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Candidate wants to shake things up a little at council

By **Melanie Hennessey**
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

"If we don't manage the change, the change will manage us" is a statement local resident Nicki Ward has adopted in her bid for the Wards 2 and 4 councillor seat this fall.

The Milton woman is going up against incumbent Ron Furik and past local politicians Rick Malboeuf and Colin Best for the local and regional job on November 13.

She said she decided to run because she's frustrated with the way the town is currently being run.

"I think some things we're experiencing right now could've been prevented," she said.

For example, by closing Fourth Line and then putting Thompson Road under construction, she said it's easy to predict that there'd be traffic problems.

"If it's predictable and you don't avoid it, then something's wrong," she remarked.

As the lone female candidate and political newcomer in Wards 2 and 4, Ward said she feels she has an advantage as a "unique" choice for residents.

"I want this job because I really want to make the change," she said. "I'd like to shake some of these 'good old boys' up."

Topping her agenda of issues to deal with if elected are the needed upgrades in emergency



Nicki Ward

services and rapid pace of development.

"Milton has to grow, but the way we're growing is destroying our quality of life," she said. "It's time to slow down and let Milton catch its breath. We need people in office who aren't afraid to say no to development."

She said she also thinks Milton needs to look at the overall environmental impact all the development is having, instead of just doing it on a subdivision-by-subdivision basis.

"Before authorizing new development, we need to do an environmental impact study on what we have in place," she noted.

Other priorities for Ward are addressing the town's traffic woes, starting with the areas that pose the greatest risk for accidents, and the lack of local affordable and rental housing.

"If we don't have a development plan that integrates more housing options, we're in big trouble," she said.

At the regional level, Ward explained she plans to take a "far more active role" in pushing for Milton's issues.

And while some may say Milton is outnumbered when it comes to the three votes out of 20 it gets at the Region, Ward said she just thinks a different approach has to be taken.

"In a situation where we're outnumbered, we have to think more creatively about how to build a consensus," she said, noting Milton has some 'natural allies' with councillors from the southern wards the town shares a border with — wards that have the same problems.

"I don't believe in the 'we're going to get outnumbered' attitude," she added.

Last but not least, Ward said she wants to see a video camera set up in Milton Council Chambers that would enable Internet and iPod broadcasting.

Ward was born in London, England and has lived in Milton for about six years. She works in the financial services field and is the founder of Diversitas, a specialty financial services company in Toronto.

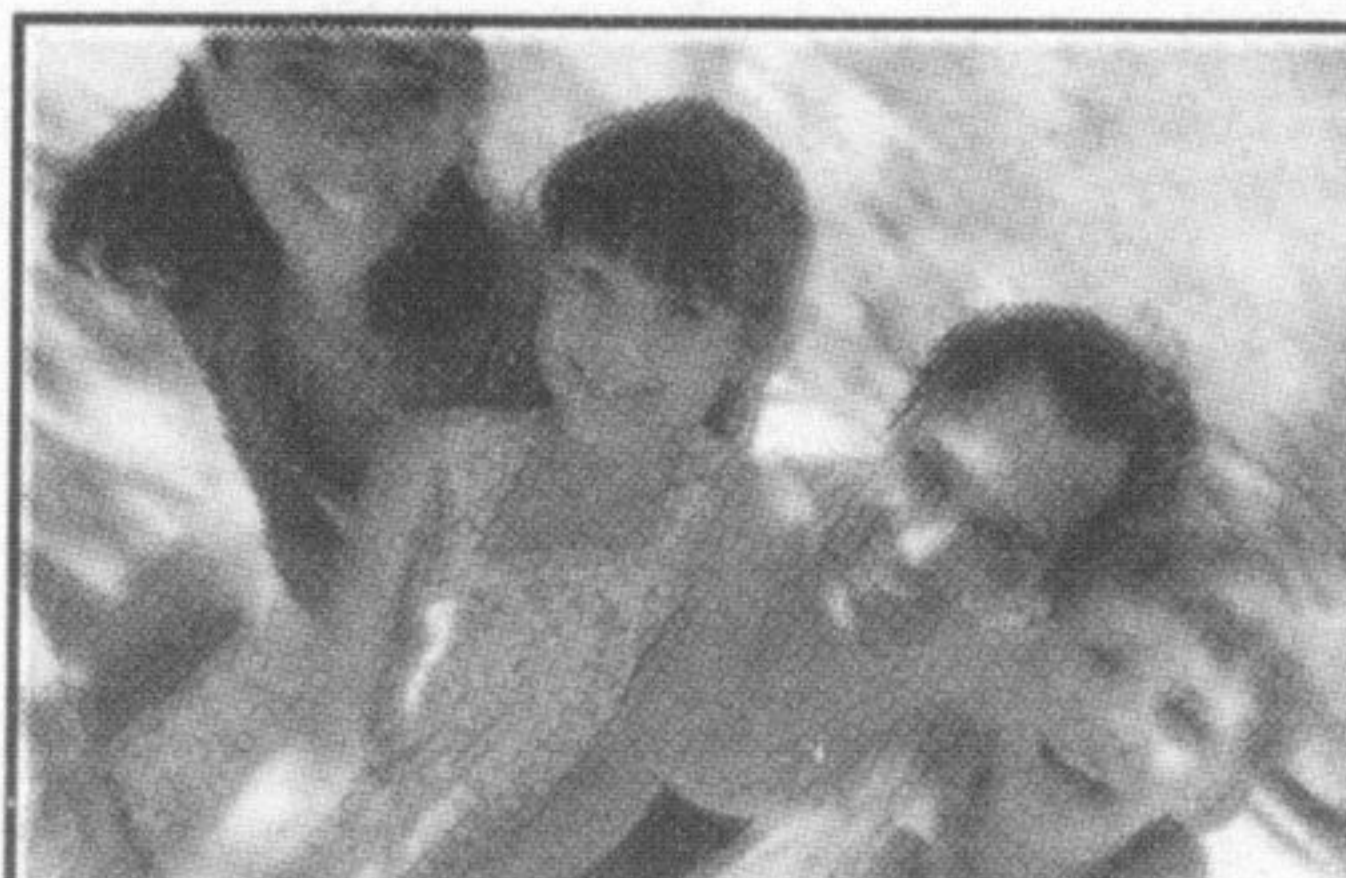
For more information or to contact Ward visit www.nickiward.com.

Melanie Hennessey can be reached at mhennessey@milton-canadianchampion.com.



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