

# THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR

High: -6  
 Low: -13  
 A couple of snow showers during the day, 1-3 cm of snow tonight.  
 Details: Go 2



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## Buds' bell rung

New Leaf Brad May can't rally Toronto in 6-2 loss in Montreal.

SP4

## Get set for gloom over jobs today

It's not Black Friday. But the economy's looking decidedly grey.

■ **Jobs:** Figures to be released this morning are expected to show a net loss of 20,000 jobs in Canada and 475,000 in the United States. Some experts even warn the hit may be 750,000 south of the border. **A12**

■ **Auto sales:** New forecasts predict plunging figures through the first half of this year and up to five years of trouble before profits return. **A12**

■ **High-level alarm:** Barack Obama warns of dire consequences if the U.S. Congress doesn't ante up unprecedented dollars. "A bad situation could become dramatically worse," he says. **A11**

■ **Bright spot:** The Bank of Canada is expected to cut interest rates this month by between a quarter and a half point. It's also planning an economic "early warning system." **A12**

■ **Ignatieff's pledge:** Liberal leader says he'd swiftly cut taxes and overhaul EI if he were PM. **A11**

Spectator staff and wire services

## Coyotes 'coming in to the city'

BY NATASHA MARAR

Ruthann and Roy Shouker hear the howling of coyotes as the animals pad past their Vinemount farm near Stoney Creek.

"It's spooky at night. You hear the whistle of the trains pass and the coyotes respond," said Ruthann.

Their numbers are on the rise. "We are getting more and more coyote removal calls," said Bill Dowd, president of Hamilton-based Humane Wildlife Control. "Coyotes on the outskirts of town are coming into the city."

Humane Wildlife Control is the largest urban wildlife control company in Canada, driving wildlife out of urban settings for 20 years.

"This time of year, with the cold weather and the ground covered with snow, there is less food for coyotes."

Continued on A4

## HHS chops research spending

BY JOANNA FRKETICH

Hamilton Health Sciences is slashing \$2.1 million from its research budget as endowments and donations run dry because of the current economic crisis.

Researchers fear the 10 per cent cut coming April 1 is only the beginning of a steep decline and are bracing for layoffs, cancelled studies and delays in equipment purchasing.

"It really will set us back," said Dr. Jeffrey Weitz, director of the Henderson Research Centre. "If you have to let people go, it's just devastating to research progress."

The centre has a staff of 150 who are specially trained to conduct research on blood clots.

"You spend so long creating these really highly trained people," Weitz said. "Once people start going, it's really serious for research. You've lost all the momentum."

Hamilton Health Sciences sent out a memo this week to its 400 researchers and staff warning of the coming cuts.

"We won't have the funds," said CEO Murray Martin, adding that hospitals across the province are facing a similar problem.

"Everybody is scrambling because they're not having the revenue flows they have had in the past."

Endowments aren't producing

enough cash because of low interest rates. At the same time, individuals and companies with tighter budgets are cutting back on donations.

The impact of the cuts is expected to be far greater than the \$2.1 million. Researchers take the money given to them by HHS and use it to get further funding from government, private companies and charities.

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## DINGED FOR \$1,000



Adelheid and Robert Schmidt have rented this phone since the '80s. But Bell ended its rental program in 1998, and won't pay compensation.



PHOTOS BY TED BRELISFORD, THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR  
 Adelheid and Robert Schmidt think Bell should have alerted them to the high cost of renting their old phone.

Adelheid and Robert Schmidt have a rotary phone that cost them more than \$1,000.

The couple, both in their 70s, began renting the phone from Bell in the 1980s. At first, it cost them about \$2 a month. These days, it's \$6.20.

They realized how much they'd spent when they switched phone companies and Mike Kemp, a technician for Mountain Cable, arrived at their house yesterday. The Schmidts asked Kemp how they could return their old phone to Bell.

Schmidt said she kept renting the phone because she was under the impression it would cover service if something went wrong with the line. She also thought the "equipment rental" fee on her bill every

month was the price for having a private line as opposed to a shared line.

"I feel totally stupid about this thing," Adelheid Schmidt said.

"I feel it is my fault. I should have looked into it, but I didn't know any better."

The Schmidts, who also use a cordless phone they bought several years ago, feel Bell should have alerted them about how much they were spending. They've received calls from Bell about switching providers, she said, but never about their phone rental.

Bell representative Julie Smithers said the company ended the rental program in January 1998 and notified all customers by mail.

But customers were free to continue renting if they chose.

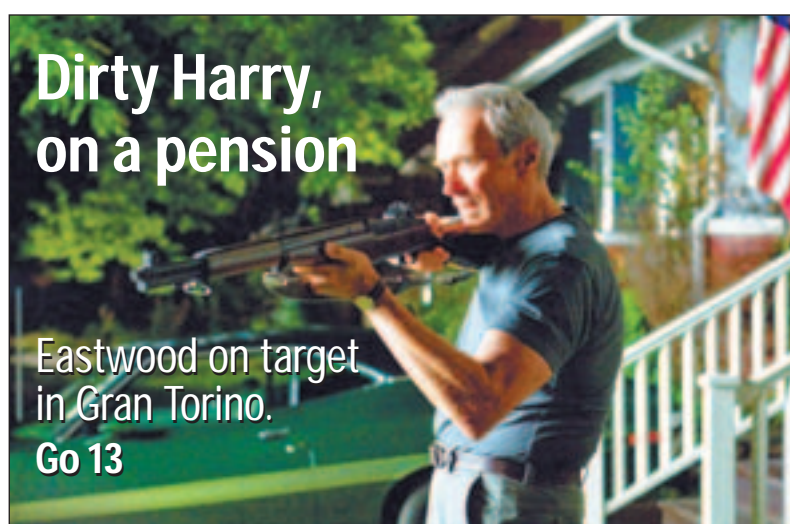
Smithers said the Schmidts are not entitled to financial compensation because the rental charge was listed on every bill.

Adelheid doesn't remember the notification letter and thinks there may be others, "especially seniors," paying the rental fee who aren't aware of it.

"We don't hook up very fast with new technology," she said.

With Mountain Cable, all new customers, like the Schmidts, are entitled to a free phone, said director of operations Pat Kiely.

The Hamilton Spectator



## Dirty Harry, on a pension

Eastwood on target in Gran Torino.  
 Go 13

## Spidey saves Obama

Next U.S. president gets a lead role in Marvel comic story.  
 A11



### Inside today

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