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Home Newspaper of Halton Hills

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TWENTY-FOUR PAGES

**DOWNTOWN
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FREE PARKING

Overall tax bill rises by \$75

Town's budget stays trim in '81

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

Amid concerns from the town's finance committee chairman that annual operating budgets in Halton Hills should do more than maintain the "level of service" to which residents are accustomed, the general committee approved a \$7,077,000 budget Monday night.

Blaming "outside forces" for hefty increases in the individual tax bill this year, Coun. Harry Levy told the committee that the 1981 operating budget

is 8.4 per cent more than its predecessor. The budget awaits official endorsement from council next Monday.

The average homeowner, he said, can expect to pay \$75 more in municipal taxes, including a possible \$22.50 increase in the Halton Board of Education's share of the bill and an anticipated \$35 hike in the regional levy. The remaining \$17.50 will be collected directly by the town for its expenditures.

Proud of the job his committee has done in paring the

budget increase down and commending the efforts of the treasury department to bolster investment revenue, Coun. Levy said he "would like to improve" what the operating budget can do for residents, but rate increases from other agencies have left the town hamstrung.

Initially, the committee had hoped to keep the budget hike at 7.7 per cent this year. However, an earlier approved plan to purchase over \$300,000 worth of additional public works department equipment would have underbudgeted when tenders were finally received by the town.

To cover the extra costs, the general committee agreed to add \$22,000 to the proposed purchases, a move which boosted the town's operating budget by 7 per cent. Although the budget actually indicates an increase in gross purchases of about 11 per cent, increased revenue — some of it from \$100,000 earned in investments made by the treasury department — and a slight assessment level increase, have kept the figure to the low 8.4 per cent.

In preparing the budget, the committee noted that it has managed to account for a number of proposed capital expenses without forcing the town to issue debentures — a form of borrowing money — to cover costs.

Among the capital expenses the town plans to make this year are several road reconstruction and improvement projects, equipment for the fire department including a new dispatch panel to accommodate more business in town and the conversion of the old ambulance building on James Street in Georgetown to the new recreation and parks administration office.

While gross costs for a number of recreation department projects were trimmed from \$105,000 to \$78,750, Halton Hills residents can expect to see improvements in the picnic area at Georgetown's Cedarvale Park as well as construction starts on ball diamonds at the Gordon Alcott Arena, Acton's Prospect Park and the Norval Community Park. Soccer fields are planned for the Acton Curling Club property and other locations around town.

Using revenue collected from the resale of old equipment as well as its share of the budget, the public works department plans to buy additional snow removal and sanding equipment, a half-ton pickup truck, and smaller tools such as lawnmowers and chain saws.

The budget has also added \$6,600 for social and family services expenses this year, up from last year's \$15,700. Planning and development in town sees its \$158,490 share of the 1980 budget rise to \$243,585, denoting a 53.7 per cent increase.

Despite the finance committee's attempts to keep the budget increase low this year, there's no guarantee that residents can expect similar stringency in 1982. Town treasurer Ray King indicated that the provincial resource equalization grants, which help balance out inequities in property assessment, may be cut back next year.

This year, the grants provided the town with about \$400,000, Mr. King said.



If the strange activities of its mad-cap organizers are any indication, the 1981 Crazy Boat Race this Saturday, sponsored by the Georgetown Jaycees, should be an uproarious success. With most of the actual organizing completed, race organizers Dennis Borotisk (seated in tub), Bob Baird (standing), and (rear row, left to right) logistics chairman Graham Waite, race chairman Jack Lee and Tom Oliver, dance committee chairman took time to pose for a photo. The race is scheduled to begin at noon from Terra Cotta for the canoes, while crazy boats will launch a half hour later from the Tenth Line bridge in Glen Williams. (Herald photo)

Crazy boaters brace for Saturday splash

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer

The countdown is on for would-be "Captain Highliners" putting the finishing touches on their entries for this Saturday's Crazy Boat Race down the Credit River.

For the sponsoring Georgetown Jaycees, besides registering the anticipated hundreds of skippers, crew members and boats, the organization and promotion of the event is pretty well completed. But there's still time for a little nail-biting before the starter's gun launches the first flotilla from the Terra Cotta at noon.

This year, the Jaycees have invited a special guest to join Mayor Pete Pomeroy and race committee chairman Jack Lee on the podium for the usual opening words of nautical wisdom. Although the time of his exact arrival in Georgetown is unknown, Ontario's Lieutenant-Governor, John Aird, will be down by the Credit River in time to wish the crazy boaters a safe voyage on their short trip from the Tenth Line bridge in Glen Williams to the paper mill dam on River Road.

In the 15-year history of the event, the crazy boats have continually attracted more and more spectators and participants from around the province. And while there are some dedicated canoeists in the race, it's largely noted for the unusual breed of sailor it attracts, sailors who let their nautical imaginations run wild to meet the challenge of the Credit's icy and seasonally fierce waters.

Divided into five categories, including special classes for commercial crazy boats, crafts constructed by various service clubs and other float-

ing oddities, the race is probably less sport than it is entertainment for the sailors and the people watching from the shoreline.

Ladies and gentleman pilot-canoes or kayaks may register their entries at 10 a.m. at the Terra Cotta launching site. Their more rough-hewn colleagues, commanding considerably less conventional craft, enlist for the Credit Navy half an hour later at the Glen Williams start.

Keeping with tradition, the noon start for canoes should be just about right to meet the first launch of crazy boats downriver at 12:30 p.m. Somewhere in the ensuing confusion, the sport ends and the entertainment begins.

As an added bonus this year, boaters may face a few unavoidable portages thanks to the Credit's relatively low level. Fear not, race publicity chairman Dennis Borotisk assures, the race will go on, high water or low.

While the idea is to have fun, Mr. Borotisk stressed that boaters will be responsible for their conduct on and offshore, and there are some basic rules to follow.

For instance, no boater will be allowed to compete without a life-jacket, one that's approved by the ministry of transportation and communications. And despite a recent warm spell, the Credit's waters are still dangerously numbing without help from any medicinal booze for courage. Members of the Halton police force and the Jaycees will be cracking down on open drinking and Mr. Borotisk strongly advises saving the celebrating for the victory dance later in the evening.

Meanwhile, CBers and club members will be keeping a close eye on the race from the shore, watching for sailors who end up in the river. The St. John's ambulance plan to have a couple of crews ready to handle emergencies.

After the first boats are launched, the race is expected to take about two hours to complete and will be followed by a final sweep of the river by the Jaycees to make sure no one is left behind.

One thing boaters should consider, Mr. Borotisk pointed out, is that the river is owned by the Credit Valley Conservancy Authority and the homeowners living along its shore. It's important that participants and spectators respect the private property they're using, by removing any debris left behind.

The Jaycees have set a \$5 entry fee per craft, plus a \$2 deposit on the racing bib for each participant. There may be some concession stand food available and the Glen Hall Committee is expected to return this year with their popular hot refreshment stand in the old town hall.

The traditional "victory dance" will get underway at 8 p.m. in the Acton Legion hall. Tickets, available from any Jaycee, are selling fast, although there may be some left over at the race. The cost is \$4 per person and music will be provided by MacMillan and Wife disc jockey service.

The race is wide open. Enter anything you think can safely float downriver and across the finish line. Besides looking for the obvious speedy winners, judges will be awarding trophies for the zaniest entries as well.

Happy sailing.

CAS agreement averts strike threat in Halton

Halton Children's Aid Society (CAS) workers voted 97 per cent in favor of their first agreement last week, averting a crippling strike scheduled to begin last Friday.

"First agreements are always the longest and the toughest to negotiate," Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) representative Gord Allen told The Herald last week.

Most of the CAS's 40 workers, certified under CUPE, agreed to a 1981 contract giving them a nine per cent salary increase effective immediately and further two per cent in July.

The union, Mr. Allen said, had "modified" its demands, originally seeking cost of living increases.

In addition, CAS workers will no longer have to pay for part of their provincial health insurance coverage and will evenly share in a new society dental plan. Prior to the new

contract, employees had to pay 15 per cent of their OHIP bills.

Vacation time for all workers has also been adjusted. Child care workers who normally waited five years before getting four weeks off now only have to wait one year. Social and child care employees receive an additional week after the fifth year, while clerical staff are given five weeks vacation after 16 years of service.

The high "burn-out" rate among child care and social workers attributed to on-the-job stress necessitates the new holiday structure, Mr. Allen said.

CAS employees began negotiating for a first agreement Aug. 12 and eventually went into mediation Feb. 19. Although the new contract is expected to run for the remainder of the year, employees and management will again sit down to the bargaining table in

October.

But, Mr. Allen said, there won't likely be as many items on the table the next time an agreement is negotiated.

Meanwhile, the society's new president, John Graham, said the CAS board of directors approved the new contract without "dissenting vote".

"During the strike, there may have developed a period of unhappiness and bitterness," Mr. Graham said, "but we are happy to have reached an amicable agreement without a strike."

An area superintendent with the Halton Board of Education, Mr. Graham said there was concern that a strike would disrupt the lives of children under CAS care, lives which have already faced a considerable amount of strife.

Among the CAS board's 24 members are six regional councillors, including Acton rep Dave Whiting and Mayor Pete Pomeroy.

Acton life-saver wins Safety Council award

Herald Special

A 10-year-old Acton boy will be one of the recipients of the Halton Safety Council awards April 3 at a dinner in Oakville.

Kevin Fabian, son of John and Wendy Fabian of Cameron Street, pulled classmate Robert Jennings out of Fairy Lake Feb. 12, 1980 when he fell through ice on his way home from Robert Little public school.

Kevin said he was walking along the ice on the lake with Robert and some other children when Robert decided he wanted to test the

water temperature and pet the swans.

The boys, accompanied by Kevin's brother Adam, 7, and sister Melissa, 8, were on the ice behind the Acton arena where the water is approximately 10 to 15 feet deep when the ice suddenly gave way and Robert plunged in.

Kevin rushed to the edge of the hole and bodily dragged him back out of the water although Robert is heavier than he is.

"I still don't know why the ice didn't give way a second time and let Kevin go in too," said Mrs. Fabian.

"All the life saving courses you see tell you to lie flat on the ice and reach as far as possible or use something to reach with, but he didn't," she said. "He just ran to the edge and dragged him out. He must have been lighter or the weak ice had broken off or something."

Kevin said three or four of the youngsters of the same age on the other side of the open water stood and laughed at Robert's predicament.

Kevin has had no life saving courses although he has taken swimming classes through the school.

Area organizations benefit from region social grants

Social service organizations in Halton received about \$37 million in grants this year, about half the \$720,000 originally sought by 60 agencies before the regional council began its 1981 budget trimming.

Among the 41 groups which eventually received funding from the region were the North Halton Association for the Mentally Retarded (\$12,000), the fledgling North Halton Social Planning Council (\$5,000) and the Acton Community Services office (\$17,000).

While Halton Women's Place, a refuge for abused women which opened last October, was not given a \$10,000 grant to help pull it out of a deficit, Halton Helping Hands received the largest social agency grant of \$41,000. The organization provides housekeeping services for senior citizens and other, less mobile homeowners.

Meanwhile, efforts by the region to limit the 1981 operating budget to its

proposed \$37 million, have been hindered by increases in the Halton police department's budget.

About \$1 million more has been proposed for the police budget above the original forecast released earlier in the year. Although members of the region's finance and administration committee have pared away about \$1.1 million from the region's operating budget, the police department increase, combined with smaller jumps from other departments, have almost nullified councillors' efforts.

Budget discussions are expected to continue until mid-April, possibly readying a final proposal for council's approval in May.

WESCOM PLANT WELCOMES NEW OWNERS

The takeover of Georgetown's Wescom Canada Ltd. plant by an American company has been approved by the federal government's Foreign Investments Review Agency (FIRA).

Rockwell International Corporation, based in Pittsburgh but with a plant in Milton, will take over the Sinclair Avenue manufacturing firm, a subsidiary of the American-owned Wescom Incorporated.

FIRA approved the takeover this week along with 16 other similar proposals, while rejecting three. Wescom's Georgetown plant manufactures voice frequency and pulse code modulation transition equipment.

Happy birthday, Hans!

The Halton Hills Public Libraries are celebrating Hans Christian Andersen's birthday tomorrow (Thursday) at 7 p.m. Drop by the Acton or Georgetown Library for free stories, films and treats. Open to children five years and older. Please pre-register.



BUCKETS OF FUN

David Orrett (left) and Beth Hughes of Streetville were fascinated by the sap tapping techniques in the Maple bush at the Mountbatten Wildlife Centre near Campbellville during recent visit. Both the Halton Region and Credit Valley Conservancy Authorities are currently offering "maple syrup festivals", the latter at Orangeville Reservoir Conservation Area. (Herald photo)

Independence of disabled focus of meeting Tuesday

An important meeting examining ways of helping disabled citizens during the International Year of the Disabled is scheduled for next Tuesday (April 7) at Centennial Public School in Georgetown.

The free meeting, organized by the University Women's Club of Georgetown, gets underway at 8:45 p.m. and features special guest speakers from BOOST (Blind Organization of Ontario with Self-help Tactics).

BOOST president Jo-Anne Yale and director David Hetherington will describe

concerns shared by the disabled and outline how concerned residents can help.

In the January issue of Chatelaine magazine, reporter Dorothy Sangster described BOOST as "an aggressive young group operating out of Toronto, with more than 100 members in Ontario."

"Last year, BOOST made headlines when it lashed out at agencies (which) encourage dependency," she reported. "It would like to see the Canadian National Institute for the Blind phased out by the end of the '80s and replaced by community

groups and provincial commissions."

Mrs. Yale, the article explained, was over-exposed to oxygen as a premature baby in a hospital incubator and developed retrolental fibroplasia and permanent blindness as a result.

"Yale, now 28, is a new breed of blind person," the article said. "She is educated, independent, anti-establishment, an activist. Paternalism of any kind is anathema to her. Pity she despises. She refuses to wear dark glasses, and if there's anything she hates, it's the well-meaning stranger who

grabs her arm and propels her across the street.

In 1976, following her marriage to California-born Michael Yale - blinded by a backyard explosion at the age of five - Mrs. Yale toured western Europe for six months. She and her husband were accompanied only by their seeing-eye dogs, telling puzzled friends they desired the challenge of exploring a new land, even if they couldn't see it. The travels included a hostile run-in with unsympathetic Parisian police who refused to let them climb the Eiffel Tower

Continued from page A1

April is Cancer Month

Buy a daffodil this Friday, Saturday



CANCER CAMPAIGN BLOSSOMS

Organizers of this year's Daffodil Days, former Citizens of the Year Mr. and Mrs. Irwin Noble, are pictured with Diane McCracken, publicity chairman for the Halton Hills Cancer Society unit. The Cancer Society is holding a breakfast this morning for commercial and industrial sponsors. (Herald photo)