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Opportunity knocks

The fact that as many as 6,000 people trooped through the newly unveiled Milton Leisure Centre when phase one of the complex (the pool area) opened a few days ago shows there's a real and appreciative audience hungry for this new diversion in Milton.

We think that audience will be there for the encore, phase two, as well. The second phase of the centre, which involves building a gym, weight room, aerobics centre and meeting room will properly finish off the complex.

That having been said, we recognize the tough decision Milton municipal councillors must make on the subject. And we appreciate the reservations so far voiced by several councillors, notably John Challinor, Gerry Brooks and Marion Howard, about proceeding even to draw up final plans for phase two at the moment.

Mr. Challinor, for instance, has focussed on a sense of fiscal restraint when it comes to his perspective on municipal government. He's gone as far as to propose that Milton consider a tax freeze for 1992. Given that, he feels constrained to hold back on spending the \$135,000 earmarked for plans to build phase two, at least until that expense can be weighed against other budget priorities in March.

Councillors Howard and Brooks feel the same way, and the fiscal caution exhibited by all three is understandable, laudable even. But if events are to be viewed in a long-term context, what purpose is served by delay? It's unlikely construction prices will get much better or interest rates go much lower.

Also, Milton is in a sound fiscal position as a municipality in terms of the debt it now carries and will assume with the new structure.

There's a good deal of pent-up demand for the centre — in one form or another it's been on the drawing board for more than a decade. And about \$1.4 million in funding for phase two has already been set aside, so it's available immediately.

Erring on the side of caution with taxpayers' money is usually praiseworthy. And if there's anything this country and this province need at the moment, it is more fiscal prudence.

But Milton can build this thing without undue hardship to residents. We cannot foresee circumstances that should derail the initiative in 1992.

In fairness we must point out that the councillors who oppose spending \$135,000 on plans for phase two are against only that at this stage — spending money without seeing the overall budget numbers that will be available in March. It may well turn out, unlikely as it sounds given current economic conditions, that those same councillors will be reassured when all the figures come in and opt to build the new wing.

It's accepted that this facility will never be a municipal money-maker. Such things aren't in any community and are not truly judged by that financial yardstick anyway. The true measure of the return on investment will be the use the centre is put to by residents, and we trust that use will be extensive.

In a worst-case scenario, if council opts to delay a year because of the recessionary burdens on residents we will be able to accept that as a decision made in good conscience by people genuinely worried for the future because of the present. But we believe the community must, soon, muster the necessary faith in itself to proceed with this worthwhile and enriching project.

Pud



by Steve Nease

Looking back



These are the faces of champions back in the 1955-'56 hockey season. The Bantam Championship Hockey Team members included from left (back row) George Horton, Charles Martin, Brian Hamilton, Ken Bailey, David Blair, Chris Wright (coach Vic White); (front row) Larry Gilbert, Mervin Fletcher, Ian Foster, Paul Lee, Pat Carr and Billy Currie.

Pages of the Past

One Year Ago

From the February 6, 1991 issue

Concern for Canada at war and the country's recession brought a vocal group of Campbellville residents to a public meeting organized by Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner. An emotional, standing room only crowd packed the Lions Club hall on Guelph Line in the village. "The last time I held a meeting in Campbellville one person came," said Mr. Turner. "And he didn't live in the riding." While some members of the audience opposed Canada's involvement in the Persian Gulf war, most, including Mr. Turner, were in favour.

A 13-year Nassagaweya resident who has long been active in her community announced her candidacy for the Halton regional council seat in her area. Virginia Taylor was the first to indicate her intention to capture the position Bill Johnson planned to vacate with his resignation from politics. "I think it's right up my alley," said the 47-year-old Moffat resident. "I'm used to dealing with people. I go to things and get involved. I don't just show up, like some people."

Coyotes and coyote-dog crossbred predators were savaging livestock in rural Nassagaweya and the provin-

cial Ministry of Natural Resources didn't seem to care much, said Ward 3 councillor Barry Lee at a meeting of municipal council. Claims by farmers who lose animals to the predators, which the Town must pay, have shot up dramatically, Mr. Lee said. "In 1987, we paid \$2,000 in so-called wolf claims and in 1990 it was close to \$14,000," the councillor noted. "So we've got a problem."

20 Years Ago

From the February 9, 1972 issue

A north Halton family became twice over victims of the dog poisoner who has been operating in the Sixth Line, Esquesing area in the past few weeks. The Del Linstead family's pet dog Jack died of an apparent poisoning. Jack, the eighth death in this area, was one of several dogs poisoned.

Milton's second annual Snow Festival was ready to roll, complete with a parade, mutt show, dance, snowmobile rally, dog races, Christmas tree burning and a variety of other events.

Covering the Community Pool in Rotary Park instead of building an indoor swimming pool was a suggestion advanced to the Milton Community Service Clubs organization.

50 Years Ago

From the February 5, 1942 issue

Last Saturday, two of our boys, Harry Evans and Harold Leslie, narrowly escaped drowning in the Credit River. They were crossing the ice when it broke and both were precipitated into the water. Harry went in up to his neck and Harold to his knee. They both managed to climb out and lost no time getting home to don dry and warmer clothing.

Frank Pearen was chosen chairman of the Milton High School Board at their re-organization meeting. Edward Mahon of Campbellville was elected vice-chairman and the property committee consisted of F. H. Gilroy, H. B. Browne and S. G. Wharin.

If February is no worse than January, the winter will have been pretty moderate.