

Province funding new transit buses

By Tim Foran
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

The Province of Ontario will help the Town of Milton with its purchase of two replacement buses scheduled to be delivered by the end of the year.

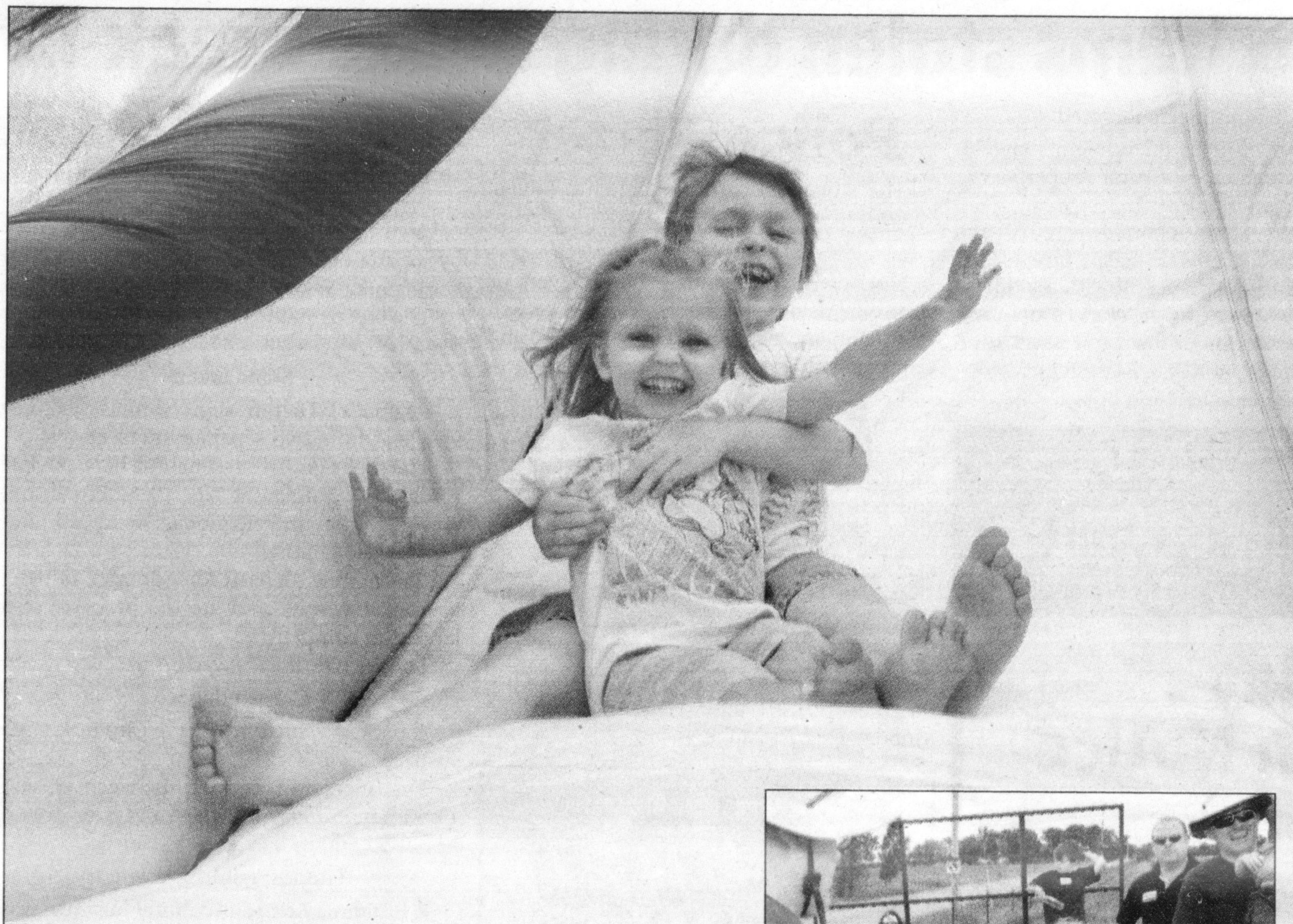
Through the Ontario Bus Replacement Program, the Town is eligible to receive funding of about \$300,000 from the Ministry of Transportation after it receives two New Flyer buses it has bought, according to a staff report reviewed by council last week.

The two buses will replace aging small buses currently in service. The price tag is about \$910,000 with the Province to cover one third. Development-related charges will cover 40 per cent of the cost with Town funding picking up the rest, according to staff.

This year's budget also included money for the purchase of a third bus, with development charges covering around 40 per cent of the cost, to be used for an expansion of the Milton Transit bus fleet. That bus could support a new route in the west end of Milton along Scott Boulevard that was recommended in a strategic transit plan endorsed recently by council. But council won't make a final decision on route expansion until it approves the 2010 budget in December.

According to Town staff, Milton Transit's ridership stood at about 43,000 for the first five months of this year. That works out to an annualized figure of 104,000, a drop off from the 2007 high of 126,500 when the municipality offered free bus service during the second half of the year.

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FAMILY FUN: Above, five-year-old Zeke Miller and sister Ivy, 2, go for a slide at a recent charity barbecue at Willis Family Fruit Farm. The event was put on by Halton MP Lisa Raitt, seen here (inset, at right) enjoying a wagon ride with Stephen Harper's wife, Laureen, in support of the Oakville and District Humane Society.

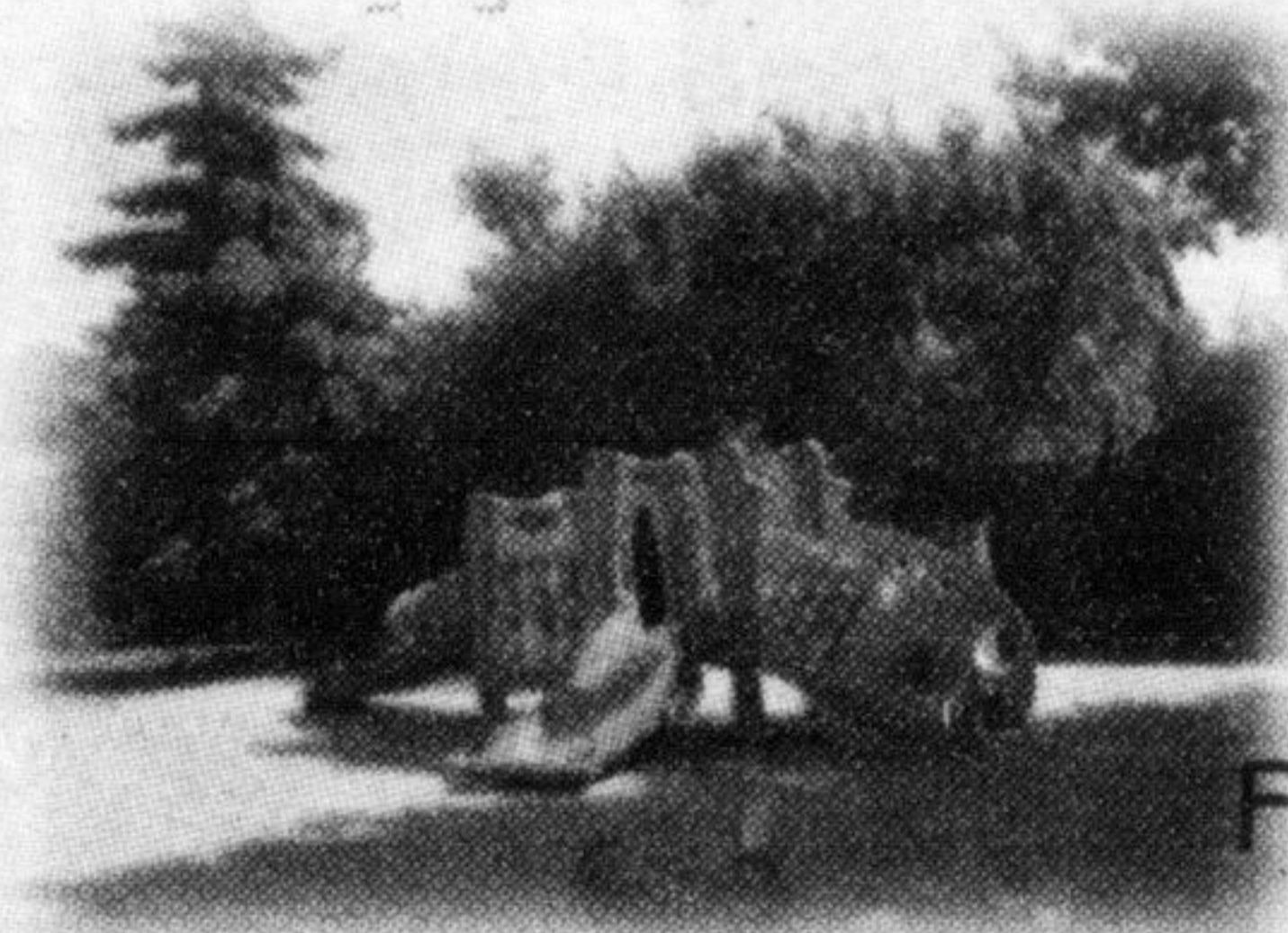


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