

# Sewer surcharge attacked

Continued from Page 1

define ways of making a sewer surcharge more equitable for all Halton consumers. Few members endorsed the surcharge recommended by the public works committee, which would amount to 105 per cent of individual water bills.

Coun. Carl Eriksen of Oakville cited the report on water rates and sewer surcharges prepared by Mr. Farmer and Oakville commissioner of general services, John White. Mr. White agrees with Coun. Mulkeiwich that a surcharge based on water consumption is usually the most equitable system. Coun. Eriksen noted, but adds in his report that "this does not appear to be the

case in Halton."

Coun. Eriksen pointed out that only one of Halton's four municipal treasurers - Halton Hills' Ray King - favors the adoption of a uniform rates policy for all Halton. Elsewhere, he said, cost estimates show that uniform rates will lead to added costs for Milton, Oakville and Burlington.

Burlington Coun. Tom Sutherland, recently a consistent defender of the uniform rates policy, called Coun. Eriksen's attention to Mr. White's report, which he said also explains why Halton is unlike neighboring regions in terms of water consumption. The inequities that arise in Halton, Coun. Sutherland said, are the result of peak summer water consumption, when homeowners are watering lawns frequently but using sewage facilities less.

"We need further information in order to resolve these apparent inequities, but we certainly have enough information now to endorse the principle of a sewer surcharge before (the current term of) council closes," Coun. Sutherland said.

Oakville Coun. Gord Reade raised a few eyebrows around

the council table when he revealed cost estimates of the financial impact uniform water rates will have upon each of Halton's member municipalities.

Noting that his estimates have not been verified and are based on 1978 expenditures, Coun. Reade predicted that a uniform rates policy will cost Oakville \$296,000 more per year, Milton \$45,000 more, and Acton \$7,100 more. On the other hand, he said, Burlington will pay \$229,000 less for water and sewer expenditures and Georgetown will pay \$116,000, or 2.77 mills, less.

Coun. Reade included in his figures the effects of a \$2.3 million grant which the provincial government is offering any regional municipality that adopts a uniform rates policy prior to Dec. 31. The grant is aimed at cushioning the impact anticipated from the transition to uniform rates.

In order to eliminate any financial impact on any municipality in Halton, Coun. Reade calculated the province will have to raise its grant offer to \$5.8 million. Mayor Munro reiterated her argument that the grant is intended for the first year under the new system only, necessitating further Halton expenditures in subsequent years.

In the hour that followed, Councillors Reade, Jack Haffis, Jim Watson and Mary Munro in turn successfully amended a motion to have more information collected. Their amendments asked for detailed breakdowns of cost impacts and alternative methods for eliminating inequities.

Oakville Mayor Harry Barrett categorically condemned any suggestion that Halton should adopt a uniform rates policy. He charged that Mr. Farmer, in personally endorsing such a move, "is acting on directions which I heard were given him three years ago down in Queen's Park."

Coun. McLean Anderson of Oakville commented that if regional councillors are really to represent Halton as a whole, the issue of uniform rates should become the subject of a public referendum in the forthcoming election. Mr. Morrow's response to his assertion, advising him to try his hand at American politics if that is the system he favors, angered Coun. Anderson, who demanded that the chairman remain "non-partisan". The Ontario municipal act gives council to authority to hold a referendum, he pointed out.

Coun. Watson was also angry, this time at Mr. Farmer, whom he charged was continuing to raise the uniform rates issue despite council's decision, reaffirmed three times in recent months, that such a system will not yet be adopted.

"I have been patient and humanitarian about this, but now I think it's time to call for some necks," Coun. Watson said. "I'm in favor of letting Farmer go. Some other municipality would do better with him. If we had an employee at the area level who acted the way he (Mr. Farmer) has, we'd let him go."

Mr. Morrow and Coun. Mulkeiwich exploded at Coun. Watson's remarks and demanded that any further discussion of Mr. Farmer's actions should be held behind closed doors. Coun. Watson's motion to take the meeting in camera "to discuss staff incompetency" was defeated however Coun. Watson later apologized to Mr. Farmer, as well as to Mr. Morrow. The treasurer is, in fact, "too competent," Coun. Watson told council.

Mr. Morrow came under attack himself a short while later when he ruled a motion

by Mayor Mary Munro out of order, saying it had already been considered and rejected by council. Mayor Munro challenged the ruling on her motion to table the matter until further information can be obtained, but the motion was lost in a close vote.

Council found itself ready to endorse the public works committee recommendation which specified a schedule of water rates for implementation across the region. Mr. Farmer acknowledged that approval of the recommendation would bring the region's charge-back system to an end, but that the new system would still not constitute a uniform rates policy. The rates would simply be based on revenue, he explained.

Coun. Watson warned that approval by council could spell disaster for the "partnership in government" to which Mr. Morrow has alluded in the past. He claimed that a regional councillor from the Sudbury area is prepared to address Halton council in an effort to prevent it from making the same mistake as Sudbury region. There, Coun. Watson said, the rejection of a charge-back system has led to financial crisis.

"I would like each of you to consider what you are doing to your own constituents," Coun. Reade advised ominously. "Equalized rates would be fine if we were all starting at an equal position. Queen's Park has the responsibility to put these things at an equal level. This matter is so serious in Oakville's case that legal recourse should be sought and possible an appeal to the provincial Cabinet. I estimate that there will be \$3.8 million stolen from Oakville if this goes through."

"I don't think there's any other way we can express our disgust with this situation," Mayor Barrett stated. "Kindly call the vote and we'll take recourse in another forum."

The recorded vote that followed ended in a 12-12 tie, forcing Mr. Morrow to vote as he chose, in favor of the committee recommendation for "equalized" rates. In doing so, Mr. Morrow ignored a promise he made while campaigning for the chairmanship in 1976, when he assured council members he would never vote to break a tie by reversing the status quo.

All four Halton Hills representatives on council endorsed the recommendation, as did Oakville Coun. Laurie Mannell and Burlington councillors Vern Connell, Dave Coons, Walter Mulkeiwich, Jack Haffis, Don Carter, and Tom Sutherland.

Council then voted on Mayor Munro's motion to table the matter until a full report could be prepared. The motion should have been defeated by the same members, but Coun. Anderson had to leave the meeting and Coun. Roy Booth indicated that he was confused about the subject of the vote. The tabling motion was carried 13-16.

## Meeting

The Georgetown Ladies Auxiliary for the Mentally Retarded held their September meeting at the home of Audrey Hellman while discussing business the ladies busied their hands making Christmas gift tags to sell.

The dance on October 21 at St. George's Church hall was discussed.

Lillian Fudge, treasurer was pleased to announce that donations received during the summer made the contributions to the Flower of Hope Campaign more than \$5,000.

A booth will be set up at the fall fair to display ceramics made at ARC Industries and publicize the work of our Association.

# Arts council hears culture centre plans

Continued from Page 1

ed in May.

Both the Rotary and GLT proposals will involve fundraising through public canvass, a factor which prompted several citizens in attendance to question the ultimate ownership of the facility. Mr. Roe speculated that any groups wishing to use the centre, including the GLT, will probably end up paying a rental fee to the town.

"We'll have to fight everybody else for the opportunity to use the theatre we started," he laughed.

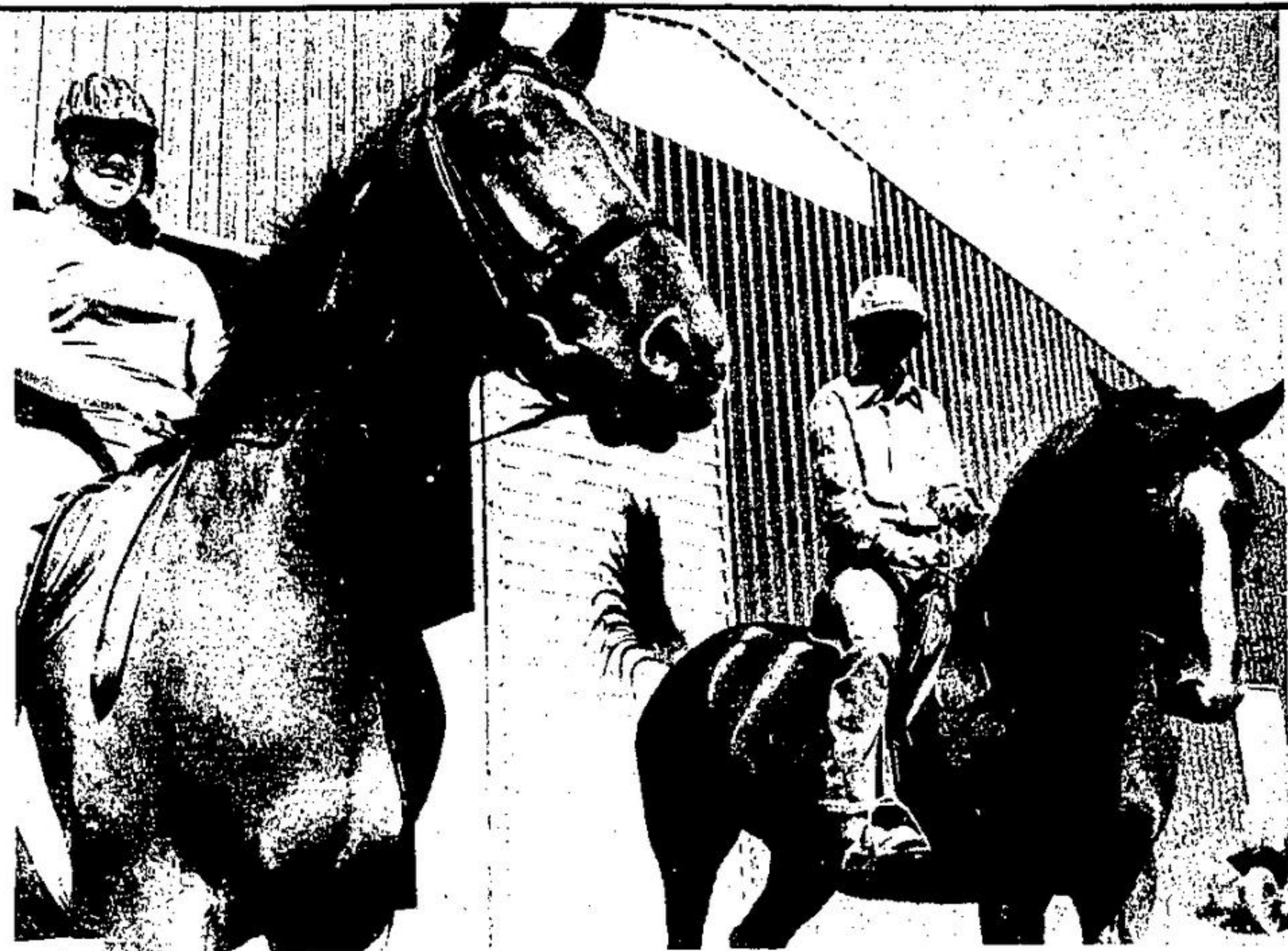
Enid Williams of the recently-opened Nornic Studio for the performing arts contended that the feasibility of private ownership should be investigated, with a view toward turning the new facility into a money-making venture after the first few

years.

In response to a number of questions about specific theatre facilities the new centre would offer, Mr. Roe pointed out that the GLT and other planners are trying to do the best they can under the circumstances. The new theatre will be a vast improvement over existing conditions, he said, but Halton Hills residents shouldn't expect a Royal Alexandra.

"Compromise is not a dirty word," he asserted.

Mr. Ursel and other representatives of the Arts Council will be attending a special seminar on the construction of cultural centres being sponsored by Arts Etobicoke Oct. 14. Officials of the provincial government will also attend to explain available funding for such projects.



## HORSE FARM TOUR

Astride a pair of Stan Allen's prize horses, Stacey Phillips (left) riding Chivas Regal, and Margaret Bell, atop Belgrave Rubato, were among the visitors Saturday to Mountainview Farms on the Fourth Line just outside Georgetown. Owner Ron Lister guided horse riding fans and other guests on tours of his breeding and training operation as part of an annual open house aimed at attracting interest in the Mountainview Farm School of

Practical Horsemanship, a well-attended academy of the equestrian arts that is rapidly gaining a reputation as a training ground for top riders. Georgetown and Milton high school students, YM-YWCA subscribers and dozens of other groups and individuals are among the many visitors who attend classes at the farm year-round. Former Halton County warden Stan Allen of Milton is another frequent guest.

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## Come to Church

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<p><b>HALTON HILLS PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLY</b> Trafalgar Rd. and No. 7 Highway Pastor Rev. E.J. Friesen Sunday, October 1 10 a.m. Family School 11 a.m. Morning Worship 7 P.M. Evening service Tuesday 7:30 Mid Week Prayer &amp; Bible Study</p>	<p><b>IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH</b> Windsor Road at Carole St. Vacancy Pastor Rev. Arthur Rader Sunday, October 1 9:00 a.m. Sunday School 10:15 a.m. Worship Service Worship Service Church of the Lutheran Hour <b>MAPLE AVENUE BAPTIST CHURCH</b> 177 Maple Ave. Georgetown Sunday, October 1 9:45 Sunday School 11:00 a.m. 6:30 p.m. Pastor Ed Mitchell 11:00-12:15 Sunday School for the deaf</p>

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