

COMMENT

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

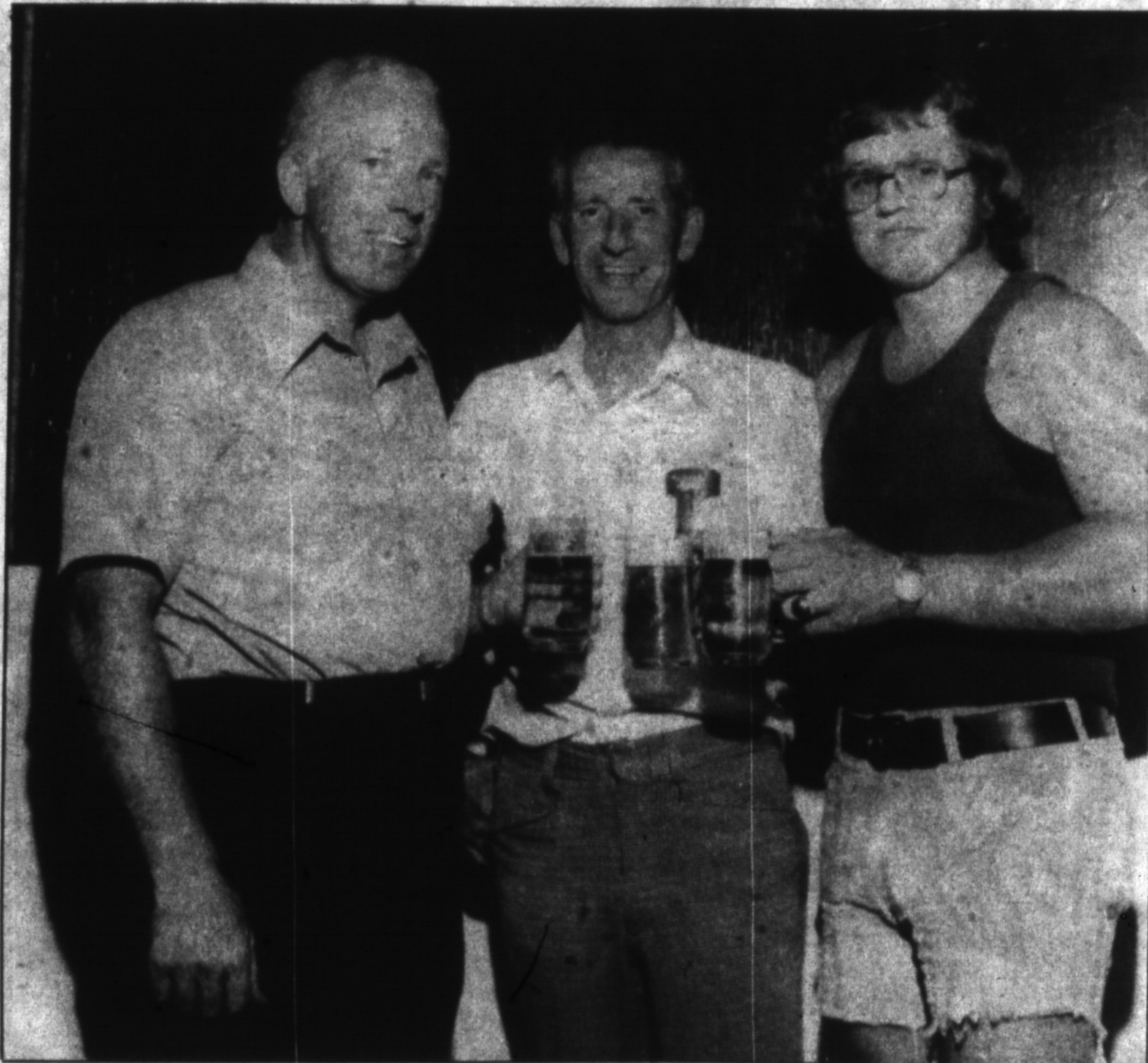
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LOOKING BACK



Toasting the success of their joint efforts back in July 1973, are the sponsor, owner and coach of the Milton Continental Flyers. Owner of the local hockey club, Vern Gooding (centre) celebrates with sponsor Bill Gallingier (left) and coach Bob (Pie) Lee with their special Continental Flyers beer mugs.

Display of choice

The emotion-laden debate between those who condemn abortion and their opponents who favour freedom of choice in the matter has become progressively uglier over the last few years, at least on a national and international scale. Hopefully, that won't happen in Milton.

There is good reason to believe it won't. The last time the issue flared, in a struggle over representation on the Milton District Hospital board, the pro-life faction lost its bid to secure new positions on the hospital's management committee, but it was a civil enough encounter.

In a sweltering arena, hundreds turned out to vote down the pro-life slate, a defeat which the group's strategists handled with aplomb, saying they had made their point.

Today the pro-lifers are making another point, a somewhat stark one, in keeping with their views on the status quo regarding abortion.

At Holy Rosary Church the Knights of Columbus have erected 50 small crosses in what they term a "memorial" to what they see as the sin of sacrificing human lives in abortion.

Their opponents cite the rights of women to control their bodies, and criticize the presumption they see in the pro-life assumption that a fetus is a person.

Pro-choicers fear the aggression they have seen in some pro-lifers, who have picketed physicians' homes and hounded women seeking access to abortion clinics. Pro-lifers fear what they see as a dangerous unwillingness to confront the immorality of abortion by its practitioners and supporters.

Is it wrong for the Knights of Columbus to have erected their 50-cross display, the number reflecting the average of annual abortions at Milton District Hospital? No.

It is macabre, perhaps, slightly intrusive to passersby, perhaps. But it is not illegal nor anywhere near as offensive as some of the tactics that have been used in demonstrations elsewhere, by both camps.

While we have no doubt many silently condemn this initiative, it would perhaps be useful to put oneself in the position of a pro-lifer who knows that on average once a week an abortion is performed in the community hospital. That too, from the flip side, is undoubtedly considered macabre and intrusive, to say the least.

We do not profess to have any answers to this profound moral dilemma. But we know what we expect in a community governed by good order and mutual respect.

We expect tolerance, empathy, an ability to listen from those most concerned with this debate.

We expect discourse in good conscience and intent. We expect no more than we trust our neighbours expect, an adherence to the values of citizenship that have made our community healthy. There is disagreement among us, but it is only as threatening as we allow it to become. Much more binds us than divides us, or should.

PAGES OF THE PAST

One Year Ago

From the May 13, 1992 issue

□ Bargains and bed races were expected to bring shoppers and sightseers into Milton's downtown core. The annual tradition of the Moonlight Magic sidewalk sale was being planned. The object of the bed race, to be held the next day, would be to propel a twin bed up the gentle slope of Main Street from Martin to James streets. Various Downtown Business Improvement Area (DBIA) merchants were expected to take part.

□ A dream was to come true for 100 young baseball fans and adult escorts from Halton who were to be among 5,000 people treated to a major league baseball game at SkyDome on Blue Jays Kids Day. The children were chosen by Halton's Children's Aid Society, Halton Adolescent Support Service and the Georgetown Open Door Service for teenagers. The Toronto Blue Jays Baseball Club, The Variety Club of Ontario-Tent 28 and the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services had teamed up for the 10th year in a row to organize the event. The seats were for the Toronto Blue Jays game against the Seattle Mariners.

□ The Milton Monarch juvenile boys basketball team had finished as provincial silver medallists in Ottawa. The team of 16 and 17-year-olds had played teams from Kingston, Gravenhurst and Collingwood in order to qualify for the provincial final four play-off round. The team sponsored by Victory Productions had beaten out Barrie in the semi-final and lost the final by only 3 points to an all-star squad from Kingston.

20 Years Ago

From the May 16, 1973 issue

□ More than 50 trees valued at close to \$1,000 were being planted on Milton homeowners' properties

through a cooperative program with town council. Council had offered to split the cost of trees, ranging in price from \$10 to \$17 if homeowners would pay the balance and have them planted in their front yards. Treasurer Audrey Brush had reported more than 50 trees had been purchased with the most popular variety being the Crimson Maple.

□ Members of the Milton OPP detachment had celebrated Police Week by winning a trophy for their expertise on the revolver range. The 36-man force, based in Milton and serving the North Halton area had won the Constable John Dennis Davy Memorial Trophy as the top marksmen in the district. Milton OPP had averaged 93.59 per cent in the competition. Several of the Milton officers had scored 100 per cent at the revolver range. It was the first time Milton had won the trophy, which had been in existence for five years.

□ Displays and nature hikes had begun at Mountsberg Wildlife Centre. The displays were on aspects of the Halton Region Conservation Area and films highlighted points which were subsequently emphasized on nature hikes. Some of the aspects shown in the displays were the Bruce Trail and species of fish found in the watershed.

50 Years Ago

From the May 13, 1943 issue

□ Some of the streets in town were in bad shape due to the wet weather but council was to attend to this matter as soon as weather would permit.

□ The Nassagaweya Women's Institute was to hold a dance at Brookville Hall.

□ The Red Cross Variety Shop was to open every afternoon and evening except Monday and Saturday evenings. Dishes, clothes, pictures, furniture, plants, jams, jellies and homemade baking were being offered for sale and afternoon tea would be served every day.

PUD

BY STEVE NEASE

