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# the HERALD

Home Newspaper of Halton Hills — Established 1866

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## Petition opposes hospital decision

A doctor's hospital privileges have been revoked at the Georgetown District Memorial Hospital, but a petition and letters are being circulated to protest the decision.

The hospital board issued a press statement Monday indicating that Dr. Jack Ford's privileges were removed by an unanimous decision of the board of directors. The decision came into effect April 7.

It is the responsibility of hospital boards in Ontario to ensure that quality patient care is provided, said hospital executive director Mark Rochon in the statement.

"This responsibility is carried out through a number of mechanisms, one being, the appointment, re-appointment and removal of physicians on the hospital staff."

The decision was based on a comprehensive internal and external review, Mr. Rochon said.

Dr. Ford is being represented by a Toronto lawyer S. Harvey Starkman and he indicated an appeal is being made with the Ontario Hospital Appeal Board. Mr. Starkman could not say when a hearing date would be set.

By Monday, Dr. Ford had nothing in writing from the hospital board stating the reasons for revoking his privileges, he said. The doctor declined to say more because the matter is before the appeal board and it may jeopardize his case.

Likewise, board members who also sit as councillors for the Town of Halton Hills, Pam Johnston and Al Cook, were tight-lipped on the matter. Marilyn Serjeantson was unavailable for comment.

Coun. Cook and Johnston said they had been receiving a number of calls from the public who wanted to air their views on the board's decision.

A petition, as of Monday, had 103 names asking that town councillors who sit on the board report back to council about the closed-door meeting.

The hospital executive director said he could not be more specific about the reasons for the board's decision. However, the removal of the doctor's privileges did not have to do with overstaffing, he said.

"Legally, we could jeopardize our case at the hearings if comments were made, so that's why it's strictly an in-camera personnel matter. It's possible we could be called to appear at the (appeal) hearing as members of the board," said Coun. Johnston.

Would a letter-writing campaign or other similar protest affect the decision of the board? According to Mrs. Johnston, she said she didn't think it would change the board's decision. "The decision that was made was based upon facts that we were given. We certainly knew the implications and we certainly knew as well that there would be some unhappy people out there," Coun. Johnston said.

"I'd love to give the other side of the story because people are only hearing one side and that's the way it's been for some time. Obviously this wasn't taken without a lot of searching and discussion," said Dr. Boyd Hoddinot, chief of staff at the hospital.

About 40 women attended a town council meeting Monday night to protest the board's decision-making process. Results of the meeting will be available in The Herald's Friday paper, Outlook.

**United Way AGM**

The United Way of Halton Hills is holding its annual general meeting April 29 beginning at 8 p.m. at the Acton District High School.

The guest speaker for the evening is Gordon Winch, the executive director of the Toronto District Centre. The public is welcome to attend.



Wave babies

The "Speyside" was the first crazy boat across the finish line in Saturday's race. Organizers have raised \$2,300 so far and hope to hit the \$10,000 mark from the race. Guiding the Speyside were Gerhard Trevisanus, Steve Mokrytzki, Rex Freitag and Steve McTure.

Eighty-two boats took part in the event and organizer Ron Sullivan said no one received injuries serious enough to go to the hospital in the race. The McDonald-Douglas Recreation Club entry has raised the most money so far with sponsors totalling \$1,400. (Herald photo by Simon Wilson)

## New residents help soften 5.2% rise in Region budget

**By ANI PEDERIAN**  
Herald Staff

Halton Regional council passed its 1987 budget of \$31,513,492 last week. That's 5.2 per cent more in tax revenues than it collected last year.

To bring the budget down to this final figure, the Region's finance and administration committee pared away \$285,891, or slightly less than one per cent.

Did you know that only 47.1 per cent of the Region's actual budget of \$29.2 million comes from your annual tax bill? The rest, 25 per cent comes from provincial subsidies, 13 per cent from unconditional grants, 14 per cent from program revenues, and 5.5 per cent are transferred from the Region's capital reserves.

The bulk of the Region's budget goes toward police protection, social services, public works, health and other boards and agencies.

Regional Treasurer Joe Rinaldo said unconditional grants to Halton have been declining significantly from 1981 when they were 44.2 per cent of Regional property taxes. In 1987, the unconditional grants are 29.8 per cent.

"The only consolation I can see is that the unconditional grants will stabilize over the next few years because we're now out of the revenue guarantee program."

Mr. Rinaldo said he noted all but Burlington now have market value assessment. Oakville is the municipality most recently adopting it.

Is Oakville picking up a bigger share of the Regional tax burden, making for a windfall for the rest of the Region, Oakville Coun. Keith Bird wanted to know.

Just because a municipality changes to market value assessment doesn't mean it attracts a greater share of the Region's taxes, Mr. Rinaldo said.

A graph from the treasurer's office shows new homes went up at a rate of 3.4 per cent last year. Mr. Rinaldo said that was a very positive sign and there was no reason to believe the increase wouldn't continue in 1987 and 1988.

Most of the growth in residential assessment has been in Oakville. Halton Hills had the least of all four municipalities.

A little more than half of this assessment growth in 1987 will be used to reduce taxation, Mr. Rinaldo said.

When it comes to making up the regional pot, Halton Hills makes up less of it than in 1986. In fact, it now makes up less than Milton. The share of the Regional levy is based upon preliminary assessment

equalization factors provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

The Region also collects water and sewer rates from you, and these are going up 3.1 per cent over last year. That translates into \$46.30, or \$4.21 more, on average. Mr. Rinaldo said the increases have been relatively modest in this area over the past five years.

## Insurance rate woes

When it comes to insurance, the news is bad for the Credit Valley Conservation Authority.

According to the Authority's Manager of Finance Sandra Hanson, getting reasonable rates for coverage was greatly reduced this year because of bad claims experience in 1986.

The Authority is a member of the Association of Conservation Authorities of Ontario Group Insurance Plan along with 29 other Authorities in the Province. Last year, the group program had claims from three people who became quadriplegics on Authority properties.

In dollar terms, it's meant a 124 per cent increase in comprehensive general liability premiums, from \$7,500 last year to \$16,800.

The Authority also saw a hike in its property premiums, largely because of Niagara Escarpment Commission property purchases in 1986.

## Y art auction

Start practising your finger exercises. The Georgetown and Acton Y is hosting an art auction May 15 at Holy Cross Auditorium.

Tickets cost \$6 in advance and \$7 at the door. There will be non-art items auctioned off such as a balloon ride and a luxury weekend for two.

Included in the auction will be graphics, oils, watercolors, photographs and sculpture. Proceeds go towards Y projects in the community. For tickets and more information call 877-6163.

## Party urges town BIA to revolt

**By BRIAN MACLEOD**  
Herald Staff

The Business Improvement Area in Georgetown is serving its purpose and members are getting their money's worth.

That seems to be the opinion of members of the BIA and the executive committee.

But BIAs do have their detractors, both provincially and locally.

The Freedom Party of Ontario, a registered political party based in London, is actively campaigning to have BIAs annulled in the Niagara region. Freedom Party Acton Chairman Marc Emery said his party's actions have played a role in eliminating the BIAs in North York and Aurora, Ont.

Mr. Emery said his party has been in contact with over 40 BIAs in the Niagara Peninsula and 12 from all over Toronto in the past three months and he has met with a great deal of response.

Their campaign has included publishing a pamphlet entitled "BIAs are Hazardous to your Economic Health and Independence."

Mr. Emery's arguments centre around the fact that business in the area designated as a BIA area have no chance to opt out of the program and have little say over how much money is spent and where it goes.

The party cites the Oakville BIA as a "typical" example of how budgets can skyrocket in a short period. "The BIA was formed in 1978 with a \$10,000 budget, a mere \$35 average for each of the 285 businesses. By 1986, only eight years later, the budget was up to \$176,274, a whopping increase of 43 per cent each and every year," the party said.

In Georgetown the 1987 BIA budget stands at \$39,890, for approximately 100 businesses, with an additional \$15,000 left over from last year's budget, said Administrator Clerk Joe Simon.

That represents a 21.6 per cent increase over the \$32,800 budget in 1986.

The tax levied on each business in the BIA is not entirely decided by the BIA executive. The Province sets an assessment of each business in the area based on the physical size of the business. The town decides where the BIA boundaries are and the BIA executive submits a budget to the town which, in turn, must give its ap-

proval, Mr. Simon said.

The Georgetown BIA, which consists of roughly 100 businesses in the downtown core, has engaged in many activities in the past, which, executive members said, has provided members with value for their dollars.

Georgetown BIA Chairman Carol Barrow cited beautification of the downtown core as the organization's main responsibility.

"I think they do (get their money's worth) if they would just sit back and look at it. Beautification is an expensive thing to do," Mrs. Barrow said.

Trees, crosswalks, lights and a median are some of the examples Mrs. Barrow listed as BIA projects.

John McDonald, a director of the BIA executive, noted the BIA is involved in several annual activities including Pioneer Days (Main Street is closed off for three days in June for the event) and Midnight Madness (shops stay open until midnight) in late summer.

Both Mrs. Barrow and Mr. McDonald said the BIA promotes the downtown core through cheaper advertising rates in local newspapers and through the installation of signs on the major arteries directing visitors to the downtown shopping area.

Coun. McDonald believes the local BIA has played a part in the rejuvenation of shopping in the downtown core.

BIAs are developed by the merchants themselves. Store owners operating in the affected area vote on whether or not to establish a BIA. But Mr. Emery noted those who oppose forming the BIA, or those who open a business in the BIA area, have no choice but to become a member and pay the tax levy. "It is pure coercion. Since you haven't joined our voluntary association on your own, fine, we'll force you to be the sentiment behind any BIA drive," the Freedom Party says.

Mr. McDonald feels the information published in the Freedom Party's pamphlet is "absolutely misleading. It's maddening. A lot of things are taken out of context," he said.

"It's not something that is imposed on anybody. It's a reality," he added.

He said the accusations levelled by the Freedom Party are "not necessarily representative of what BIAs do."

## Overthrow plan would reduce budgets to zero

Marc Emery said one way to get rid of a BIA is for merchants opposing the organization to garner enough support to get themselves elected to the executive, then reduce the budget to zero, effectively eliminating the organization. The only other way to abolish BIA is to gain support of one third of the members and one third of the assessment, said Mr. Emery.

He said that can be difficult to do because a major store might not vote to abolish the BIA, and that store might hold a big chunk of the assessment, thus giving one store a bigger vote.

One disgruntled former member of the Georgetown BIA is Bill Aggar, former owner of Thinkinkers Learning Centre on Main Street. Thinkinkers, which sold children's books and educational items, opened in April of 1986 and closed down in Jan. 1987 due to "lack of volume," Mr. Aggar said.

"For new business starting up you start paying the bucks. The BIA to me is still pretty much an unknown," Mr. Aggar said.

"It looked to me that they took a shot at (beautification) and just gave up on it. The BIA is not a very high profile operation as far as I'm concerned," Mr. Aggar said.

He said he would have opted out of the BIA program if such an action was allowed.

Like several other businesses contacted, Mr. Aggar wasn't sure what his BIA taxes actually were, but added "it was a fairly good chunk of money."

"Mr. Aggar said his business "didn't benefit at all from anything they (BIA) did."

"I don't think they have the big picture. It's sort of piecemeal," he said.

Mr. Emery claimed many professionals who are located inside the BIA boundaries and are forced to pay the levy are angry because they feel no benefit from the organization's activities.

## Tax Scoreboard on average residential assessment of 5,500

	1986	1987	% increase
Town of Halton Hills	\$300 rural \$371 urban	\$323 rural \$404 urban	7.5% rural 8.8% urban
Halton Region	190	197	3.8%
Halton Board of Education	683	727	6.4%
TOTAL	\$1,173 rural \$1,244 urban	\$1,247 rural \$1,328 urban	6.3% rural 6.7% urban

## Electing regional chairman a non-issue

**By ANI PEDERIAN**  
Herald Staff

An attempt to put the question of how the Regional Chairman should be appointed on the 1988 municipal election ballot failed last week.

Burlington Coun. Joan Little wanted the 1988 ballot to include the question "Are you in favor of having the Regional Chairman's position being elected at large?"

During last week's Regional council meeting it appeared the matter is a non-issue as far as the voters are concerned.

Most councillors said they'd never been called on the subject or ever had it brought up by any of their constituents. Coun. Little was the only one who said she had received calls on it.

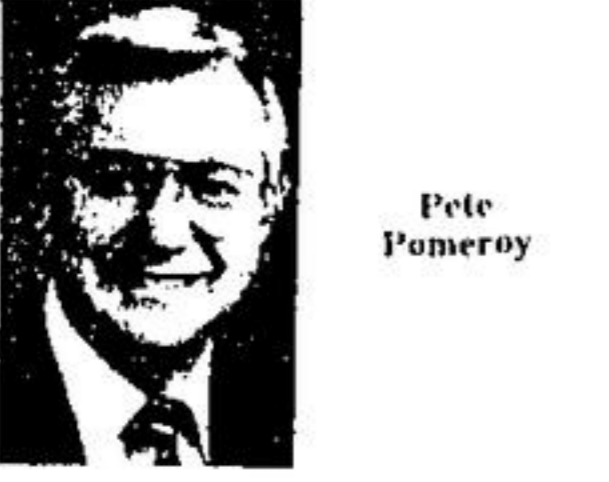
Whether the Regional Chairman should be elected by Regional councillors as has been the way in Halton, or whether the position should be filled by a public election, sparked over an hour's discussion by councillors.

Coun. Little wants the Regional Chairman to be elected in a Region-wide election, and not by councillors.

"The more you think of it, if you believe in democracy and believe the municipal level (of government) is the one closest to the people, you have to go this way," Coun. Little said.

She acknowledged it would be an expensive process for candidates to campaign Region-wide, but pointed out it's also expensive for Mayoral candidates to run in a large city like Toronto.

Burlington Coun. Walter Mulkevic said Halton Region isn't a very large Region, and is smaller than many of the big cities that have mayoral races.



Pete Pomeroy

He said electing the Regional Chairman at large will legitimize Regional government.

Burlington Coun. James Grieve said Halton may be as large as some cities, but because it covers such a large geographic area, it has diverse needs you'll not find in a city.

"It's clear in my mind the chairman who wins will be the one from a large city," he said, meaning Burlington or Oakville.

Oakville Coun. Peter Arch said to ask a candidate to run at large is to ask for something Canadians don't even ask their Prime Minister to do. The Prime Minister only has to run in his riding.

"We're building up a dust storm here that isn't necessary," Coun. Arch said, adding the only interest in the matter was with the 24 councillors at the Regional table.

Milton Coun. Bill Johnson said the system in place now is a democratic one. When the province used to elect Halton's Regional Chairman, it was undemocratic, he said.

"For an individual to be able to run for chairman in a Region of this size, not just in terms of population but geographic size, is going to take an awful lot of money. Only the rich could afford a campaign," Burlington Coun. Joyce Savoline said.

If the candidate isn't rich, then party politics will enter the game.

"It'll be a sad day when that happens. Up to now we haven't had that and I want to keep it that way," she said. "It's naive to think party politics doesn't enter into the election of the mayor of large cities."

Although every Halton taxpayer doesn't have the right to elect the head of the Regional council personally, they do have the right to elect the Regional councillors who then vote on their behalf, Coun. Savoline said.

Halton Hills Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson said there was nothing wrong in looking to the future. She said the Regional Chairman is responsible to the Regional council and to the councillors who are representatives of the public. If he doesn't do a good job, he doesn't stay in this job, Coun. Serjeantson said.

Oakville Coun. Keith Bird said the matter isn't a burning issue and councillors are trying to make something out of nothing. He said the current system seems to be working well.

The councillor proposed the question be "Are you in favor of Regional government?" instead. Most people would vote no, he anticipated, so you wouldn't end up with people wanting to elect a chairman for a body nobody wants.

Burlington Mayor Roly Bird said he would sooner abolish Regional government than make it better.

Burlington Coun. Henry Quinn had more questions to put on the ballot: Should Regional councillors sit on local council? Should they be elected at large within their community? Should Regional council be larger? Should local mayors sit on Regional government?

"If we start adding all these questions, it won't be a ballot, it'll be a market survey," Coun. Arch commented.



Biehn roast

Georgetown Chamber of Commerce President Marg Tanna (left) gave retiring Chamber Secretary Walter Blehn (right) a plaque to honor his 12 years in that position at the Walter Blehn Dinner held at the North Halton Country Club Friday.

Mr. Blehn said "anything I've done for the Chamber really hasn't been very much because the Chamber's done a lot for me. Mr. Blehn retired from the Chamber before moving to St. Catharines recently."