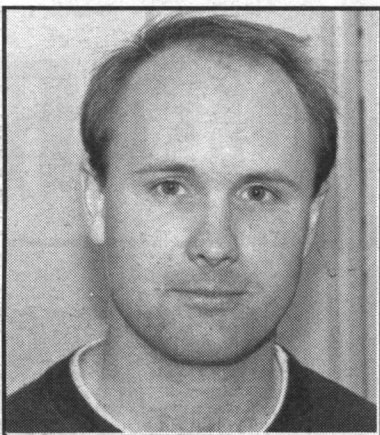


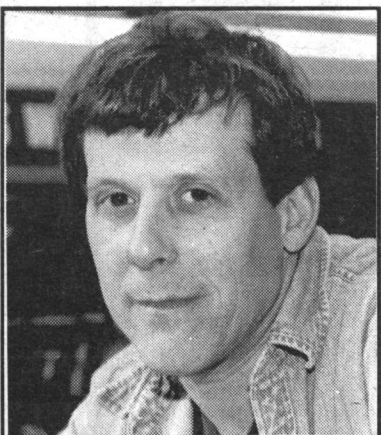
Local reaction to the NDP provincial budget



Marg Palmer, Georgetown – "It stinks. We are taxed to death. This budget is not going to help the economy."



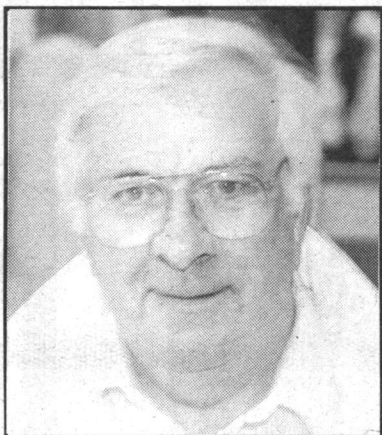
Rick Stull, Georgetown – "Everybody is frustrated. The NDP spending spree is making everybody pay."



Eric Blechman, Georgetown – "They (the NDP government) are taking more, wanting more, but not giving anything back. We need Ross Perot to fix the problem."



Carol Burse, Acton – "I am fed-up with tax increases. We are taxed to death. I have no control anymore on what any government does."



Don Matheson, Milton – "I didn't think it was that bad. I don't like taxes going up, but what else could Rae do?"

Town treasurer is troubled by provincial budget

By Oksana Buhel

Wednesday's provincial budget has Ray King, Town of Halton Hills' treasurer, considerably troubled. "This is the second time municipalities have been hit," he complained.

Several weeks ago, the government revoked \$147,000 in uncon-

ditional grants, which had been promised to Halton Hills. Now the town will have to deal with an eight per cent retail sales tax extension to property insurance, parking spaces in municipal and commercial lots and parking meters, as well as sales tax on sand and gravel. "We're a major purchaser of sand and gravel," Ray admitted.

He added that these new expenses will cost the town approximately \$38,500, from July 1 to December 31. "That amounts to almost \$200,000, which we will have to cut out of our budget by either increasing taxes or cutting back services." King promises the issue will be addressed at Tuesday's Town of Halton Hills

council meeting.

King admits there is a debt problem which must be addressed, but that "it's frustrating that the government watched us make our budgets in March and didn't tell us 'til now that we need to greatly slash our budgets."

The social contract issue has not

yet been settled either. The provincial government plans to cut \$285 million by having public service employees take off 12 days off a year. "The government insists that ratepayers will not be affected by this cut," King said. "I don't see how this is possible. People will obviously be affected by the cut in service."

Halton Hills This

WEEKEND

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Businesses confused and bitter over budget

By Oksana Buhel

Local businesses are very disillusioned with Wednesday's provincial budget. "It's sad to see the government trying to put people out of jobs," said Kevin Baldwin, part-owner of Brew Factory in Georgetown.

Baldwin is one of hundreds of local business owners who will suffer because of the expanded sales tax, which will apply to insurance, sand, gravel, soil and clay, parking fees, warranty parts and labor and do-it-yourself brewing.

"I'm really sweating now," admitted Marg Bergsma, co-owner of Bergsma Trucking in Georgetown, which deals with sand, gravel, topsoil and fill. "We just finished wrestling with the GST a couple of years ago, and now we'll have to explain this to our customers. It's kind of scary."

Business-owners agree they will be affected by the expanded tax, but no one knows any details.

Stanley Hardman, insurance broker at Daly, Farnworth and

McGregor Insurance Ltd. in Acton, confirmed his uncertainty while describing a hypothetical situation. A customer owns two vehicles, both insured at \$1,000 in December. The customer then buys a new car in July and insures it, cutting off the insurance on one of the older cars. The insurance would inevitably increase, perhaps to \$1,100. "What I'm not sure of is whether the extra \$100 is taxed, or is the \$1,100 taxed," admits Hardman. "This whole taxation issue regarding insurance is a total surprise. Insurance has never been taxable. It'll be a totally different way of administration."

Asked if the tax will be retroactive from January 1, 1993, Hardman insisted that it would not happen. He hesitated, then added, "Well, it's the government, so I guess it wouldn't surprise any of us."

Bergsma is similarly confused. "We sell firewood and I don't know if that'll be taxed."

Bergsma Trucking is threatened with a two-fold tax increase. "We

have vehicle and liability insurance for our trucks, but I don't know how much, or when it'll increase."

Baldwin doesn't even know what is being taxed. "It's not the ingredients or the rental equipment," he insists. "It's not even the service that's being taxed, or the increase wouldn't be as high. It must be the finished product."

Businesspeople are fed up. "I've taken courses, trained and worked hard to help my country," insisted Bergsma, "but I don't think this will help."

Baldwin agrees. "I've saved for 15 years to open this business," he explained. "Everything I own is on the line...and now this."

Bang-O-Rama

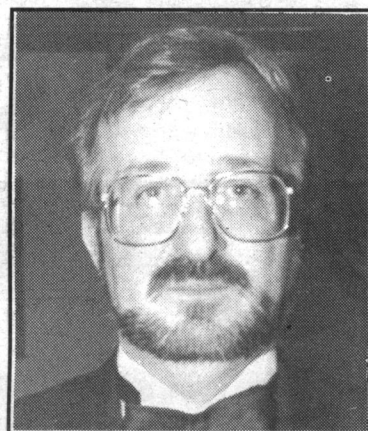
For those not heading to the cottage or other climes this Victoria Day weekend, the Georgetown Optimists Club presents Bang-O-Rama, Saturday, Sunday and Monday at the Georgetown Fairgrounds Park.

Silence is golden

Editor's note: On Wednesday, Halton Hills This Week was contacted by a member of North Halton NDP MPP Noel Duignan's staff to inform us that Mr. Duignan would be contacting the newspaper shortly after 9 a.m. on Thursday to give his reaction and possible insight into the provincial NDP budget which was tabled by Finance Minister Floyd Laughren.

The phone call wasn't made and numerous attempts to contact Mr. Duignan prior to press time for his comments and insight were unsuccessful.

We had purposely made space available for Mr. Duignan's comments and insight so, to borrow from a well-known phrase, 'What you see, is what you get.'



Noel Duignan

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