



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Owner James Thomson is all smiles, and even his dog Topnotch appears to be too. The Campbellville beagle won an award for bravery and loyalty from Purina Monday.

Brave beagle among the best

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
Special to *The Champion*

Milton's top dog, Topnotch, was officially honored for last summer's heroics at the 28th annual Ralston Purina Animal Hall of Fame Awards Ceremony Monday evening in Toronto.

The four-year-old beagle, belonging to James and Irene Thomson of Campbellville, was one of five inductees to join Purina's Hall of Fame at the Harbourfront ceremony. Topnotch got the only solo

award. The two other incidents cited involved pairs of exceptional dogs

Topnotch becomes the 72nd dog and 89th pet to be included in the Hall of Fame since Purina began this program to honor animal heroics in 1968.

"Purina has been doing this for 28 years now. I think it's amazing and I was certainly surprised when I first heard about it," said Irene Thomson.

She has every reason to take pride in Monday evening's festivities, as her beagle displayed tremen-

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School dropout rate rising

Dropout Rates in Halton Schools

Year	Rate
1994-95	6.06%
1993-94	4.41%
1992-93	5.59%
1991-92	4.78%
1990-91	5.74%
1989-90	6.70%
1988-89	8.17%
1987-88	8.83%

A study by the Halton board indicates the high school dropout rate is on the upswing in the region.

The Report on Student Retention was presented to trustees recently, with a review of annual rates from 1988-1995.

Diane Knox, the principal of Burlington's M.M. Robinson High School and a member of the study team, noted dropping out was on the increase, to 6.06 per cent (940 withdrawals) for the 1994-95 school year, after hitting a low of 4.41 per cent (696 high school students) for '93-94.

A little more than half (58 per cent) of the students who withdrew from school during the latest period for which statistics are available, '94-95, left to take a job, while the reasoning by a third of the dropouts wasn't known.

5—The Canadian Champion, Wednesday, March 6, 1996

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