

Dinner-auction nudges United Way toward goal

The United Way of Milton received a 10th anniversary gift of about \$15,000 Friday night when proceeds from its campaign kick-off event were tallied.

The dinner-auction at Halton Hills Place combined with profits from two draws made that evening, got the 1992 campaign off to a good start. Sharing in the organization's fortune were the lucky ticket holders.

A trip for two anywhere Air Canada flies in Europe was won by David and Ellie-May Hardie of Milton and tickets for all of the Toronto Blue Jays home games next year were picked up by Don and Lori Sales of Moffat.

Walt Elliot, this year's campaign chairman, acted as master of ceremonies for the evening. Guest speaker Reverend Rod Lewis took the more than 200 supporters at the event back over the 10-year history of the United Way in Milton, recalling the first campaign which fell far short of its goal but was still called a success.

The crowd was entertained by Father Mark Curtis and Paul Bulla as well as the Milton Choristers barber-shop group.

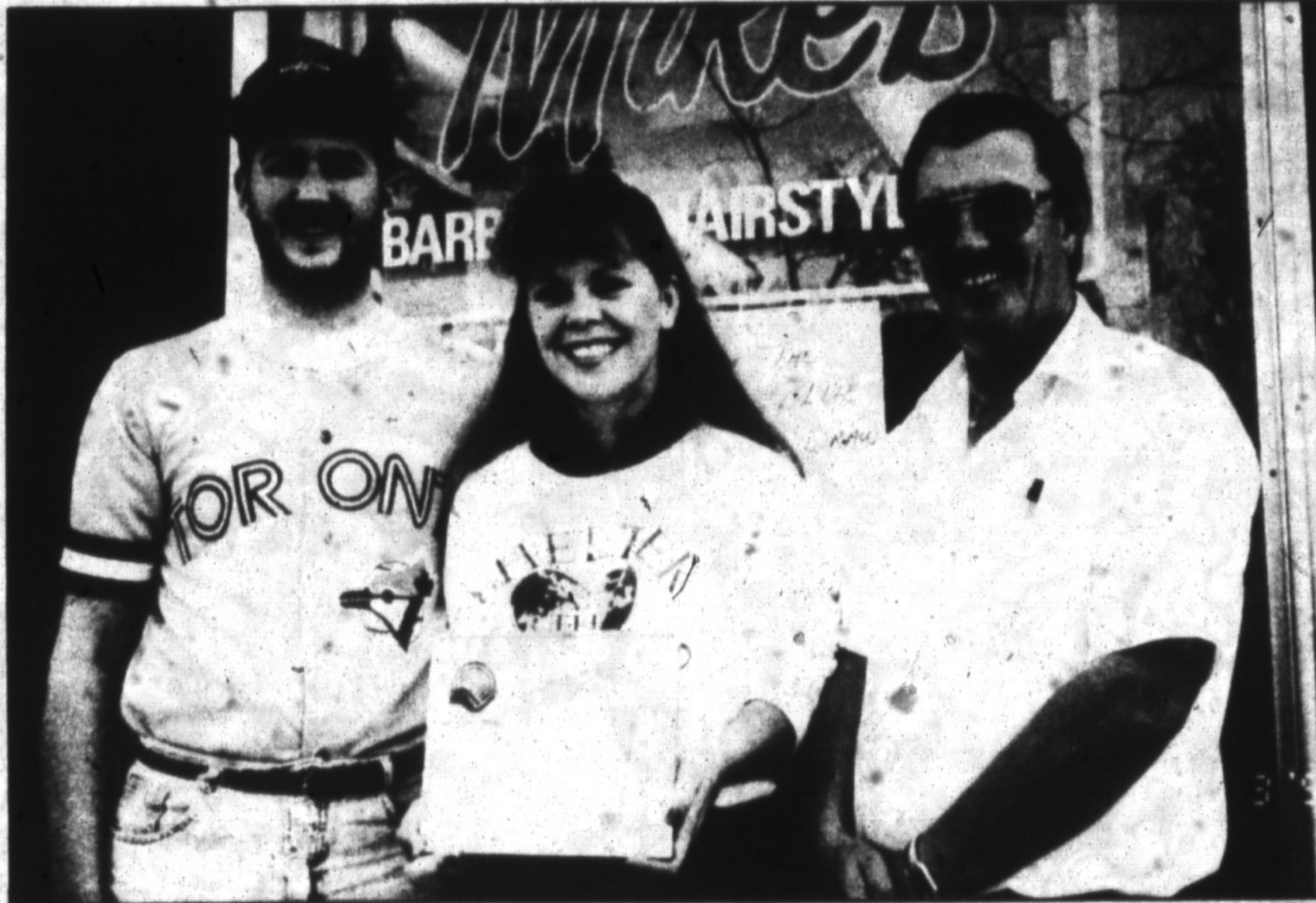


Photo by DONNA COULTER
Mike Boughton (right) hands over 1993 season tickets for the Toronto Blue Jays home games to draw winners Dan and Lori Sales of Moffat. Mr. Boughton organized the draw on behalf of the United Way. Expedite-Plus donated a trip to Europe for a second draw.

Garbage goes private

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Browning Ferris Industries (BFI) will collect the garbage in Milton's urban area as of January. The company has been hired for a three-year term. In 1993 Milton will pay \$227,945 for BFI services. The contract increases for the subsequent two years will be based on consumer price index changes.

In a comparison of operating expenses, Mr. Matthews noted that the same service would have cost taxpayers \$360,000 had Town of Milton employees provided it. He points to a potential saving of roughly \$133,000. But such a net windfall would only be available if the Town workers were let go.

The possible savings swell when the potential capital costs are factored in. Mr. Matthews said two Milton-owned garbage trucks would probably have been replaced in 1993, at a cost of roughly \$230,000. Now the Town can avoid that.

Regarding the work being farmed out to the private sector, Mr. Fendley said, "we're not happy about it, but we can't stop it. We just hope it will not eliminate any of our jobs."

Mr. Fendley said he knew of other municipalities where experiments with private sector collection have been attempted, but failed. He also cautioned that no one really knows what level of service a private collector will provide until the work is actually being performed over a period of time.

Mr. Matthews told councillors Monday night that BFI is "capably handling the City of Burlington contract" for garbage collection.

"There should be little, if any, change," stressed Mayor Gord Krantz. "Hopefully nobody will notice any difference."

Mr. Matthews said there may be some alterations in the timing of pick-up, but none in frequency, except for the special collection service. That will be every two months instead of monthly.

Headache in tax reform

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A four-year phase-in was adopted by regional council in an attempt to compromise on the contentious issue, but all four area municipalities, and the school boards, have a say in the matter. It is by no means certain that the local councils or school boards will endorse the plan.

Phase-in periods cushion the blow of tax increases by slowing the process in which those who will pay less do so. In effect it amounts to a subsidy for people getting taxed in a higher bracket by others who are enjoying a reduction. Since those getting a reduction are obtaining it more slowly, those facing a hike won't have to endure it as quickly.

Mr. McQueen would rather dispense with a phase-in altogether, the rationale being that if MVA is, as touted, a fairer taxation system, the sooner it's put in place the better.

Mr. McQueen warned that Milton "could have all the citizens in the community in opposition to the phase-in", not just the ones getting increases. He expects "a high level of (taxation) appeals in the first year" by irate taxpayers.

David Hipgrave, Milton's new chief administrative officer, formerly worked for Metro Toronto, where MVA has been a highly contentious issue. There, research done on phase-in periods suggests they "tend to be an administrative nightmare."

Mr. McQueen said he understood the school boards have difficulty with phase-in formulas, too.

THANK YOU Milton

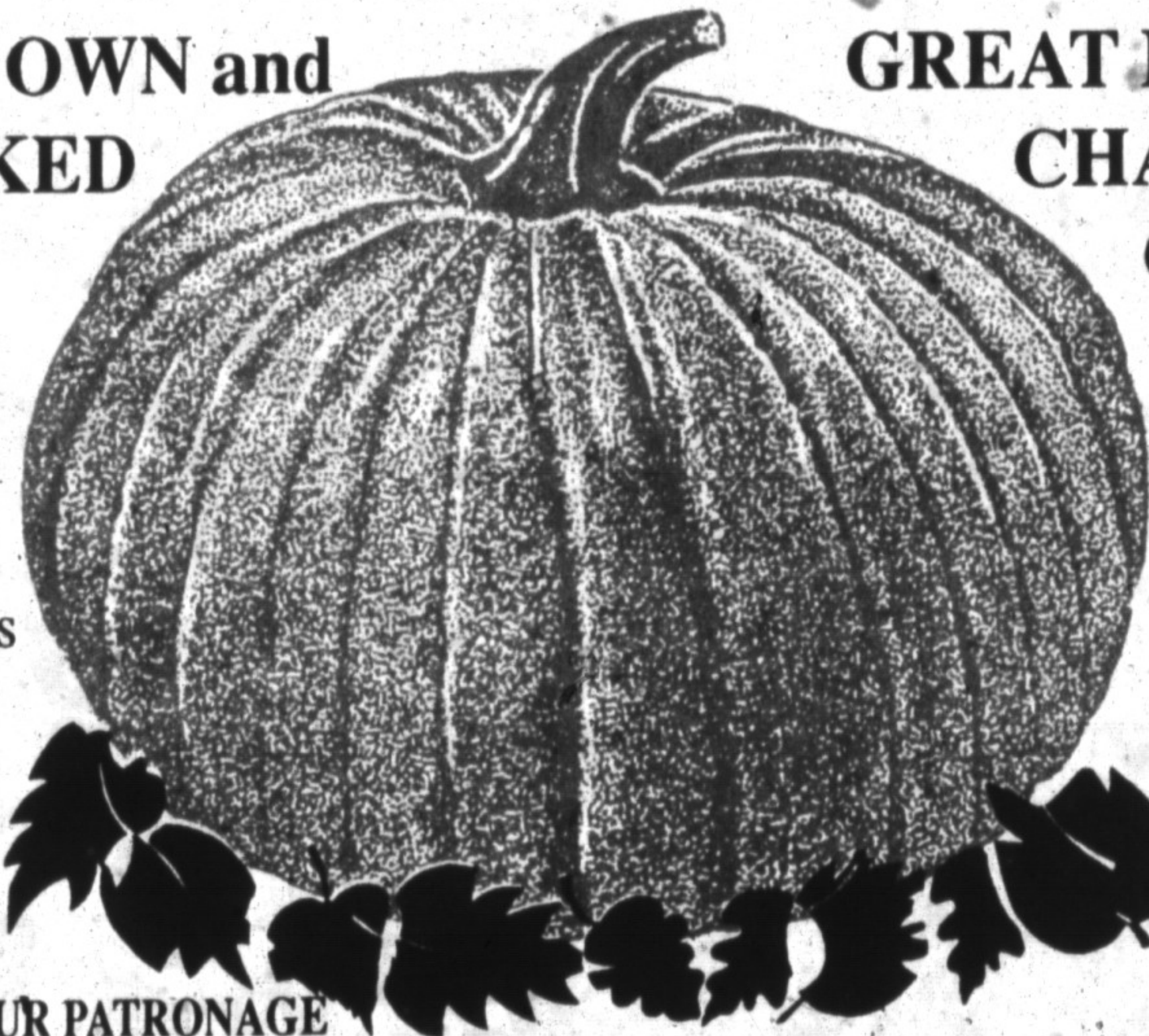
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