

Watch out for fraud artists during holidays

The Halton Regional Police Service is reminding Miltonians to safeguard their credit and debit cards to prevent fraud during this busy holiday season.

There are various categories of frauds related to cards including counterfeit credit cards using personal information skimmed off actual cards.

Other frauds include lost or stolen cards being mis-used, telemarketing frauds and fraudulent Internet sites.

Police are offering the following tips to help you protect your money as well as bank and credit cards:

Keep your card in a safe place and never lend it to anyone. Your debit card is the key to your accounts. Conducting an Automatic Banking Machine (ABM) or debit transaction requires both your access card and your Personal Identification Number (PIN).

Protect your PIN. It's your electronic signature. Instead of writing it down, memorize it. When selecting a PIN, avoid the obvious including your name, telephone number, date of birth and address.

Never disclose your PIN to anyone. No one from a legitimate financial institution, police service or business should ask for your PIN.

Always conduct your ABM transactions when and where you feel most secure. If you're uncomfortable about using the

machine for any reason, do it later or go to another location.

To ensure privacy, use your hand or body as a shield to prevent others from seeing you enter your PIN. After completing a transaction, remember to take your card and your transaction record.

After making a withdrawal from an ABM, count the cash you've received and put it away immediately.

Finally, if your card is lost or stolen, or is retained by an ABM, notify your financial institution immediately. Most institutions offer 1-800 phone numbers or 24-hour service for lost or stolen cards.

Party merger welcomed here

By LISA TALLYN
Special to The Champion

The historic decision by their parties to unite into a single conservative party is welcome news to former local Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservative spokespersons.

The newly-formed party, which doesn't yet have a leader or platform, is called the Conservative Party of Canada.

"I think it's just a really important milestone in Canadian history," said former Halton Alliance candidate Dean Martin, who has

already declared his intention to seek the new party's candidacy in the riding.

"We need to end the vote splitting that us small 'c' Conservatives have been involved in over the past 16 years."

Mr. Martin said he wasn't surprised by the level of support by Alliance members (96 per cent) for the merger but "he was pleasantly surprised by the PC support (90 per cent) across the country."

Former president of the Halton Federal PC Riding Association,

Charlie Tilt, was also surprised by the PC support for the merger.

"I was expecting somewhere around 80 per cent," he said.

Former Halton Alliance riding president Charles Brewer also welcomed the merger.

He said, "If Ottawa and Calgary had left it up to the ridings it would have been done a long time ago."

The new party has to move ahead quickly, but with purpose, said Mr. Tilt especially, now that the Liberals are talking about a spring election.



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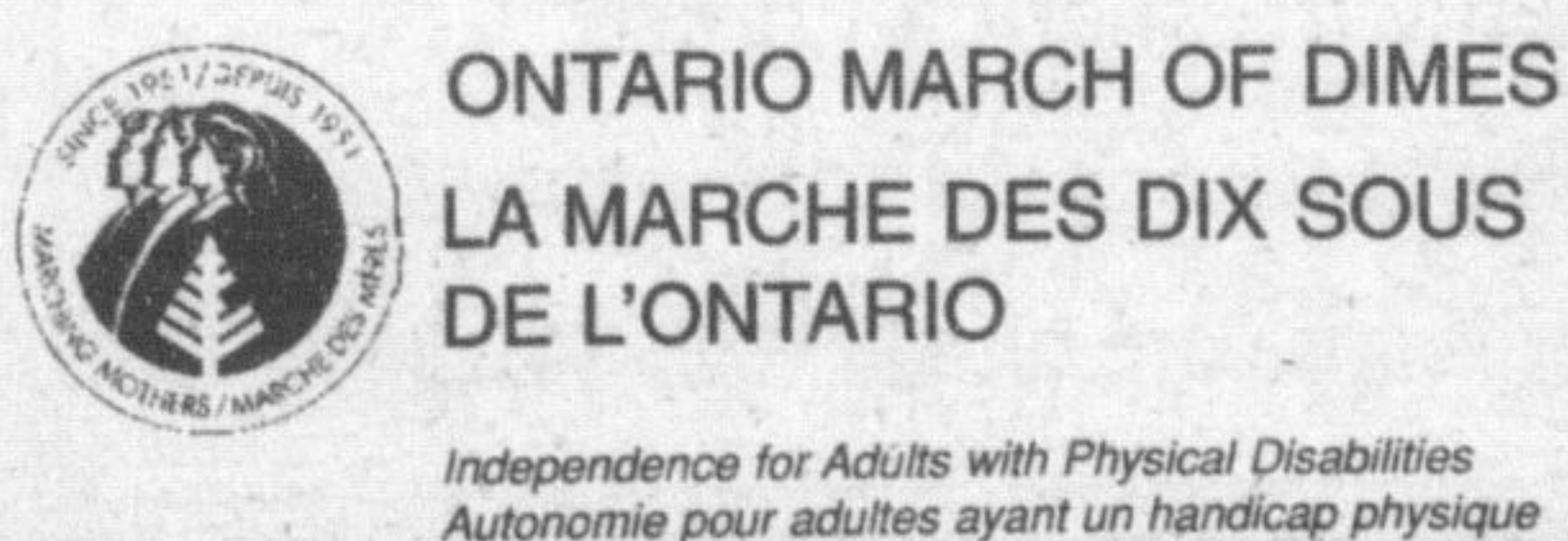
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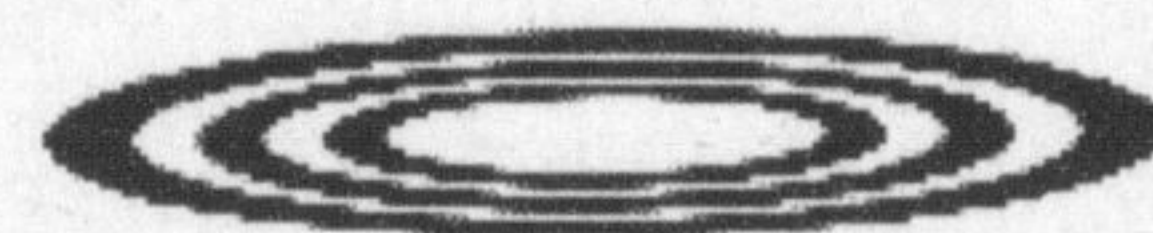
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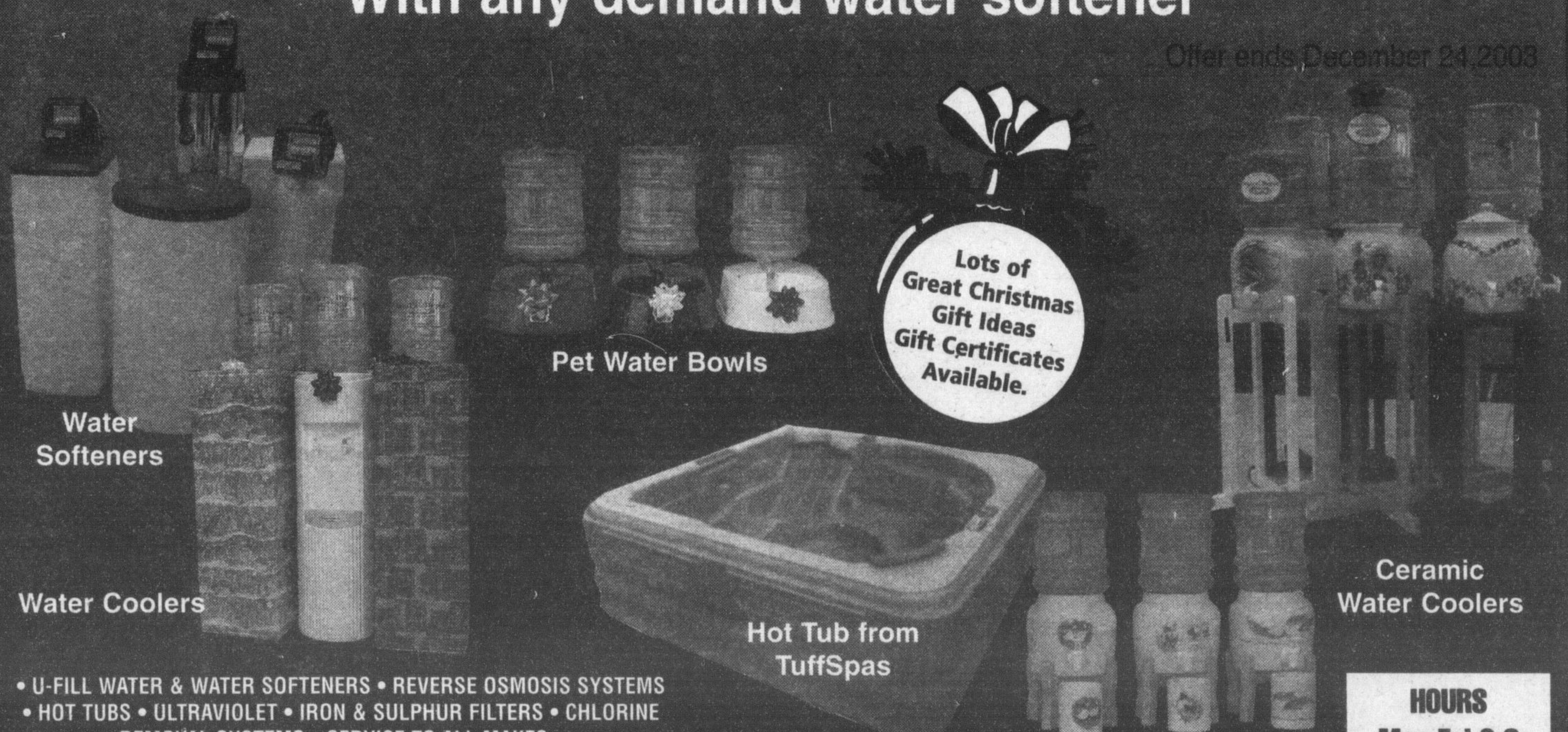
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