



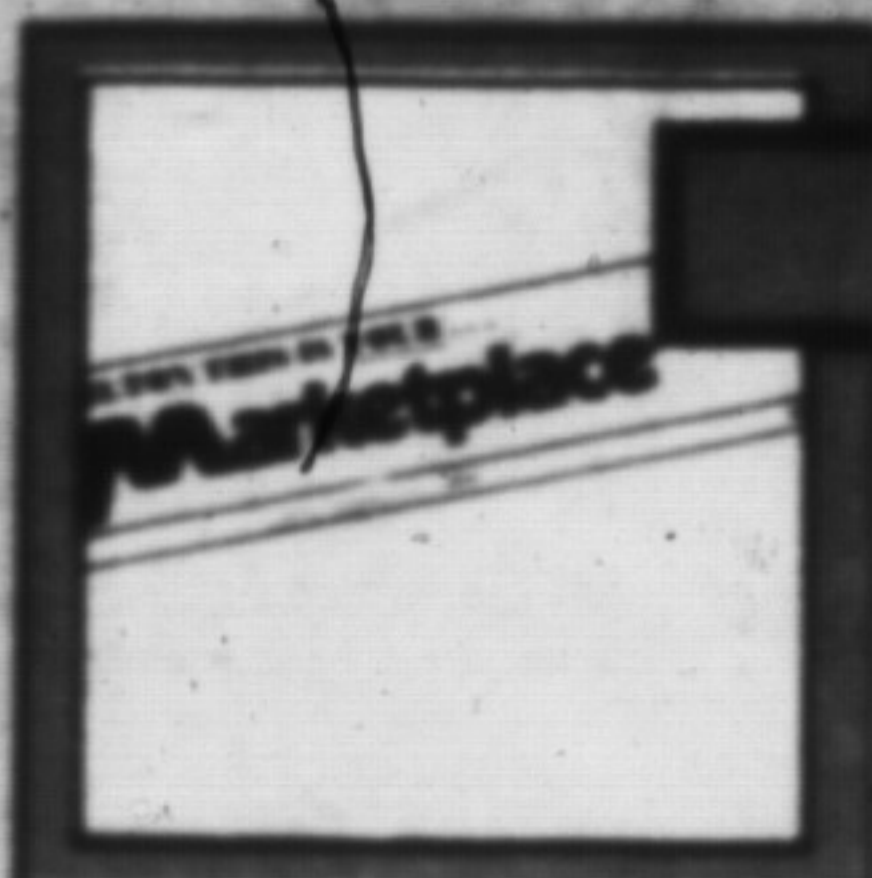
GLIDER

Definitely not 'Fear of Flying'
— 3



SPORTS

Muldoon stymies Oakville for 2-2 tie
— 10



INSIDE

Region News 5
Opinion 6
Sports 10-14
Classified ... 15-19

The Canadian Champion

Weekend edition

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Photo by JON BLACKER

Family ties

Joseph Gooch, a longtime resident of Milton, received birthday greetings from Ontario Premier David Peterson recently. Mr. Gooch, who now lives in Acton, turned 90 years old this month. Here, he celebrates with wife Mary.

Schools argue against regional nursing cuts

By NORMAN NELSON

School board officials will be given an opportunity to plead their case for more public health care nurses in Halton's high schools.

At the beginning of the school year, Halton Region cut in half the amount of time spent in each high school by the public health nurse, from five half-days a week to five half-days every two weeks.

A motion before regional council on Wednesday recommended increasing that slightly to six half-days every two weeks.

Larry Dilanni, principal of Aldershot High School in Burlington, said "we're here to tell you how valued your public health nurses are to our system. They serve you well and your community."

Speaking on behalf of the Halton high school principals association, he added that "we as secondary school principals feel that the level (of six half-days every two weeks) is not enough to meet the complex needs of our students."

His request to have the matter sent back to the region's health and social services committee in order for the school boards to present their case was agreed to by council.

While supporting the additional input from the school boards, Milton councillor Brad Clements requested that the role of the public health nurses in the high schools should be discussed "in its entirety".

No cuts were made, he noted, to a myriad of other services performed by public health nurses in the high schools, including immunization and dental health programs.

In a story in Wednesday's *Canadian Champion*, Gary Crossman, superintendent of instructional services for the Halton Board of Education, had questioned why the region was finding it hard to obtain staff for the high schools this year when it had managed to keep up the same level of service for more than a decade.

In an interview after the meeting, Dr. Graham Pollett, the region's medical officer of health, reiterated the same reason he had outlined in his report to last week's committee meeting — a staffing shortage.

He said there are more schools to be covered this year as well as more mandatory programs from the province that all have to be carried out by the same pool of public health nurses. "Something had to give."

In a previous interview, Gayle MacKay, the health department's director of preventive health services, said that to bring the regional nursing complement up to optimum levels would require about 20 additional nurses for the present staff of 40.



Milty wants you!

Milty, the Winter Carnival mascot, wants you! He is looking for friends to join him at the Mill Pond for winter carnival celebrations Sunday, Feb. 11.

If you have a clown, animal or character costume and would like to volunteer, call Barb Robb of the Town's leisure services department at 878-7211, ext. 136.



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