

Hospital cuts \$300,000 in wages from budget

By JANET BAINE
Staff writer

Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital has cut \$300,000 in workers' wages from their 1992 budget.

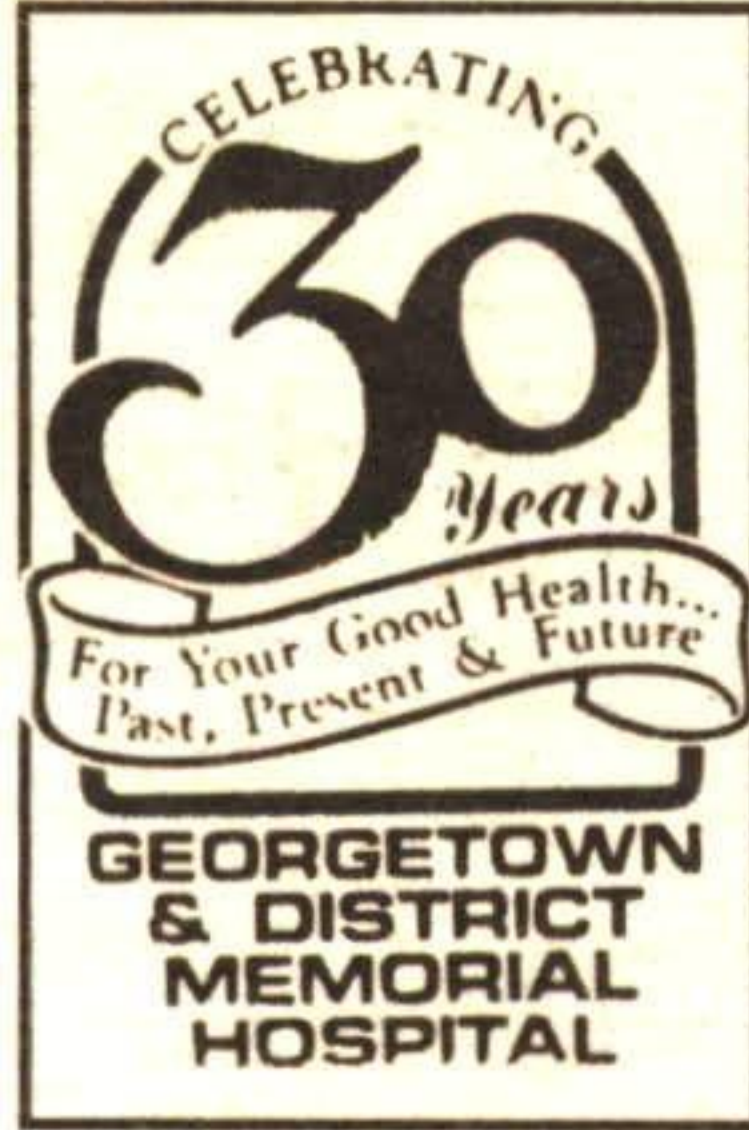
The \$14.2 million balanced budget was passed by the hospital board April 23, and information about it was released this week. The budget still has to be approved by the Ministry of Health, but because the budget is balanced, the hospital does not anticipate any problems, Hospital director John Oliver said.

To help save the \$300,000, three management positions have been

eliminated at the hospital. Salary ranges for management staff at the hospital have been frozen at the same rates as last year, which means employees may still receive increases for merit, but the range will stay the same.

No positions will be lost in the housekeeping department, but "there will be less money and less work available" for part-time staff, Oliver said.

Nursing staff will also be affected by the wage cuts. Oliver said he will be meeting with the Ontario Nursing Association over the next month to find ways of making the



changes. While there will be a slight increase in the number of hours for registered nurses, hours for registered nursing assistants will decrease, so they are more likely to be

affected by the changes. "I don't know if it will result in layoffs," Oliver said. The hospital is hoping that some nursing staff will voluntarily go from full-time to

part-time hours, he said.

"It's the intent of management and the board to minimize as much as possible the effect of downsizing on staff positions," Oliver said.

Oliver believes the changes will not adversely affect patient care, because staff will be used more efficiently. For example, the hospital plans to operate part of the in-patient surgery unit only on weekdays, and close it on weekends. This will mean rearranging the operating schedule so that the people who need a longer hospital stay will be operated on on Mondays and Tuesdays, while operations for peo-

ple requiring a shorter stay will be later in the week. Right now there is 60 per cent occupancy of surgical beds, but with this new approach and other changes, the occupancy rate will increase to 90 per cent, Oliver said.

Six of the 112 in-patient beds will be closed down, but at the same time, the hospital will create a new six-bed day surgery area, in order to save money. Overall, the amount of surgery performed at the hospital could increase 20 per cent this year, and about 55 per cent of this would be done with patients arriv-

See CUTTING, page 9

HALTON HILLS
NOTICE

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News

Digest

Three break-ins

Three Halton Hills homes were broken into during the day Monday.

The first occurred at a home on Trafalgar Rd., between Fifth and Sixth Sideroad, sometime between 7:30 a.m. and 5:10 p.m. A panel on the back door was kicked in, and then the thief reached inside the house and opened the door. The house was searched, drawers opened and jewelry dumped on the bed, police said. An antique ladies' pocket watch was taken.

Another Trafalgar Rd. home was broken into between 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. and \$820-worth of items were taken. Someone entered by kicking in the back door of the house. They searched the house, opening drawers and closets, taking a VCR, television, two watches and a ring.

The third break-in occurred on Ontario St. sometime between 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Someone tried to pry the rear door open with a screwdriver, but was unsuccessful, so they kicked in the door, police said. Two rings were stolen from this home.

Police were not available to comment on whether the three incidents were related.

INSIDE

- Police Blotter.....page 2
- Opposed to duplex.....page 3
- Glen expanding?.....page 5
- Soap box champs.....page 8
- Monster Madness.....page 11
- Karate competition.....page 17



Globe sails 'South'

The raucous Luther Billis (Gord McLeod) dickers with Bloody Mary (Sandra Greig) over the price of grass skirts in Georgetown Globe Productions newest musical "South Pacific," which opened this week at John Elliott Theatre. The well-known Rodgers and Hammerstein musical about the 1940's war years continues its run this week.

Councillor slams police 'intimidation'

By ROB KELLY

Special to the Halton Hills Weekend

An angry Halton Hills councillor Pam Johnston warned Wednesday she has had her fill of police "threats and intimidation" whenever they want money from Halton Region.

The regional administration and finance committee was considering a pitch by police for a new \$6.5 million communications system. Some councillors were nervous about the price tag. Police chief James Harding then rose to say forcefully that without a major upgrade his officers could be endangered.

"One thing that really upsets me is that whenever we're dealing with the police it's not a logical or rational approach," Johnston said. Her experience was that councillors "always find the chief or some other members of the force have to use threats or intimidation" in order to "try and get us to support" their cause.

Johnston said she found such tactics "increasingly disturbing," and added emphatically, "I personally don't like it."

Chief Harding sat in impassive silence at the rebuke, which came hot on the heels of his warning that councillors must "be assured that the radio system now in use is shot." It is "a potential danger to officers and citizens" that is held together by "string and sealing wax."

The chief also warned that the current communications system has been "criticized and condemned" and that its continued use is putting "our officers in jeopardy."

The proposed new network is called a trunk system. Fleming described it as being similar in capability to a phone system. It is designed to be used by all Halton emergency and public works services, as well as police, so as to integrate them in case of a disaster. Currently the various services use different frequencies, and some can't talk to others without special equipment.

The committee voted to set the groundwork for exploring the new technology, calling for proposals from companies interested in setting such a network up. But councillors also decided to look at simply improving the old police system too, which is expected to be much less costly. That however, would mean the various emergency services wouldn't be combined on a single radio network.



PAM JOHNSTON

TED BROWN/Halton Hills Weekend

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