

OPINION

Please don't let your holiday go up in smoke

This time of year for celebration can quickly turn into tragedy — right in your own home.

Sadly, the number of residential fires increases during the holiday season, destroying homes, memories, presents and, more frighteningly, lives. Most are preventable.

Fire Prevention Canada, the national voice of fire safety and education, reminds you to be mindful of things as simple as turning off decoration lights before going to bed.

"Never leave lit candles near ornaments and never overload extension cords," advised Fire Prevention Canada president David Hodgins. "Have your chimney cleaned and inspected regularly."

The holiday season is a hectic time, and it's during moments of forgetfulness, inattention or hurry that fire hazards can turn into destructive fires, he said.

"This should be the time of year for celebration, so let us be as vigilant about being fire-safe as we are about not drinking and driving."

Other prevention measures to save lives and property include:

- Keep candles in a sturdy holder away from children, pets and combustible materials. Blow them out before leaving the room or going to sleep.

- Stay in the kitchen when cooking. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of kitchen fires.

- Alcohol and fire are a dangerous mix. Keep a close eye on anyone cooking or smoking while under the influence of alcohol.

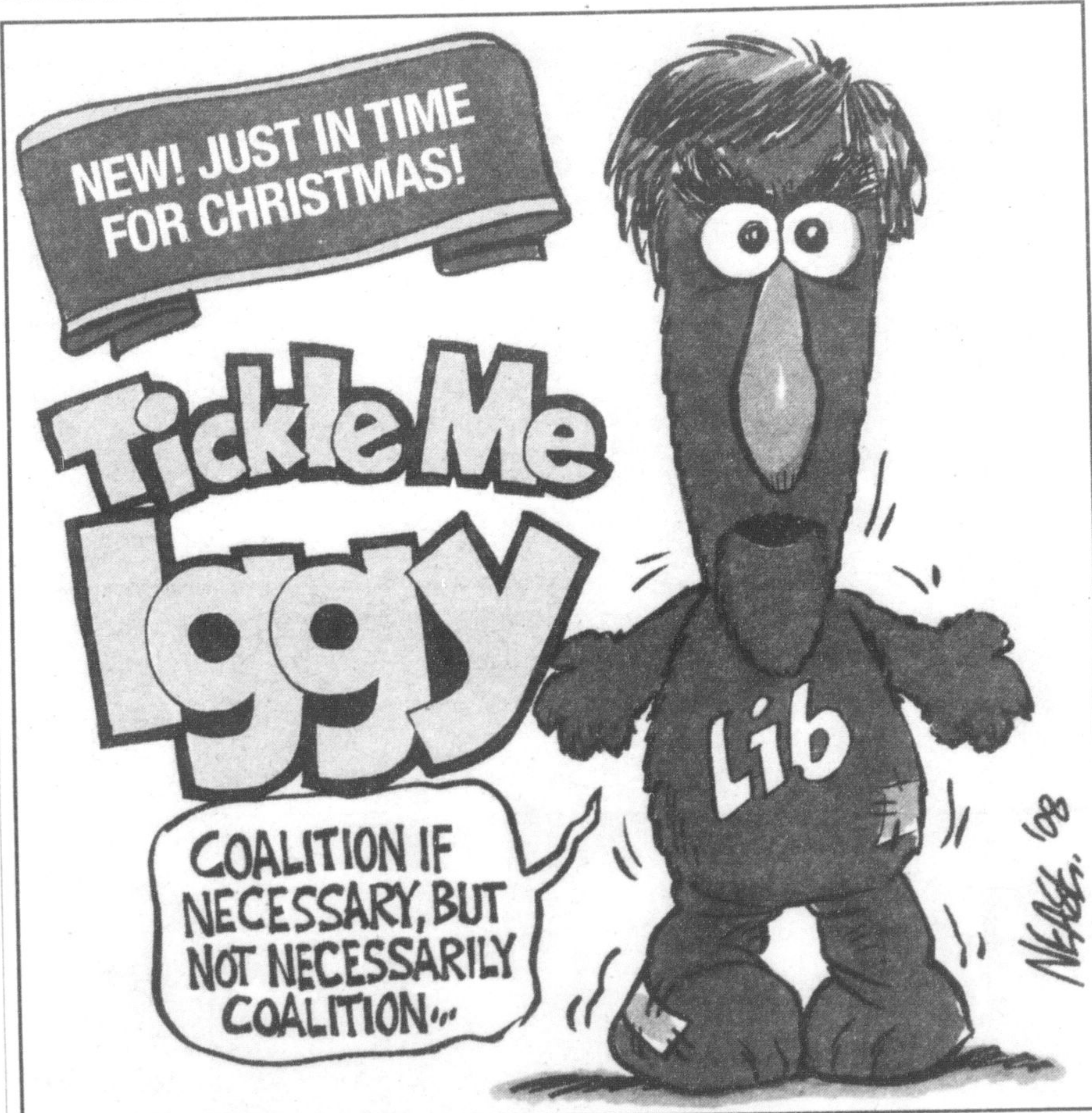
- Space heaters need space — ensure at least one metre of clearance.

- Make sure you have working smoke alarms on all levels of your home.

- Keep your natural holiday tree well watered to prevent drying and becoming a fire hazard.

Find more fire prevention tips in the fact sheet section of Fire Prevention Canada's website at www.fiprecan.ca.

From everyone at the *Canadian Champion*, have a safe and happy holiday season.



Readers Write

E-mail your letters to editorial@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

Suspension of Parliament outrageous

DEAR EDITOR:

The recent suspension of Parliament is an outrage.

Shutting down Parliament to avoid the outcome of a vote is something that Canadians would expect from a third-world dictatorship, not a Canadian government.

Halton MP Lisa Raitt's statement that for her, "It's always about making sure everyone's voice is heard," is absurd. Nobody's voice can be heard properly now that the political process has been shut down.

Even more incredible is the fact that this action was taken at a time when the government should be directing all of its efforts at solving an economic crisis.

The prime minister's recent actions are both irresponsible and dangerous to our political process.

Let's hope that our politicians make up for lost time in January when they return from their seven-week Christmas break.

IAN STEPHENSON
MILTON

Upfront

A paws-atively heartwarming response to adopt-a-thon

Christmas has come early at the Oakville and District Humane Society. That is, at least for many of its furry residents.

With its feline numbers swelling as of late, the shelter — which handles animal control for Milton — is currently in the midst of its first-ever Happy Cat Adopt-A-Thon, which continues tomorrow and Sunday.

For a minimum donation of \$50 — less than half the usual cost of adoption — you can now give a cat a loving home. Given how much goes into caring for these kitties, they're practically being given away.

Pending successful completion of a screening process, which includes an initial interaction with the potential adoptee and an interview, you can take home your new friend right away.

Each adoption includes a micro chip, current vaccinations, de-worming, a collar and

tag and six weeks of pet insurance.

As a volunteer at the humane society for a little over a year now, it truly warmed my heart to see a number of kitties find homes during the adopt-a-thon kickoff last Friday.

Among them were several cats — including two of my favourites — that were looking at spending their second Christmas at the shelter. Their adoptions were especially gratifying.

While certainly well taken care of at 445 Cornwall Rd. in Oakville, no animal should have to live in a cage for that long.

While the shelter's feline ranks have definitely thinned out, there's still plenty of little fur-balls to choose from — in all colours and with all types of personalities.



Steve LeBlanc

That's where trained matchmakers come into play. With ample info (see for yourself at www.oakvillehumane.ca) kept on each cat's

demeanour, as well as his or her medical history, adopters can rest assured that they're getting an animal that suits their specific situation.

Humane society staff put a lot of care into that, since it's especially hard on an animal to have to be brought back because he or she didn't fit in with an individual or family.

Of course I'm not endorsing a spur-of-the-moment adoption. Pets should never be acquired on impulse. But if you're thinking of getting a cat anyway, this might be the ideal time to head on up to your local shelter.

I'm paws-itive you'll be glad you did.

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: 905-876-2364
Classified: 905-875-3300
Circulation: 905-878-5947

www.miltoncanadianchampion.com

V.P. — Group Publisher

Neil Oliver

General Manager

David Harvey

Editor in Chief

Jill Davis

Managing Editor

Karen Miceli

Advertising Director

Debbi Koppejan

Production Manager

Tim Coles

Circulation Manager

Charlene Hall

Office Manager

Sandy Pare

The Canadian Champion, published every
Wednesday and Friday, is a division
of Metroland Media Group Ltd. —
President 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

SNV Suburban Newspapers
of America

The Canadian Champion is
a proud media sponsor for:



The Milton Canadian Champion is a Recyclable Product.