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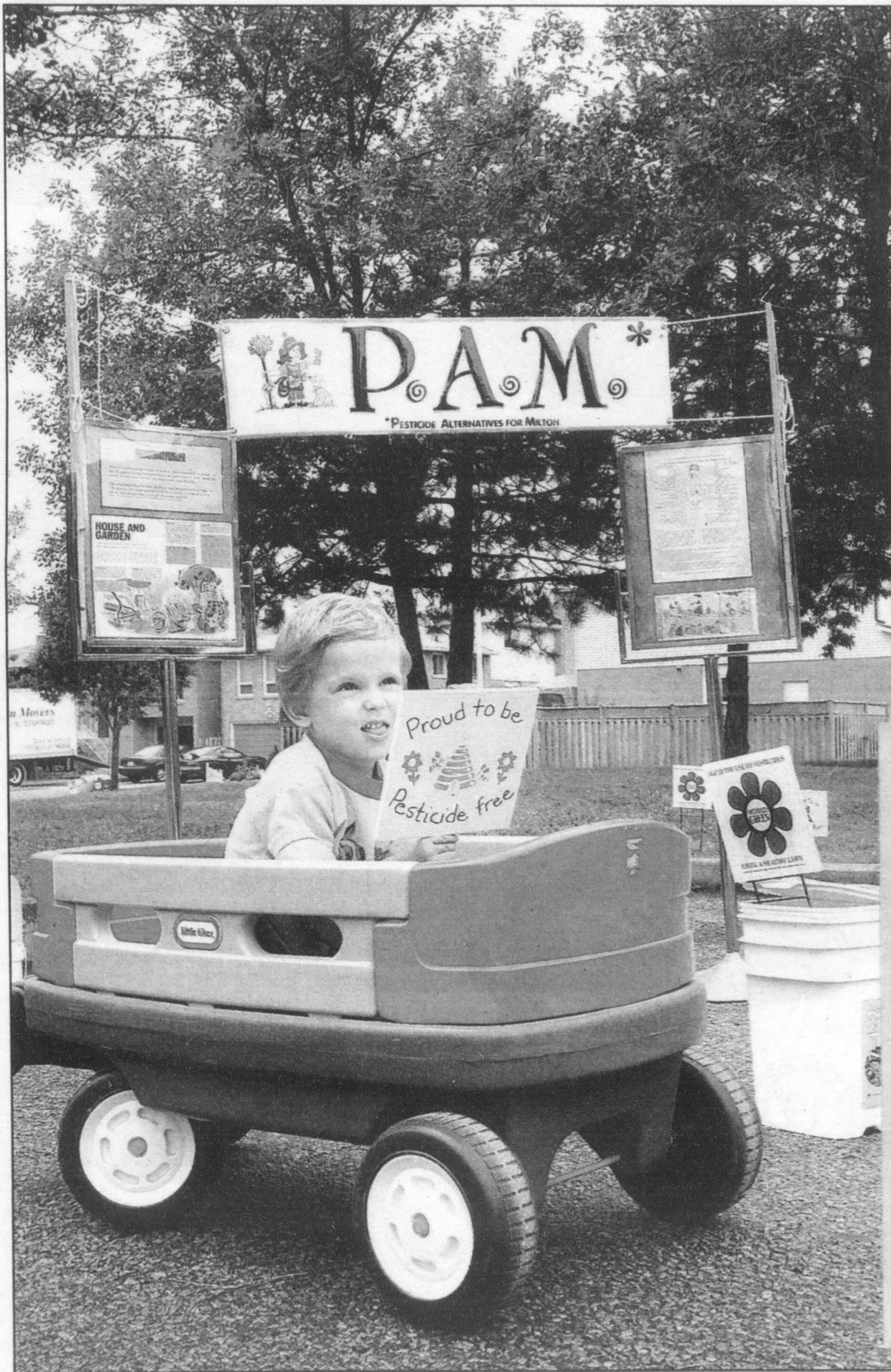
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West Nile virus is now in Halton

Dead crow found in Burlington tests positive

The West Nile virus is now in Halton.

Burlington is home to the first case of the virus in the region this year.

A crow found dead in the area of Lakeshore Road and Guelph Line tested positive for West Nile virus, the Region of Halton announced last Friday.

The bird underwent tests at the Canadian Cooperative Wildlife Health Centre in Guelph after it was discovered on July 15.

The confirmation West Nile is in the region comes much later than last year's first reported case, which was June 2 in

Milton.

But the region has seen annual cases of West Nile virus in birds since 2001, and residents are being encouraged to take precautions.

"Finding a dead bird that is positive for West Nile virus alerts us to the fact that the virus is in our region," said Dr. Monir Taha, associate medical officer of health for Halton.

"From now until the end of the West Nile virus season is the time when people throughout Halton have to be careful about protecting themselves and their families from mosquito bites."

No human cases of West Nile have been reported in Ontario this year.

Residents can protect themselves by avoiding areas with high mosquito populations, using repellent and covering exposed skin while outdoors.

To report a dead bird sighting, standing water, or for more information about West Nile virus, call the Region at (905) 825-6000 or visit www.region.halton.on.ca/health.

Thinking green

Two-year-old Ivan Komljenovic sits in his wagon while his mom, Erika Ristok — president of Pesticide Alternatives for Milton — talks about organic lawncare alternatives during an information session at Laurier Park Wednesday afternoon. It was part of Conservation Halton's marking event for the Yellow Fish Road Program, which was postponed due to rain. In the program, kids paint yellow fish beside storm sewers to remind people that anything entering the sewers ends up in local water bodies.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

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