

Provincial grant announcements get mixed reviews

By BEN DUMMETT
The Herald

Local municipal, hospital and educational officials agree the provincial government's recent grant announcements give little indication about the amount of money that will actually end up in Halton Hills and Halton.

The province plans to allocate \$793.4 million among the province's municipalities for road construction during 1991/92, an increase of 5.5 per cent over 1990/91. Provincial transfer payments to municipalities will increase five per cent to \$948 million. Transfer payments for hospitals will increase 9.5 per cent to \$7.325 billion while those for school boards will jump 7.9 per cent to \$4.879 billion.

However, Town Treasurer Ray King and Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital Executive Director John Oliver say the provincial money they receive and whether it will be larger than the 1990/91 allocation won't be known for another month or so.

The announced grants represent the average increase municipalities will receive, but the amount each is actually allocated depends on particular need, said Mr. King.

Mr. King "is hopeful" the Town Roads Needs Assessment Study will prove that Halton Hills requires more than the average 5 per cent increase in funding if the Town is to make necessary road repairs.

Mr. King explained the 5.5 per

cent increase to municipal transfer payments is the only transfer type payment that applies equally to the recipient municipalities. The Treasurer said the 5.5 per cent increase will mean an extra \$55,000 for the Town coffers this year. The Town will receive just over \$1.1 million for 1991.

"It (the \$55,000) might not seem like a lot but last year we received no increase. Under the circumstances (the province's money difficulties), we had no reason to expect more, he said.

Mr. Oliver said all Ontario hospitals will receive a percentage increase in their transfer payments equal to the cost of living increase over 1990/91 but he doesn't know how much more of the 9.5 per cent increase will be directed at the Georgetown hospital. Any money the hospital receives on top of the cost of living increase will go to finance capital projects, and life support programs - acute care programs - he explained.

Halton Board of Education Director Bob Williams called the government announcements "misleading" because school boards don't know much of the 7.9 per cent will apply to them. Mr. Williams anticipates, that despite the increase, the total percentage amount of provincial funding Halton receives will probably drop a percentage point or two.

"Last year transfer payments to the school boards increased 8.7 per cent but provincial funding actually decreased from 29 to 27

per cent," he said.

"I would anticipate a similar thing to happen this year," he said. The transfer payments will do nothing more than maintain the status quo, added Mr. Williams.

As for the New Democratic Government reversing the trend and someday funding 60 per cent

of school board education costs, "that's a pipe dream," said Mr. Williams.

The government had said during the election campaign that attaining this level of funding was an important objective.

North-Halton MPP Noel Duignan was unavailable for comment at press time.

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Creative teachers efforts rewarded

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT
The Herald

Creative teachers were rewarded for their efforts Thursday night when the Halton Board of Education presented its prestigious Award of Creativity in Education (ACE).

In Halton Hills, Mary Taylor from the North Education Centre was recognized for her instrumental role in the Grade 4 science unit of Lego Logo activities while Sharon Cook and Shirlene Wells from Georgetown District High School were lauded for their Date Rape Program.

Ms. Taylor's creative and innovative addition to school studies, Lego Logo, was a concept involving Lego pieces run by the a logo computer program.

Lego Logo incorporates Lego blocks, motors and lights which students use to design moving mechanisms. The creations are then connected through an interface onto a computer and by a logo program, the children can

operate their designs, explained Ms. Taylor.

After seeing the Lego Logo kit at a conference three or four years ago, Ms. Taylor said she was enthused with the idea and immediately began campaigning to the board to purchase some of the kits. But the kits only offered prepared instructions on what to build with the product.

Ms. Taylor took it a step further by developing a series of activities to help teachers and students first design a creation and then build it. She was aided by Raquel Ahearn of Pilgrim Wood P.S. and Alan Dowdell of Bruce T. Lindley P.S., who were also given ACE awards.

"It helps the students learn to create, design, build and solve problems they encounter through the process," she said. "These are skills we identify as important in the learning process."

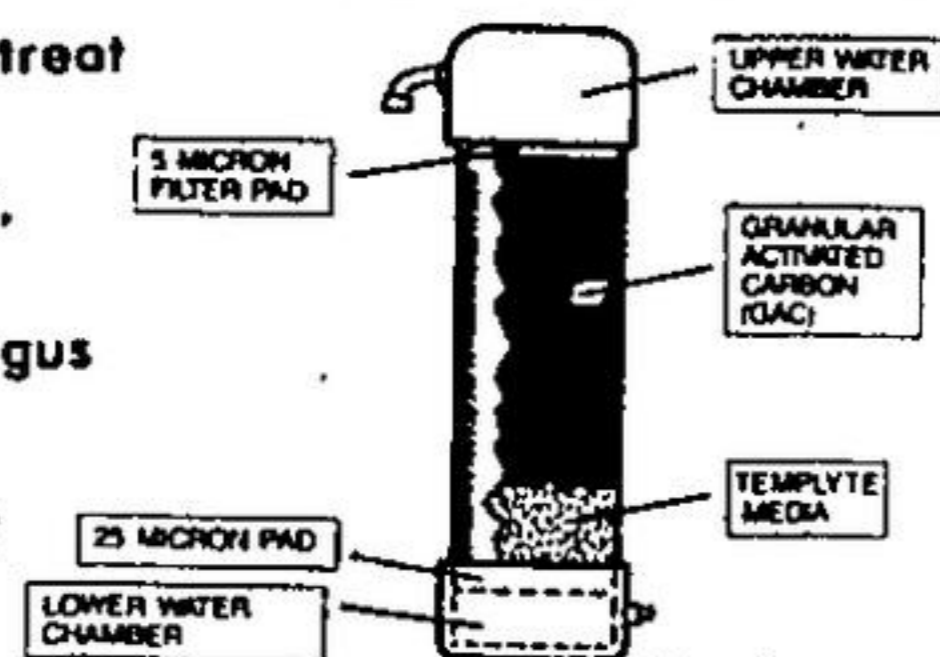
She's found the students can't get enough of the project. "The

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