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## Driving home convenience

Not everyone has jumped into the pool but Sylvia Benchimol is happy that at least 100 commuters have tested the water.

The president of POOLit launched her commuter match-up service in the summer.

Although it's meant to, serve the Greater Toronto Area — of which Milton is part — so far commuters in Pickering and Ajax have been most responsive, thanks to "lots of publicity".

"It (response) depends on how much exposure it gets in certain areas," Ms Benchimol explained.

In an effort to drive home the benefits of her service, Ms Benchimol has targeted large corporations, municipal governments and various provincial ministries in the Toronto area.

She's counting on increased concern for the environment, and a basic frustration with fighting traffic daily, to convince commuters to dive into her giant pool.

As someone who has "been on the road a lot", the Toronto resident knows most commuting cars are carrying just one person.

"It's absurd that there are hundreds of thousands of cars stuck in rush hour traffic every day with only one person inside," she says.

She admits some prefer to go solo, however she believes her company's matching process could sway drivers to consider taking on passengers.

POOLit participants are matched on the basis of musical tastes, smoking habits and interests as well as compatible destinations. She deals with matches that don't work out and attempts to replace drivers or passengers whose transportation needs change — due to a new job, for example.

The \$49 annual management fee covers these services.

According to Ms Benchimol, the only way for her car pooling network to function effectively is to have thousands involved. Currently there are about 100.

While she would like POOLit to become a fulltime venture, Ms Benchimol's career in marketing is still paying the bills for now.

## Condo auction

The luxury condominiums at Village Parc on the Pond will be on the auction block Wednesday, Dec. 16 at the Toronto Airport Marriott, 901 Dixon Rd., Rexdale.

Open houses at the Milton highrise will begin this weekend and continue each Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. and Thursdays from 2 to 6 p.m.

The auction is being conducted by Sheldon Good and Company in conjunction with Re/max Mil-towne.

About one-third of the condos have been sold and according to a press release by the auction firm, the owners are attempting to reduce the carrying costs of the vacant units.

"An auction condenses the marketing campaign into a few short weeks, rather than years. The cost savings are passed directly to the purchasers, who themselves set the market price on auction day," stated Gordon Green, president of Sheldon, Good and Company in the press release.