

# Pomeroy may quit if equal sewer rates dumped

In an in-depth, pre-election interview with *The Herald*, newly-acclaimed Mayor Pete Pomeroy discusses council's past and coming terms and reveals that:

- he'll consider quitting his job if regional council abandons its equalized sewer and water rates policy;
- the apparent incompetence of regional treasury staff was no big surprise to him and could have been headed off in time;
- there's more bad financial news on the way from regional headquarters;
- the chance to respond personally to requests from individual citizens constitutes the "biggest thrill" of his job;
- he believes the proposed expansion of town administration facilities will reappear as a major issue this term.

By PAUL DORSEY  
Herald Editor

Calling municipal spending the biggest issue facing both town and regional council in the next two years, Mayor Pete Pomeroy says he will consider resigning his position if south Halton forces regional council to abandon equalized sewer rates, a move now being studied.

In a pre-election interview following his acclamation last week, Mayor Pomeroy told *The Herald* that resignation was on his mind earlier this month when Burlington and Oakville regional councillors managed to have council reconsider its 1979 implementation of a policy equalizing sewer and water rates across Halton.

Reversion to the old charge-back system, whereby each of Halton's four member municipalities must cover its own sewer and water service costs, could have a \$1.4 million impact upon Halton Hills' urban taxpayers, according to the mayor. Thanks to the new policy, the more populous Halton municipalities to the south help pay for services and improvements in the north, but council launched a review of the policy two weeks ago.

Should south Halton have any additional success in what Mayor Pomeroy and others are calling an affront to the regional mandate, Halton Hills' rookie mayor says he will meet personally with Burlington Mayor Holy Bird to try and persuade him that

equalized rates do not pose the threat south Halton seems to perceive.

"The mayor of Burlington is one of the best councillors the region has," Mayor Pomeroy commented. "It may be that he's afraid we're planning lots of expansion in the north that his municipality will have to pay for. When this came up again recently, I seriously considered resigning, because I felt I could no longer work with a regional council that operates like that. I'll give it some more thought if the chargeback system returns, but until I've seen this town through whatever action is necessary."

**NEED CHANGES**  
"It all depends what comes back (from the new sewer rate

review). We do need some modifications in the sewer surcharge system; we've got to shift the emphasis away from residential assessment and put more responsibility on the industries. There are ways around the Burlington vote."

The possibility of expanding Halton Hills' sewage treatment facilities is itself currently under study by outside consultants, effectively stalling work on two major issues facing the town: the need for more industry and the proposed 1,740-home Pocat Properties Ltd. subdivision.

While the town is currently awaiting provincial confirmation that Acton's sewage treatment plant can expand no further, the mayor said, preliminary results from a year-



The fans were lining up Saturday for the opportunity to kiss Mayor Pete Pomeroy at the kissing booth at the bazaar operated by the Georgetown Figure Skating Club. The price tag was four kisses for a dollar, and some ladies returned for a repeat performance.

long study of Georgetown's creek system are expected to come before council in the near future and many observers are optimistic that room for expansion will be found. It will be nearly a year, however, before any real steps can be taken to follow up on the results of the study, which only began in September.

Mayor Pomeroy is adamant that council will adhere to established priority ratings indicating that vacant land in the Georgetown area must be serviced to accommodate new industry before any housing development will be considered. If additional sewage treatment capacity is found to accommodate residential growth, the mayor said,

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### HARRISON PUBLIC MONSTER MASH

The monsters arrived a little early at Harrison Public School, when the school's annual monster party was held Monday. This is the sixth year for the party, whose guests of honor are monstrous creations designed and manufactured by the students. Grant and Trent seem to be hiding behind this horribly handsome fellow, perhaps in hopes of avoiding the Halloween spirits already on the loose.

(Herald photo by Lori Taylor)

## Citizens seek special review of region's budget deficit

Intergovernmental affairs minister Tom Wells is expected to receive at least the first of two anticipated petitions from Halton region citizens demanding a provincial inquiry into the \$600,000-plus budget deficit revealed to

regional council late last summer.

Two separate residents' groups, one in Burlington and the other in Milton, are currently circulating the petitions in response to what they consider inadequate

official explanations for the surprise regional deficit.

Regional officials are still scrambling to make up portions of the deficit by switching funds from alternate accounts, but council has yet to fully indicate what impact the overall deficit - and the treasury department clerical mistakes which created it - will have upon next year's regional tax bills.

As of early last week, both groups had each collected more than the 50 signatures they need to prompt a provincial inquiry, but Burlington petitioners have indicated their aims in doing so differ somewhat from those of their Milton neighbors.

While the Nassagaweya Residents Association is hoping such an inquiry would provide ample evidence to support its ambition of seceding the former township from Milton and Halton and joining Wellington County, the unnamed Burlington group is not challenging regional government as such.

Neither group, however, is satisfied with regional council's decision to bank on a management study now being conducted by outside consultants. A spokesman for the Burlington group admitted that his committee has not sought explanations directly from regional councillors, wary that any official answers would be conflicting at this point and their investigation "futile".

In a pre-election interview with *The Herald* last week, Ward 1 regional Councillor Ed Wood commented that he and his colleagues on council were just as "shocked and appalled" as most residents when the deficit was revealed. He noted, though, that he has not received one phone call from ratepayers wondering about the problem or seeking explanations. Councillor Wood added that while the deficit represents a substantial amount of money, it is still only about 1.5 per cent of the total \$45 million regional budget and is not too far out of line in that context.

## Store robbed at knife point

A man armed with a knife robbed the III Neighbor Mini Mart on Georgetown's Main Street South last Tuesday. Over \$150 in cash was taken in the robbery. A man armed with a 12-inch knife entered the store at about 10:30 in the evening. The man was about 5'10" tall, of medium build, and wore a dark ski mask over his head.

Police are continuing their investigation.

## Former 'priest' Scallen loses court appeal

The Ontario Court of Appeal has upheld the 1978 conviction and sentence handed down to Dennis Edward Scallen on fraud charges in connection with a "religious convent". Mr. Scallen operated outside Limehouse.

It was not known at press-time whether Mr. Scallen intends to carry the appeal further.

Mr. Scallen founded a monastic order known as the Benedictines of Mary Immaculate, in an industrial shed outside Limehouse that still bears its original religious

trappings. He was arrested and charged with defrauding Daniel and Mary MacDonald of Brantford, Daniel and Barbara Kennedy of Oakville and John Tonelli, also of Oakville, by impersonating a Roman Catholic priest.

The nine-day trial before Judge Alan Sprague was spent mainly in determining the validity of Mr. Scallen's claim to a member of the priesthood. Mr. Scallen was sentenced July 10 to six months in jail.

Mr. Scallen still faces a charge of rape and two charges of indecent assault.

## MAN CHARGED IN GOLD HEIST

A Georgetown man has been charged in connection with the theft of six kilograms of gold valued at \$170,000 from Toronto International Airport in Milton.

Kenneth Hugh Diamond, 22, of McIntyre Crescent in Georgetown, has been charged with theft over \$200. He is currently free on \$50,000 bail.

Six kilograms of gold were en route from Buffalo to London, England Sept. 6 when they disappeared. They were not discovered missing until Metro Toronto police arrested a man and a woman on drug charges Sept. 19 and found five of the six kilograms in their possession. The sixth kilo is still missing.

Following an investigation, police arrested and charged Mr. Diamond and Allan Henry Crawford, 26, of Toronto. Mr. Crawford was charged with theft over \$200, conspiracy to commit theft and possession of property obtained by crime.

The two men will appear in court again Nov. 10 to set a trial date.

## Regional works staff incompetent?

# Blunder could cost \$186,000

Halton region public works staff is under the gun for an information "bottleneck" that has cost the region's taxpayers an additional \$80,000 in 1979 and may cost \$186,000 in higher interest rates overall.

While most regional officials are downplaying shortcomings that led to the higher charges and stressing that steps have already been taken to rectify the problem, Mayor Pete

Pomeroy this week blamed the failure on "pure staff incompetence".

Although Halton Hills is not directly involved, Milton, Burlington and Oakville will all see public courts of revision held next month in a sudden flurry of activity intended to resolve outstanding cases of private-public cost-sharing on 14 different water and sewer-main installation projects.

Since 1977, the region has undertaken the 14 projects under the provincial Local Improvement Act, which enables private citizens to have work done on or near their properties at a shared cost with the region. To calculate how much each party must pay, homeowners must first be supplied with lot frontage information by regional public works staff and then give an opportunity to appeal the cost breakdowns before a court of revision, made up of local councillors.

Although such court hearings are to be held within six months of the project's completion, public works staff members have neglected to supply any of the homeowners with the necessary frontage information and no courts of revision, made up of local councillors.

The result is that the region has been forced to finance each project itself - a total exceeding \$1.5 million over the three years - using short-term loans borrowed at higher than usual interest rates, estimated at \$80,000 during 1979 alone.

Last Wednesday, acting regional treasurer Jim Ste-

wart told the region's administration and finance committee that a "bottleneck" centered in the works department has led to the shortcoming.

The committee moved quickly to rectify a situation first noted by management consultants reviewing regional fall earlier this year. A new procedure for provision of

necessary information is being set up, and courts of revision are now scheduled in Milton, Burlington and Oakville for the week of Nov. 26.

## Ministry provides \$80,000 for Acton school purchase

By MAGGIE HANNAH  
Herald Special

The Halton Separate School Board received an \$80,000 allotment last Wednesday from the ministry of education towards the purchase of property for a new facility for St. Joseph's Separate School in Acton.

Halton Hills trustee Hartley Sherk said the minister of education, Dr. Bette Stephenson, made the announcement Wednesday evening.

The board already committed itself to purchasing a property on Mill Street West earlier this year and

the additional funds will cover that purchase, he said.

"I can't remember the exact price of the land," he said, "but I think it was somewhere between \$75,000 and \$80,000."

"I think the fact that the Acton people showed a bit of patience helped them," he added.

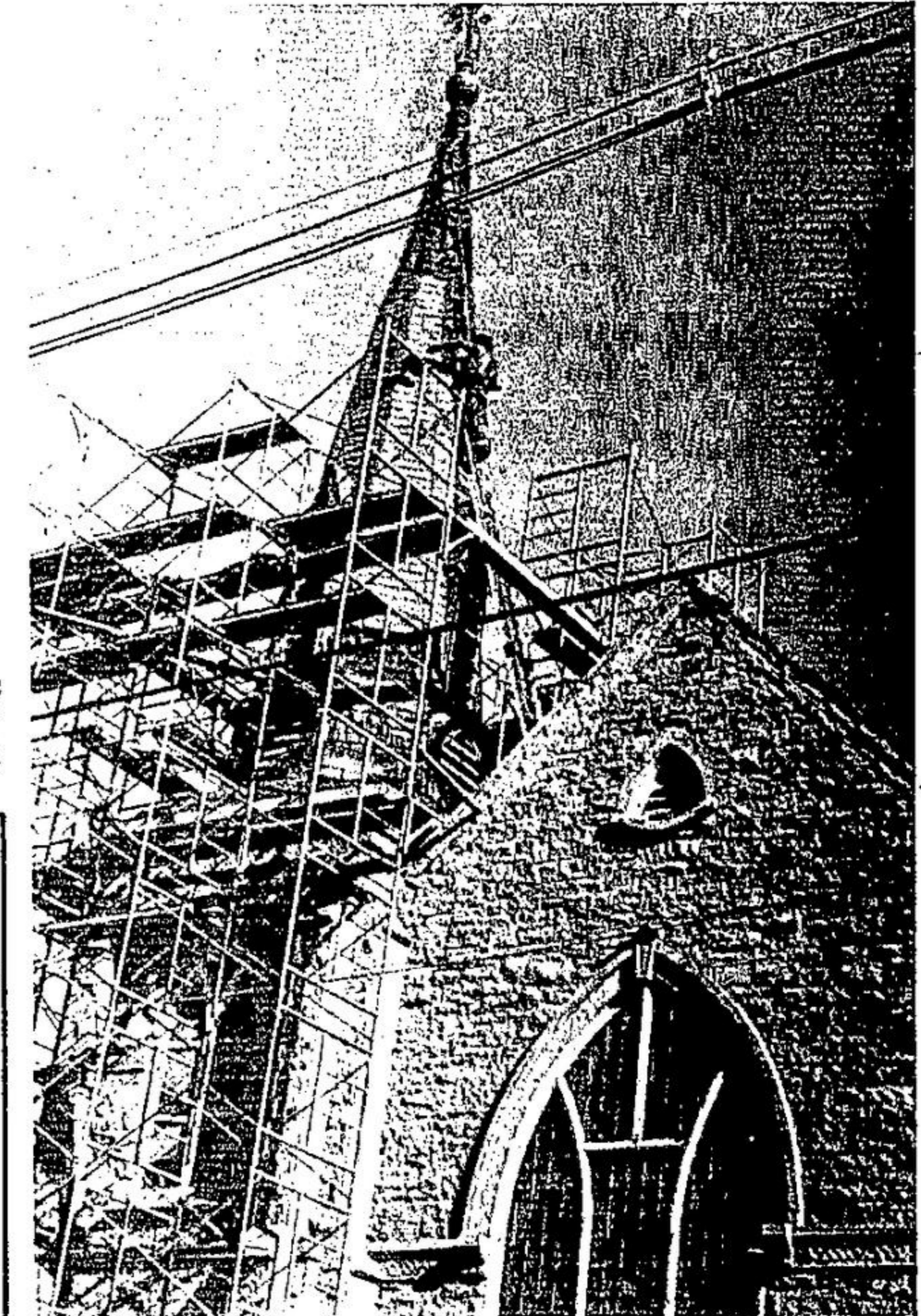
"If we'd have found a new tactic to pressure her so it became something of a confrontation she probably wouldn't have responded as quickly. She was given facts about the situation and reason prevailed."

Vince Whelan, president of St. Joseph's Parents' Associ-

ation and a candidate for the Halton Hills trustees seat, sees the announcement as a commitment on behalf of the minister to the concept of a new school for Acton.

Mr. Sherk believes the funds from the ministry put the onus on the board now to seriously consider her suggestions about modular schools when they consider designs for the Acton facility.

The modular school concept could help northern schools, he feels, since population shifts could be accommodated more easily with them and growth will probably occur in the north in coming years.



### STEEPLE GETS FACE-LIFT

Work has begun on the roof of the church building which will form part of Halton Hills' new arts complex. Workmen have been busy tearing off old shingles on the spire to replace them with more modern material. Meanwhile, the footings are being poured for the new section of the complex.

(Herald photo)

## Millions needed for road repair

A recently-completed road study for Halton Hills indicates that the town needs \$15 million worth of road reconstruction in the future.

The study, which is required by the provincial ministry of transportation and communications to help establish the amount of reconstruction subsidies a town is allowed, says that traffic volumes in Halton Hills are increasing

10.25 per cent every year, although the provincial average is leveling off.

While the document recognizes that the town cannot eliminate all road problems, it says "a net improvement to the road system has been realized" over the last few years.

The town's general committee recommended that the roads study be adopted by council next week.