

Huge outpouring of community support shown for baby Holly

Parents overwhelmed by town's generosity

By Stephanie Thiessen
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

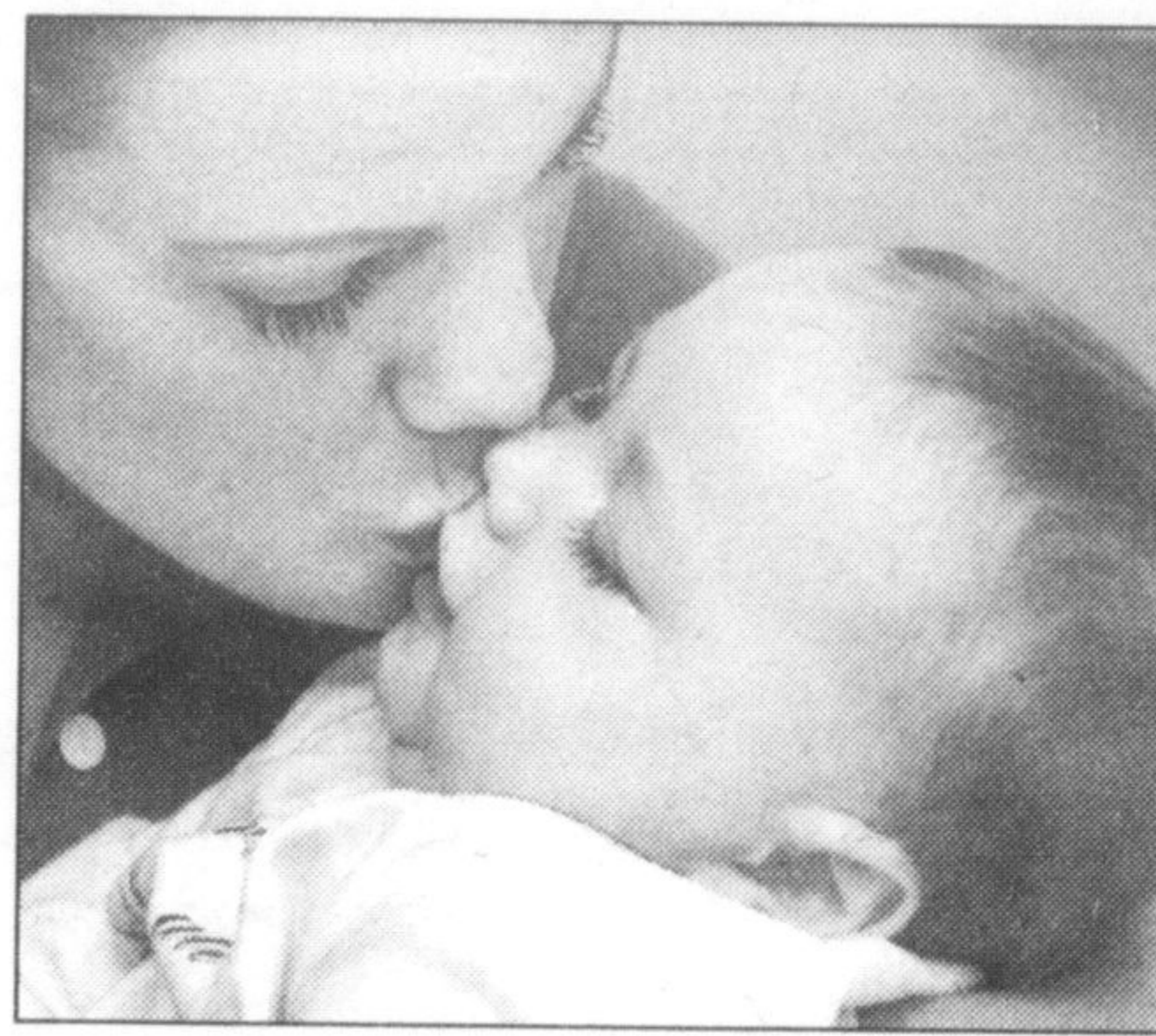
When the heart-wrenching story of nine-month-old Holly Taylor's illness was printed in last Tuesday's issue of The Champion, her parents were in no way prepared for the outpouring of support that would follow.

Over the past week, Courtney McLaughlen, 23, and her fiancé, Ken Taylor, 26, have received numerous phone calls and e-mails from residents wanting to help their daughter, Holly, who has a rare birth defect causing part of her brain to be under-developed.

Those offers were on top of generous donations that have been made to the Help for Holly trust fund that's been set up at CIBC. To date, just over \$1,000 has been collected for the family.

"It's just amazing. I never thought all this would be happening," said an awestruck McLaughlen.

Even more mind-boggling to her was the \$3,000 donation from the



Among the donations made to baby Holly's family was a portrait of her and mother Courtney, painted by a local man from the likeness of a front-page photo (at right) taken of the two recently by The Champion's Graham Paine.

Leslie Wells Slo-Pitch Tournament and the organizing of several fundraising events, including a Halloween dance that'll take place tomorrow.

Holly has schizencephaly, which is characterized by abnormal slits in the cerebral hemispheres of the brain. She's actually missing about one-quarter of her brain and will probably experience developmental delays, delays in speech and language skills and problems with brain-spinal cord communication.

As McLaughlen told The Champion recently, the financial implications of

Holly's illness have added to the family's stress. Last month, they had to travel to Calgary for an MRI, a trip that cost \$3,000. And soon they'll have to make their home wheelchair accessible, just one of the costs they're anticipating.

But Miltonians have stepped up to the plate. Tomorrow's fundraising dance has been organized by the Kinette Club of Milton, and will take place from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. at Memorial Arena, in the upstairs Lion's Club room, at 77 Thompson Rd. S.

• see WIDE on page A10

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