

How much tightening can police services take?

## Halton cops cash-strapped

By Stephanie Henderson  
Special to HHTW

Halton's police services board may need to draw more than \$8 million from a special regional reserve fund in order to meet provincial demands to chop spending.

Police have been asked to make drastic cuts in their 1993 budget of \$40 million. Regional treasurer Joe Rinaldo told the police services board at a meeting last week he is willing to use the region's reserve fund to offset the shortfall on a transitional basis, but his department expects the police board to make reductions on a permanent basis.

Board chairman, Barry Quinn, says "between 20 to 25 per cent" of the \$40 million budget will have to come from reserves, "based on the fact that we're six months into the fiscal year."

Quinn says \$626,000 in cuts have already been identified, including \$350,000 to

be saved by canceling a one per cent wage increase, \$246,000 in design fees for the new police station for north Halton and \$30,000 in office furniture.

"But we may have to revisit a few things on the basis of safety concerns."

The police service is also expected to trim about \$1.2 million more through wage negotiations under the province's social contract agenda. Personnel costs make up about \$32 million, or 82 per cent of the \$40 million police budget.

Under the new provincial legislation, the region can realize a savings of 20 per cent in this area if an agreement can be reached before Aug. 1. Rinaldo strongly urged the board to comply with the legislative timeline.

"When we have to cut down on our services, we are exposing the public to become victims of crime. Let's not have a knee-jerk

reaction and scare everyone," cautioned Halton police chief James Harding.

Regional treasurer Joe Rinaldo told police that like other regional departments, they must re-engineer and re-think how they provide services.

He suggested police consider the types of cost-cutting initiative being considered by other agencies. The board responded by asking staff to investigate the possibility of implementing user fees for some services, and raising charges on those already in place.

"It would be across-the-counter information," said board chairman Barry Quinn.

A \$15 fee is already charged for insurance reports related to break-ins.

At the meeting, Rinaldo emphasized the need to preserve the region's triple A credit rating.

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Halton  
Hills This

# WEEKEND

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## Halton Hills gets short end of stick

By Oksana Buhel

A letter from the Ministry of Finance, presented at Monday evening's Town of Halton Hills council meeting for information only, was denounced by councillors who felt Halton Hills was getting the short end of the stick.

The letter stated that as a result of June 14 introduced social contract legislation, the "target savings" to Halton Hills would be \$411,491. Target savings are, in effect, provincial transfer funding cuts.

"Why should we pay \$411,491 and Milton only pays \$292,278," demanded councillor Rick Bonnette. "The towns are the same size."

Municipal treasurer, Ray King, admitted the numbers were determined by a "slightly imperfect" model, based on 1991 financial statements. He speculated that despite the similarity in population, the number of people making less than \$30,000 annually, or with part-time jobs, might affect the target savings.

The communication stated



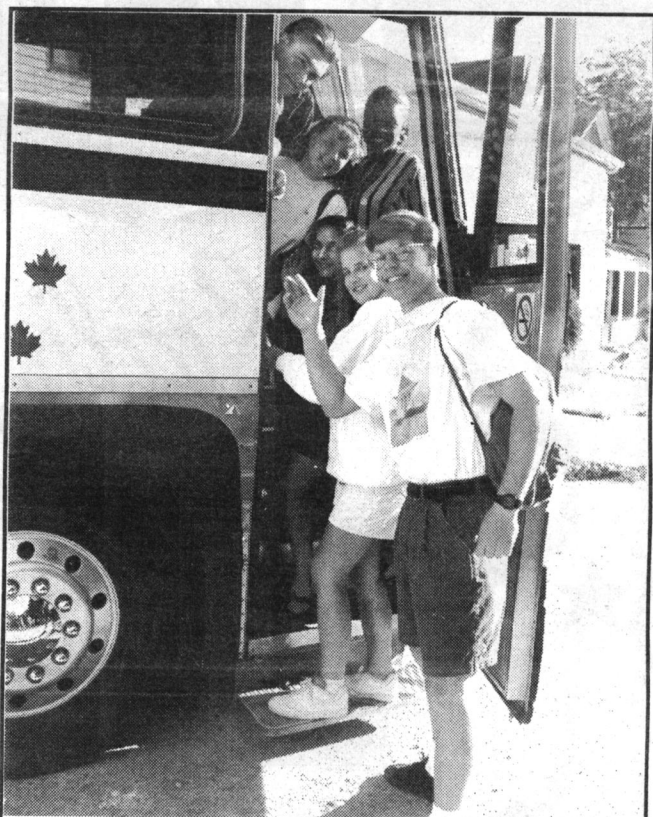
provincial payments will be reduced effective July 1, and employers and bargaining agents have until Aug. 1 to negotiate payroll and other cost-savings the reductions. It further stated if agreements are reached, employees will have access to enhanced job security, and employers will have their savings targets lowered.

Councillor Gerald Rennie, confused by the political jargon, demanded clarification.

King explained lowering of target savings was a built-in incentive to persuade municipalities to make their own agreements before the cut-off date. He added if an agreement is reached, Halton Hills may look forward to a lowering of approximately \$80,000, but only if a province-wide sector agreement is reached.

Councillor Pam Johnston explained that even if the target savings are reduced, the money will have to be made up somewhere else.

Bonnette would not accede to any explanation. "I think we should vigorously pursue this," he demanded.



### Hello New York

Georgetown District High School student Micah Zarnke and 40 other high school students across Ontario hopped on a bus last Tuesday at the Odd Fellows Rebekah Temple Lodge in Georgetown for a 10-day visit to the United Nations in New York City. The trip is organized and funded by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Orion 105, and the Verdun Rebekah Lodge 184.

photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

### Acton sign of the times



### Summer swimming season

Registrations are being accepted for summer swimming lessons. Pick up registration forms at the pool or the Civic Centre. For more information, call 873-2600, ext. 276.

#### School's Out Swim

There will be public swimming starting today at both the Indoor Pools, 2-4 p.m. Come cool off at the pool.

#### Outdoor Pool Opens

The Dick Licata Outdoor Pool will open July 5 - Aug. 29. Public swims from 2-4 p.m. daily.

# SEASON PACKAGES

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Notice: 2 for 1 Tuesdays on 'Trillium' are back!



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