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# The Canadian **Champion**

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A METROLAND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER VOL. 144 NO. 103 TUESDAY, MARCH 9, 2004 \$1.00 (GST included) 40 PAGES "Using Communication to Build Better Communities"



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## Surveying the damage

Milton Fire Department Captain Doug Shortt, left, and a firefighter survey the damage to a second-floor bedroom after the No. 5 Sideroad home was ravaged by an early Saturday morning fire. Damage to the home, located just west of Regional Road 25, is pegged at about \$200,000. The four residents of the boarding house escaped to safety thanks to a smoke detector. It was first heard by a first-floor resident who awakened a second-floor resident before exiting. The cause of the fire was electrical.

## Parrott's killer may be out in 9 1/2 years

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**  
*The Champion*

Friends and family of slain Miltonian Murray Parrott say the fact his killer will be in prison with a life sentence offers little consolation — especially since he'll be eligible for parole in nine-and-a-half years.

"No amount of time could give him back the third of his life he lost," said his wife of 27 years, Pat Parrott, after Judge Bruce Dumo sentenced Douglas Stokes to life in

prison yesterday with no chance of parole for 12 years.

Mr. Stokes, 21, has already been in custody for two-and-a-half years, so he can apply for parole in nine-and-a-half years.

Since Douglas Stokes pleaded guilty to the 2001 second-degree murder of Mr. Parrott, 53, a sentence of life in prison was mandatory. The question being dealt with throughout the hearing was when he could seek parole.

Judge Dumo made his decision yesterday afternoon at Superior Court of Justice in Milton as Ms Parrott sat in the front row, surrounded by supporters.

Mr. Stokes' mother, from St. Catharines, left the court room before the judge finished reading his decision.

There's no evidence that Mr. Parrott showed any violence toward Mr. Stokes, as had been testified, Judge Dumo said.

He said he didn't believe Mr. Parrott pulled out his knife — with which he was eventually killed — in a threatening manner as he walked home from the former Knight Cap bar on Main Street.

Mr. Stokes' motive was most likely robbery — see **GUILTY** on page 10

## Champion wins third in Ontario

The Champion took home a third-place award for General Excellence in the Ontario Community Newspaper Association's 2003 Better Newspapers Competition.

The awards presentation was held Saturday in Toronto.

The Champion competed against 18 other community newspapers in the circulation category of 12,500 to 24,999.

The first-place award went to Stoney Creek News, while the Orangeville Banner placed second.

Judges made their decisions based on elements such as the paper's front page, community news, presentation, ad design, sports, local features and overall product quality.

Each winning paper was offered a written critique by judges.

"I liked the large photos (on the front page)," remarked one of the competition's judges, adding the paper has "a good mix of local news stories."

The Champion placed third for General Excellence last year as well.

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