

# Concert a benchmark presentation

Ten ladies meet to try and organize a music appreciation club. Thirty-five years later and this little group has expanded to become the Milton Choristers, which now includes male voices.

With the addition of the choral ensembles Women of Note, and the Georgetown Bach Chorale, coupled with two highly-talented soloists, Sunday's concert held in the acoustically-pleasing Royal Bank Hall of Mississauga's Living Arts Centre was truly a benchmark presentation.

Guest tenor Chris Fischer and soprano Deanna Sarkar offered the audience some of the best-loved operatic arias. Works by Verdi, Donizetti, Bizet, Delibes, and Wagner were coupled with excerpts from the pens of Gilbert & Sullivan. It was a well-balanced mix from the opening Trovatore Anvil Chorus to the Traviata Libiamo toasting finale.

The Choristers demonstrated their vocal range as well as their cohesiveness with such challenges as the difficult Prisoners' chorus from Fidelio; and especially the humming chorus from Madama Butterfly. Lyrically, they successfully negotiated the demanding vocal range of G & S's 'British Tar' from HMS Pinafore and the tongue-twisting libretto sung by a certain high-ranking officer in Pirates of Penzance. Conductor Sonja Van de Hoef's arrangement of the latter gave it added humour and zest, as did the group's incredible vocal synchronization. Their Chorus of the Hebrew Slaves from Nabucco was sung with empathy and understanding. No wonder Italians of the composers' era adopted it as a semi-anthem to their own desire for independence.

## Sharps & flats Danny Gaisin

Ms Sarkar's first selection was Mein Herr Marquis, the humorous aria from Die Fledermaus. Not only does she possess a clear voice with full soprano range, she was also able to project explanatory action to help put the piece into context. Her rendition of Mio Babbino Caro was spectacular. The piece defies many singers; the lyrics do not scan to the music thus necessitating detailed phrasing. Ms Sarkar was then joined by mezzo-soprano Ms Van de Hoef, absenting herself from the podium and offering us the magnificent flower duet from Lakmé.

There's a warm droll moment in the Magic Flute, where two characters, both doubting they'll ever find happiness, meet; fall in love and plan their family future together. The aria, Papageno/Papagena, as interpreted by Ms Sarkar and Mr. Fischer was expressive and visually portrayed the brightened future the two protagonists discover. They were a hoot! Both guests' positive interaction was repeated in their dramatic Boheme duet wherein Mimi accepts the offer of infinite affection, albeit with reservations. Their duet was highly charged and sung with intensity. Then, as a finale, the duo performed the rousing Libiamo from Traviata.

For his solo renditions, Mr. Fischer gave us Il Mio Tesoro, from Mozart's Don

Giovanni. Sung in an dramatic andante grazioso tempo, he imbued the emotion of Don Ottavio's aria. However, selecting Rigoletto's La Donna è Mobile, while admirably performed begged comparison with Heppner, Carreras or Luciano P. himself, who have made it their apogee themes.

Hearing maestra Ms Van de Hoef's Habanera; seeing her command of such a large group of talent, and being seated next to Brainerd Blyden-Taylor, a past conductor of the Choristers; and spending an evening listening to opera favourites; truly a memorable event... even to a somewhat jaded reviewer. Bravo!

Danny Gaisin can be reached at [dangaisin@sympatico.ca](mailto:dangaisin@sympatico.ca).

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## Loves stage: mom

• from ALYSHA on page 12

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Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at [sthiessen@milton-canadianchampion.com](mailto:sthiessen@milton-canadianchampion.com).

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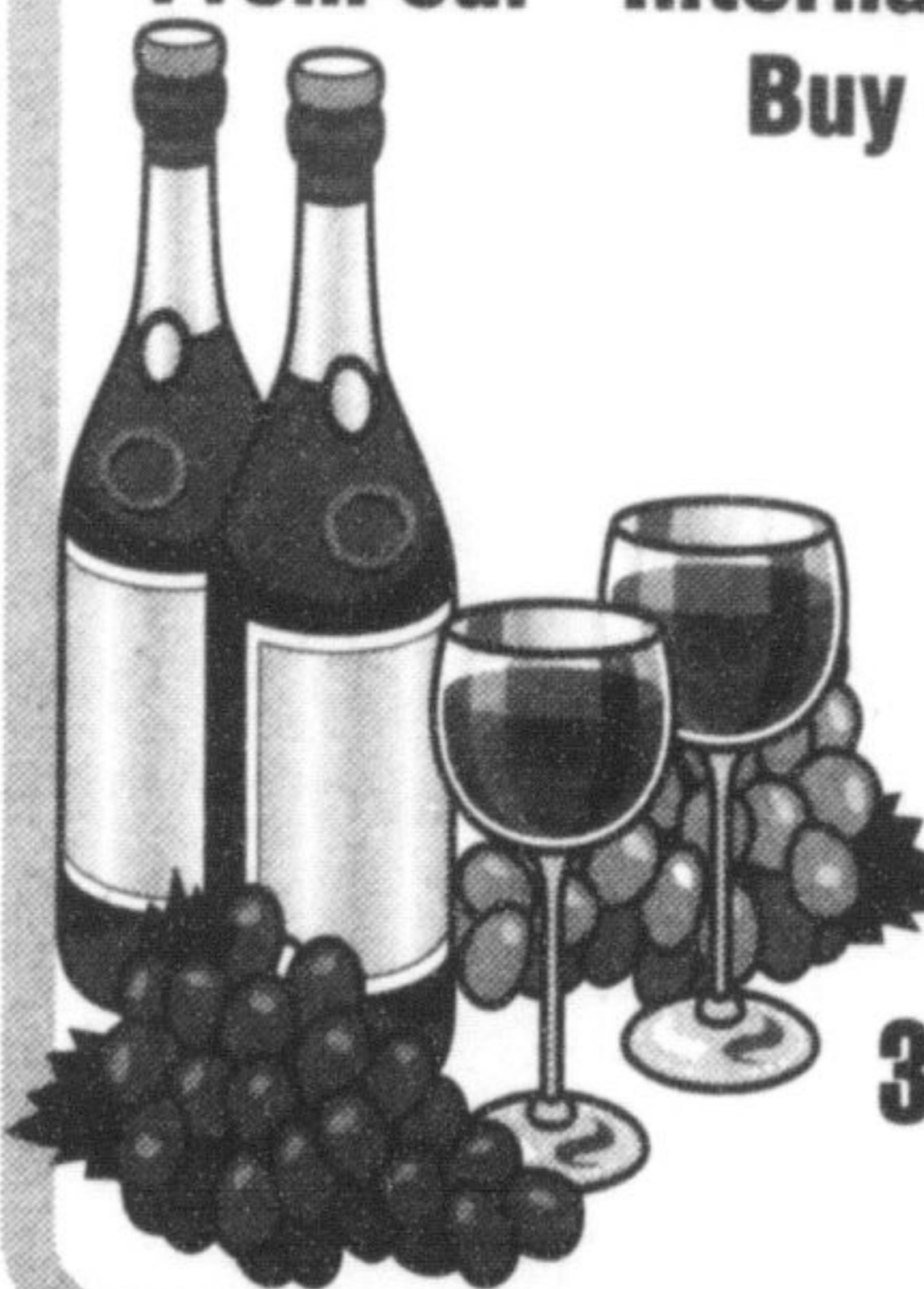
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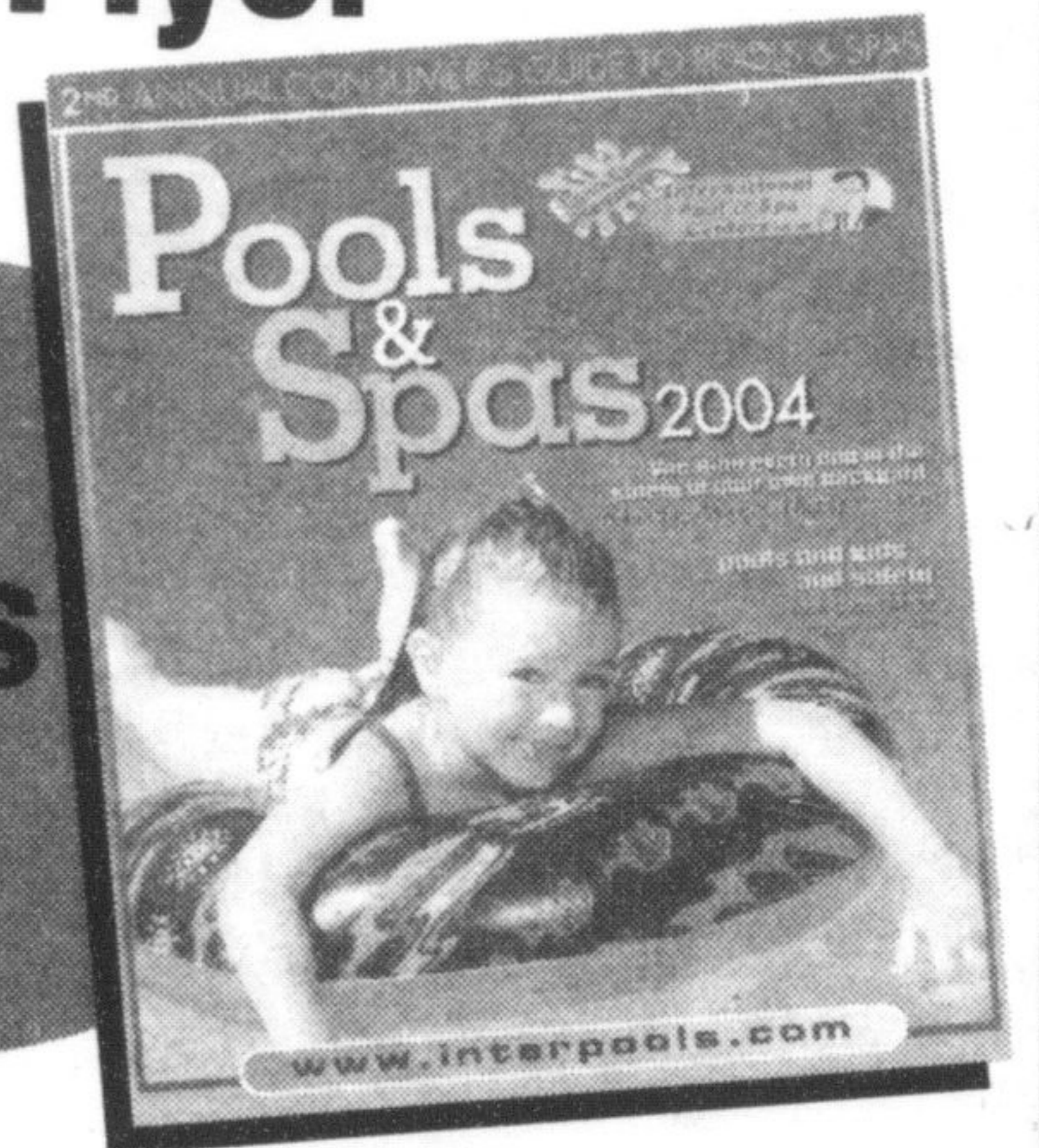
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In Today's Paper



# Meeting Notice

The Board of Directors of  
Halton Healthcare  
Services Corporation  
invites you to attend the

Annual General Meeting

# 2004

Thursday, June 17th, 2004

7:00 p.m.

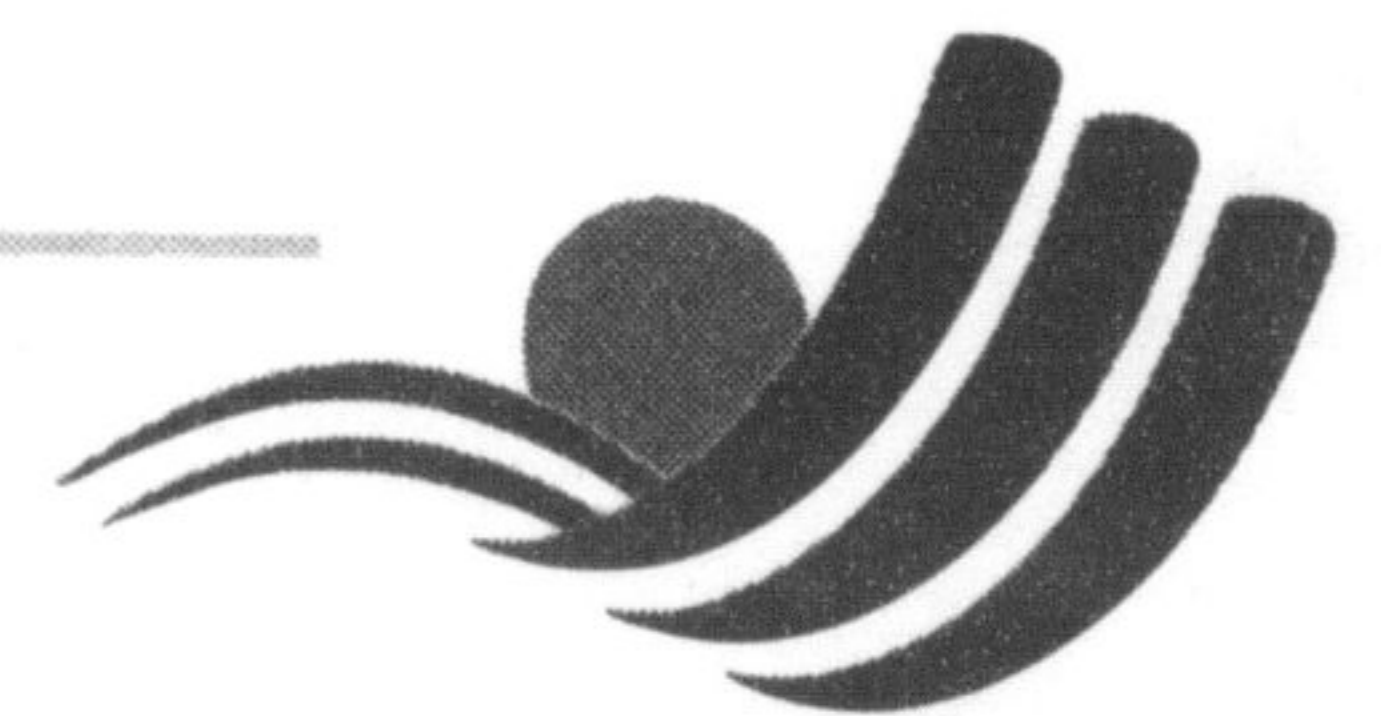
Oakville Conference & Banquet Centre - 2515 Wycroft Road, Oakville

Wine & Cheese reception to follow.

By-Law changes will be recommended.

Audited Financial Statements will be available at the meeting.

Please call the HHS Public Relations Office at 905-815-5100 for additional information.



Halton Healthcare