community-minded volunteers — those who go out of their way to make this a better place to live, play and work.

It's not often we get the chance to formally acknowledge their tireless efforts, but this month represents a golden opportunity to do just that through voting for the Chamber of Commerce's 2001 Citizen of the Year award.

A community ballot form can be found in today's Champion (page 12) giving everyone the chance to choose between finalists Barbara Singleton, Kathy Powell and Scott Scholtzhauer.

All are worthy nominees and boast impressive volunteer resumes — which include everything from training lay pastoral care workers to helping organize various town functions.

While these three have taken very different roads toward helping others, they all represent just what makes this a wonderful community.

Now it's time to show them that. So cast your vote for your favourite volunteer. Ballots can be dropped off at the Chamber of Commerce, 251 Main St. E. The deadline for entry is Thursday, February 28.

The 2001 Citizen of the Year will be announced during a gala banquet in April.

Unified ban on public smoking the right choice

Most of our neighbouring municipalities have banned public smoking. Why are we considering taking a watered-down approach?

As debate over whether to completely ban smoking in bars and restaurants continues, it appears there are really only two options on the table — 100 per cent smoke free or designated smoking rooms.

With neighbouring communities such as Guelph, Mississauga and soon Oakville eliminating butts from public places, Milton should take no less of a stringent approach.

If the Town is as concerned about maintaining the "level playing field" as local and regional politicians have stated, there is no other option than to keep smokers at the door.

Everyone knows about the health issues related to smoking, so there's no need to push those buttons. But the economic impacts of a smoking ban

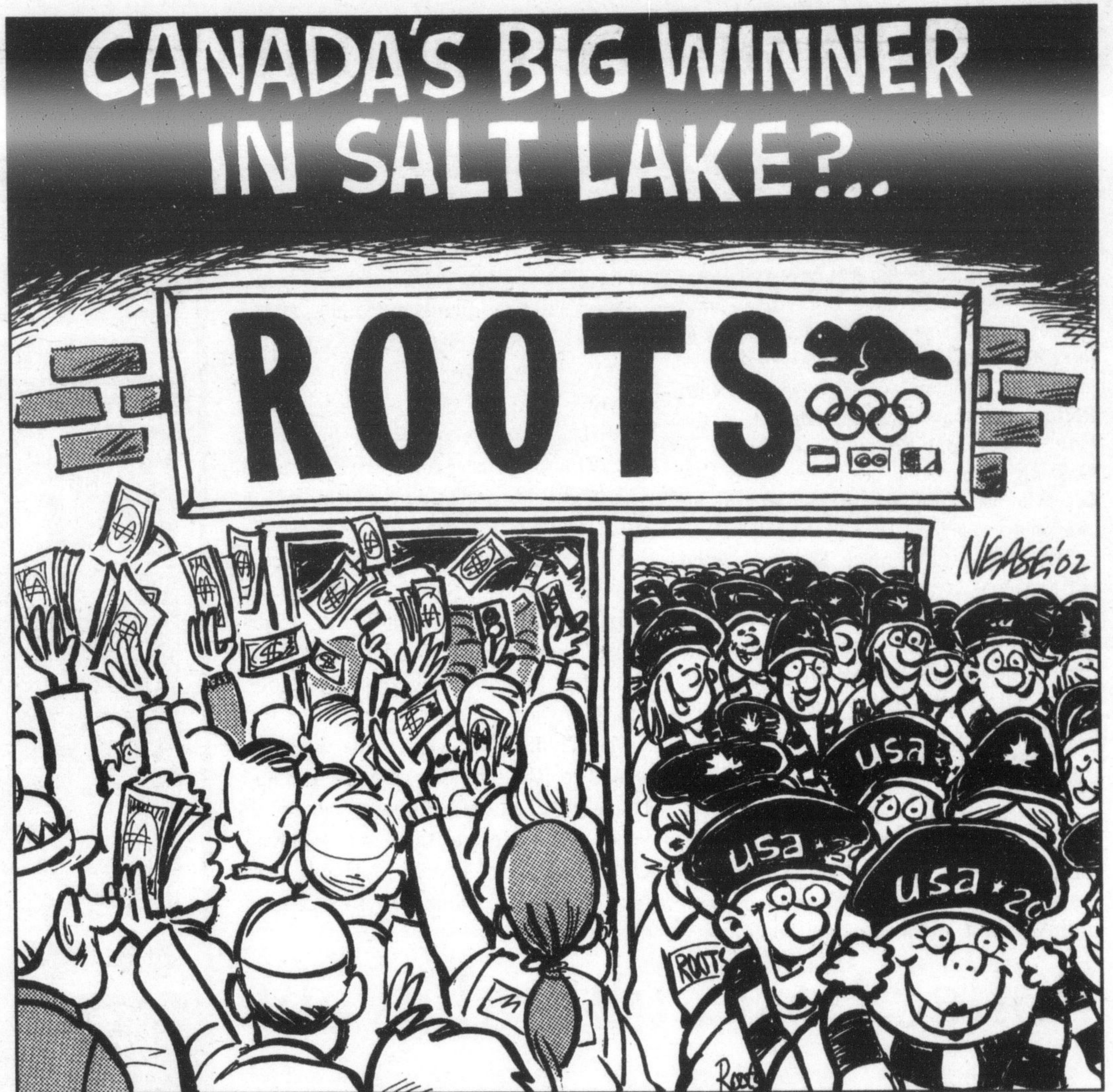
may also favour butting out.

Initially, business is bound to go down for those establishments that have a high quantity of smokers. But the experiences of our municipal neighbours have shown the business returns.

And if we're keeping our arguments to strictly economical factors, creating designated smoking rooms can be quite costly. There's the expense of segregating a room, installing a separate ventilation system and of course the disruption to regular business while all this is going on.

Now, for the sake of argument, let's say the Town goes with the smoking room option. Businesses around town want to please their smoking customers and spend thousands of dollars to meet designated smoking room requirements.

Everything seems to be going good for a couple years, then something astounding happens -



OUR READERS WRITE

Letter on White Cane Week helpful: reader

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank you for printing the letter from E. Kidole explaining how that individual took the time to demonstrate the use of her father's cane to a class of students.

Not too long ago I led a busy life not giving too much notice to the odd person I would see with a white cane on the street or in the mall. Now the shoe is on the other foot so -to-speak and I'm vision impaired. I can no longer drive my van here or there, but must be driven anywhere I go. I must take my time with my own white cane to make my way around outside my home.

No I'm not absolutely, totally blind, but vision impaired, as are most people with white canes, or

guide dogs. I still have some peripheral sight and I find people watching me saying, "You can still see, why do you have a white cane?". Please, please let your readers know that people don't have to be totally blind to use a white cane, or have a guide dog. It doesn't mean that they don't need the white cane or guide dog any less or do not need a little extra room in crowded malls. I'm fairly new to using the white cane and am not quite used to people bumping into me or tripping over my cane without so much as a "pardon me".

As an aside, vision impaired individuals are given a great deal of assistance from the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. However the white canes have to be

purchased by the individual, and so do the replacements when someone carelessly steps or trips on it and breaks it.

I believe education is the key to having people understand what the white cane or guide dogs are all about. I would ask the two local school boards what they are doing to help educate our young people in the area of vision impairment.

I may stand corrected, but I understand that the Halton CNIB asked the two local boards if they wanted to have volunteers come to the schools to educate our young people, during the White Cane Week. Silence was their only answer.

Fran Cranley
Milton



From my
perspective

with RICHARD VIVIAN

the Provincial government realizes smoking is a health issue and makes the smoking ban province-wide.

That means those businesses that struggled to come into compliance with the Town bylaw now have to kick their smokers to the curb anyway.

Although it's unlikely the Province will ever grow enough courage to lead, this is a possibility

that must be considered when the Town finally makes a decision.

To have your opinion heard on this matter, contact Councillor Rick Malboeuf during the day at (905) 878-1299 or in the evening at (905) 878-0111. The Town of Milton Clerk's Department is also accepting written submissions on the matter.

Mr. Malboeuf and Councillor Ken Keates represent town council on the Smoking Bylaw Review Committee, which is currently discussing how Milton should approach the matter.

The committee is expected to submit a report to town council with recommendations implementing a new bylaw on March 25.

Councillors passed a motion last fall stating their intention to have 100 per cent smoke-free public places by May 31 — a date which could be extended should council favour designated smoking rooms.