



# The Canadian Champion

Established 1861



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The Canadian Champion, published every Wednesday and Friday at 191 Main St. E., Milton, Ont., L9T 4N9 (Box 246), is one of The Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing group of suburban companies which includes: The Acton Free Press, Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Aurora Banner, Barrie Banner Advance, Brantford Guardian, Burlington Post, Erin/Hillsburgh Echo, Etobicoke Guardian, Georgetown Independent, Halton Hills Weekend, Kingston This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Mississauga News, Newmarket Era, Oakville Beaver, Oshawa/Whitby This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill Liberal, Rockwood Review, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville Tribune, Today's Seniors, Uxbridge Tribune, Vaughan Liberal, and The Willowdale Mirror. Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing is a division of Harlequin Enterprises Ltd.

Price: Store copies 40 cents each; Wednesday edition home delivery 40 cents weekly, \$20.80 annually. Friday edition \$75 annually by mail in Canada; \$85 in other countries. 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. In the event of typographical error, advertising goods or services at the wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell and may be withdrawn at any time.

## Bad move, Bill

Let it not be said that this newspaper is too proud, too arrogant, to disdain admission of a wrongdoing when one has been committed.

Let it not be said either that this newspaper will stand idly by while would-be bullies distort events so as to soothe their own seared egos.

Ward 3 councillor Bill Johnson would have been a bully Monday night had he been afforded the opportunity. He was not, because those with more common sense, or perhaps those less vindictive, clearly quashed his self-centred ploy.

At municipal council Monday night a deafening silence rained down on the diminutive councillor when he proposed a motion attacking the integrity of a Canadian Champion reporter (see story page 3). Mr. Johnson could gain no second for his motion.

Mr. Johnson alleged that "mis-reporting of our meetings" has "gone on too long." That statement is actionable, since it is in the opinion of this newspaper blatantly false. Judging by the response Mr. Johnson's tirade earned among his elected colleagues, it had little more credence with them.

Indeed, Mr. Johnson himself could only support his flimsy and slanderous accusation with one argument; a reference to a single factual error made in the course of the last 30 months inaccurately describing Dr. Les Laughren's professional credentials. An immediate offer of public apology was made following discovery of the error. Doctor Laughren declined that offer. Later, a written apology appeared in the paper anyway.

Now perhaps a minor clarification is in order. It is not, in all good conscience, completely correct to call the fiasco over voting on the newly proposed town logo an unintentional miscout, as was reported in the Wednesday, Jan. 17 Canadian Champion. The town clerk, Bill Roberts, and the town administrator, Roy Main, are each capable of correctly counting to 10, after all, and they did.

However, a misrepresentation of results did occur, in that a trio of Conestoga College students competing with their peers to create the new town logo left under the impression their group had been chosen the winner.

The whole issue degenerated into a tangle of competing concerns; whether or not the original secret ballot was legally binding, where an absent councillor (Mary Long) fit into the picture with a potentially tying vote, how to treat the college students so as to spare them further embarrassment.

Those matters deserve serious deliberation. Instead of truly addressing them councillor Johnson went off on a disjointed tangent, only to find that his colleagues obviously felt he had over-reacted.

We have admired in the past some of Mr. Johnson's positions. He has never been afraid to take a stand, nor speak his mind. Yet now a creeping doubt emerges as to how much of that behaviour is in the public interest and how much is merely what appears to be an effort to slake his insatiable thirst for the spotlight.

And while we have always suspected he provoked, prodded and preened for the press and public out of a general concern for moral government, we now find ourselves wondering if that was truly his motivation.

That is because we are convinced that he brought up the whole issue of taking this newspaper's writer to the Ontario Press Council not because of any mistakes surrounding coverage of the logo debacle, but because in the editorial on that same date Mr. Johnson was criticized for abusing the rules of order in council meetings.

He has always taken pride in his knowledge of parliamentary procedure, and rightly so, we suppose. That just makes it more unfortunate that he often flaunts such procedure. And if he doesn't like that criticism, he should address it, not hide behind some other supposed concern in hopes of doing more damage to his critic's credibility.

## Looking back



Charles Lenz demonstrated his courage as he raced down the slopes of Glen Eden Ski Area in January, 1963. The local ski area experienced its busiest Christmas break period on record in 1989 thanks to the early jump on the season when snow arrived — and stayed around — in December.

## Pages of the Past

### One Year Ago

From the January 25, 1989 issue

□ The long-awaited study recommending how Milton should develop new recreational and cultural facilities was finally unveiled at council. When the curtain was drawn back, plans described a \$4.8 million recreational centre, with the preferred location at Milton Fair Grounds.

□ The funds were in place to establish a treatment centre for women with addictions, but a place was needed to spend that money. The board of Hope Place Women's Treatment Centre received approval for the centre but a large home was required to house the program. The house, about 3,000 square feet in size, had to be found in either Milton, Acton or Georgetown.

□ Despite a \$250,000 fire at Glen Eden, the ski area was

back in business. The blaze damaged the area's snow making equipment beyond repair. But five days later, rental compressors were in place and snow was being manufactured to add to the base on the ski hills.

### 20 Years Ago

From the January 28, 1970 issue

□ Seven senior head nurses at Milton District Hospital were back at work after they walked off the job to protest a firing and a suspension of the hospital's two senior nurses. Administrator Dalton E. McQuaig reportedly relieved Director of Nursing Mrs. R. Verrall of her duties and suspended her assistant Mrs. Pat Walker. In protest, the seven head nurses walked off the job. After a two-hour meeting between the nurses and the the Hospital Board's Personnel Committee Chairman John W. Ostler, it was announced that the nurses would return to work.

□ A capital budget of \$24,915,000 was approved by the Halton County Board of Education. The five-year forecast was \$6,403,000 less than that released in 1969. The budget approved for 1970-74 was \$13,257,500 less than that projected by the 10 separate boards operating in the county prior to amalgamation for the 1969-1973 period.

### 50 Years Ago

From the January 25, 1940 issue

□ Colin Anderson of Milton, aged 12, while riding a bicycle, was tossed more than 20 feet when in collision with a car driven by Robert Hamilton of Milton Heights. The lad received only knee injuries when he was thrown from his wheel at the intersection of Highway 25 and Court Street. Police stated that Anderson and Hamilton were both travelling east on Highway 25. The young cyclist attempted to turn left on Court Street at the same moment as Hamilton swung out to pass him, police said.

□ Hockey continued to hold the spotlight in Milton this winter. The groups this season indicated greater interest.

### Pud



by Steve Nease