

**Hydro Commision news**

# Smith still steaming about GST on power

To protest the Federal government's Goods and Services Tax, (GST), should the Halton Hills Hydro Commission decide not to collect the tax from its customers?

That's the question angry local Hydro Commissioner Bill Smith asked his fellow commissioners Wednesday to determine how far the utility would go to protest the tax.

Since the tax's inception last December, the commission as a whole, and especially Mr. Smith, has advocated that electrical power should be exempted from the tax.

The commission has always held the position that power is an essential, and therefore should be exempted from the tax as is currently the case with certain food items.

The government's position, however, has always been that if electricity receives a GST exemption so should other forms of power. And the more exemptions, the higher and less fair the tax would be.

Although supportive of Mr. Smith's frustration, none of the other commissioners would outright support an action that could possibly have illegal ramifications.

The commission did decide the type of action taken, legal or otherwise, should be determined after it meets with Halton Region's three

other commissions in Milton, Oakville and Burlington.

The more utilities that can be brought on side the greater chance Halton Hills Hydro will have at gaining Federal government concessions concerning the tax, commissioners agreed.

On that note the commissioners instructed staff to arrange a meeting between the four Halton Region Hydro Commissions to determine an appropriate plan of attack.

### 1992 rate undecided

The local hydro rate increase for 1992 has yet to be decided, Halton Hills Hydro Commission General Manager, Gerry Trudell, informed the commission Wednesday.

The commission has submitted a rate increase to Ontario Hydro for approval, but has yet to receive a reply.

The local commission is not at liberty to reveal the proposed increase until it is approved by Ontario Hydro. However in past discussions the commission has predicted an increase in the area of 11.6 per cent.

Whatever the percentage increase, it will likely reflect the 1992 price Ontario Hydro charges municipal utilities for its power.

Earlier this year Ontario Hydro



Bill Smith

approved a 11.8 per cent jump in the price of power.

### Tender awarded

After much discussion, Wednesday, the Halton Hills Hydro Commission tentatively awarded local company, Colonial Tree Service with the utility's tree trimming contract.

Despite offering the second lowest tender at \$42,400, the commission awarded the contract to Colonial as a show of support to local businesses in light of the tough economic times.

Hamilton-based company Bestwick Tree Service submitted the lowest tender at \$38,520.

The utility needs a tree trimming service to ensure its hydro poles, wires, and substations don't become inaccessible due to tree growth.

In support of Colonial Tree Service, Town Mayor and Hydro Commissioner, Russ Miller said, "when times are tight we should support our own."

However, Colonial must meet one condition before the tender award becomes official.

The commission insisted the tree trim work be done in 15 weeks instead of the 25 weeks Colonial proposed in its tender.

Another reason for awarding the tender to Colonial was because the company was willing to do any emergency tree trimming work for \$123.70 per hour. Bestwick Tree Service would only do emergency work at an hourly rate of \$160.50.

Using the number of emergency hours accumulated over the past year, commissioners reasoned Bestwick's tender figure would end up approaching that of Colonial because of Bestwick's higher emergency tree trimming service hourly rate.

### Press singled out

Singling out the local press for only writing bad news about the local Hydro utility, Commissioner Bill Smith pointed out Wednesday the commission had cut its expenses on conventions by more than half since 1989.

In 1989, the Herald revealed the five Halton Hills Hydro Commissioners spend approximately \$38,000 to attend hydro-related conventions that year.

However, the commissioners

have only spend just over \$17,000 on conventions during the last 11 months of this year.

### Utility buys equipment

Halton Hills Hydro Commission directed staff Wednesday to purchase used equipment up to \$4,500 worth from Georgetown company, Burns Transport.

The company is selling the equipment because it recently closed down due to the recession, said commissioners.

## Carol service

By BETTY SOJKA  
Ballinafad News



On Sunday, Dec. 16th, members of the Village Church Senior Choir travelled to Georgetown for an evening carol service, at St. Andrew's Church. Ballinafad's United Church Choir lent their voices to St. Andrew's to produce a harmony that was truly sweet. Several people read various passages from the Bible. It was quite a lovely service.

Folks are invited to come out to the Christmas Eve Service, at the village church, which begins at 9:00 p.m. The Senior Choir will be there to delight everyone with classic hymns. Attending this service, leaves you with a special feeling inside. Here joined by friends, and neighbors, the Christmas spirit burns bright.

A beautiful sign has been installed by F.L. Signs, at the cemetery corner across from the Ballinafad General Store. On a yellow background the words "BALLINAFAD COMMUNITY CENTRE" and "JIM BAILEY DIAMOND", with appropriate arrows show up great in the blue fluorescent lettering. In addition, there are three rows of track, where six inch interchangeable

letters can be arranged to announce coming events. A plastic cover encases the sign for protection against weather and vandals. This new sign sits on the sign structure very kindly built by Mr. Gerald Andrews. His design, and quality workmanship compliments the new sign.

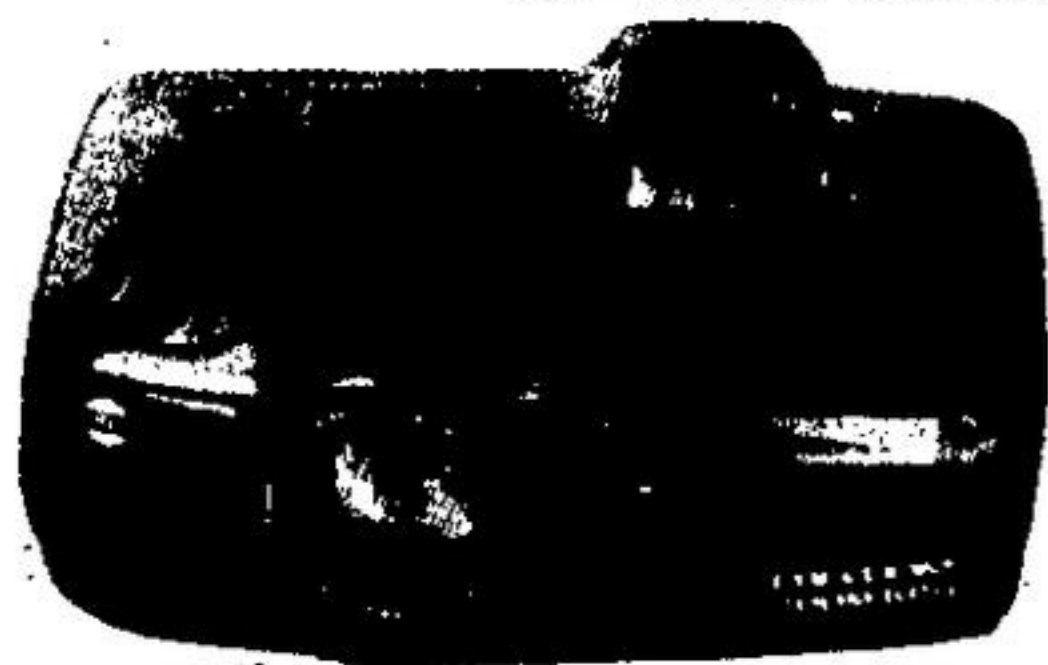
The U.C.V. decided to take a well deserved break, for their December meeting. Accompanied by their husbands, the group enjoyed a lovely meal at the Chateau Restaurant in Georgetown. It was a time to exchange pleasantries, and celebrate the festive season.

Congratulations go out to Bob and Pat Kerr, who are celebrating 25 years of matrimony. The United Church Women, will be kept busy Saturday, December 21st. Happy returns Bob and Pat.

The December edition of the monthly newsletter is on its way to your doors, having now been mailed out.

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