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HALTON HILLS, ONTARIO - FRIDAY, JULY 26th, 1991

By STEVEN LeBLANC
The Herald

Unless the federal and provincial governments move quickly and provide more assistance, many Ontario farmers face financial ruin.

A spokesperson at an Ontario Federation of Agriculture "state of emergency" press conference in Toronto last Wednesday said grains and oilseed farmers need immediate help. They are seeking more than \$60 million in federal and provincial assistance.

"This is indeed a real crisis," OFA President Roger George said.

Frank Anthony, President of the Ontario Corn Producers Association and local farmer, said prices for grains and oilseeds are now about 40 per cent of what they were in the 1930s. He explained that in the last six months, the price of wheat has dropped from \$115 per tonne to \$75 per tonne and corn prices have fallen from \$3 a bushel to \$2.15 a bushel.

"There's not much more room for prices to drop," explained Mr. Anthony. "We've had to batten down the hatches and cut back where we can."

Mr. Anthony, a fourth genera-

tion farmer in Halton Hills, stated that while the situation in Halton is not quite as serious as in southwestern Ontario where there are considerably more farmers, the problems are consistent across the province because grain and oilseed prices are the same in all areas of Ontario. The Ontario Corn Producers Association has been in operation for 10 years and represents over 26,000 farmers in Ontario.

While the federal and provincial governments have decided on assistance programs such as NISA (National Insurance Stabilization Account) and GRIP (Gross Revenue Insurance Plan) to help farmers starting in 1992, there is nothing to compensate farmers because of the current prices.

Gary Johnson, Communications Planning Officer with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, said that a gap has been left by the two levels of governments and that there is a serious problem now. He explained that prices have dropped considerably and have continued to stay low, and farmers can only sustain the tough times so long.

"The problem has been on going for some time and farmers

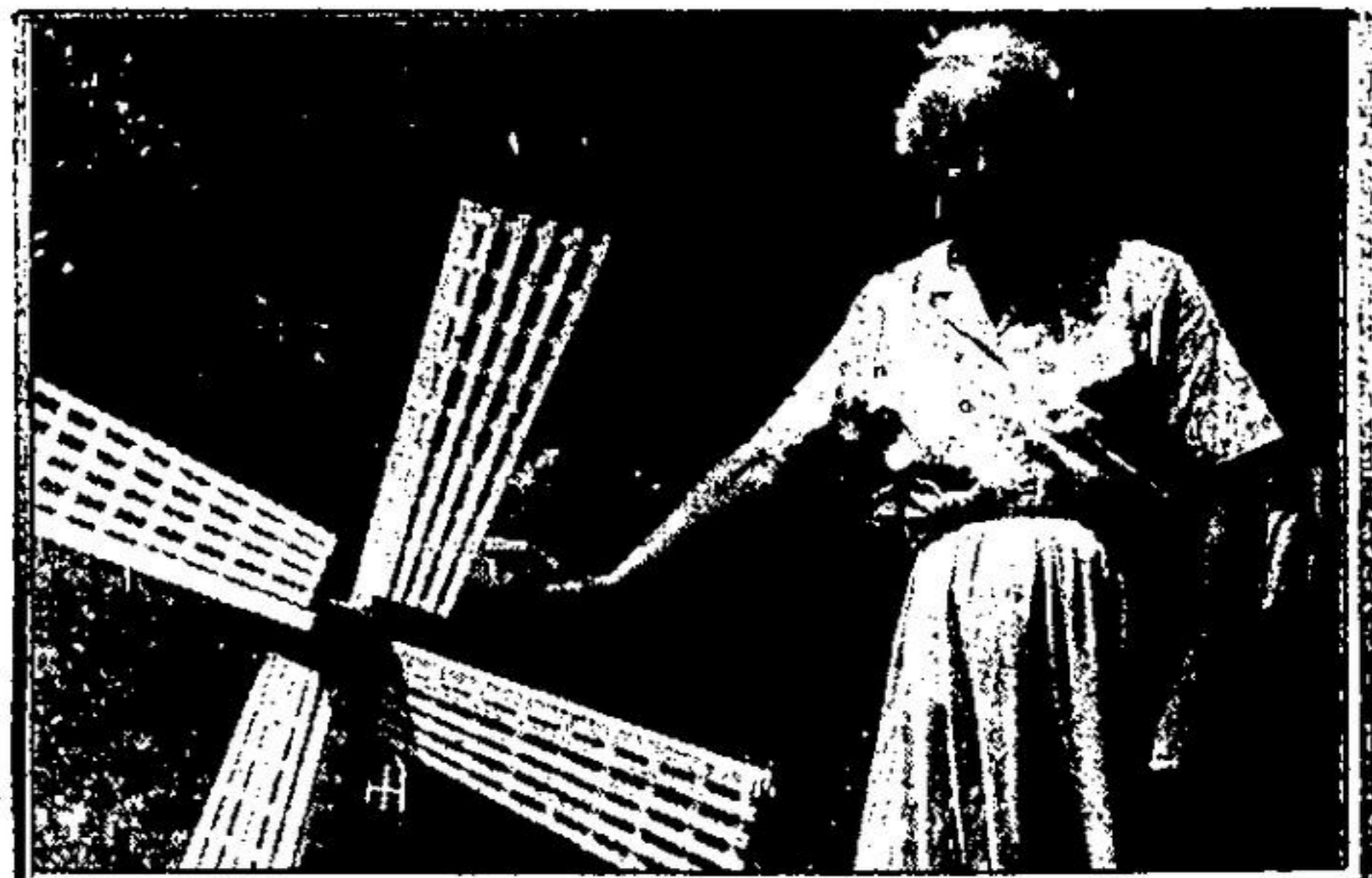
need assistance now," Mr. Johnson stated. "We haven't heard anything from the federal or provincial government yet," he added.

He explained the two assistance programs to start in the coming year are designed to act as price stabilizers and will compensate farmers when prices are low. In the past, he noted, government assistance programs for farmers have been implemented on a temporary basis.

Provincial Agricultural Representative for Halton, Marie Hartly, explained world prices and fairly well-run subsidized programs in the United States and Europe have been the main reasons why grains and oilseed prices in Canada are so low. Ms. Hartly stated there are between 700 and 750 farmers in Halton Region, 200 of whom are cash crop farmers. She predicts there will be a decline in the number of area farmers if things do not improve.

Halton-Peel MP Garth Turner said he will meet with the Halton Federation of Agriculture within the next two weeks to discuss the problems facing the farmers and how these problems specifically affect the Halton area. While he

Continued on Page 2



Georgetown resident Siena Van Hoekelen took time out of her busy schedule to pose for his picture Wednesday afternoon at her Cleaveholm home. Ms. Van Hoekelen, who was the Lions Club of Georgetown's 1990 Citizen of the Year, was also recently nominated for the Ontario Senior Achievement Award. (Herald photo)

Local resident nominated for special senior award

Georgetown resident Siena Van Hoekelen says she couldn't believe it when she was nominated for the Ministry of Citizenship's Ontario Senior Achievement Award.

"I asked myself, why me?" Ms. Van Hoekelen said. "I thought it was quite an honor."

While she was not one of the 21 recipients of the award for 1991, she explained she was not disappointed, and receiving a nomination was flattering enough.

A resident of Georgetown since 1968, Ms. Van Hoekelen was nominated for the Senior Achievement Award by Florence Smith and Alice Greenaway of the Georgetown and District Seniors Association where she is on the board of directors in charge of fundraising. These two ladies also nominated her for the Lion's Club of Georgetown 1990 Citizen of the Year, which she won.

Ms. Van Hoekelen and her husband emigrated from Holland to British Columbia in 1951 with six children. In 1968 she moved to Georgetown, remarried, and con-

tinued to raise her family.

For many years she canvassed for several heart, cancer, and Red Cross campaigns and was a volunteer with the Mother's Self Help Group, the Health Unit food clinics, and the Bennett Health Care Centre among others.

Along with being on the board of directors for the Georgetown and District Seniors Association, Ms. Van Hoekelen is also a dedicated member of Holy Cross Parish and the Catholic Women's League. She is very involved with the St. Vincent de Paul clothing project.

"We don't think she ever says no," says Florence Smith and Alice Greenaway. "She has great faith in her ability to mastermind any project to a successful conclusion."

These two ladies explained this active senior still finds time to keep fit at "Work That Body."

"When my children moved out on their own, I needed to find things to keep me busy," said Ms. Van Hoekelen. "I'm not the kind of person who enjoys sitting around."

Developers could face increased building fees

By BEND DUMMETT
The Herald

Local taxpayers would pick up the additional expense if a proposed industrial and commercial Town development fee charge is opposed as was hinted at during a special Town Council meeting Tuesday.

Town Consultants CN Watson and Associates Limited of Toronto has recommended Town Council approve developers be charged \$1.90 per square foot to build a commercial or industrial space. Currently no such charge is imposed.

If the \$1.90 figure is approved, which won't be decided upon until September, then the money would go toward covering town and hydro services that accompany a project.

Consultant representative Connie Kilgour told council Tuesday she predicts the \$1.90 per square foot for an industrial complex would be sufficient to cover the total cost for all services directly related to a project.

However, if the charge is eliminated or reduced then the local taxpayer will be required to make up the difference through increased taxes.

Town Treasurer Ray King told council if the charge was

eliminated then people's taxes would automatically increase approximately an additional 10 per cent over the next 10 years.

Despite this information, some councillors, urged by representatives from the business and development community, suggested a reduction if not an elimination of the commercial and industrial charge should be considered.

Councillors Alf Spence and Anne Currie both agreed it made no sense to charge developers for industrial and commercial development when there has been virtually no such development in the Town for the past several years.

Continued on Page 2

An Inside Look

Police Beat 2	Community 11
Features 3	Focus 11
Environment 4	Carlo Testa 11
Seniors 6	Religion 12
Food 7	Sports 13-15, 22
Norval news 8	Entertainment 16
Steamer 9	Youth 17
Raaside 10	Classified 18-20
Weir's World 10	Hotline 21
Poets Corner 10	Home of the Week 22
People's Forum 10, 11	



Roundin' em up

Wheeling into a finish between Halton Regional Police Inspector of Operations Ron Sullivan and North Halton's Crime Prevention Officer, Sergeant Dave Gwilliams, is Georgetown Village Constable Nick Leoni astride his newly equipped cross-trainer bike he'll be riding around town on. Constable Leoni officially launched the local bike program Tuesday when the police service's two Target Response Accomplished by Cycling Enforcement (TRACE) of-

ficers came to Georgetown to practise bicycling techniques with Constable Leoni such as this type of arrest procedure the two are performing on the wary Inspector and Sergeant. Constable Leoni will use the bike, donated by Ollie's Cycle and Ski, to travel the outer perimeters of his downtown Georgetown beat and use it as an example of bicycle safety. (Herald photo by Lisa Boonstoppel-Pot)

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Local student participated in PEACE program
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