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Gas price surging

By LISA RUTLEDGE
Herald Special

Even Halton Hills motorists maybe suffering the effects of Kuwait as fuel prices surged over 59 cents per litre over the weekend.

Most Halton Hills service stations made the jump to 59.1 and up to 59.9 cents per unleaded litre Friday afternoon.

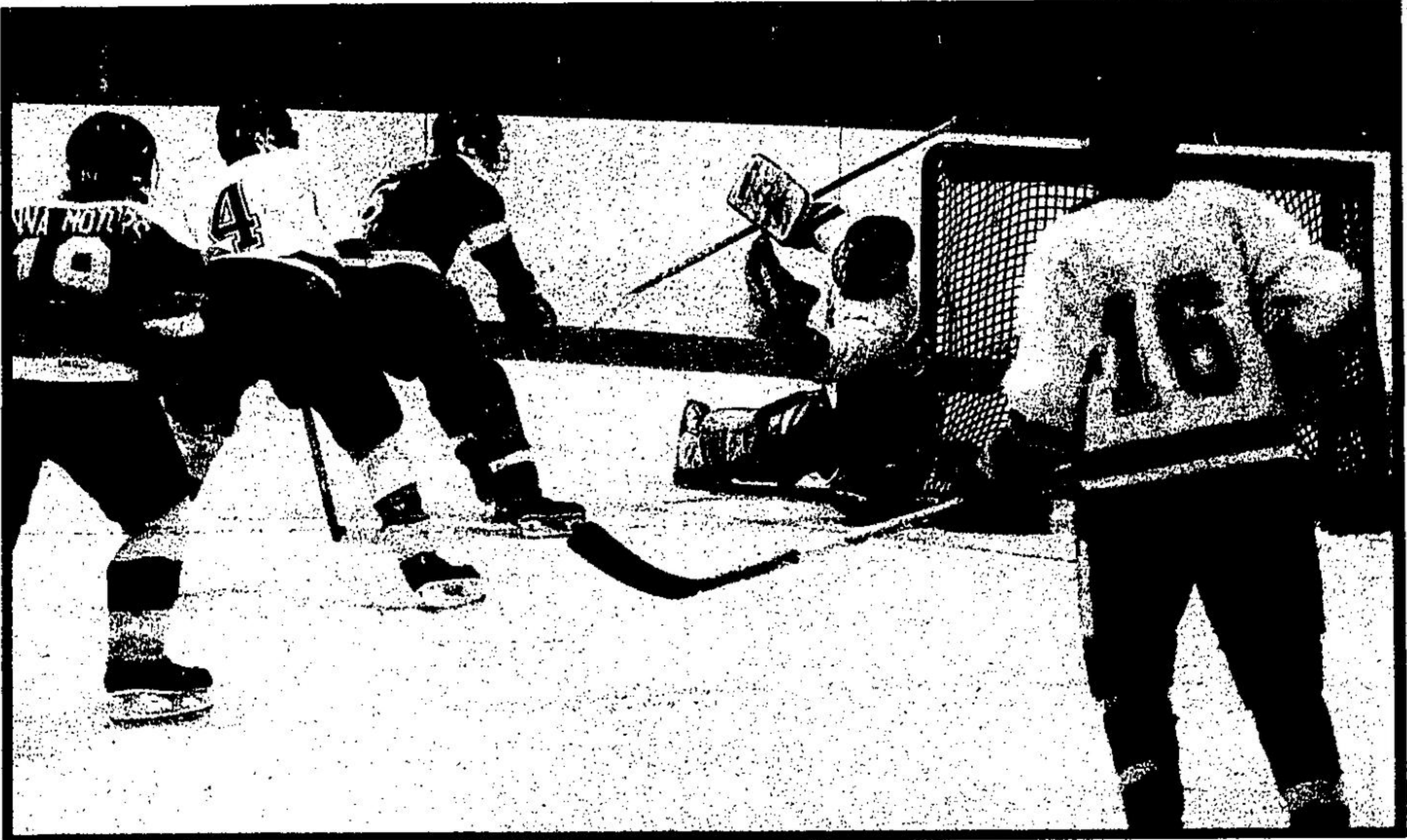
Krista Eastwood, manager of Cango Gas Service station at 488 Guelph St. in Georgetown, said unleaded fuel prices rose to 59.3 on Friday at about noon. Despite the price hike, motorists were still buying gas, but only because Friday was payday and gas tanks were dry, she said.

The price increase shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone, Ms. Eastwood said, because everyone knew it was going up. "People were trying to avoid it but by now their gas tanks are bone dry and they have to get gas," she said Friday, several hours after the prices went up.

There likely won't be any relief from the higher gas prices for Halton Hills motorists in the near future, said Ms. Eastwood. "As far as I'm told, it's going to stay like this or just keep climbing."

The number of motorists filling their gas tanks decreased quickly after the prices went up, said Richard Nipper, an employee at

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Sabres Slash Stayner

Acton Sabres goaltender Jim Mantione comes up with a glove save during the Junior "C" exhibition game Friday at Gordon Alcott Arena as teammates Dennis Jeffreys, left, and Jason Lucas look on. Mantione played a strong game against Stayner, helping the Sabres win 3-2. The Acton team plays two more exhibition games before the start

of the regular season, one this Friday evening against Flamboro at Alcott and the other Sunday in Mount Forest. The Georgetown Jr. "B" Raiders kick off their regular season at home on Saturday night, 7:30 p.m. against Oakville, at Gordon Alcott Arena. (Herald photo by Robert Risk)

Acton station is a GO

It's official. The long awaited Acton GO Transit commuter train stop will be opened for service Oct. 29, confirmed Edward Shea a spokesperson for GO Transit.

A trailer, which has been installed on Mill Street near the Old Hide House will act as a temporary ticket booth, said Mr. Shea. A more permanent structure will eventually be installed, said Mr. Shea, but that won't be for a year or two. A permanent station site must first go through a lengthy environmental assessment.

Until the Acton station opens at the end of October, GO will install a platform, four shelters which people can use while waiting for the train, a parking lot and lights, said Mr. Shea. The service will run weekdays in the morning from Acton to Union Station in Toronto and during the evening to Acton from the Union Station, he explained.

Town council sharpens tax axe

By BEN DUMMETT
the Herald

Judging from comments made by several of the Halton Hills councillors Monday, council won't accept a 1991 budget tax rate increase greater than the inflation rate or approximately five per cent.

In response to a budget direction's report submitted to council by Town Treasurer Ray King, Councillor Ann Currie led the way by saying she personally won't accept a 1991 tax rate increase of more than inflation.

Mr. King told council if the 1991 budget is based on no new staff being hired and the introduction of no new programs, residents living in the urban areas of Georgetown and Acton should expect their tax bill to increase by 26.3 per cent in 1991 over this year's rate. Those who live in the rural area and don't pay for regional services such as garbage disposal would see their 1991 tax bill increase 23.4 per cent, he said.

Council, earlier this year, approved that rural residents receive garbage pick-up in 1991 and pay for it through their taxes. But Monday night council reserved its decision and decided that rural residents be excluded from town service as it pertains to garbage pick-up. If this new initiative was included in the 1991 budget the rural residents' 1991 tax rate, would have increased by 60.7 per cent.

Appreciative of Mr. King's report Coun. Currie said "the report shocks you into action."

The councillor explained that the type of action needed to keep the tax hike down should include putting off construction work slated for Main Street in Georgetown for a number of years, preventing all town councillors from attending any conventions and conferences and implementing a town hiring freeze.

Mayor Russ Miller and Coun. Al Cook echoed statements made by Coun. Currie both saying they won't accept a tax rate increase greater than the inflation rate. "The people are saying enough is enough," said Coun. Cook.

But Acton Coun. Norm Elliot tried to temper some of the councillors statements explaining it was premature for council to decide what tax rate increase will be acceptable. He supports councillors desire to keep the 1991 tax hike as low as possible in 1991, but council shouldn't make any decisions until it's aware of the ramifications of any cuts to existing services.

Council voted that staff prepare a preliminary budget comparing

the effects on town services allowing for a range of tax hikes between six and 10 per cent.

In his report, Mr. King attributed the initial tax rate increase to "a virtual shutdown of the residential building industry," in town and the escalating cost of garbage disposal.

The expected 1990 shortfall in the issuing of building permits will mean approximately \$700,000 less in revenue than expected, said Mr. King.

Just over 10 per cent of the projected urban area tax increase accounts for making up this \$700,000 shortfall, Mr. King told councillors.

The treasurer went on to say that if the town didn't have to pay the

35.5 per cent increase in garbage disposal in 1991 the urban tax hike would only be approximately seven per cent. Garbage disposal is expected to increase from \$116 per tonne of garbage to between \$176 and \$195 per tonne.

Coun. Marilyn Serjeanston said the public must become more conscious of waste reduction if they want their tax rate to drop. In Halton, said the councillor, the blue box program is working but offsetting the result of this recycling program is that people are producing more garbage in general.

She asked town staff to find out if the overall amount of garbage in Halton Hills has been increasing over the past few years.

Hospitals hike wages

The approximately 45 full-time and 70 part-time Registered Nursing Assistants and cleaning staff employed at Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital now have a contract which calls for their wages to increase by eight per cent retroactive to Sept. 29, 1989 running through to Sept. 29, 1990 and by seven per cent for the year starting Sept. 30, 1990, confirmed the hospital's Assistant Executive Director and the Director of Personnel and Hospital Services, Randy Esford.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees Union, Georgetown local, and locals with approximately 70 other hospitals in Ontario had been without a contract since Sept. 28, 1989.

Negotiations between the union and the hospital's representative, the Ontario Hospital Association, (OHA), broke down in March of this year. Since that time, a third party arbitrator has been in charge of finding a suitable con-

tract agreeable to both sides. This is the second round of contract talks that have been decide

by any arbitrator, said Mr. Esford. Mr. Esford couldn't comment

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Commissioner questions utility's hiring practice

Halton Hills Hydro Commissioner Peter Hagget questioned the utility's General Manager, Gerry Trudell, about the need to replace a recently vacated position in light of the town's decision not to automatically fill vacated positions, during the commission's monthly meeting Friday.

In defence of the need to fill the \$35,000 Linesperson position, Mr. Trudell told the commissioners if a replacement wasn't found it would take longer than usual to restore power if a power outage happened.

A Linesperson is in charge of maintaining the town's power lines, said Mr. Trudell. The utility has two crews each with four linespersons. On each crew there are two experienced linespersons and two "learner linespersons." The vacated position is for an experienced lineman, said Mr. Trudell. Two experienced linespersons are needed on each crew so the novice linespersons are properly supervised, he explained.

Halton Hills council will discuss later this month the need to fill vacated positions in the Building Department and Engineering Department.