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Page 21

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Page 8



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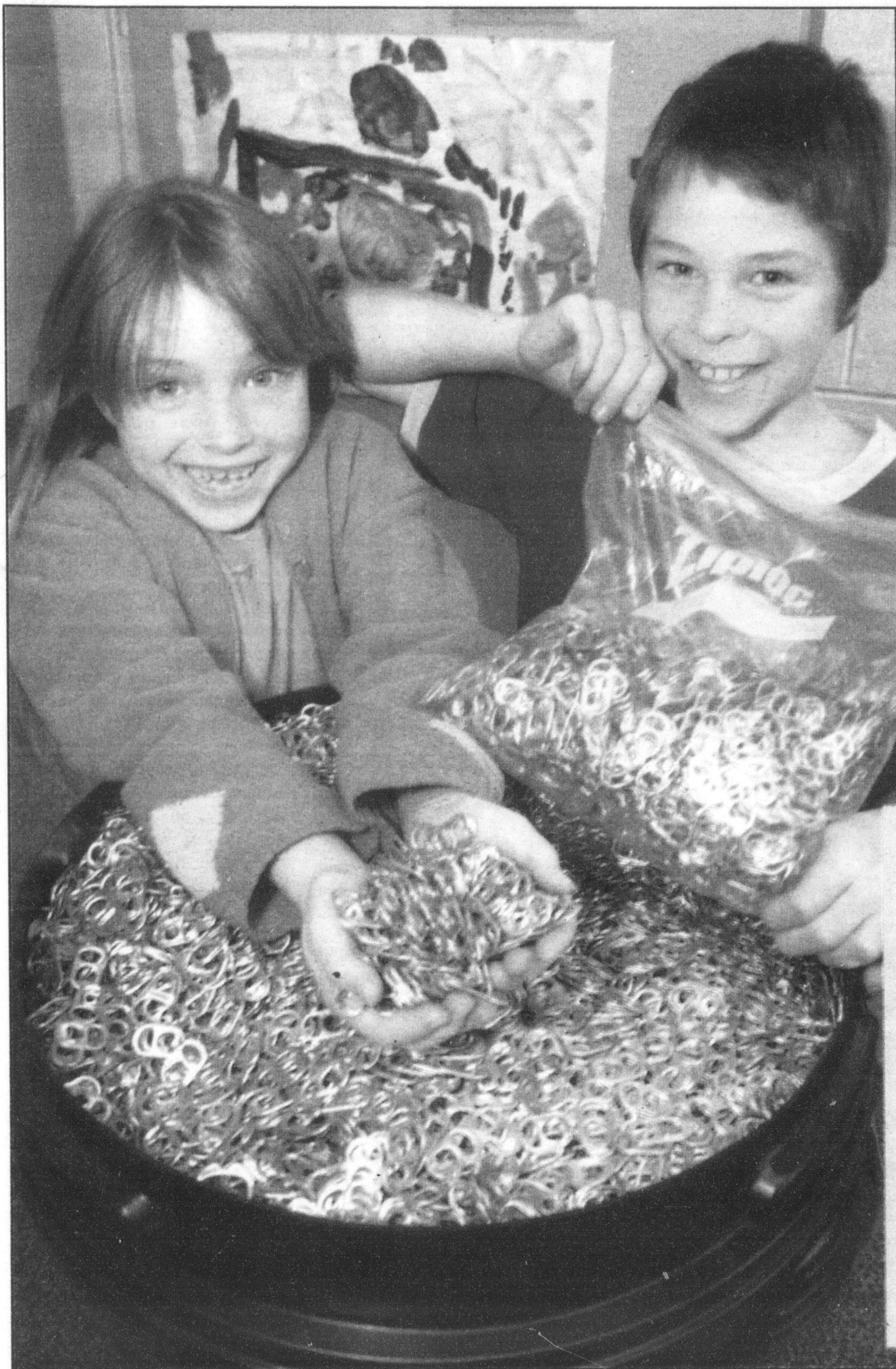
# The Canadian Champion

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A METROLAND COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER VOL. 145 NO. 73 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23, 2004 \$1.00 (GST included) 44 PAGES "Using Communication to Build Better Communities"



## About 1,250 Halton residents homeless or at risk each year

By MELANIE HENNESSEY

The Champion

Each year in Halton, between 1,200 and 1,300 people are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

That's one of the findings of a report released by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) Wednesday.

Entitled 'Quality of Life in Canadian Communities — Incomes, Shelter and Necessities Report', the document takes a closer look at life in 20 municipalities across the country.

The report, which focuses on data collection from 1991 to 2001, states that while homelessness is "considered a 'hidden' problem in affluent Halton," it's a reality.

"Homelessness exists in Halton region despite one of the highest median (household) incomes in Canada (\$74,946 in 2001)," the report reads.

It goes on to say that the "between 1,200 and 1,300" figure excludes homeless youth who "cruise" from couch to couch throughout the region.

"It's time to stop talking about affordable housing and homelessness and start taking action," said Brenda Hogg, chair of the Quality of Life Research System technical team. "Governments need to work together to get money flowing quickly to create more affordable housing across the country."

The report shines some light on poverty in the region, indicating that Halton's poverty rate for all households was 7.1 per cent in 2001, up from the 1991 rate of 6.8 per cent.

Child poverty in the region held steady at 8 per cent over the study decade for youths up to 12 years of age.

The report also said that in 2001, 5.4 per cent of Halton families were considered poor, about the same as the 5.3 per cent in 1991.

• see INCOME on page 9

## Keeping tabs

Shannon Stomphorst, 8, and her 10-year-old brother, Daniel, show off the 1,000 pop tabs they've collected before adding them to the more than 100,000 tabs already gathered by students at Chris Hadfield School. The school's goal is to collect one million tabs, which will be used toward wheelchairs for Milton District Hospital. Domino's Pizza will donate \$500 to the hospital if the school reaches its goal.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

**Inside**

Comment .....6  
Business .....10  
Dateline .....14,24  
Champion Country ..15-20  
Classified .....25-28

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