

# Region's aim could be 12% tax increase

Durham regional council will vote today (Wednesday) on a planning committee recommendation to hold the 1990 Region tax increase to no more than 12 per cent over last year's levy.

A planning staff report had projected an increase of 27.3 per cent, or another \$18.6-million, in a preliminary budget estimate. However, staff also presented alternative percentage guidelines, including 9, 12 and 15 per cent, and the impacts each would have on 1990 and future spending.

A motion made by regional chairman Gary Herrema at the planning committee session, to establish 10 per cent as the maximum increase, was defeated by committee members. Councilors instead voted to accept a guideline of 12 per cent.

The staff report had recommended against a "low" overall

guideline, such as 9 per cent, saying it would "exacerbate the problem for the 1991 net regional levy," particularly with spending requirements for police, social services, general government and works.

"It should be recognized that the achievement of a single digit guideline for the 1990 net regional levy will require significant expenditure deferrals in the special capital levies," states the planning staff report.

"The expenditure deferrals in the special capital levies for roads, police and homes for the aged would require a re-evaluation of the priority of these capital expenditures. The result of this scenario would be that quality and quantity of regional services could not keep pace with the growth in the region and that existing levels of service could not be maintained."

The preliminary budget with a

27.3 per cent levy increase included:

- cost increases of about \$9.4-million for inflation, annualization of 1989 staff approvals and 1990 new positions approved in 1989;

- 165 new positions (11 pre-approved), additional special levies and an increased general welfare caseload of 23.5 per cent that means another \$5.7-million;

- forecasted growth projections for population and households of 20 and 25 per cent for the next five years;

- debenture borrowings of close to \$48-million for general purposes (\$129-million for all purposes) over the next five-year period.

A tax increase of 12 per cent translates into an increase of \$39 in the regional portion of the tax

bill for the average household.

Regional taxes make up about 20 per cent of the tax bill for an average household. The local (Town, Township or City) portion makes up about 25 per cent and school board the other 55 per cent.

## The Barbershoppers

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Over the Jan. 6-7 weekend, representatives from different Ontario chapters met at Geneva Park, each rep bringing chapter donations. For the first time in Canada, \$1-million was raised.

The Oshawa chapter of Barbershoppers is called the Horseless Carriagemen, who meet every Monday night at the Glen Stewart clubhouse, Cartier St., Oshawa. The money they raise from shows is donated primarily to the Campbell's School Fund in Oshawa.

The Horseless Carriagemen consists of 72 members, 10 of them from Whitby, including president Rick Faulkner.

Faulkner has been president four different years and was district secretary in 1974. However, he sees himself as merely another member who greatly enjoys singing.

"Barbershopping gave so much to me that I can never give back enough," says Faulkner of his role as president.

Dennis Thomas of Whitby has been a member for 17 years. Singing tenor as one of two section leaders, Thomas is currently one of the assistant directors.

"We're very proud," says Thomas of the \$1-million raised.

"We feel strongly about the charity cause," adds another Barbershopper, Milton Rainey of Whitby. A member of the Horseless Carriagemen for 10 years, he has always been interested in music.

Rainey speaks highly of the group, saying, "They're really a great bunch of guys."

The annual show, the major fundraiser of the year, will be held May 4 and 5 at Eastdale Collegiate, and will have a showboat theme. The Horseless Carriagemen also take part in two contests each year.

The Horseless Carriagemen are always looking for new members to join in what they describe as good, clean fun that ultimately benefits children throughout the world.

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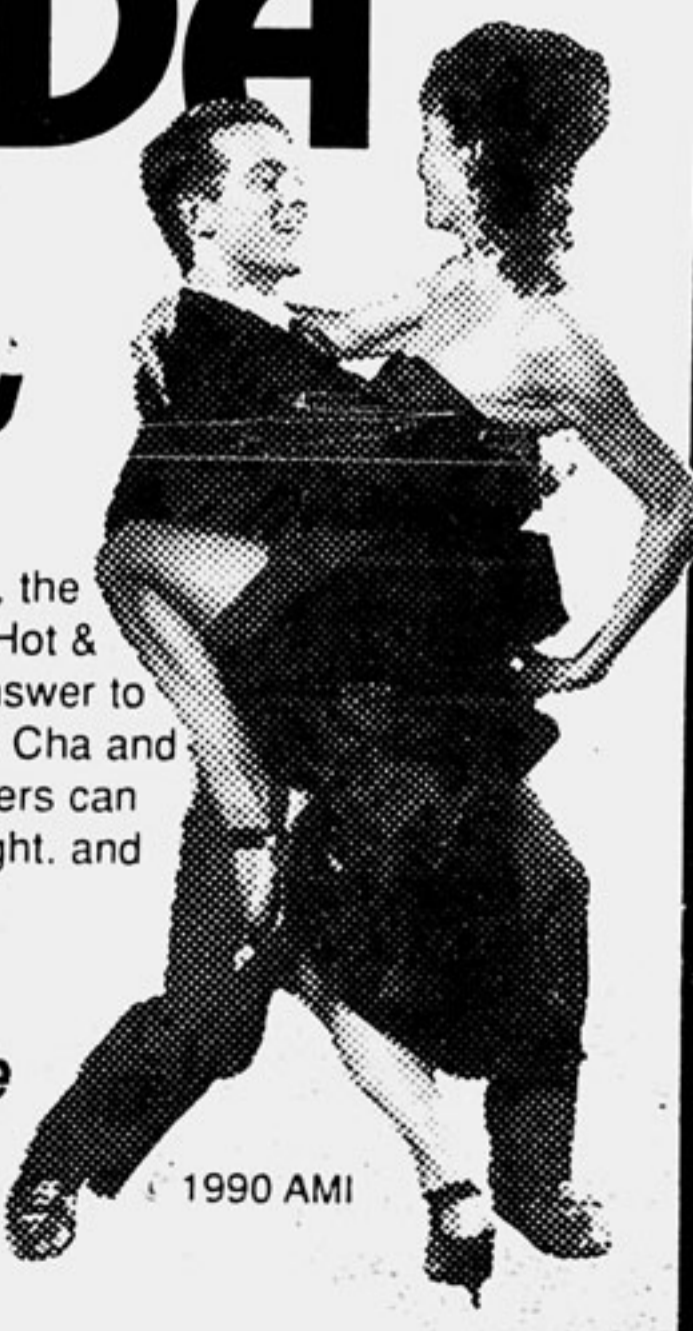
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