

Larviciding program may be expanded to north Halton in ongoing battle against West Nile virus

By JASON MISNER
The Champion

Halton's top public health officials want to step up efforts to fight West Nile virus this summer by larviciding catch basins in north Halton.

The Region's health and social services committee unanimously passed a recommendation Tuesday to use pesticides in the urban areas of Milton and Halton Hills where mosquito larvae has been detected. Lab results from Health Canada, which were only released to the Region recently due to major backlogs, concluded mosquitoes caught in traps in north Halton last summer tested positive for West Nile. That prompted Halton's health department to encourage councillors to expand the West Nile larviciding program this year.

In February, the Region approved larviciding catch basins in Oakville and Burlington. If approved at Wednesday's regional council meeting, as many as 7,000 catch basins in north Halton could be larvicided for a total of 35,000 across the region.

The Region anticipates getting approval for a larviciding permit from the Ministry of the Environment next week. The entire Halton program is scheduled to start the second week of May.

The Region will hire nine university students to check for larvae and a private company will drop the pellets. Combining the larviciding, surveillance and monitoring portions of the Region's West Nile battle plan, costs of the entire program will likely exceed \$800,000.

The Region will also larvicide stagnant pools of water on public property, like road-side ditches and small ponds, throughout Halton this summer. It's a worthy initiative to help stem the spread of the potentially-deadly, mosquito-borne virus, said Dr. Bob Nosal, Halton's medical officer of health. "We had a problem and we're taking it very seriously," he said after the meeting.

There were 59 human cases of West Nile in Halton last summer, three from Milton. Some got very sick, but none died. There were 17 deaths linked to the virus in Canada last year.

The Halton numbers were the highest in the province, next to Toronto. And south Oakville was the hot spot for West Nile in 2002, given it had the highest rate of infection in North America.

That's why Halton has undertaken a blood study to determine the prevalence of the virus in south Oakville and south Burlington residents. Dr. Nosal hopes to have the test results some time next month to see if the Region needs to alter its West Nile program.

When it comes to West Nile, the most pressing issue the health department has heard from residents is the concern for standing pools of water, Dr. Nosal said.

He said a four-page leaflet will be mailed to Halton residents next week explaining the Region's West Nile program, as well as tips on how to safeguard your property from buzzing mosquitoes by getting rid of stagnant water.

Further to that, Dr. Nosal urged people to open their pools earlier this summer or to pump the water off of the cover to avoid the possibility of mosquitoes finding a suitable home to lay their eggs.

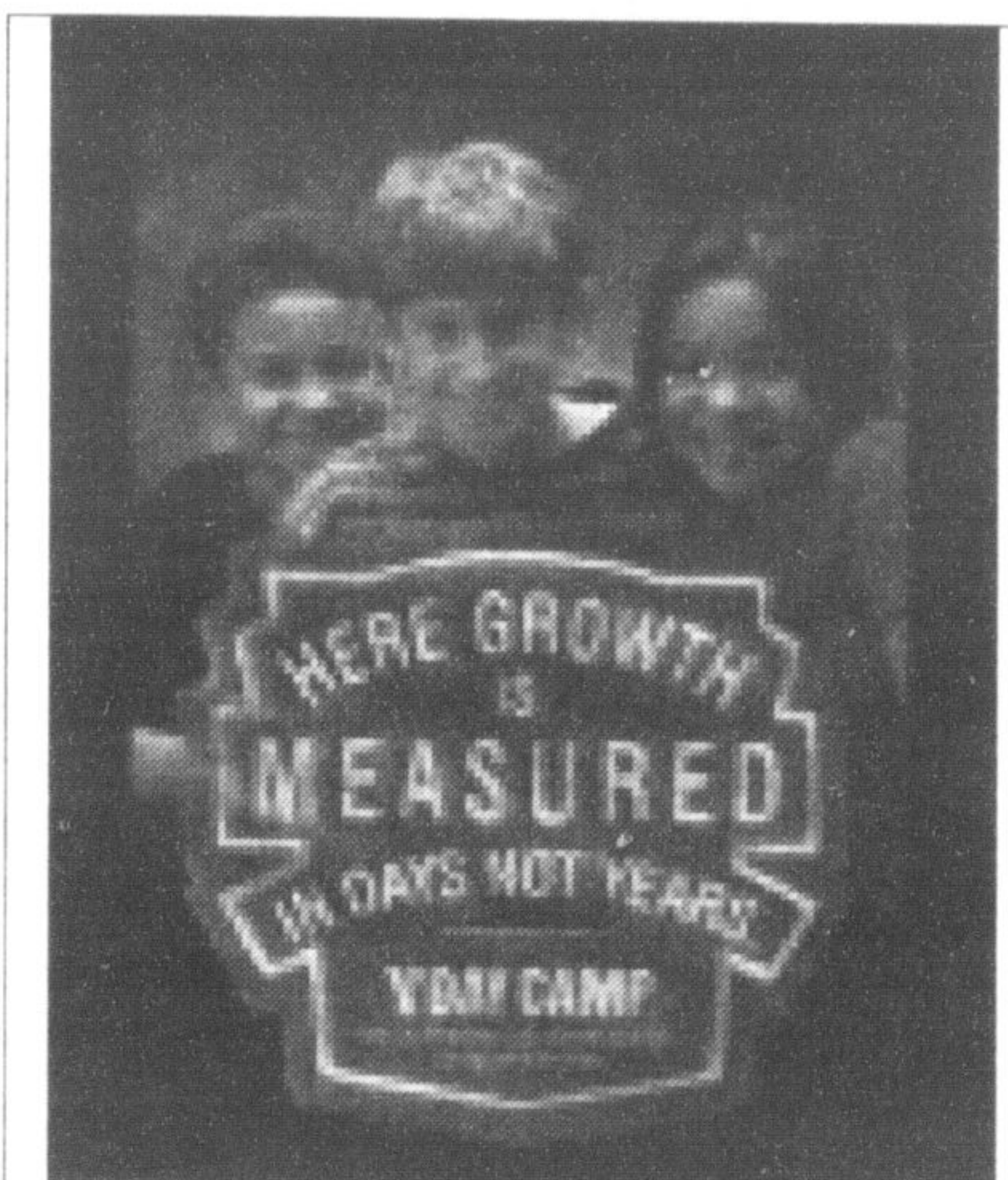
The Region is researching the potential of larviciding pool covers if the pool can't be opened early, he said.

Public information meetings will be held by the Region in all four municipalities in late May to discuss West Nile and the meas-

ures to combat it. Larviciding is a form of safe pesticide use involving the dropping of pellets.

Catch basins are considered a prime habitat for larvae, which grow into adult mosquitoes and risk getting West Nile from an infected bird and passing it on to humans through bites.

Jason Misner can be reached at jmisner@miltoncanadian-champion.com.



With more than a dozen program choices and camp sites in the Greater Toronto Area, there's a camp that is right for your child.

YMCA
416-928-9622 or 1-800-223-8024
Call now to register.

GEORGETOWN CINEMAS
235 GUELPH STREET 873-1999

1 **X MEN 2 - X MEN UNITED** [PG]
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:15 p.m.
Sat. & Sun. 2:00 p.m.
Frightening Scenes

2 **LIZZIE MCGUIRE** [G]
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:00 p.m.
Sat. & Sun. 2:00 p.m.

3 **ANGER MANAGEMENT** [PG]
Daily 6:45 p.m. & 9:00 p.m. Sat. & Sun. 2:00 p.m.

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE - Lotto Centre - Georgetown Market Centre
Theatre Parking Available at Rear

Charley FitzWhiskey's Tap & Eatery

Mother's Day Buffet Brunch Reserve now!

Sunday May 11, 10am - 2pm
Over 75 hot & cold items including an omelette station, carved roast beef, ham & a dessert table from heaven.

Tues: 35¢ Wings, after 4pm
Wed: All-U-Can Eat Spaghetti, after 5pm, \$5.97
Thurs: Kids Dine for \$1.99, 4pm-9pm
After 9: Thirsty Thursday, DJ with Classic Rock
Fri: Fired Up Fridays Hosted by DJ Wishbone and MC Mr. Gerry
Sat: All Day Breakfast (11am-5pm) &
After 9: BLAST TO THE PAST RETRO 80'S AND 90'S
Sun: All Day Breakfast (11am-5pm) & *Rista Perfecta*

Sun. Night Open Jam Night
HOSTED BY JOE BRETT
Every Sunday starting May 18
Featuring keyboardist Gregg Dechert, formerly of Bad Company, Uriah Heep and the David Gilmour Band

55 Ontario St. N., (Beside Milton Chrysler) 905-876-2378

LOOK
for your **COVERS** flyer in today's paper

Covers
Blinds Drapes Bedlinens
The store is the factory!

THE LARGEST SELECTION OF ROMAN SHADES AT THE LOWEST PRICES

NEW **FACTORY DIRECT** ROMAN SHADES

FACTORY DIRECT ROMAN SHADES

NEW **FACTORY DIRECT** ROMAN SHADES

FACTORY DIRECT ROMAN SHADES

FACTORY DIRECT ROMAN SHADES

Selected Area's

Gary Hannah
SUMMIT AWARD

Rob Farrant
SUMMIT AWARD
TOP OVERALL SALES 2002

Congratulations to Gary and Rob on their outstanding achievement in 2002. Their dedication to excellence and professionalism has earned them the Summit Fleet Award in the 2002 Professionals Club Program.

The Summit Fleet Award is recognition for their proven expertise in product knowledge and consultative selling skills. They have demonstrated a strong commitment to customer satisfaction, and their sales performance has positioned them in the top 10% in their region.

The staff and management of Gallinger Ford-Lincoln would like to thank them for their hard work and dedication. And wish them continued success in 2003.

GALLINGER
FORD LINCOLN

655 MAIN STREET EAST, MILTON
(905) 875-FORD (3673)
Visit us at www.gallingerford.com