

Group attempts to silence train whistles in Campbellville

By **ROB KELLY**
The Champion

A train whistle protest by 25 angry Campbellville residents was derailed Monday night when town councillors said they wanted more information on the issue.

Dr. David Rosenbloom, a spokesperson for SWITCH (Stop Whistling Into Campbellville Homes), said he was "very" disappointed councillors hadn't backed his group. Much of the reservation expressed by councillors centred on potential insurance costs to stop train whistling. While Dr. Rosenbloom said he could understand the caution, "it still does not stop me from being frustrated."

Sporting trademark SWITCH red train-engineer type caps, the two dozen or so protesters applauded loudly from the council chamber gallery when SWITCH speakers made their most emotional points, and muttered in exasperation when the discussion veered toward putting the matter off until additional research is done.

There are eight CP Rail crossings in the Milton area. Three are on town roads and five on regional roads. The SWITCH group wants train whistling banned throughout Milton, but is most concerned about the rural Campbellville area, where in their opinion whistle blowing has become a genuine noise nuisance.

CP Rail is proposing a cost-sharing agreement for the extra insurance the railway says is necessary if whistle blowing is banned. The premium quoted is \$1,000 per crossing, and CP believes municipal governments should pay half. That would amount to \$4,000 for the eight crossings. But Halton Region and Milton at least initially disagreed about who should pay.

In his preliminary report, which was supposed to be discussed Wednesday, Halton public works director Art Leitch suggested Milton pay for all eight crossings. But Milton representatives largely resisted that at their general committee meeting Monday night, saying they would pay for the three Milton roads, but didn't want to assume Halton's liability too.

By Tuesday Mr. Leitch had softened his stand, saying

he wanted to know Milton's position prior to proposing a regional stance. He planned to ask that his previously scheduled report be deferred as "premature."

Ward 3 councillor Gerry Brooks said it doesn't really matter which level of government pays since it all comes out of one pocket anyway — the property taxpayers'. "I don't think that for \$500 for crossing we should hold this up," councillor Brooks added. "The cost of \$500 per crossing, I think, is minimal in comparison to many other (municipal) expenditures."

Dr. Rosenbloom said there are three crossings in "a one mile stretch" through Campbellville, with "25 trains in 24 hours."

Although all the crossings have flashing lights and barriers, the trains, as per current policy, blow their horns at each one. Villagers say the noise blasts through their otherwise peaceful environment at all hours, interrupting sleep, disturbing children and generally assaulting them with more than 100 decibels.

The sound is equivalent to "somewhere between a farm tractor at close quarters and a rock concert," according to a SWITCH press release.

While a majority of residents polled in the village support the proposed whistle ban, there are those worried about potential safety breaches if it comes to pass.

Ron Huntsinger, who lives nearby, said trains often shunt to and fro in the Guelph Junction area west of the village, activating barriers at crossings although they aren't going to pass by the roadways. This led to some disdain among residents for the barriers, Mr. Huntsinger warned. In such circumstances, whistles provide the only real warning that a train is approaching, he noted.

Dr. Rosenbloom said neither Burlington nor Oakville allow train whistling in their communities, and that no ban would be granted until a formal safety inspection of the Milton sites is carried out anyway.

Councillors are expected to consider the matter again when they have broader information regarding potential liability, and whether the \$1,000 per crossing insurance surcharge suggested by railroad authorities is really warranted.

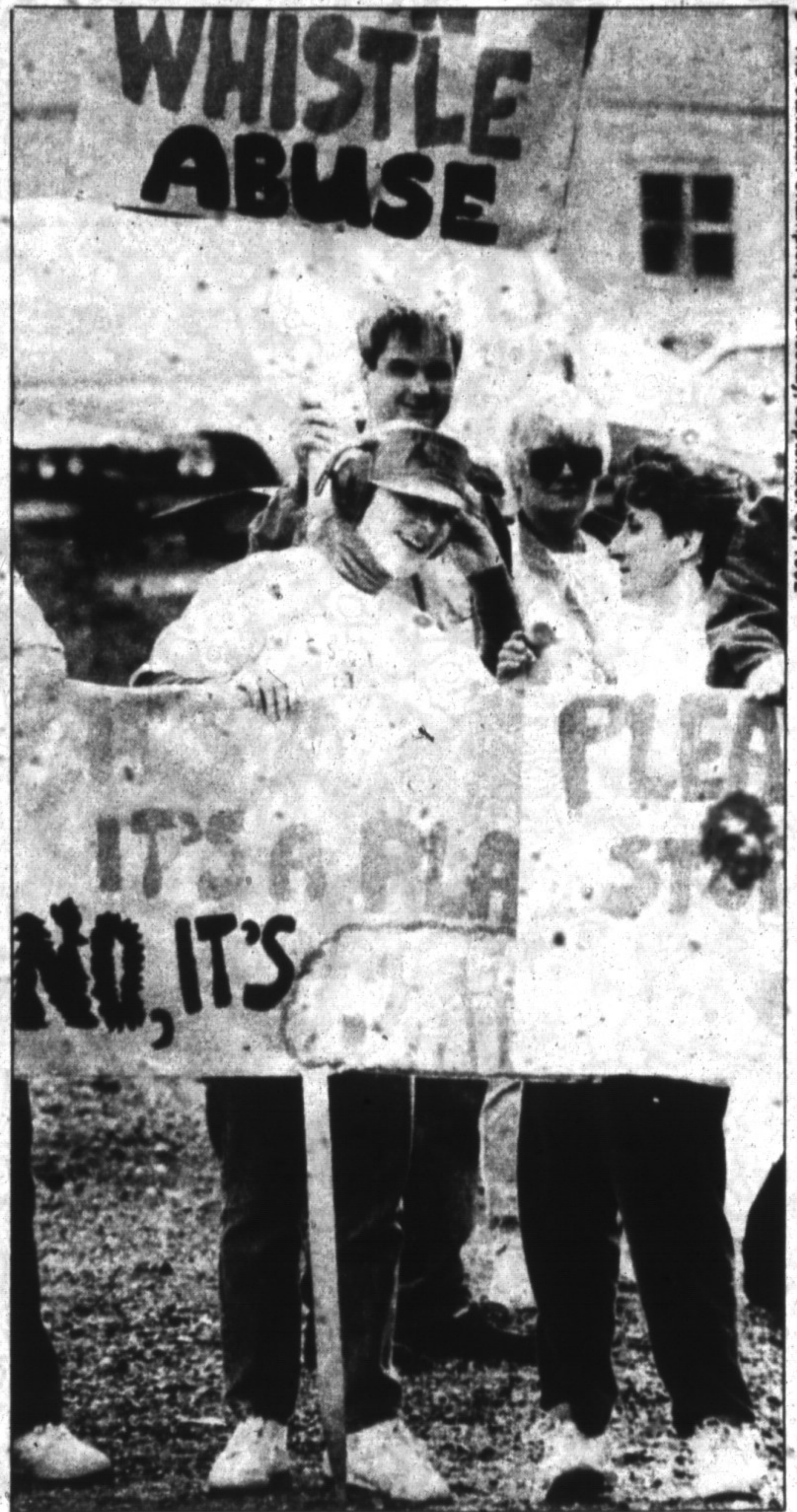


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE
A group of Campbellville residents wants trains to switch the practice of blowing horns at crossings. The SWITCH group rallied in the village briefly Sunday.

Car wash blaze at auto auction

About \$350,000 damage was caused to property at the Toronto Auto Auction on Lawson Road last week when the car wash caught on fire.

No one was hurt and no cars were affected, but 12 golf carts stored in the building were damaged September 22 when the blaze broke out just before 7:30 p.m.

An employee of the car auction, which was just about to close for the day, noticed smoke and called for help, said Deputy Chief Harold Penon of the Milton Fire Department.

Firefighters battled the blaze ac-

companied by dense, black smoke for about 45 minutes before bringing it under control.

The Ontario Fire Marshal's Office is investigating the cause of the blaze.

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Here's a reducing plan for the entire community.
Your municipality is being challenged to a Halton-wide
Waste Reduction Contest during the month of October.

Each municipality will keep a record of the residential waste it
disposes of from curbside collections. These figures will be compared
to those from October 1991. The municipality with the highest rate of
reduction — or the lowest increase in waste disposal — will win a
Waste Reduction Week Waste Minimization Award.

That's a mouthful. But what it means is that, if we all
reduce together, we can save tons of garbage.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE THINGS YOU
CAN DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE:

- use your blue box
- use a home composter
- use Household Hazardous Waste Depots
- buy only what you use
- buy products with minimal packaging
- repair items instead of replacing them

October's the time to watch your waste.
We'll keep you posted on the progress of the contest.

Reduce, reuse, recycle — you could be a winner!

