

# Dickens owner says smoking ban proposal discriminatory

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sink, he said.

Bingo Country's Kitchener operation saw profits drop from \$1,112,202 in 1999 to \$558,886 in 2000. Waterloo Region instituted the ban on January 1, 2000.

Similarly, the Guelph ban — which came into effect October 1, 2000 — resulted in a \$222,214 profit reduction between 2000 and 2001.

"All it takes is 15 to 20 people a session to leave and all of a sudden, our bingo events are not profitable," explained Mr. Innocent. "Let's say there's 20 customers and they each spend \$30. That's \$600 and that's basically what would have become the charity's and the operator's profit. In areas (where we've created designated smoking rooms), we've retained customers and profits haven't been affected."

The Town of Milton also received \$5.5 million in profits from Mohawk Slots last year.

But the argument that fundraising facilities should be exempt is irrelevant, continued Mr. Mason.

"The evidence is insurmountable (that second-hand smoke is unhealthy), but why is the second-hand smoke in those exempted facilities not as harmful as second-hand smoke in here?" he questioned. "I don't get that and I think that's very unjust."

Restrictions not permitting minors into the bingo hall and on the gaming floor of Mohawk Slots played a big role in their exemption, explained Mr. Malboeuf. "There's no kids in there to be subjected to second-hand smoke."

The Halton Region Health Department (HRHD), which has been pushing a complete ban from the beginning, are supportive of the proposed bylaw.

"We feel this is a very good step forward," commented Burgess Hawkins, HRHD representative on the review committee.

## Open for business

Town councillor Cindy Lunau (right) recently joined Charles Machines Inc. CEO Dave Woods (left) and Brandt Equipment president Gavin Semple in cutting the ribbon to officially open the new Brandt Equipment location on Esquesing Line.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE



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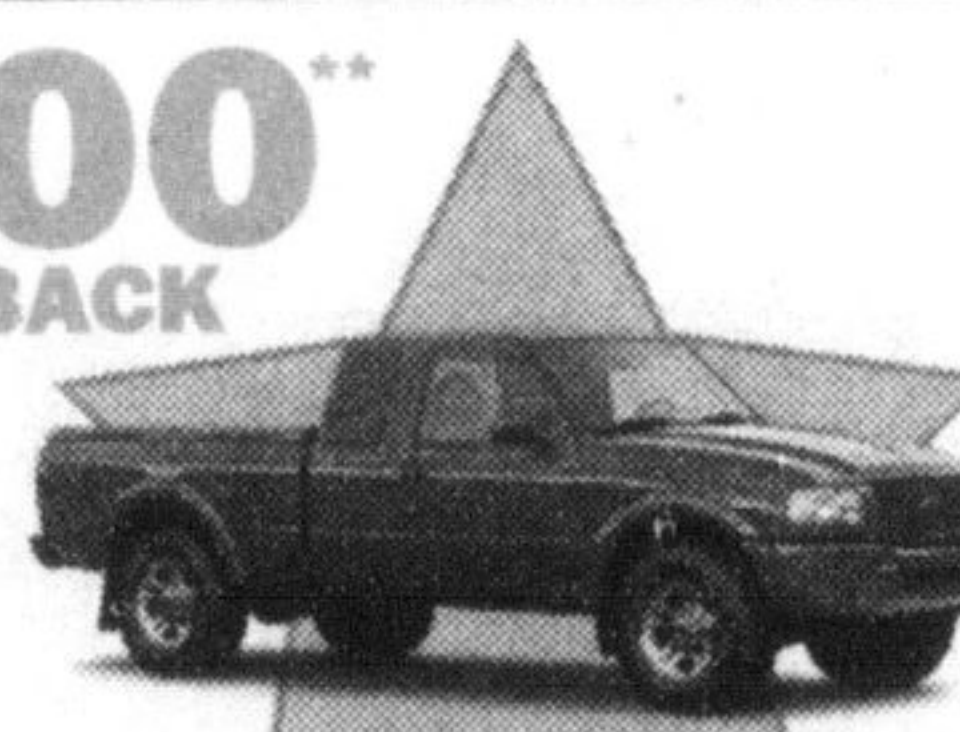
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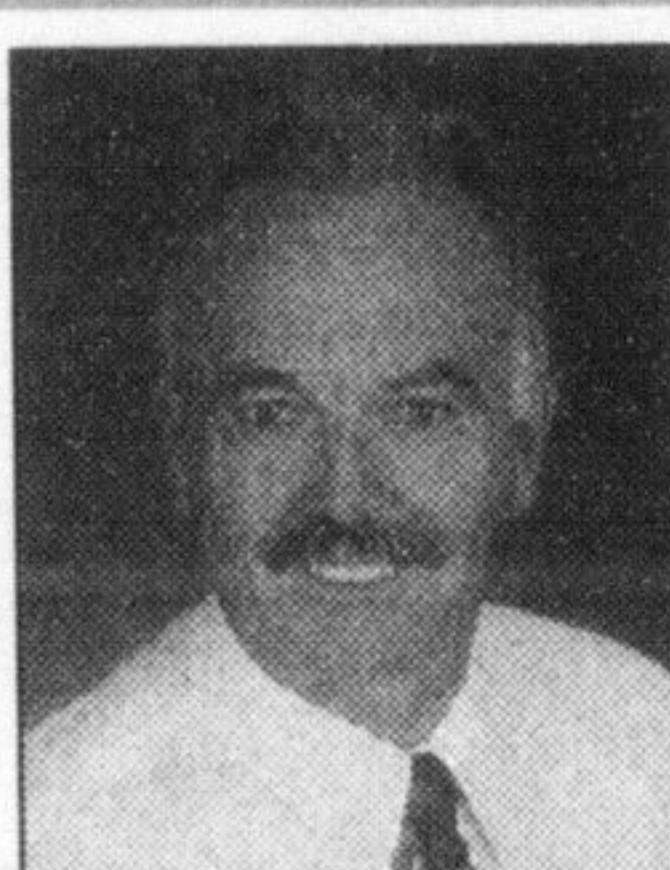
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