

OPINION

Perfect crime

Every day in Ontario millions of lottery tickets are purchased by customers with the clear understanding they are taking part in a game of chance and that the odds are stacked against them.

However, those players also hand over their money with the belief the lotteries are being run fairly.

While that belief had been shaken earlier this year by a CBC television exposé that indicated an unusually high number of retailers — and this does not mean ALL retailers — had won large prizes, it was altogether shattered last week by Ombudsman André Marin's damning report on the Ontario Lottery and Gaming (OLG) Corporation.

Marin bluntly stated that the OLG developed a "corporate culture of profit" and basically abandoned its three core values — integrity, responsibility and accountability.

Not only that, but the OLG, according to Marin, became too close with its retailers and turned a blind eye to questionable winnings by the very people who sell tickets.

From 1999 to July 2006 about \$100 million in prizes worth more than \$50,000 have been won by retail owners and employees.

The largest single case revealed by Marin took place in Burlington. It involved \$12.5 million paid out to a woman who signed a declaration stating she did not have a brother and was not connected to any retailer. The OLG then discovered that she had the same last name as the retailer who had generated the free play ticket, and he confirmed she was his sister. Confronted with this, she said she was trying to protect family privacy.

"Incredibly, despite all this, the corporation paid her the \$12.5 million..." stated Marin's report.

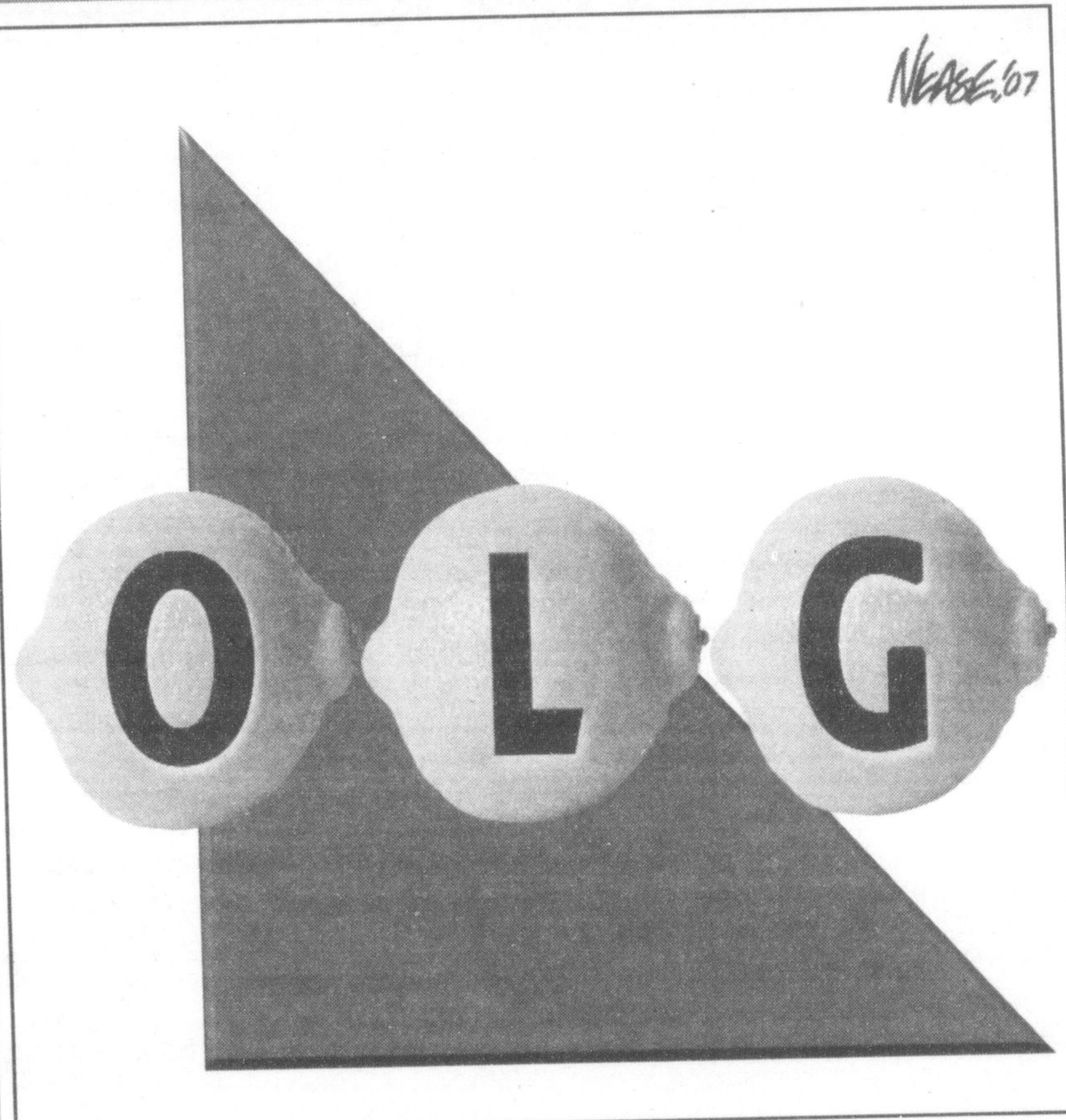
Even when these wins seemed suspicious to OLG officials nothing was done. In fact, ousted CEO Duncan Brown told an OLG official who complained,

"Sometimes you hold your nose..."

Marin said the OLG was also "rude and inept" when dealing with complaints from customers who felt cheated.

In the case of an 83-year-old cancer survivor, who was cheated out of a \$250,000 winning ticket by a convenience store clerk, the corporation spent millions fighting him in court instead of helping him get his rightful prize.

While the Province has taken steps to restore trust in the lottery system and vows to implement all of Marin's recommendations — such as tougher rules, more enforcement, monitoring of retailers and an independent oversight of the corporation — there's no escaping the fact Ontario taxpayers have been the victim of the perfect crime.



ReadersWrite

Send your letters to miltomed@haltonsearch.com.

Great support for Daffodil Days

DEAR EDITOR:

During four days at the end of March, the Canadian Cancer Society ran the Daffodil Days sale of fresh flowers to support cancer research. Milton raised a record amount of money for this cause, more than \$22,000, which has touched most families.

I would like to thank local businesses, including A&P, The Beer Stores, Canadian Tire, Cristello's Market, Foodport, Home Hardware, the LCBO, Milton Mall, Wal-Mart and Zak's

Pharmacy, for giving the volunteers space and a warm welcome to their premises.

As well, all 110 volunteers deserve a big hand for giving their time and effort to sell the flowers.

Finally, to the citizens of Milton, thank you for your generosity, both in purchases and donations. Every penny takes us closer to a cure. Milton is still a small town with a big heart.

**JENNIFER MIROSOLIN,
DAFFODIL DAYS CONVENER**

Upfront

Clara a true testament to longevity — to say the least

It's the type of story I'm only now starting to truly appreciate.

In the March 27 Champion we got up close and personal with Clara Auckland, who was poised to turn 100 — which she did on Monday — and by all accounts seems to have as much, or more, zest for life as most people half her age.

In my younger reporting days I did at least two such profiles on Miltonians hitting the century mark. At the risk of sounding too detached or — God forbid — emotionless, I'll admit the stories didn't really resonate with me at the time. They were nice and all, but didn't make a significant impact.

That's not the case anymore, due in large part to a reconnection with my paternal grandparents over the past six years. Lifelong residents of a Maritime community that makes Milton seem like a metropolis, the

two — like Clara — are a testament to longevity. Grandpa celebrated his 90th birthday back in December and Grandma, who's just a big sweetie, will do likewise about two months from now.

And to say they've both got a little steam left in the proverbial gas tank would be something of an understatement.

Now in my grandparents' little nook of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, finding people who've pushed the envelope of life expectancy and are still vibrant isn't exactly difficult. The reason for this — as my father and I have discussed on numerous occasions — has got to have something to do with the fact that down there literally everyone looks out for one another.

Milton can't possibly boast that kind of

all-consuming support, not with a population thousands of times bigger.

But what I've become quite proud to realize in recent years is that our community — as much as any around — seems to truly care for, and about, our elderly residents. One need only look at the energy and dedication expended in bringing Martindale Gardens and Marian Courtyard to reality to know there's hard evidence to support my claim.

And if a recent letter to the editor is any indication, those in the twilight of life can expect a great deal of warmth and compassion at Allendale.

It's great to see another Miltonian join the centenarian ranks, and with plenty of gusto to boot. Happy 100th, Clara — all the best.



Steve LeBlanc

The Canadian Champion
Milton's Community Newspaper Since 1860

555 Industrial Dr.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 5E1

905-878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943
Advertising Fax: 905-878-3187
Classified: 905-875-3300
Circulation: 905-878-5947

www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

Publisher

Neil Oliver

Advertising Director

Wendy McNab

Managing Editor

Karen Miceli

Production Manager

Tim Coles

Circulation Manager

Charlene Hall

Office Manager

Teri Casas

The Canadian Champion, published every Tuesday and Friday, is a division of Metroland Media Group Ltd. — Group Publisher Ian Oliver.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with a reasonable allowance for signature, will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the applicable rate. The publisher reserves the right to categorize advertisements or decline.

CCAB Audited

Recognized for excellence by

ocna Ontario Community Newspapers Association

CNA Canadian Community Newspapers Association

SN Suburban Newspapers of America

The Canadian Champion is a proud media sponsor for:

Halton Healthcare **Child Find** ONTARIO

WELCOME WAGON SINCE 1930 **THE SAUNDERS ARMY** **MILTON CANADA DAY**

UNITED WAY OF MILTON **WELFARE FOR LIFE** **MILTON SANTA CLAUS PARADE**

ATHENA Awards **The Oakville, Milton** **YMCA** OF ONTARIO

Showcase Milton **GALA Awards** **FAO**

MILTON **GALA Awards** **FAO**

The Milton Canadian Champion is a Recyclable Product