



Halton regional police constable Keith Woudstra demonstrates how Halton Hills cops will be filling the fuel tanks of six cruisers recently converted for propane use. Stored in the trunk out of necessity, the tanks mean Halton taxpayers will save \$1,300 a month on police transportation costs. (Herald photo)

## Propane-fueled police cars save us up to \$1,300 a month

Six new propane-powered regional police cruisers are now on Halton Hills roads without their spare tires. The cruisers came back fresh from having their gas tanks converted into propane tanks last week. The 15-gallon propane tanks take up most of the trunk space of the new Plymouth Caravelle cruisers, leaving no room for a spare tire. They are high tensile steel tanks with 20 times the impact resistance of a gasoline tank. "You can fire .308 rifles at them," said Constable Dave Richards, planning and research officer with the force. Why are the tanks in the trunks? Because propane, a byproduct of oil and natural

gas processing, can't be stored in a square tank that fits under the car like a gasoline tank. Because it's stored under pressure, propane requires a tank with rounded edges. Gasoline isn't stored under pressure; you pour it into your car like water every time you "fill 'er up". In a rounded tank, the pressure is equal all around. In a square tank with corners, the pressure is greater on the corners than the sidewalls, causing problems. A federal grant of \$400 per vehicle and a provincial sales tax exemption made the final cost of converting from gasoline to propane tanks \$200 a car. "It will take one and a half

months to pay back the cost of converting the six cruisers," said Constable Richards. "After that, we'll be saving up to \$1,300 a month." "If we convert the whole fleet of 36 patrol cars, we could save \$50,000 a year," he said. The police officers are being taught to fill the tanks themselves, using a special key to open them. When the tank is full, liquid propane pours out of the socket, vaporizing into a foggy white gas when exposed to air. Police don't know how many miles to the gallon they'll be getting with propane, but Niagara regional police cars showed no significant lowering of fuel mileage, although an earlier experiment by San

Francisco police showed a five to 10 per cent decrease in fuel mileage. Constable Richards said. Unfortunately, the only location for filling up the tank is the Guelph Street station, but Inspector Matt MacPherson doesn't see this as a problem. "A full tank will last for one shift. Normally, we like to have staff fill up the tank after their shift anyway," he said. Propane costs less than gasoline and is cleaner because it burns as a dry gas, leading to maintenance savings through cleaner engines, fewer oil changes and longer spark plug life. The Ontario ministry of energy anticipates that 40,000 propane-powered vehicles will be on the road by 1985.

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## MD to launch new hospice care sessions

Herald Special  
Dr. Adam G. Grzeslo of the Joseph Brant Palliative Care Service in Burlington will open the second season of educational forums presented by the North Halton Hospice Care Interest Group at the Milton District Hospital Sept. 24 at 7:45 p.m.  
Dr. Grzeslo will discuss the

development and growth of the hospice concept at Brant Hospital and explain his role as Palliative Care Physician. This first meeting will introduce the overall theme for this season which is to focus on the roles of the people involved in Hospice Care. This carries last season's general introduction to Hospice Care, one step further.

Other meetings are tentatively planned for Oct. 22 at Glen Williams Community Centre, focusing on the Role of Funeral Directors and Medical Social Workers, and Nov. 26 at a location to be announced later. Topic will be the role of hospice volunteers and nurses. As a second project, the group is offering a course this fall on "Developing Resources for Supporting the Dying and Bereaved" Tuesday evenings 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. from Oct. 20 to Dec. 1 to be held in Glen Williams.

## Police Beat Cops studying shootings

A Halton regional police sergeant based in Burlington was expected to appear before a one-man police hearing this week on charges of using excessive force. According to Staff Sergeant John der Lelie, the unidentified plainclothes officer fired his service revolver at the rear bumper of a departing car into which had climbed a man the officer was approaching on foot to question. The officer was investigating a possible armed robbery a week ago Monday when he heard noises similar to gunshots. Three teenagers later told police they had been setting off fireworks. In an unrelated but similar incident, a second Burlington policeman is being investigated after firing his revolver at the rear tire of a car moving toward him. A 19-year-old Burlington man was charged with criminal negligence in operating a motor vehicle, assaulting a policeman, and other crimes after a high speed police chase Thursday.

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