

Council Birthday plans

Milton council has taken the first steps toward laying plans for a community wide celebration of Milton's 125th anniversary. Acting on a recommendation from the general committee councillors approved the establishment of an interim committee to form terms of reference for a master committee which will organize the event. Among the suggestions made for the celebration is a reunion of former mayors and reeves of the municipalities which combined to form the current town.

Speed hiked

Residents making regular use of parts of Thompson Rd. will be able to do legally what they have been doing for some time now. Town council recently approved a general committee recommendation to prepare bylaws to increase the speed limit on portions of the road from 50 km. an hour to 60. The higher speed limit will apply to portions of the road between Derry Rd. and Steeles Ave.

Longer term

A longer term for municipal councillors has won the support of Milton representatives. Councillors gave their approval recently to a resolution from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario calling for changes to provincial law to allow for a three year term for local councils. Mayor Gord Krantz had urged support of the resolution because of the time that would be added to a council's useful life.

Attendance

A motion to have local staff members sit in on the latest rate increase application being made by Union Gas has been rejected by town council. Councillors recently voted to simply file away the warning they received of the impending hearings rather than follow a suggestion by councillor Bill Johnson to have local staff members attend the hearings.

"I find it very difficult to believe that the gas company is losing money, especially when the demand for gas is higher than ever," he said.

Library board rejects town control

By Steve Arnold
Independence is the only way to protect public libraries from political interference.

That's the stand taken by members of the Milton Library Board in a brief they presented to the town's general committee Monday night.

The brief was prepared as a response to a review of Ontario's public library system started by the provincial government.

Another response to that review, submitted by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) urged that public libraries be brought under the direct control of municipal councils.

That suggestion was immediately rejected by the local trustees.

"This board rejects the concept of the abolishment of

the appointment of Board Trustees," reads the brief prepared by the local board.

"The Milton Public Library Board further rejects the concept of creating a board or committees established or hired as a direct committee of the local council. The premise for this rejection is that an intermediary committee of council would be operating totally under the control of the local council and would be without democratic independence. Such control and direct management could result in censorship which would impede the freedom of thought inherent in this democratic society."

Glenn Goldstraw, a council appointee to the library board, said the "question comes down to—is it going to be a political body or one that is independent?"

He argued that if the library board were open to direct political influence, members could be coerced into removing books from circulation with the threat that they would not be re-elected.

"That's one of the pressures that is always present in the political framework," he said. "The library should remain specifically oriented to provide for all points of view... subject to reasonable taste."

The brief from the local board recommended several changes to the current structure under which the nine member board is composed of the mayor of the municipality, three members appointed by the local council, three by the board of education and two by the separate school board.

Under the proposal put forward by the Milton members,

the library board would be increased to 11 members, including the three currently named by the local council.

Automatic appointments by the school boards would be eliminated and the remaining eight positions would be filled through interviews conducted by a selection committee.

"We don't think that being a committee of council would provide for the total independence of thought that comes from a greater cross section of membership," board member Lester Wood argued.

Councillors approved a motion from Milton Mayor Gord Krantz to meet with the library board again to discuss their brief before a final presentation is made to the provincial body reviewing the current structure.

Councillors favor separating garbage

The first faltering steps toward the start of a full fledged program for separating household garbage into useful components have been taken by the town.

General committee members voted Monday night to approve a source separation

program to begin early next year.

The program would require homeowners to separate newsprint from their household garbage. This would be collected separately and sold to recycling plants.

John Matthews, the town's

public works director, recommended that four depots be established where residents could drop off their newsprint on a seven day a week, 24 hour a day basis.

The town has been spurred on to this action by Regional

council's recent passage of a bylaw prohibiting the acceptance of newsprint at Regional garbage dumps after April 1, 1982.

If an infraction of that bylaw occurs, Milton could be charged.

Late tax interest rap above prime

Homeowners and developers who stall paying their taxes, while the money earns interest in an investment, will have their scam made a little less sweet by a recommendation passed by Milton's general committee Monday night.

Committee members approved a recommendation from treasurer Don Loughheed to increase the interest charge on late taxes from the current maximum of 15 per cent of year to as much as 21 per cent.

Committee members approved a plan to amend their taxing bylaws to increase the interest on arrears to 1.5 per cent above the prime rate on the day the bylaw is passed.

The prime rate, that special interest rate banks charge their preferred customers, is currently hovering around 19.5 per cent, thus the possible rate of 21 per cent.

Mr. Loughheed cautioned councillors that, while the interest rate they set can be lowered at some future point, it cannot be raised again in the same year.

"We want to be sure," he said, "that those people who pay their taxes on time are not subsidizing those who don't."

The treasurer added that "we have a list of people we know are going to be late with their taxes."

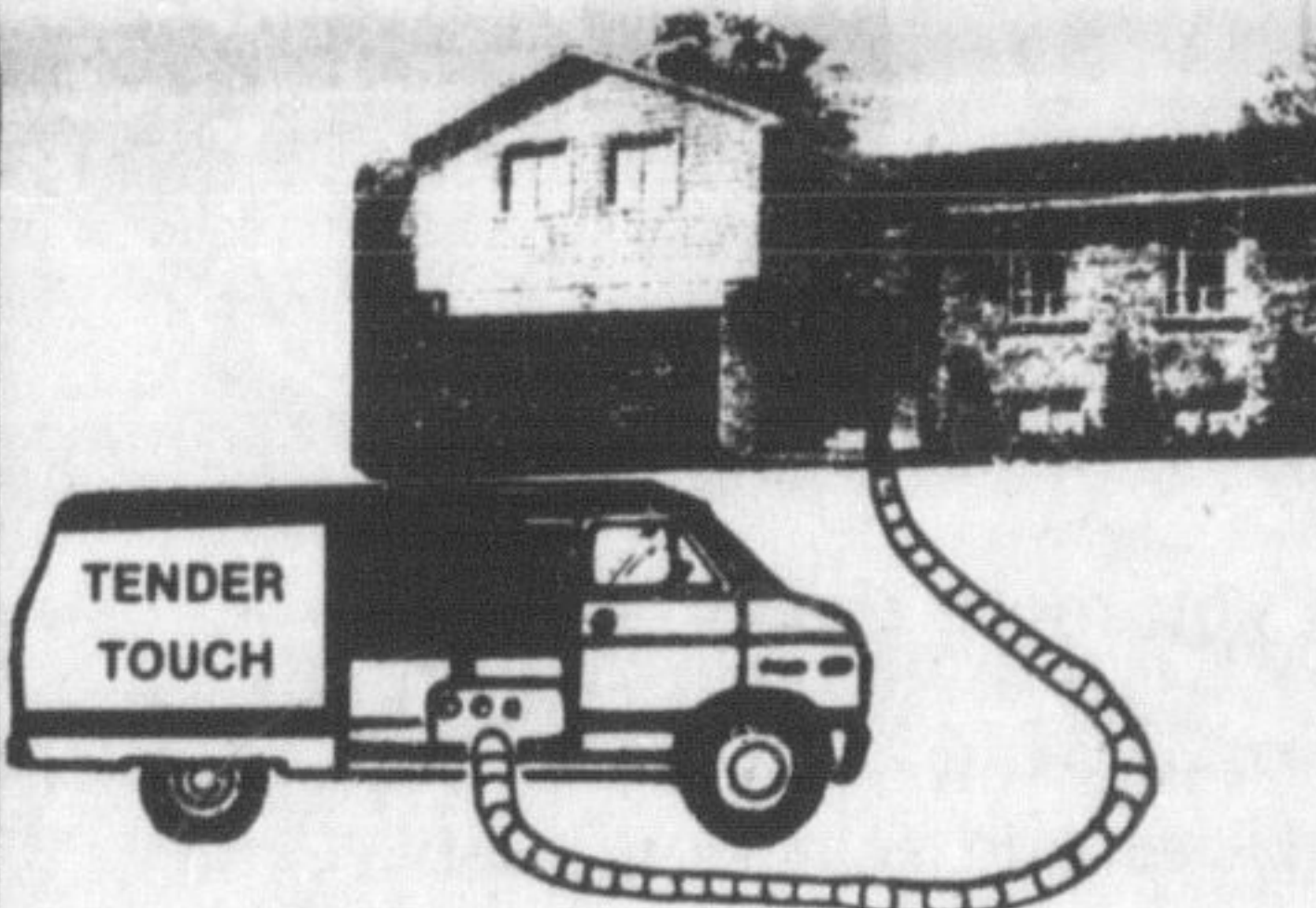


Early Christmas cheer

Joanne and Lindsey Dobson met Santa Claus recently at Zellers, Milton Mall. Little did they know the man behind the beard was an E.C. Drury High School student participating in a marketing course program.

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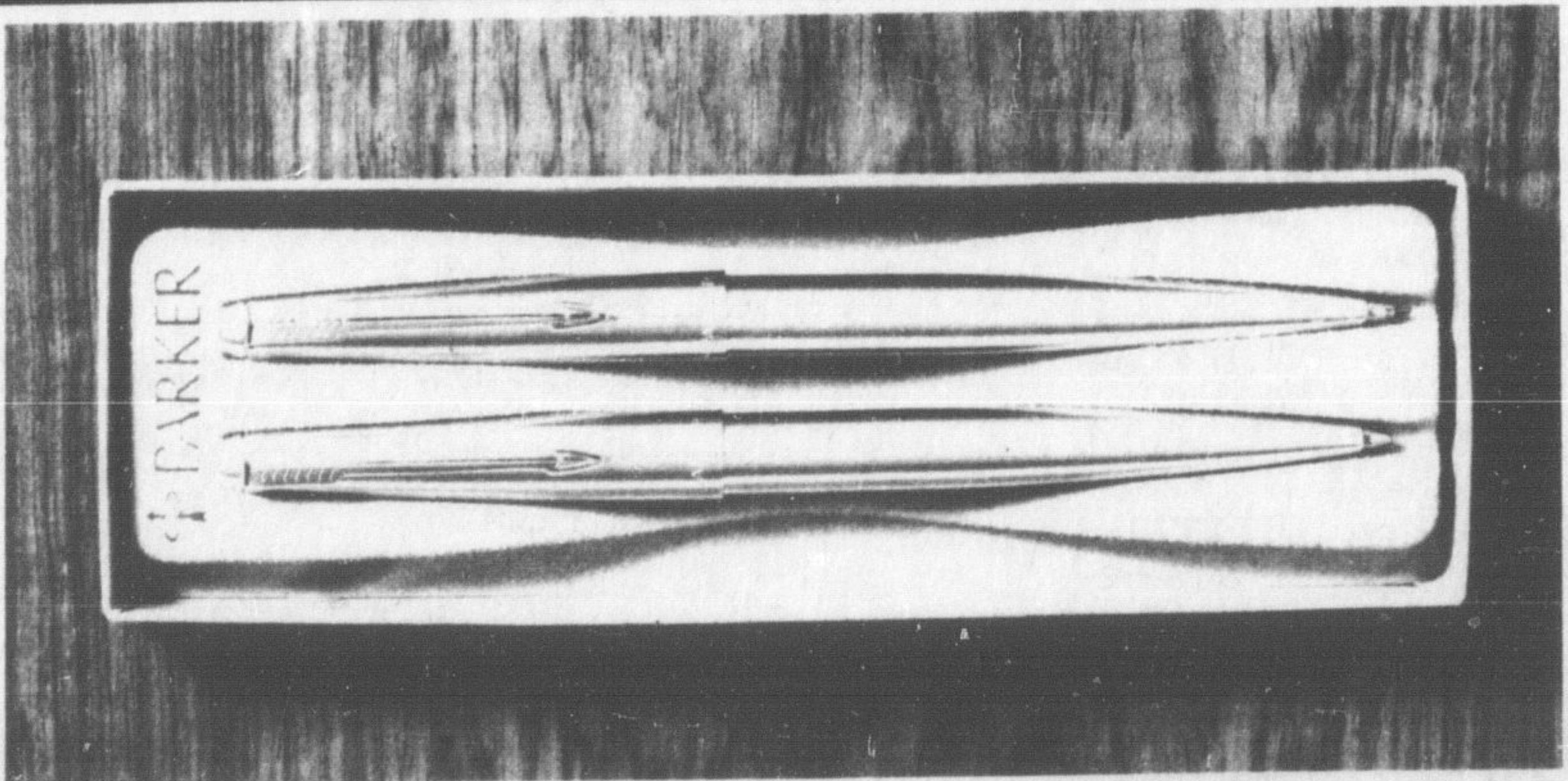
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