

Non-smokers flex their muscles

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

A more extensive no-smoking bylaw could come to Milton.

Town staff will take a close look at results from a survey and consider changes to Milton's six year old no-smoking bylaw. Council will then debate a new bylaw or direct the issue to Halton Region, in hopes of fashioning a uniform bylaw for all of Halton.

Results of a June, 1995 survey were presented to councillors Monday night. There were 11,000 surveys delivered to homes, of which 932 were returned to the town. In addition, a telephone survey of restaurants and a public meeting were conducted as part of the study.

Substantial support was found in surveys for a total

Picket line scuffles...

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Police have agreed to escort workers in and out of the building when possible, said Halton Regional Police Staff Sgt. Jackie Gordon.

Only about 10 people were on the picket lines yesterday and "everything went smoothly," Mr. Thorne said.

Investigators have completed their probe into the union's assault allegation and no charges will be laid, police said.

Staff Sgt. Gordon explained witnesses gave conflicting accounts of the alleged assault, so the charge wouldn't hold up in court.

Meanwhile, the management employee's complaint remains under investigation, she said.

The linemen, office workers, customer service representatives and engineering staff, who were in a legal strike position May 30, were locked out June 14.

The main bones of contention include a grievance launched by the union over a job classification, a dispute over whether temporary students should be in the bargaining unit, and disagreements over changes to life insurance benefits and working hours options.

Mr. Thorne said he expects to hear from a mediator soon to set up a date to continue talks.

ban on smoking in public places, and for more severe restrictions than are currently in force.

"I don't smoke. Never did. And I think people who do are foolish," said Mayor Gord Krantz. "But I believe in freedom of choice. How would we enforce such bylaws? What's the priority of smoking violations for police?"

The mayor said he was hesitant to enact bylaws which will not be effectively enforced. However, John Hall of the Halton Region health department said that people are generally law abiding, so a bylaw would be by and large effective. He said if the bylaw was enacted by Halton Region, then public health inspectors would be charged with enforcement.

Councillors tossed around several possible modifications to the current bylaw. Councillor Colin Best said changes in public opinion on the issue could fuel stricter rules. Councillor Rick Day said for restaurants the key was to keep smokers away from dining areas. He mentioned a phased approach the Town of Oakville has built into their bylaw, which reduces the smoking sections of restaurants a little each year.

According to Mr. Hall about 70 per cent of the population are non-smokers but in Milton many restaurants set aside 70 per cent of their seats for smokers.

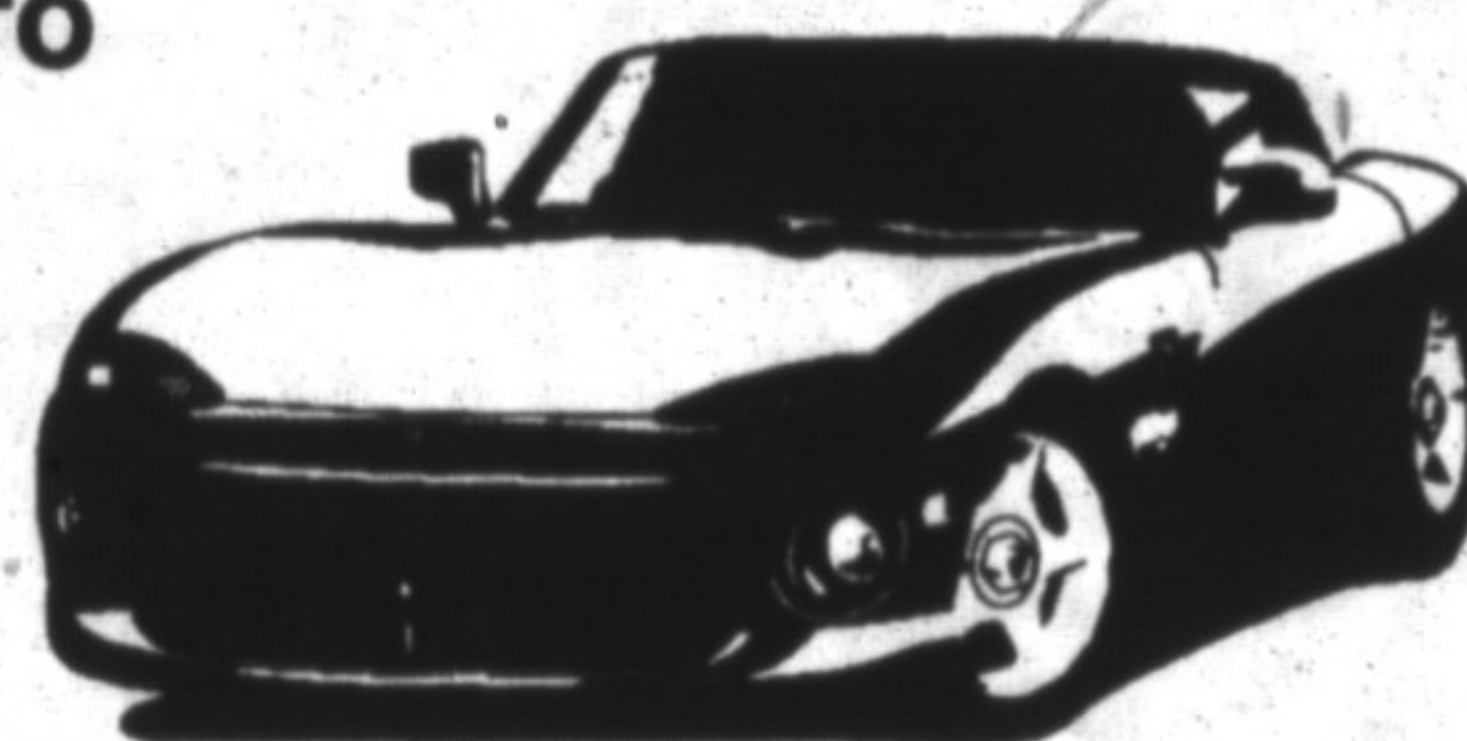
According to Mr. Hall's report many municipalities in North America are working towards smoke-free public places by 2000. Changes to municipal smoking bylaws are being made in conjunction with provincial laws which regulate tobacco sales and use in schools, businesses and public buildings.

Among the survey results: 80 per cent said less than 70 per cent of restaurant space should be for smokers; 61 per cent said small restaurants should be smoke-free; 88 per cent said hotels and motels should designate 50 per cent of their rooms as non-smoking; and more than 80 per cent said common areas of apartment buildings should be smoke-free.

Mr. Hall said studies in the United States suggest there is no loss of business for those establishments which switch to a smoke-free environment. In fact, he said local restaurateurs who have switched report an increase in business.

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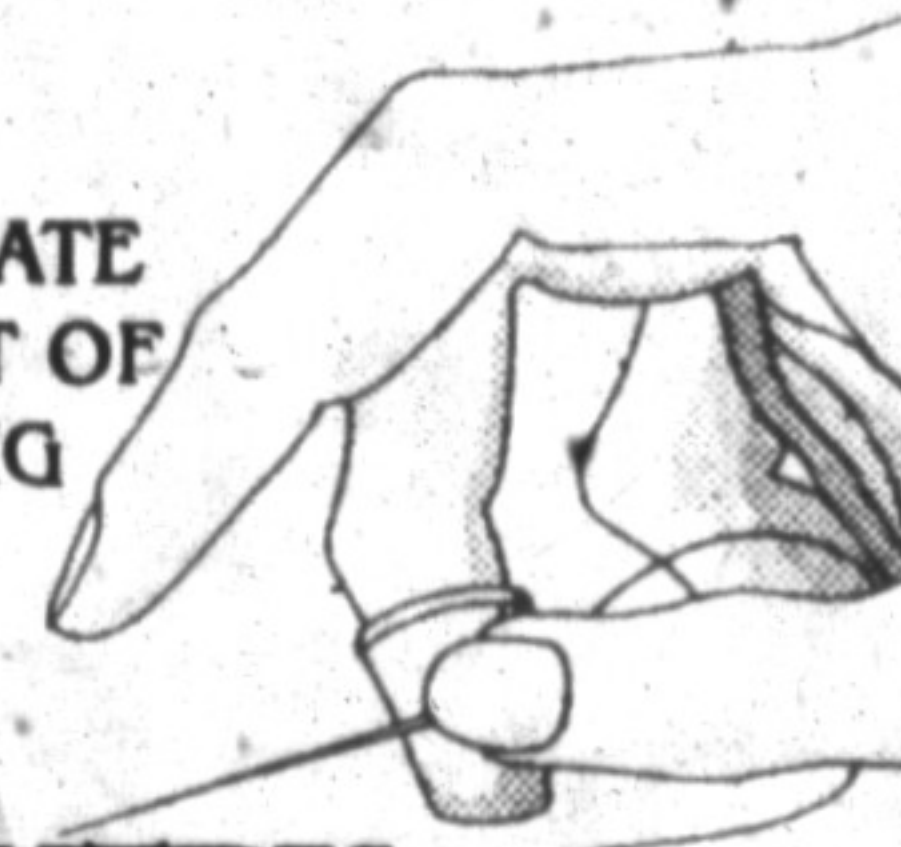
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