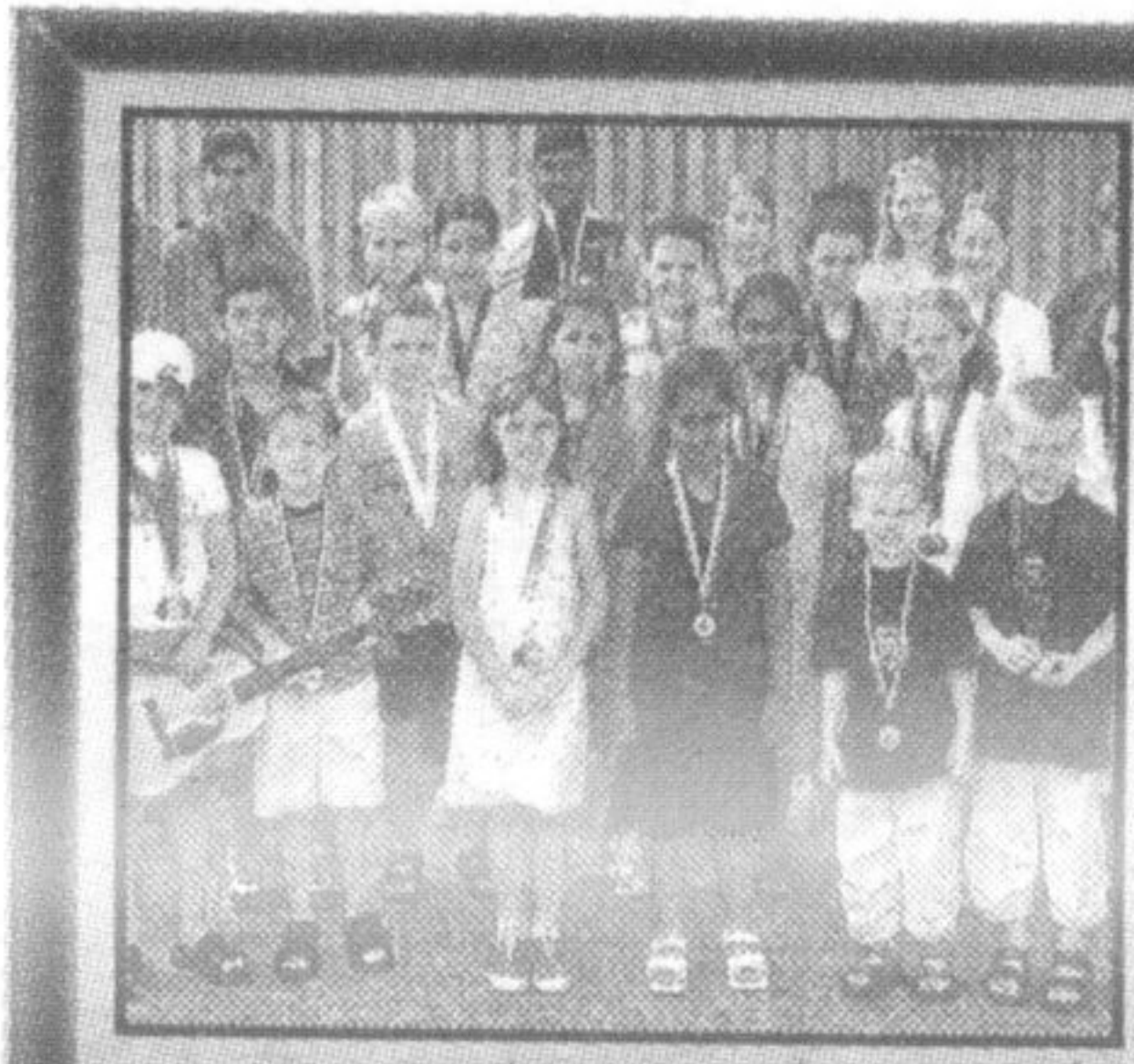


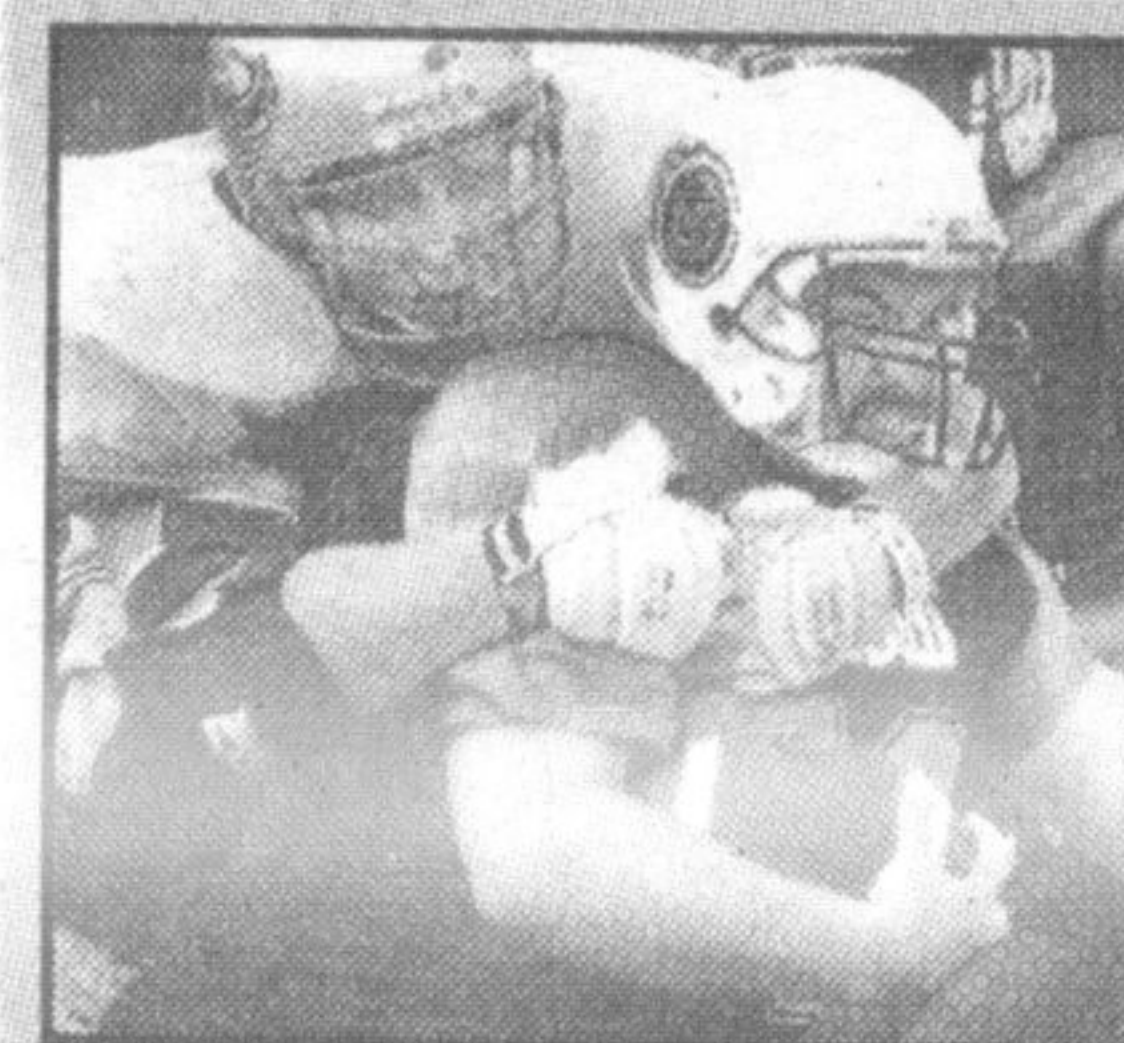
**E. coli cause can't be found: health officials**

See page 2



**Standings show music students doing very well**

See page 8



**Marauders edged in regular season finale**

See page 18

**West Nile virus found in crow in Burlington**

See page 4

# The Canadian Champion

*Milton's Choice Since 1860*

"Using Communication to Build Better Communities"

A Metroland Community Newspaper

Vol. 144 No. 39

Tuesday, July 29, 2003

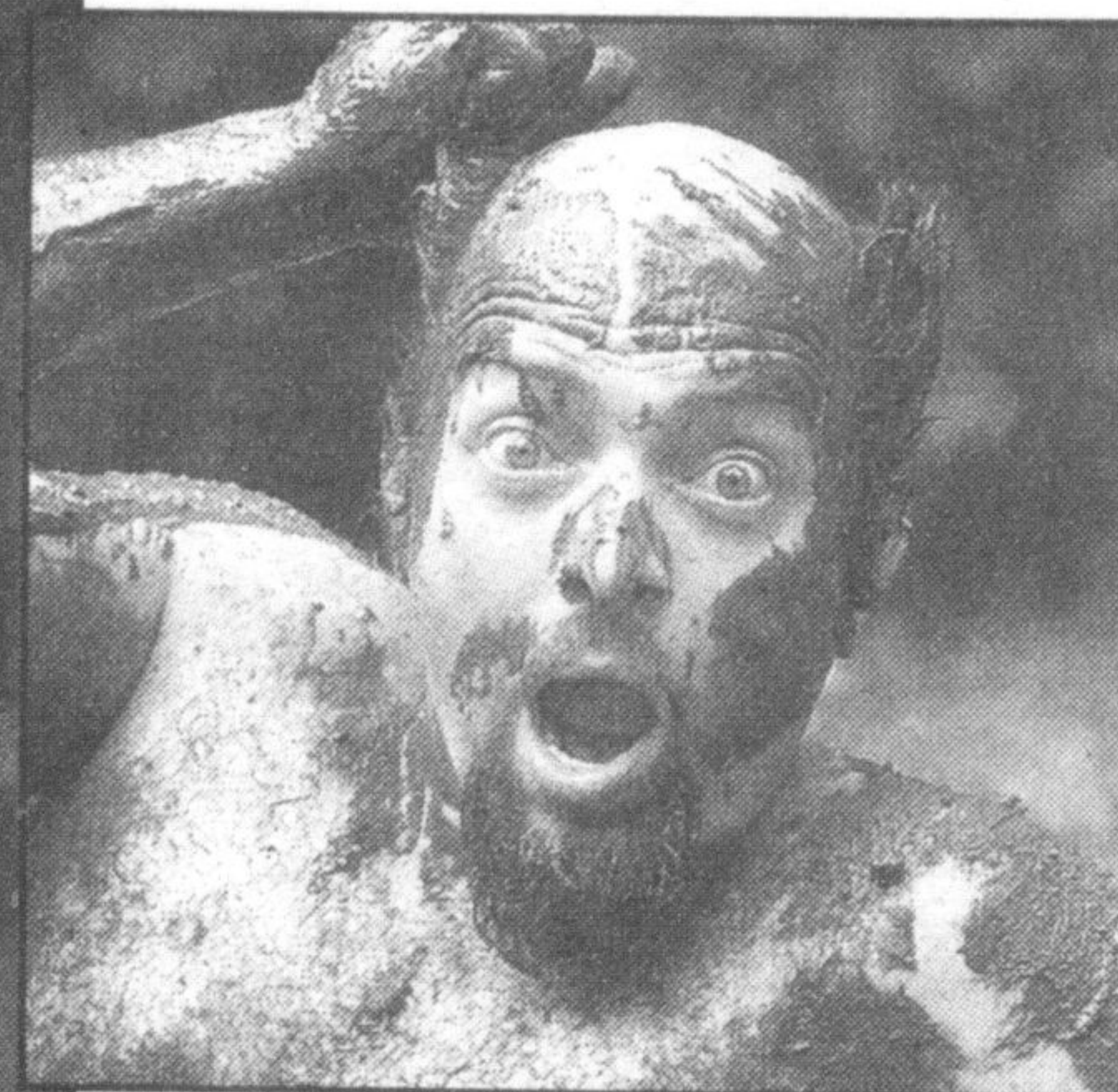
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## Old days

Erin Rowe (left) and Kim Howard of Milton play characters at popular tourist attraction, the Milton-based Ontario Renaissance Festival. Inset, Ross Thomson, formerly of Milton, performs in the 'Theatre in the Ground' show.

Photos by GRAHAM PAINE

## Outpouring of support replaces bikes

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**  
*The Champion*

For Nicky Pearson, the past week has been quite an emotional roller coaster.

Just three days after discovering 19 BMX bikes used in the Riders Ready program were stolen, she stood shaking her head in awe, as she recounted tale after tale of the generosity of Milton and area individuals and businesses who responded by reaching for their wallets.

It's a real-life fairy tale of good triumphing over evil.

"We're set for probably the next four years," Ms Pearson said.

Friday afternoon, excited kids from the BMX program were presented with a BMX bike by the Hudson's Bay Co. It's the first of 19 bikes the company's donating to replace what was stolen.

But there's more. Fifteen mountain bikes were donated by Tim Hortons and 12 bikes were donated from other businesses and individuals in Halton. So far, \$12,500 has also been collected.

All this means that not only will the program be able to resume, it will

be greatly expanded. In fact, one of Ms Pearson's dreams will now come true. The program will spread across the province — something Ms Pearson had wanted, but couldn't do with limited resources.

Now, the overflow of bikes and cash will go to other communities like Chatham, Kingston and Port Elgin to establish more Riders Ready programs.

"This is going to change everything," Ms Pearson said jubilantly.

The Riders Ready program is a non-profit program that Ms Pearson started four years ago for special

needs children. Each week, about 25 special needs boys and girls — many who have autism — go to the Milton track to race the BMX bikes.

Ms Pearson said she hopes the Riders Ready program will soon be able to run twice each week. There's even talk of forming a mountain biking program for underprivileged kids, she said.

Ms Pearson said all she needs now are volunteers — people willing to ride alongside the special needs kids so all the new bikes can quickly be put into use.

• see **SMALL** on page 3

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### TUESDAY INSERTS

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