

# Mayor Gord Krantz says he runs a tight ship

By ANGELA BLACKBURN  
The Champion

After 29 years in political office, 57-year-old Gord Krantz is still fighting — and he'll fight all the way to the polls November 14 to retain his job as Milton's mayor. It's a job he's had 14 years, the longest reign in Milton's 137-year history.

Born the eldest of seven children in Milton Heights, six feet from Nassagaweya's town line, Mr. Krantz calls Milton home.

With no claim to riches, he started Krantz Fuels after working nine years in a related industry and operated his company successfully for two decades before selling it to turn fulltime attention to the mayor's job in 1980.

It was in the days when decisions were made at barber shops and on street corners, that Mr. Krantz first became a Milton councillor. He said he'd been "spouting off" in a barber shop when someone challenged him to seek election. "The glove was dropped, I picked it up and here I am 29 years later."

Mr. Krantz is being challenged this election for the mayor's job by two newcomers, Glenn Botting and David Lloyd. But he said he remembers when elections were annual and the atmosphere was like being in "a constant election."

Milton's mayor describes himself as a fighter. "There are not many things I ever back away from. To use a cliché, when the going gets tough, the tough get going."

Ironically, as Milton prepares for unprecedented growth, Mr. Krantz admits it was lack of growth in Milton that first spurred him to run for council.

"It was one of the things that got me elected. Milton was stagnating in the early 60s," he explained. A big supporter of private enterprise, Mr. Krantz said he likes the Town to run like a business.

And while successful in general,

## A tree for thee

The Milton and District Horticultural Society is continuing its annual tree planting initiatives involving local students.

The organization will match the efforts of students who raise money to have a tree planted on school property by donating another tree.

Schools that have planted a tree in 1994 and wish to be considered in the project should call Roberta Roberts at 878-0400 by Nov. 18.

Mr. Krantz admits to some disappointments along the way, such as the new regional dump in Milton. "You win some, you lose some," he admits, but not without recalling how he was held in contempt of court as he fought the dump. "I don't mind standing up and being counted."

Yet he was a shy person. "I always liked people but I was not outgoing," he said, admitting a speech at his wedding 36 years ago to wife Olive was one of his shortest.

In 1980 Mr. Krantz eyed the mayor's chair, defeating incumbent Don Gordon (but not by much), shortly after the advent of regional government in the mid-1970s. He still likens regional government to "an adolescent" growing and maturing to age 20.

Mr. Krantz said Milton's diversity and its residents' lack of common issues was more pronounced then than now. Looking ahead, Mr. Krantz said, "I look at the mayor's position as the captain of a ship. Sometimes

the ship lists and goes its merry old way but it has not done that while I've been at the wheel and it's not going to." He added, "I know that seems a little folksy."

He predicts rough seas and the need for a firm hand at the wheel. He foresees Milton as a suburban com-

munity in the shadow of the Greater Toronto Area. "There's nothing to do to escape it, so the GTA has to be well planned," he said.

Politicians, he said, must be visionary. "Leaders have to stop and think and make provision for change to keep communities like this vibrant and good."

Milton, which had a 6,000 population in the 1960s, is heading to one of more than 80,000 by early in the 21st century. Mr. Krantz said accompanying concerns, real and perceived, have to be handled.

"The community will change and I want to be part of the change and have a say," said Mr. Krantz, looking to Oakville, which was told by the courts how it would grow. "I have no intention of letting that happen here such as it did in Oakville," he vows.

Public and private partnerships is a new trend that's also becoming a reality. Mr. Krantz looks to the need for such partnership in order to get, as he calls them,

the "big pipes" to Milton allowing for increased water servicing and growth.

"I think you'll see more of a business approach than a socialist approach (to government)," said Mr. Krantz, noting a big difference between wants and needs for services.



*'Leaders have to stop and think and make provision for change to keep communities like this vibrant and good'*

Mayor Gord Krantz


Admitting it's often more politically expedient to highlight a \$1,000 issue than a \$1 million issue, Mr. Krantz said, "That's the problem with government." He said while the Town is run pretty tightly, there are always poor judgement calls and while he attempts to be accountable, he doesn't pretend to be perfect.

Father to two, and grandfather to six, Mr. Krantz believes a mayor should help settle local problems, give everyone a say but ensure the process doesn't get bogged down.

As mayor, Mr. Krantz has also been a Halton regional councillor and Milton Hydro-Electric commission-

er. He's been an appointed Halton Regional Conservation Authority member over 20 years, a part-time Milton firefighter and is a past president of the Firefighters' Association of Ontario. He's been president of Milton's Fastball League, a Milton Chamber of Commerce and Association of Police Governing Authorities of Ontario director, and he's served over 20 years with Halton's Community Credit Union.

And though he knows the joke is that Mayor Krantz will turn up at any social function, he says, "A community leader should be truly interested and I really am."



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