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A Metroland Media Group Publication • Vol. 148 No. 13

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

52 Pages • \$1.00 (incl. G.S.T.)

Catholic chair and vice-chair refuse request to resign

Trustees' call for change unsuccessful

By David Lea

SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

"I respectfully decline the request."
These five words, spoken by Halton Catholic District School Board Chair Al Bailey and Vice-Chair Alice Anne LeMay, were all it took to put to rest one of the most intense and controversial meetings in the history of the board.
Earlier in the week five trustees called a special meeting for Thursday night to vote on a motion calling for the resignation of the chair and vice-chair.

The reasons listed to justify the request were numerous.

The motion, presented by Oakville trustee Anthony Danko, stated the majority of trustees no longer believed that the current chair and vice-chair spoke for them.

Burlington trustee Bob Van de Vrande said the leadership's inability to forge a board that could work together towards a common vision justified their dismissal.

Disagreement between the leadership and trustees also existed over the proper role of the trustee, some believing trustees should take a more active role in establishing policy and providing direction for the board.

Danko said the motion was merely being held to make a statement and convey the trustees' dissatisfaction over remarks Bailey had made about their conduct.

Although the motion passed, with a five to four majority, it was non-binding.

In other words, it was just a formal request which Bailey and LeMay were all too happy to turn down.

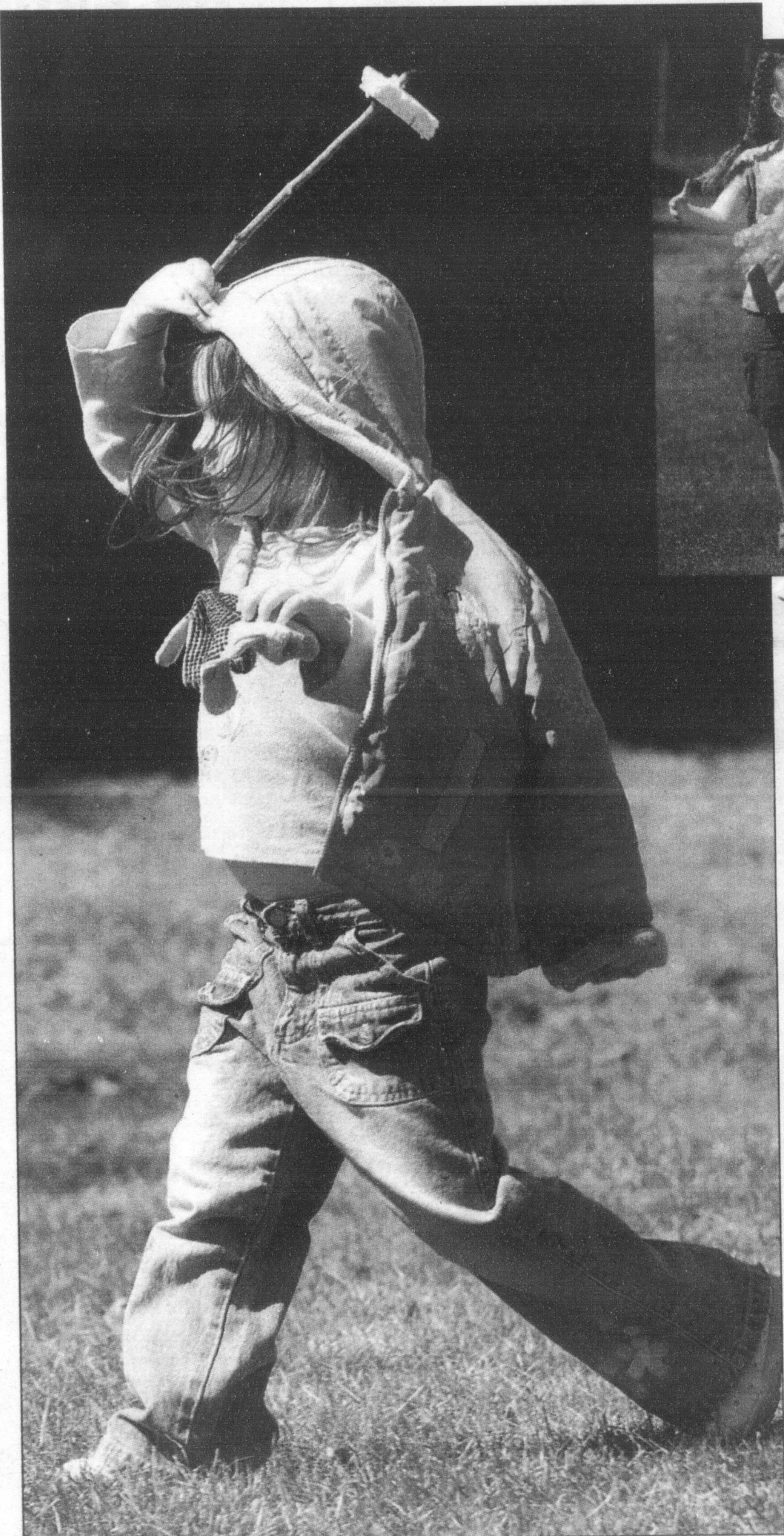
The fact that this was a non-binding motion did not stop the board room from filling with more than 70 concerned spectators in the moments leading up to the meeting.

From the beginning this crowd made it known in no uncertain terms just whose side they were on.

As Danko read the motion and attempted to speak on his reasons for bringing it forward a cry of 'Shame! Shame!' erupted from the crowd.

Bailey silenced the crowd with a few strikes of his gavel, but much more was still to come.

• see PLENTY on page A5



SPRING CLEAN UP:

At left, Emily May-Jacobs, 4, carries a piece of Styrofoam on a stick as she holds her coat and clean up glove at Robert Baldwin School during Friday's Milton Makeover Morning. The entire school, including the kindergarten students, participated in the event. Above, six-year-old Stephanie Butt-Hofing runs across the school field to deposit some plastic trash in the garbage. See page A8 for related photos.

GRAHAM PAINÉ / CANADIAN CHAMPION

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