

Hospital service will suffer: Morris

By MICHAEL HOLLETT
Herald editor

Ontario taxpayers will be faced with greatly reduced hospital services if changes to hospital financing announced Friday by the minister of health come into effect, according to the chief administrator at the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital.

Minister of health Dennis Timbrell told a meeting of hospital executives last week that funding to hospitals for the 1979-80 fiscal year will be increased by 4.5 per cent. Mr. Timbrell also announced that effective April 1, chronic care patients and psychiatric patients hospitalized for more than 60 days will be charged \$9.80 for

each additional day of hospitalization.

REALLY A CUT
GDMH chief administrator Fred Morris said that the province's funding announcement does not take into consideration Canada's nine per cent inflation rate. He said that once inflation is taken into consideration, the province's funding level is really a cutback.

Mr. Morris also said last year's budget was based on "annualized" figures that take into account the level to which costs to the hospital rise by the end of the fiscal year.

Annualization is not being taken into account in this year's budgeting, he said.

"We are running with no hidden costs now, now fat on the budget. Show me where we are wasting money," said Mr. Morris.

TO THE WALL
"When you get to the wall with cuts, where do you go from there?"

Mr. Morris said that Ontario has been operating under a program of reducing costs since 1972 and hospitals have been cutting costs steadily since that time. He said the Georgetown hospital has no maneuverability to cut any further.

Mr. Morris was also critical of the government's decision to begin charging chronic and psychiatric patients for ex-

tended stay in hospitals.

"I would use other methods to increase revenues. It's a poorly conceived plan."

Mr. Morris said that chronic care patients make up 17 per cent of the hospital's patient days during a year. He said there are approximately 10 chronic care patients currently in GDMH and he is unsure how many of them will be financially capable of paying the new charge once it comes into effect on April 1.

CHRONIC CARE
Mr. Morris said that some of the chronic care patients in the hospital could be properly cared for in nursing homes

but added there is not a single nursing home bed in Halton Hills, despite repeated appeals for the construction of such a facility. Nursing home beds are cheaper to operate than hospital beds he said.

Mr. Morris maintains that it is impossible to deliver the kind of health service "promised by the politicians" to the people of Ontario under the current funding constraints.

Mr. Morris accused the government of doing nothing to come to grips with the lack of money to fund hospitals. He said that instead of trying to deal with the problem, the government continues to expect the same level of service but for

less money.

"If they aren't prepared to come up with the necessary money, they should be looking at raising OHIP rates or charging user fees for hospital services. Otherwise you will not be able to get the service people have come to expect."

OFFER PREMIUMS
He said that insurance companies would likely offer premiums towards user fees if such a system was instituted in Ontario.

Mr. Morris also maintained that there are other areas within the ministry of health's budget that could be cut before

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Your Morning Smile

Losing Your Mind

One tourist went to Las Vegas with no money available to gamble. After watching the games for a few hours and gambling "mentally," the man had lost his mind!

the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills

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This Week



AL PILUTTI

Colorful builder

Georgetown builder Al Pilutti came to Canada from his native Italy back in 1951 with nothing but the hope of getting a job. Since that time he has been involved in constructing over 200 buildings. The colorful developer speaks with Herald writer Maggie Hannah in this week's edition of "Halton's People" and offers some tongue-in-cheek solutions to the world's problems.

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Acton executive

Acton's Agriculture Society members elected a tough talking new executive last Tuesday night. Brent Marshall was elected president.

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Sweat box trial

The trial into discreditable conduct charges against two Halton police officers charged in the "sweat box" incident is expected to end today. The first five days of the trial saw prisoners present their charges against the officers while the defense followed by presenting experts and other police officers as witnesses.

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DAVE BURROWS

Hockey speakers

Two of the Toronto Maple Leafs newest players Dave Burrows and Walt McKechnie have been named as guest speakers at Georgetown's Hockey Heritage dinner to be held Tuesday, February 13 at the Holy Cross church auditorium.

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Georgetown taxi union is now certified, becomes Ontario's first, ends controversy



STEVEN'S SNOWMAN SMILE

Steven Hayden proudly shows off his styrofoam snowman to a Herald photographer Monday afternoon at Park Public school. Steven and his fellow grade one students completed their

projects Monday, and were eager to show them off to anyone willing to admire.

(Herald photo by Lori Taylor)

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald staff writer

The battle between the Ontario Taxi Association and the owners of Georgetown's Glen Taxi ended Monday with the verbal certification of Ontario's very first taxi union.

Union members met Sunday to unanimously ratify a two-year contract which took effect Monday. The contract which covers drivers, owners, owner-operators, and dispatchers includes a number of items on wages, holiday and working hours.

The contract increases the rate for dispatchers from a minimum of \$3 an hour to as high as \$4.50 an hour for overtime, a union source said. It also provides for paid statutory holidays and paid vaca-

tions for non-owners and guarantees vacation time without compensation for owner-operators. It specifies that drivers may keep tips and limits a full-time driver's work week to five consecutive shifts of not more than 12 or less than eight hours Monday to Friday, with at least 12 hours between shifts.

ORIGINAL MEMBERS
Although seven of the original union membership were absent from Sunday's meeting the contract was ratified unanimously by the membership present.

In addition to the contract the union and management also reached agreement on a couple of separate issues which had been behind grievances which precipitated a

recent hearing before the Ontario Labour Relations Board (L.R.B.).

The agreement calls for the re-statement of Wayne Barnaby, union vice-president, and a cash settlement of \$3,000 to cover legal expenses and back pay owed to five union employees allegedly fired for attempting to organize a union.

As a result of these agreements the union dropped all 29 charges of infringements of the Labour Relations Act levelled at the company during the OLRB hearings, the company recognized the union and the board automatically gave the Ontario Taxi Association verbal certification. Written certification is expected by the end of this week.

A previous attempt by the Canadian Labour Congress to organize cab company employees outside of Georgetown in 1971 fell through because the OLRB refused to give union status to the drivers' organization. Once written certification is received however, a CLC spokesman said there was "no question" that attempts will be made to begin a new organizing drive in the industry.

CLC director of organizations Ralph Ortieb said that "many, many calls have come in as a result of the publicity over the fight to get the association established here and once we get it certified in writing our people in the field will start following them up. We'll probably go into an advertising campaign too. I don't know where we'll establish new locals but I'm sure that it will grow now that we have it begun."

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Actonians pack plaza meeting, show support

By PAUL DORSEY
Herald staff writer

About 75 Actonians packed the Trafalgar Road municipal centre last Tuesday as if to verify by their number the results of a recent survey which showed that 96 per cent of Acton shoppers believe Landawn Shopping Centres Ltd. should be permitted to follow through with its proposal to build a 100,000-square foot commercial plaza on the community's eastern boundary.

Confronted by the survey results, the town planning board yielded to a request by the Actonians to reconsider the plaza proposal in light of the newly-demonstrated public support and to hold a special meeting on the matter in Acton. The location of that meeting, which will take place Feb. 14, will be advertised in The Herald and elsewhere once municipal staff makes the arrangements.

Although several downtown Acton merchants were on hand at last week's meeting to hear former municipal planner Ron Burnett oppose the plaza scheme on their behalf, the majority of those in attendance were clearly supportive of developer Jerry Sprackman's intentions to have the planning board overturn its previous decision rejecting his proposal.

ROUND OF APPLAUSE

Brandishing the results of a survey conducted in Acton by high school students hired by Landawn, Mr. Sprackman won a loud round of applause from those in the gallery when he urged the board to heed the will of the people.

According to the survey undertaken by Acton high school students on Landawn's behalf, 1,140 adults were interviewed at random and asked whether they would like to see "a modern Zehr's supermarket" built at the intersection of Queen Street (Highway 7) and Churchill Road North in Acton's east end.

Mr. Sprackman reported that 96 per cent of those surveyed answered in the affirmative. The results closely corroborate those of an earlier smaller-scale survey undertaken by Acton housewife June O'Rourke, who told the board at a recent meeting that she decided to consult public opinion herself after learning of the board's initial rejection of the plaza proposal.

The Zehr's supermarket

chain has signed a lease with Landawn to locate a new branch at the proposed plaza, according to Mr. Sprackman. Also interested in the site is Canadian Tire, which, together with Zehr's would take up most of the plaza's floor space. Several smaller stores are also proposed.

Mr. Sprackman told the board last week that Landawn

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Library board members busy chairman assures town council

By PAUL DORSEY
Herald staff writer

The need for improved library facilities in Georgetown will be among the facets examined as part of the \$10,000 feasibility study proposed last week by the town's Arts Plus committee, if a suggestion by the Halton Hills Public Library Board is accepted by the committee and town council.

Library board chairman Dick Howitt attended Monday

night's council meeting to bring the members up to date on the board's efforts thus far to meet the need for better facilities. He expressed hope that the library issue can become part of the feasibility study being launched by Arts Plus and council to examine alternatives and possibilities for the establishment of a multi-use cultural centre in Halton Hills.

ASKED COUNCIL
Mr. Howitt also asked

council to arrange a meeting between the town planning department and the board, preferably next month, at which board members could update their own information regarding local developments that could affect their final decision on the library.

Public opinion about the type of community needs that should be served by libraries, particularly about the range of activities and programmes that should be offered, will also

be surveyed, Mr. Howitt said. Recently re-elected chairman of the board, Mr. Howitt reminded council that the board felt it necessary to return to square one in its planning for the improved library facilities after the Ontario Municipal Board vetoed its initial proposal to build a new library in Georgetown's Cedarvale Park.

Since last fall, he said, the board has been striving to define the kind of community needs that must be served by a public library.

"It may appear to the public and to members of council that we're wasting time and that we're failing to come up with some decision," Mr. Howitt said, "but we can't define what we need until we know what council and the community want in terms of facilities and activities. It isn't just a question of books."

The board's involvement in the Arts Plus feasibility study, already a topic of discussion between Mr. Howitt and Arts Plus director Rex Heslop, could force the board to revise its timetable for finding a solution to the library problem, the chairman admitted. The board's hopes of placing a finalized report on the issue before council by mid-May, he said, could be affected as a result.

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Additions announced for Acton's YMCA

By JIM VERNON
Herald special

A planned two-storey addition to the Murray Memorial YMCA in Acton will stimulate use of the Y and add a much needed recreational facility to Acton, Keith Robbins, president of the Murray Memorial YMCA said Wednesday at the Y's annual meeting.

Mr. Robbins said the addition is only in the planning stages at present, but tentative dates for completion and type of facility have been determined.

The addition will be a recreational facility which will

include two squash courts, a weight lifting and boxing area and several games room. It will be built at the rear of the Murray Memorial YMCA and adjoin the gymnasium. Tentative date for completion is December, 1980.

FILL VOID
The facility will fill a void of recreational facilities in Acton and stimulate use of the Murray Memorial YMCA, he said.

"I personally have a feeling the Y facilities are not being used by the community in the way they should be," he said. "The planned facility will provide an attraction to draw interest and be extensively



BIRTHDAY BOUNCE

January 25 is Robbie Burns' birthday, and Christine Sittes, 7, of Mary Street, was practising up for it with her sword dance. Christine, whose grandmother is Scottish, has been studying Highland dancing for the last six months, and hopes to compete in the Highland Games this year. Her teacher is Cathy deLoach.

(Herald photo)