

HAVING A HAPPY EASTER

Scott Yates gets a helpful hand from his mother Pat Yates at a Parents Without Partners crafts party where children were

able to use their imagination in making Easter rabbits and other

(Herald photo)

Budget Day at the region as \$5 million goes up for grabs

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Today (Wednesday) is "B-Day" - Budget Day - at Halton regional headquarters in Onkville, and Halton Hills councillors, led by a determined Mayor Pete Pomeroy, are expected to do more than their share of chopping, dicing and paring.

Ontario's new equalized assessment system has Halton Hills and Milton footing the largest portions of the region's \$50 million operating budget for 1980, while southern neighbors Oakville and Burlington will benefit from larger populations and pay less.

Largely because of strenuous urgings from Mayor Pomeroy and others, regional council has delegated its administration and finance committee to spend most of today making final revisions to a budget badly marred by its potential mill rate hike of 18 per cent over

last year. Final budget approval is expected to come from council next Wednesday.

Committee chairman McLean Anderson of Oakville likened the budget hike's anticipated impact on the public to being "kicked in the face with a hobnailed boot".

Coun. Anderson was

expected to convene his committee, which includes the mayors of all four area municipalities, early this morning for a full day of debate and decision. At stake are a number of proposed expenditures which collectively could boost the region's general purpose levy to nearly \$15 million, an increase of more than \$2 million over 1979. The bulk of the costller programs involve social services in Halton, including the regional health unit,

welfare assistance, day care and seniors' care.

The region's health and social services committee. headed by Burlington Coun. Walter Mulkewich and including councillors Ed Wood and Russ Miller of Halton Hills, was faced for the first time this year with dozens of requests for social service grants that had previously been handled by

area municipalities and other agencies. Social service grants approved by the region this

year totalled nearly \$114,000. Thus, Halton's tax levies are expected to rise dramatically despite hopes of some reduction that were pinned on the region's new system of equalized water and sewer rates. The system is estimated to have saved taxpayers \$5 million this year.

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First aid course

The Georgetown Red Cross is offering a six-week course in first aid beginning April 15. The course will run from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the Red Cross office in the Cedarvale Community Centre. The fee is \$12.50, and includes textbooks and bandages. People can register by calling 877-5233 or

Work on pumping

station

Acton's Lakeview pamping station will be getting an unexpected \$23,500 worth of modifications to its facilities.

The modifications were approved last Wednesday by Halton regional council, although some members thought it should be referred back to the administration and finance committee for final consideration in the 1980 budget.

Halton Hills Mayor Pete Pomeroy complained that early approval prevents further budget manipulation when the budget is reviewed for the final time today (Wednesday) by the committee.

"If we can't afford to spend that much money on a project then we are in deep trouble," Oakville Coun. Terry Mannell sald. "One problem we have in this region is that we are constantly trying to squeeze too many works projects into a short summer season. This year, let's get a decent start on things for a change."

The work to be done on the Elizabeth Drive station involves the installation of two new sewage lift pumps to replace existing pumps that are considered inadequate, according to staff reports.

Originally the region's works committee had approved a budget of only \$15,000 for the project, based on information provided by consultant R.V. Anderson.

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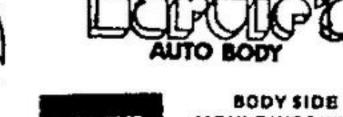
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