

Halton's taxpayers shouldn't front bill for Oakville hospital

DEAR EDITOR:

What's going on at the Region of Halton headquarters?

Halton Regional Chair Gary Carr suggests to us that all Halton taxpayers should be on the hook for up to \$100 million for the new Oakville hospital. The *Champion's* sister publication, the *Oakville Beaver*, recently quoted the CEO of Halton Healthcare Services as saying, "Really, this is a site for Oakville into the long future."

Why should all Halton taxpayers be on the hook for the parking lot, cafeteria and equipment of a hospital whose primary function is to serve Oakville?

Does Milton District Hospital receive similar tax support for its equipment purchases? I don't think so.

The Milton District Hospital Foundation and other dedicated Milton community members take on the responsibility and work hard and long to raise much-needed funds for the local hospital. So why should Oakville community members be excused from their responsibilities?

And hasn't Carr been a major proponent of uploading social services costs, rather than putting them onto the property tax base? Why change that tune now — for Oakville?

I appreciate that Halton taxes have decreased somewhat for 2008, but we should recognize that a good portion of the decrease came from the Region downloading the collection of the GTA pooling tax to the

lower-tier municipalities.

An increased Halton-wide tax burden is totally unwarranted. Halton residents have demonstrated they will contribute on their own to worthy causes. If they believe an Oakville-focused hospital is good for them, then I'm sure they will respond voluntarily and generously to fundraising endeavours on behalf of that hospital.

In the May 2 *Champion*, Carr also seems to have defended a proposal that Halton residential taxpayers should be hit with an additional \$70-plus tax surcharge to subsidize new industrial and commercial profits.

Commercial and industrial development has been going like gang-busters — just take a look at the 401 corridor. Property taxes have gone up and, in my opinion, quality of life has dropped. Why exacerbate the situation?

Halton is a prime development region — Places to Grow has seen to that. So why do existing taxpayers need to take on more taxes to subsidize developers? Why should developers not pay their fair share?

The Region website states, "The purpose of development charges (DC) is to recover the growth-related costs associated with the capital infrastructure needed to service new development." The key word is 'recover' — and it doesn't mean cover as in 'cover by increasing property taxes.' In my opinion, we don't need any developers who wish to avoid their financial responsi-

bilities by not paying for growth-related costs. And since existing non-discounted and non-waived development charges will 'winnow the wheat from the chaff,' that's fine with me.

Furthermore, didn't we hear at the last municipal election that action would be taken to slow growth down and start to manage it? Why the switcharoo? Why is virtually unbridled growth, and an increased property tax burden, such a good thing now?

I hope too that Carr will change his mind about the publication of municipal employee salaries over \$100,000. His comments in a May 2 *Champion* letter to the editor would seem to indicate he considers individual municipal employee salaries of \$100,000 to be so prevalent, and the amount to be so comparatively insignificant, that taxpayers shouldn't be made aware of them.

Stats Canada reports that the median Canadian family income is close to \$69,000. I would argue that salaries of individual municipal employees who make almost 50 per cent more than half of Canadian families are of great interest to taxpayers.

Carr needs to do much better. I believe he can, and hope that he will.

**MIKE GRIMWOOD
MILTON**

Many lessons learned in the garden

• from I'M on page A6

And there certainly are many lessons to be learned — patience, persistence and anger management (there's nothing like happening upon a dog's business smack dab in the middle of the lawn), to name a few.

It goes without saying that the benefits of gardening go far beyond the garden. There's nothing like puttering around in the early evening, per-

haps even taking in a sunset.

Never would I have thought that pulling weeds could be rewarding or that watering could be as good for the soul as it is for the flowers.

It's a calming activity, and one that leaves a lingering sense of well-being. It forces me to slow down and take pleasure in the small things in life.

Thanks, Mom, for opening the floodgates — it's a brave new world indeed.

Couple makes offer of furnished ward for proposed Milton hospital

'Time Capsules' are gems of information extracted from past issues of the Champion and other publications in order to provide a window into Milton's past. Explanatory comment is sometimes provided to place the situation in context.

November 1911

The possibility of the establishment of a hospital in Milton leads a Milton old boy and girl to make a generous offer to furnish a private ward. They will do it well, too. Who will be next?

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The interior of Christ Church, Omagh has been undergoing repairs during the past few weeks. A new Georgia pine ceiling has been put in and reflects great credit on the contractor, Samuel Henson, of Milton. The whole of the interior has been repainted and grained and Messrs. Armstrong, Gollins and Maxted have the thanks of the congregation for the very able manner in which they did their work. New carpets, matings and choir chairs have also been added and the Anglicans are now the proud possessors of one of the prettiest churches in the neighbourhood.

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The recent rains have considerably increased the flow of water from springs and at last the supply to the reservoir has become large enough for a 24-hour service, to the great relief and convenience of the water users. Progress in pipe-laying from the Agnew spring is still slow, though farther than it was as the men are becoming more expert at the work.

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The waterworks committee started a second gang of men on Monday, pipe-laying on the waterworks extension, with W.I. Lott as overseer. It is reported that they laid 1,000 feet of pipe in one day. There now seems to be no doubt that the work will be finished before winter sets in and, with favourable weather it will be done very soon and the water from the Agnew spring turned on. We shall then have plenty of water. As it is, the heavy rains of the last two months have made the springs so strong that despite leaks, independent of the extension, and though

**Milton
Time
Capsules**



there has been a 24-hour service for more than a week, the reservoir is said to be filling steadily.

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Knox Church will have a gowned choir. For some time this has been considered. The session has given authority and the gowns purchased and they will be worn on Sunday. The Ladies' Aid Society has also presented Mr. Mackay with a beautiful silk pulpit gown and cassock.

December 1911

The bilingual schools are coming in for a good deal of discussion in the present election campaign, but it is to be feared that nothing will come of this unless the English-speaking citizens of Ontario, Protestants and Roman Catholics make the question non-political and unite in demanding that English shall be the language of this British province and the only language taught in its public schools. Now is the time to do this.

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A meeting of Milton hockey fans was held last week at which it was decided to enter two teams in the O.H.A. competitions this season, intermediate and junior. Both are expected to be strong enough to make a good showing and there will be no end of sport at the rink. The executive committee will select a manager and a captain for each team.

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Milton water-users will be glad to hear that the pipe line from the big Agnew spring will be connected with the old line either today or tomorrow. This means abundance of water for the future, at least until the population of the town increases greatly. The waterworks committee is to be congratulated on the way in which the work has been rushed lately.

This material is assembled on behalf of the Milton Historical Society by Jim Dills, who can be reached through the society at (905) 875-4156.



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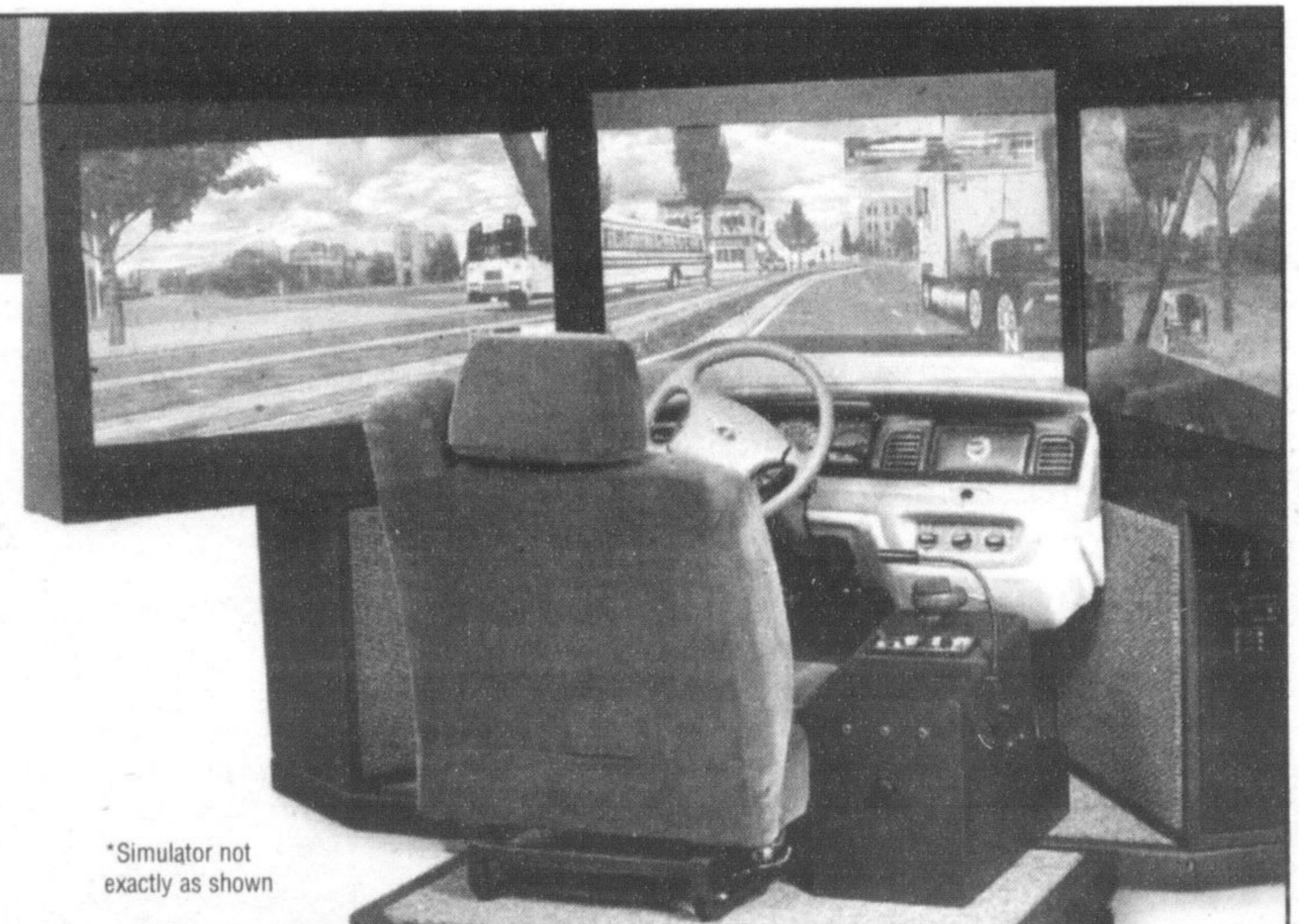
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*Simulator not exactly as shown

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