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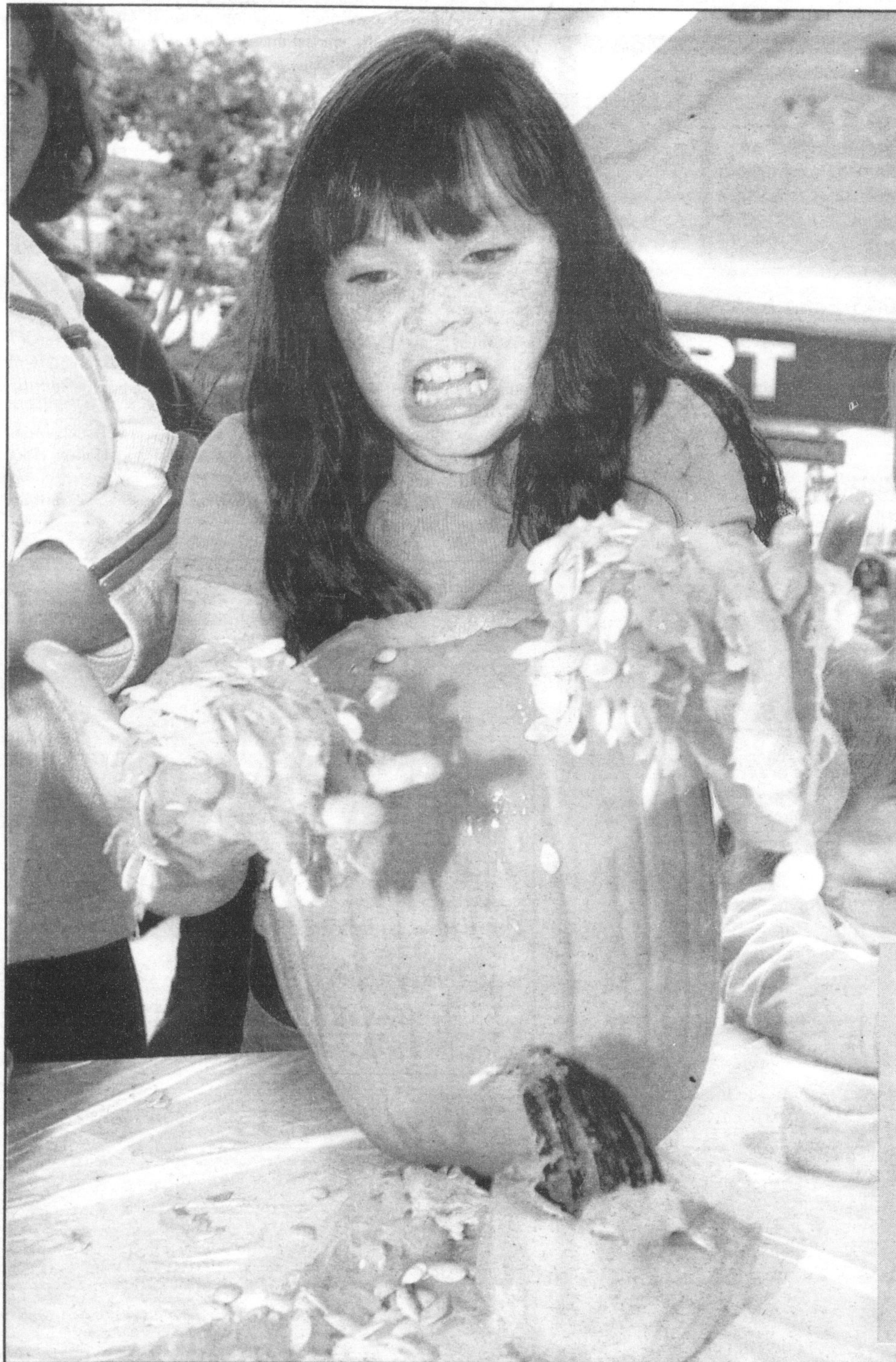
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A METROLAND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER VOL. 145 NO. 65 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2004 \$1.00 (GST included) 44 PAGES "Using Communication to Build Better Communities"



Contractor stopped clearing land: trial

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

A contractor hired to clear trees from an environmentally-sensitive property on the Milton/Oakville border told the property owner to contact the local conservation authority before doing anything, court has heard.

"I met with Mr. Vastis (the owner) and we talked about the woodlot area he wanted cleared for farming purposes. I told Mr. Vastis we should talk to Conservation Halton," said Frank Anthony of Graystone Contracting Ltd.

He told Crown Attorney John Olah that when the time came to do the clearing in April of last year, he asked property owner George Vastis if he had a permit, and he replied everything was in order.

And so the clearing of the property — located on Fourth Line, south of Britannia Road and north of Hwy. 407 between Regional Road 25 and Trafalgar Road — began.

Mr. Anthony was testifying Thursday at Milton provincial court before justice of the peace J. Woloschuk.

"We stopped and removed our equipment and that was the last work we did."
ROBERT GRAY

In June 2003, Mr. Vastis and the numbered company of which he's president were charged with 40 counts of destroying trees in an Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) and destroying trees in a woodlot, contrary to the Region's tree conservation bylaw.

Two more tree-cutting charges were added in July of last year.

It's alleged the Burlington resident was responsible for destroying trees from April 4 to 11, 2003 and again July 14 and 15, 2003.

He could be fined up to \$840,000.

Mr. Vastis pleaded not guilty to the charges in June.

Robert Gray, owner of Graystone
• see **PROPERTY** on page 4

Goopy stuff

Sarah Bradley, 7, reacts to a handful of goopy seeds while cleaning out her jack-o-lantern during Milton Mall's community pumpkin-carving event Saturday.

Photo by **GRAHAM PAINE**

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