

Voting hours, poll sites may change for 2006

By **JASON MISNER**
The Champion

Unsuccessful Ward 1 municipal election candidate Greg Nelson says voting hours should be extended to help avoid the kind of low turnout that plagued his ward in last week's election.

Mr. Nelson said he isn't blaming the Town, but that the hours on the day of voting — 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. — were insufficient. He thinks the polls should open at 8 a.m. so people can vote before they head to work, and could lead to a higher turnout the next time around.

"I do agree that we have a two-hour window in the morning," he said. "I'm sure they're (the Town) receiving tons of input from the wards about how to do things better in 2006."

Ward 1's voter turnout was 22 per cent, compared to next highest in wards 3 and 4 at 33 per cent. Ward 2 has the largest turnout at 37 per cent.

Town staff will bring back a report on election issues — like outlining advanced poll locations — when the next election rolls around in 2006.

Town clerk Troy McHarg said council will have the option at that time of extending voting hours if it wants to. Changes would require a majority vote.

While the report is still a ways away, he said it could include recommendations for longer voting hours.

Council can choose to have voting day start earlier than 10 a.m., but it can't extend the hours beyond 8 p.m., Mr. McHarg said. Also, "it's possible in the future we can

look at ways of accommodating voters at the advanced polling locations," he said. "We can set the hours for advanced polls," he said.

The advanced polls this year were held over two days at Milton Mall. The hours reflected when the mall was open.

Another reason given as to why voter turnout was so low in Ward 1 was the location of polling stations.

Lou Medeiros, an unsuccessful candidate in Ward 1, said the locations for the ward were ill-chosen.

Eligible voters on the ward's east side had to go Trafalgar Golf and Country Club and those on the west side had to go to the Milton Sports Centre.

Mr. Medeiros said the drive to both locations was simply too far, which he feels contributed to the ward's disappointing voter turnout.

"Two-thirds of the voting public comes from the new subdivision. Why would they place a voting polling station (at the golf course) so far away?"

Mr. McHarg said he's responsible for choosing the eight voting locations and drove around town to find the most appropriate spots.

"We had to accommodate all the electors in Ward 1 and balance competing interests (from other wards)."

But Mr. McHarg noted those polling locations could change in the 2006 election.

Jason Misner can be reached at jmisner@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Milton man wins \$236,000 in lottery

Milton's David Morrow had the surprise of a lifetime when he went to pick up his \$10 lottery win at a local store.

Instead of \$10, Mr. Morrow had won \$235,935 from the November 5 Lotto 6/49 draw.

"I was in complete shock when the clerk told me how much I won," Mr. Morrow told the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation staff when he picked up his cheque.

He explained his mistake, saying, "I checked my lottery ticket and saw that I had matched three numbers. What I didn't realize was that I had checked my ticket against the previous draw's winning numbers."

Mr. Morrow, 45, is an operations manager at Ideal Railings in Mississauga. He and his wife, Palma, have three children. Mr. Morrow said he plans to invest the money in his kids' education and take a family vacation.

He bought the winning ticket in Mississauga.

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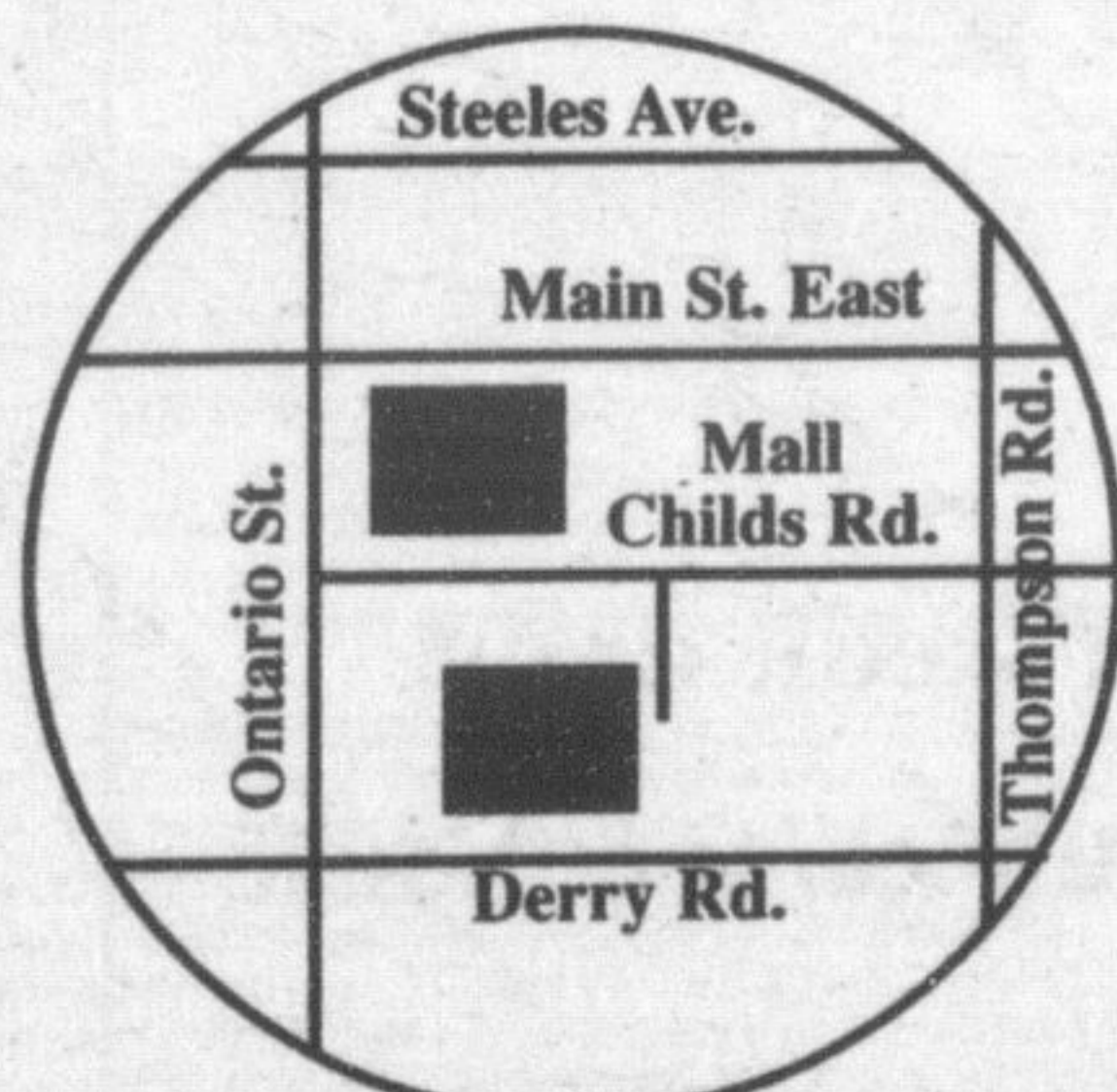
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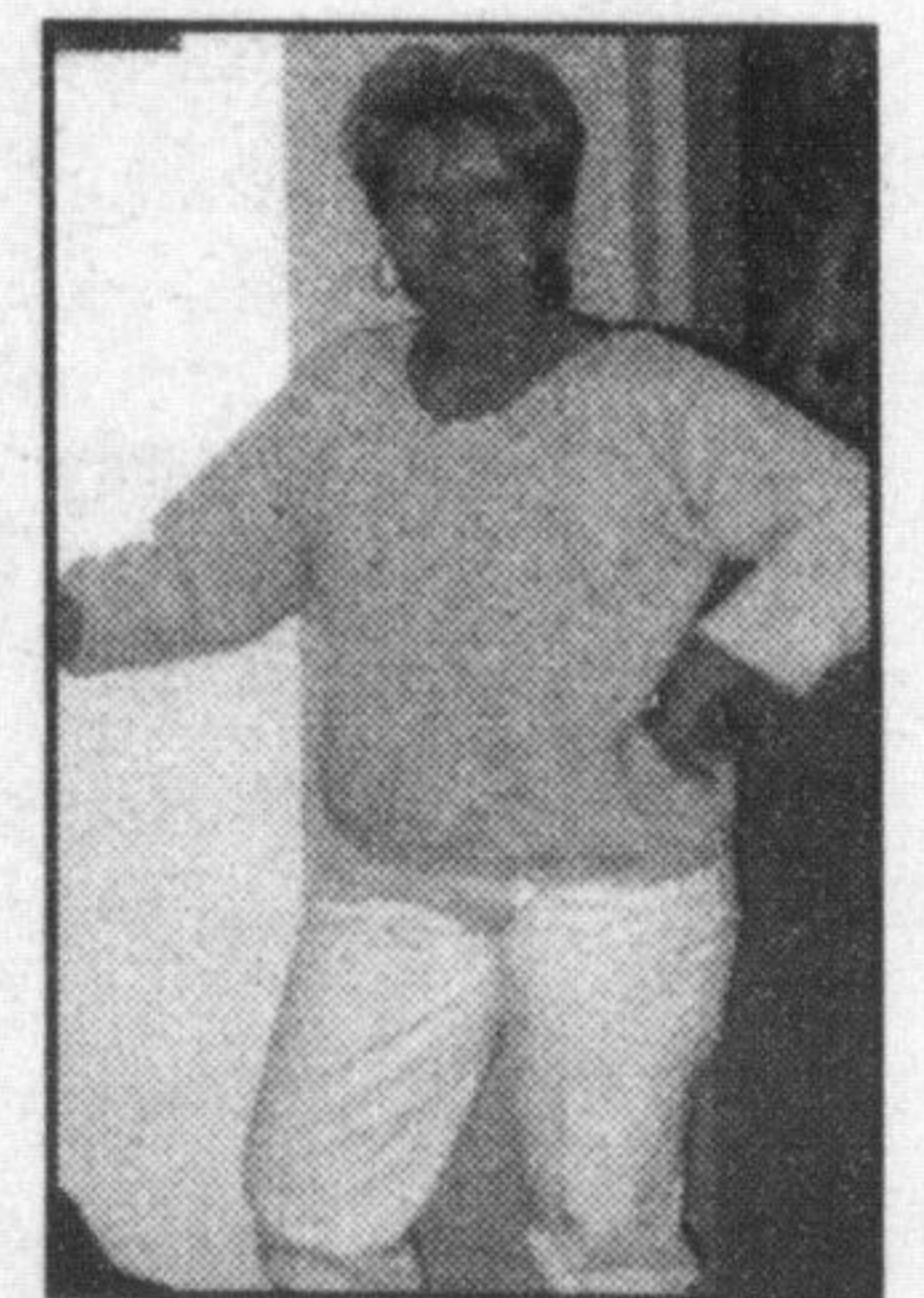
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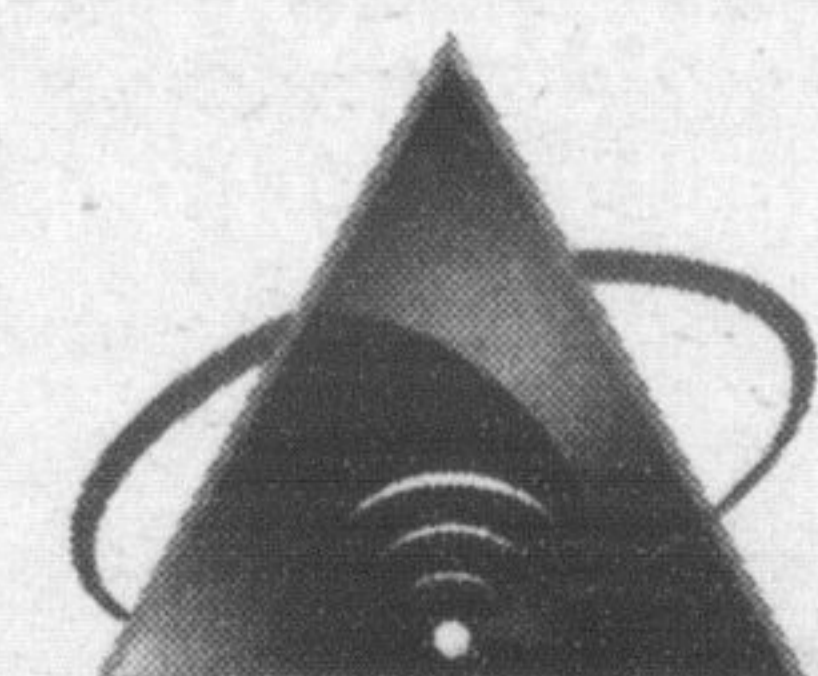


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