

HIS LAST DAYS



Ordered to his death, Jesus (played by Bob Long) makes the tedious trek through the streets of Jerusalem guarded by Roman soldiers and led by a Centurian commander Ron Knowles. The play His Last Days will begin a four-night stand at Holy Cross Church tomorrow night. Fred Marks is the producer while Winston Robinson and Paul McDougall are the co-musical directors. (Herald photo)

Hospital board meeting

Bennett Care Centre \$6 million in debt

About 21 people got a first hand look at how the Georgetown Hospital Board works at its first open meeting Feb. 25.

Onlookers were brought up to date on the progress of the chronic care wing, the status of the hospital's financial situation and organization of the Medical Advisory Committee during the 45-minute meeting.

The hospital also took time to answer questions from Dr. Jack Ford Support Group spokesman Paul McDougall on a variety of topics.

The Georgetown hospital is operating at a debt of \$210,000, according to Finance Committee Chairman Graham Goebelle.

But the Bennett Health Care Centre is still holding a \$6 million debt, due mainly to the cost of building the centre, said Mr. Goebelle.

He expects that debt to be covered soon by grants from the Ministry of Health and Halton Region.

Surplus lands to the south of the hospital will also be sold off to help reduce the Bennett Health Care deficit, said Mr. Rochon.

The hospital's operating deficit has been covered by a \$500,000 grant from the Ministry of Health. That grant will hold the hospital over until a formal appeal for funds to pay for the operating deficit is resolved, said Mr. Rochon.

The Ministry pays for 90 per cent of the hospital's expenditures, said Mr. Goebelle.

The chronic care wing is almost half way through the process which ends with final construction, which could take up to 15 months alone, said Long Range Planning Committee Chairman Doug Brock.

The Ministry of Health must approve the design of the chronic care wing and that's what is holding it up now, he said.

Despite an application for funding from the Ministry and a grant of \$848,000 from the Region, Mr. Brock said fund-raising is going to play a major role in the success of the chronic care wing.

"It's a forgone conclusion that fund-raising will have to be done before long," said Mr. Brock.

Births at the Georgetown hospital have decreased from 377 last year to just 227 this year, said Mr. Rochon.

He attributed the drop to the fact that the hospital is still missing one obstetrician and gynecologist pending the outcome of the Hospital Appeals Board Hearing into the revoked privileges of Dr. Jack Ford.

Questioned by Mr. McDougall on the occupancy rates at the hospital

and the Bennett Health Care Centre, Mr. Rochon said the 47 nursing home beds at the centre are always occupied.

The self care unit occupancy rate at the Bennett Centre has risen from 21 out of 29 beds occupied last year to 28 beds occupied this year, said Mr. Rochon.

Different units at the hospital had varying occupancy rates from 92.1 per cent in the medical unit to 48 per cent in the obstetrics unit, said Mr. Rochon.

The medical surgical ward's occupancy rate has risen from 57 per cent last year to 70 per cent this year, he said.

The intensive care unit has a 50 per cent occupancy rate. That is a normal rate of occupancy, said Mr. Rochon.

Ten beds in the medical surgical ward were closed for about two months last year, said Mr. Rochon.

Summer months tend to be less hectic so it's normal to close beds down then, he said.

All bed closures are done with the knowledge of the medical staff, he said.

Mr. McDougall asked the hospital board why the public "has the perception that significant numbers of people have left the employ of the hospital" in recent months.

He claimed two out of four management positions have left the hospital.

Mr. Rochon said only one middle management position remains to be filled.

Many of the people who have left the hospital recently have retired, said Mr. Rochon.

Mr. Goebelle explained that people tend to take advantage of retirement opportunities when new management takes over a corporation.

"When new management comes in, many people who were thinking about retiring do," he said.

Mr. McDougall also asked the hospital board to examine the timing of the meetings which now take

place at 4:15 p.m.

But many times have been discussed and each alternative time is just as inconvenient as the next, said Board Chairman Bob Clipham.

Mr. Clipham said he has had to attend hospital committee meetings at 8 a.m.

Attendance at the 4:15 time slot has been the strongest, said Mr. Clipham.

Volunteer night

The North Halton Association for the Developmentally Handicapped Saturday Centre is hosting a Volunteer Appreciation Night on March 7, 7:40 p.m. at St. John's United Church in Georgetown.

Region costs us \$540,594 in '87

Regional council cost Halton taxpayers \$540,594 in 1987.

That figure includes salaries paid to councillors and members of committees and authorities, benefits and expenses.

Regional Chairman Pete Pomeroy picked up a total of \$57,806 last year. He received just over \$50,500 in salary, almost \$7,000 in benefits and \$385 in conference expenses.

Each of Halton's 24 councillors, including the mayors of the four municipalities was paid \$15,281 in 1987.

Each councillor also received \$706 in benefits from the Region.

Mileage and meeting allowances expenses as well as conference expenses varied widely.

Coun. Rick Bonnette picked up \$655 for mileage and meeting allowance.

Coun. John McDonald received \$314 for mileage and meeting expenses.

Halton Hills Mayor Russ Miller

was paid \$595 in mileage and meeting allowance expenses and he chucked up \$1,192 in conference expenses.

Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson received \$1,051 in car mileage and meeting expenses and \$1,042 in conference expenses.

Coun. Pam Sheldon chucked up \$2,236 in car mileage and meeting allowance and \$1,897 in conference expenses.

Apart from Chairman Pomeroy, the most expensive councillor last year was Milton Councillor Bill Johnson. He picked up \$568 in car mileage and meeting allowances and over \$4,700 in conference charges.

Coun. Pam Sheldon said her regional expenses are higher because she registered all her conference expenses through the Region rather than the town budgets.

The Region has a much bigger budget to absorb the expenses than a smaller municipality like Halton Hills, said Coun. Sheldon.

In the hills

Need donations

The Georgetown Parent-Child Centre which is opening on April 5, needs donations of preschool toys. The toys may be left at the Halton Regional Health Department, 93 Main Street South, Georgetown. For more information call 877-1575 or 873-0488.

Shopping survey

Sunday shopping isn't a popular concept in Georgetown if results of a survey by the St. George's Anglican Church is any indication.

A survey conducted on Sunday, Jan. 31 at the church showed 44 of 46 people support the existing Sunday shopping laws.

All 46 respondents said they are in favor of legal requirements "protecting workers' rights to days off work for reflection, recreation and rest with family and friends."

Scout service

NORVAL-The Baden-Powell service was held at the Huttonville United Church Feb. 21. All six groups took part including Brownies, Guides and Pathfinders, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. The theme for the children's story was Promises, told by Heather Phair.

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