



The Canadian Champion

Milton's Business of the Year for 1989

Established 1961

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A fire sale

P.T. Barnum would have laughed. He is credited with the observation that there's a sucker born every minute. Halton politicians are proving it true by preparing to sell landfill space at fire sale prices.

There has been an economic weather forecast issued by Halton Region and it is a storm warning. Halton expects to be buffeted by a 13.8 per cent tax increase this year, up more than three points from last year's 10.7 per cent hike.

One of the reasons cited for the dramatic climb is increased costs related to garbage disposal. The cost of the soon to be built Milton landfill site has escalated to \$36 million.

Already a round of furious finger pointing has broken out regarding blame for the hefty new burden to be placed on taxpayers' backs. Regional Chairman Peter Pomeroy has criticised Milton for fuelling cost increases surrounding the landfill by dragging the matter out in the courts.

But the Region has missed the boat entirely by ignoring the potential revenue offered by the new dump to be constructed in south rural Milton.

What is to be an unpalatable hole in the ground could become a money pit, albeit temporarily. However, to carry through with the scheme requires substantially more political will than so far demonstrated by those content just to bicker over who should be blamed for what has already gone wrong.

Put simply, landfills are a scarce commodity in high demand at present. Use of landfills for those outside the local tax community (Halton) should be priced accordingly. At a premium.

The fee that Halton charges out-of-region users for our dump should not be based on what it costs us to dispose of our garbage, but on what it would cost them for other alternatives if our dump was not available.

The situation won't last. In a decade or so there will be more than enough government approved landfill space for everybody, so it'll be cheap once again. And if provincial recycling targets calling for 50 per cent of waste to be re-used somehow are met, landfills will be cheaper still.

At present there is a garbage dump drought, if you will, and Halton is sitting on an oasis. So let's price the commodity we possess accordingly. That is not happening.

We have agreed in principle to 'lend' 250,000 tonnes of our landfill space with other Toronto area municipalities. The tone of the agreement is almost apologetic, indicating that non-Halton users must basically only absorb the costs of new engineering and site changes to accommodate their waste.

Instead, the agreement should make clear that non-Halton users will pay a substantially higher fee for using the Milton landfill than those in Oakville, Burlington, Milton and Halton Hills.

Realistically, what alternatives do these other centres have in the short term? No concrete ones, and it is an unhappy situation of their own creation through poor planning. It was Halton that for more than a dozen years pioneered the struggle through the convoluted provincial landfill approval process. Now we should reap some benefit from that struggle.

It could roll back our tax increases. And the situation won't last. Current agreements call for greater Toronto area communities to share dump space, meaning Halton will be entitled to 250,000 tonnes of landfill from others, presumably when our 20-year site is exhausted.

But since by then approved landfills will be plentiful, we will be getting a commonplace commodity for one which was originally costly and rare. And if we continue on our present course we will sell that costly and rare commodity far too cheaply.

Looking back



Are you in this photograph? A big crowd turned out for the 22nd annual Hornby Garden Party held July 19, 1969 at Hornby Park. This view shows part of the attendance.

Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

From the July 19, 1989 issue

□ Milton has been chosen for Halton's new 20-year landfill, a five-million tonne facility west of Highway 25 between Lower Base Line and Britannia Road. It will cover 246 acres. Mayor Gord Krantz thumped both Halton North MPP Walt Elliot and Halton Centre MPP Barbara Sullivan, saying they never indicated to him they would back town officials against a proposed new landfill site.

□ The Ontario Provincial Police will be the first police force in North America to operate radar-detector detectors, in an effort to deter speeding, which is one of the major causes of fatal motor vehicle accidents.

□ Bobbiann Macpherson, a former resident of Milton, now living in Thunder Bay, was in Newfoundland over the weekend. She was competing in the Canadian

National Age-Group qualifying meet in diving, attempting to make the Canadian team travelling to Spain for the World Age-Group meet in late August.

20 Years Ago

From the July 22, 1970 issue

□ Milton's first industrial plaza will soon be taking shape on the former Harrop farm north of Base Line Road. Milton Council endorsed provision of sewer and water lines and a road into the industrial subdivision of Alliance Building Corporation and agreed in principle with a rezoning of the lands.

□ Reversing an earlier decision, Milton Council this week withdrew its demands for a \$400 per suite capital levy on the proposed Ontario Housing Corporation senior citizens apartment building, and went back to its original \$260 per suite levy.

□ Lowville Intermediates claimed first place this year again, in the Halton Rural Burlington Interlocking Fastball League with a 9-1 victory over Procor. It was their 17th win of the year and they have yet to be defeated.

50 Years Ago

From the July 18, 1940 issue

□ The hay crop is a heavy one in this district. More rain is needed.

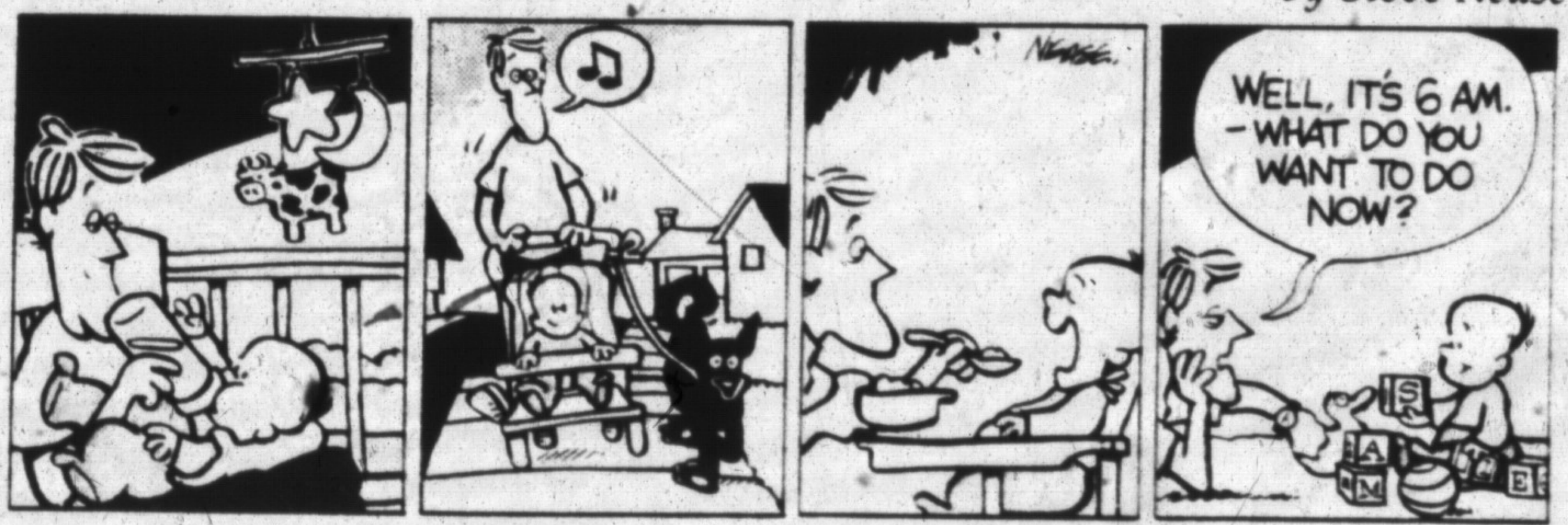
□ Hitler has his eyes on Canada, so keep your eyes on Hitler.

□ Roses have been in bloom in profusion in the gardens this week.

□ Robert Armstrong is back again at his old business, having taken a position in Paddy Wilson's butcher shop.

□ Jimmie Johnson, who suffered a broken leg and other painful injuries in a motorcycle accident, is able to be around again with aid of a couple of crutches.

Pud



by Steve Nease