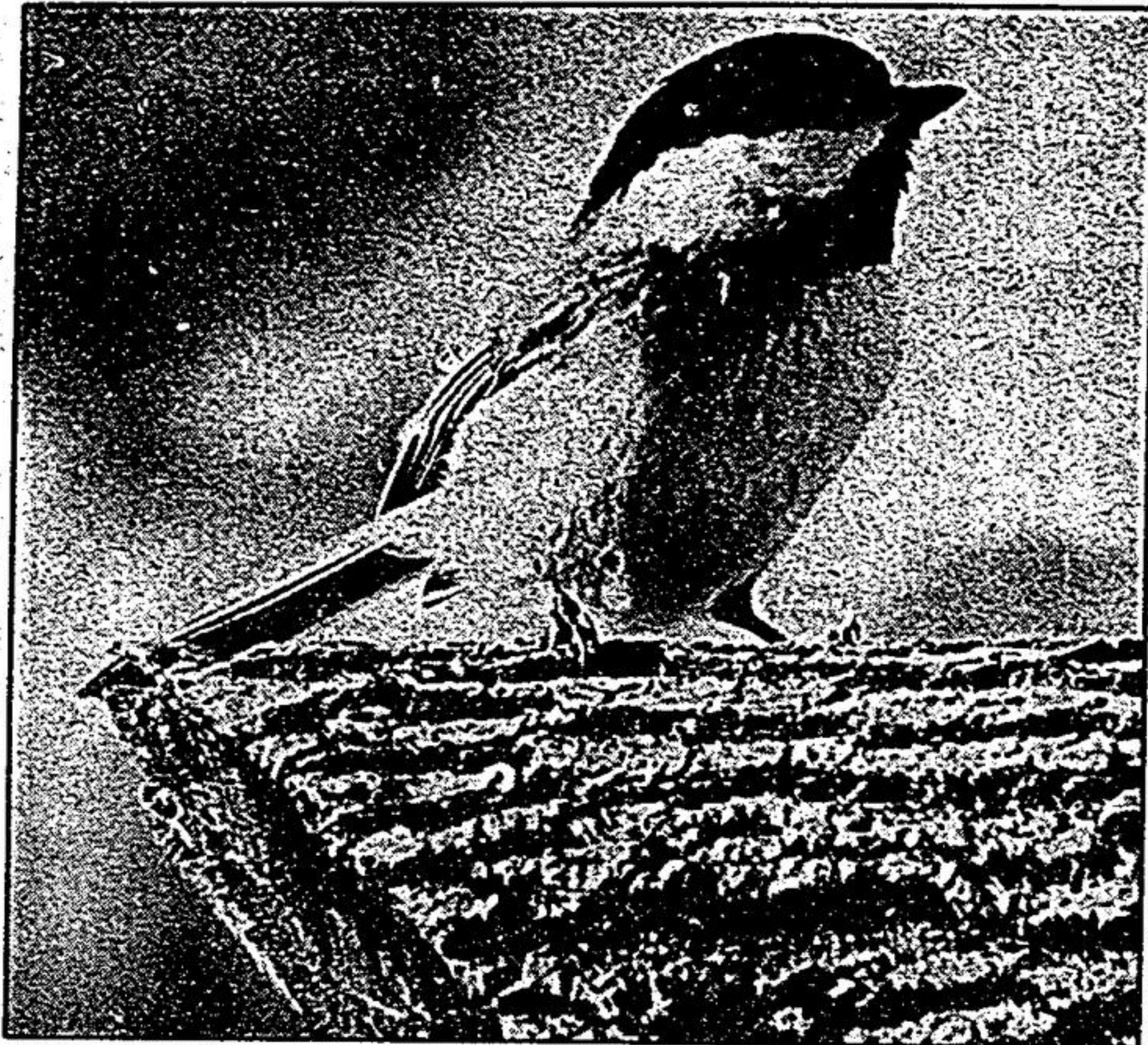


Chickadee cheerful in winter



By ART BRIGGS-JUDE
 You'll find him active on the most blustery days of this cold season when all the other feathered creatures seem to have vanished. His pleasing "Dee-dee, chick-a-dee-dee" notes are a well known greeting to woodland traveller or bird feeding enthusiast alike. Little wonder his displays of limitless energy ignite a welcome spark in all who acknowledge his appearance. And while this fact alone contributes most to the bird's widespread appeal, there are other reasons that make the little chickadee a perennial favourite.

Sporting a black cap and a bib to match on a predominantly gray coat with a lighter vest, this acrobatic sprite of a bird seems to come right out and challenge old man winter at his own game. It also comes right out and makes its presence known if you saunter into its favourite neighbourhood. If this happens to be a remote woodland area, chances are good

a chickadee will soon appear and immediately set out to win your admiration. Beginning with a series of introductory notes and gaining confidence with each run, the restless chickadee closes the distance between itself and its potential audience. When only a foot or so separate the two, the little bird pauses and peers out inquisitively with a twinkling ebony eye. "I know this face," it seems to say, "but so help me I can't remember your name." It stares for only an instant though, then spins around a small branch, hangs upside down and grabs a sleeping grub, all in the same motion.

Closer to home, chickadees, upon finding your feeding station, will furnish you with a season of interesting moments. An example is the contrast shown between it and the blue jay's loud call announcing the feed tray needs replenishing. The coy little chickadee on the other hand achieves the same results in a manner that makes the blue jay look like a rank amateur. If its animated antics aren't being observed sufficiently to warrant the arrival of some tid-bits, this tiny black-

capped artist beats out a "rat-ta-ta-tat" with its bill on your feed tray or window sill. It is here too with regular exposure to people, that these midget bundles of energy can actually be trained to feed out of your hand.

Nutmeats along with sunflower seeds are his favourite handouts, along with chopped suet. In his woodlot home away from man's influence chickadees thrive on such natural foods as insect eggs, wild berries, and weed seeds. A cavity dweller, this active year round resident will nest in a bird house if the dimensions and surroundings are suitable. Occasionally we find them raising a family in some of our bluebird nest-boxes, especially those placed near woodlands or brushy ravines.

While many words have been used to describe this tiny bird's antics or disposition, there's one that stands out most in my mind. For a mighty mite to brave the strongest north winds, to survive the coldest winter nights and to still come bouncing around and add a little joy to a seemingly dismal day, this bird just has to be called 'cheerful'.

Plowmen pushing for 1991 match

Dear Editor:

As some of your readers will recall, the Durham Region Plowmen's Association made an unsuccessful bid last year to bring the International Plowing Match and Farm Machinery Show to the area in 1990.

Although understandably disappointed by the rejection, the plowmen have launched another bid in an effort to bring this event to Durham in 1991.

has received excellent cooperation and support from the Region of Durham; the Twp. of Brock; host farmer Robert Jibb and family as well as neighbors and area agricultural businesses.

We will do our best to represent Durham as the vibrant, growing community it is. In advance, we wish to thank our many supporters. Please wish us good luck!

Sincerely,

Ted Smith,
 Chairman, International Plowing Match Steering Committee, Durham Region Plowmen's Association

The annual convention of the Ontario Plowmen's Association will be held Feb. 15 and 16 at the Constellation Hotel, Toronto. The Durham Region delegation

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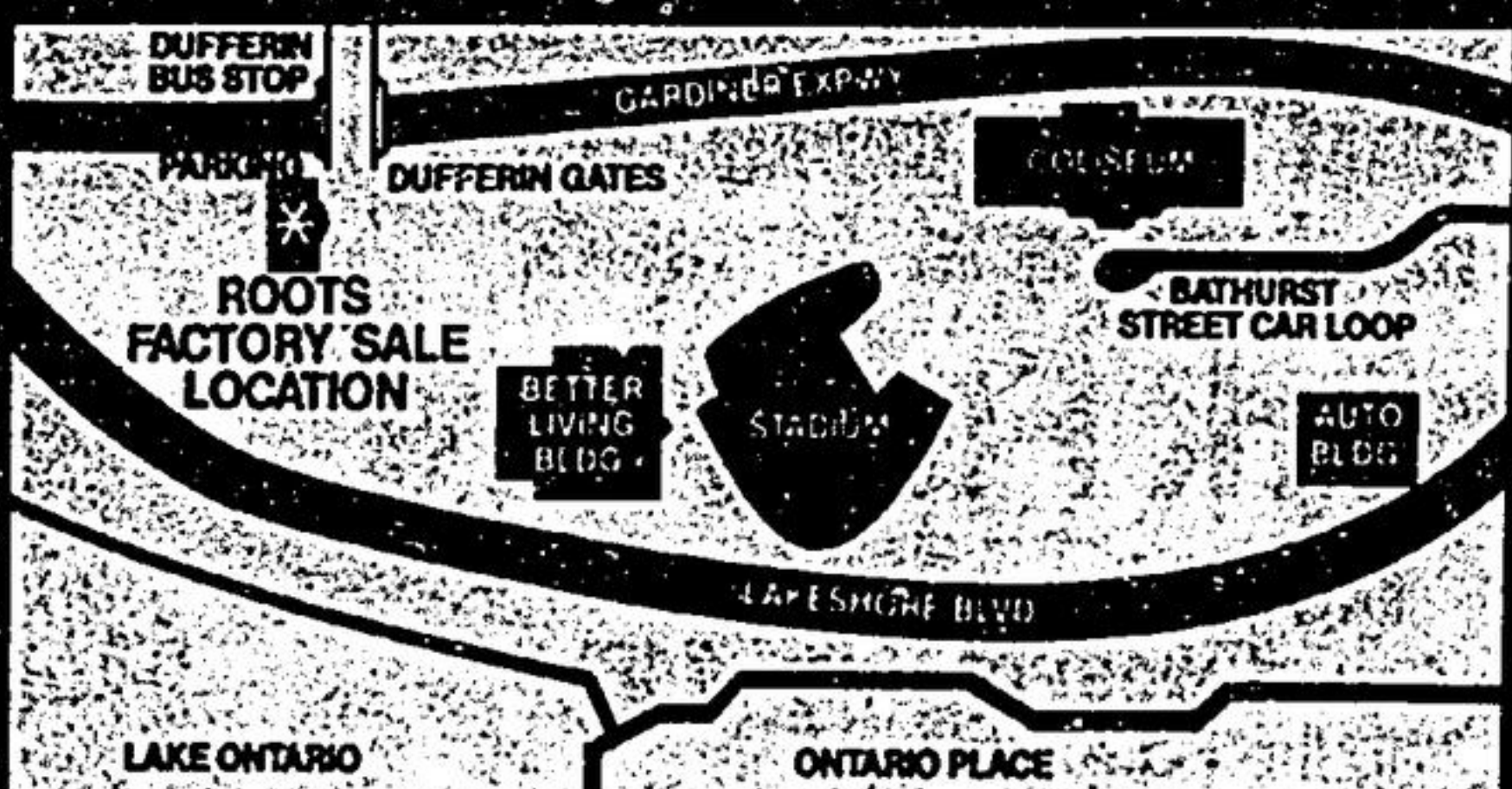
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Exiting from their limo, Venetia Gerodimos and Joey Greco of Scarborough are welcomed by Doug Barber, General Manager of Chimo Hotels, to the Chimo Hotel for a Royal Treatment weekend. Venetia was the winner in the Economist & Sun/Chimo Hotel Christmas Contest for the War Amputations of Canada Child Amputee program with her guess of 2,222 bulbs on Chimo's outdoor Christmas tree. The correct number 2,224. The prize includes limo, to and from Chimo, two nights accommodation, a romantic dinner for 2 in the Berczy Room and Brunch for 2 in Quincy's.