

Region slashes \$3 million in spending

By Johanna Powell
Special to HHTW

Halton regional council beat the province's Aug. 1 deadline, approving a fiscal restraint program that will cut \$3 million from regional spending this year.

That doesn't include additional cuts of nearly \$2 million approved by the Halton Police Services Board, bringing total spending cuts for the region to nearly \$5 million.

In fact, the region cut \$800,000 more than was required in order to provide a

cushion. This will soften the blow if the province decides to demand even more spending cuts or if some departments can't meet restraint targets.

The cutbacks, approved at a special council meeting last Thursday, had already been accepted by a committee representing about 600 non-union workers at Halton region. Their approval made Halton eligible for a 20 percent reduction in the total spending cuts it is required to make.

Friday morning, the restraint program was also accepted by 127 road, water and sewer workers who are members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

However, at press time, Halton had yet to reach an agreement with about 275 other unionized employees. Hughes said many of those are nurses whose unions were waiting for a deal between the health sector and the province.

The rest are landfill employees who are represented by a union but who do not have their first collective agreement in place.

No layoffs are foreseen under Halton's restraint agree-

ment. Instead, the savings will come from eliminating 66 regional positions and freezing the wages and salaries of the remaining 1,014 staff members.

Regional services will not shut down, aside from the business days between Christmas and New Year's Day, when many staff members will be asked to take regular holidays.

Many of the spending cuts have been made to items such as office supplies, mementos, printing a glossy annual report and information programs.

However, some major programs will be reviewed, including the Pegasus transportation system for the disabled. As well, no work will be done on the Oakville waterfront this year.

Agencies and boards will be required to trim 2.2 per cent from their budgets this year and another 3.5 per cent in 1994.

According to regional staff, as a result of the cuts to the 1993 budget, much of the groundwork has been done for the 1994 budget. That budget is expected to be in place at the start of 1994, several months ahead of usual.

Ferro Steel "restructuring"

By Oksana Buhel

Ferro Structural Steel Ltd. on Armstrong Ave., which has been in Georgetown for 31 years, is undergoing "restructuring," and may face closure.

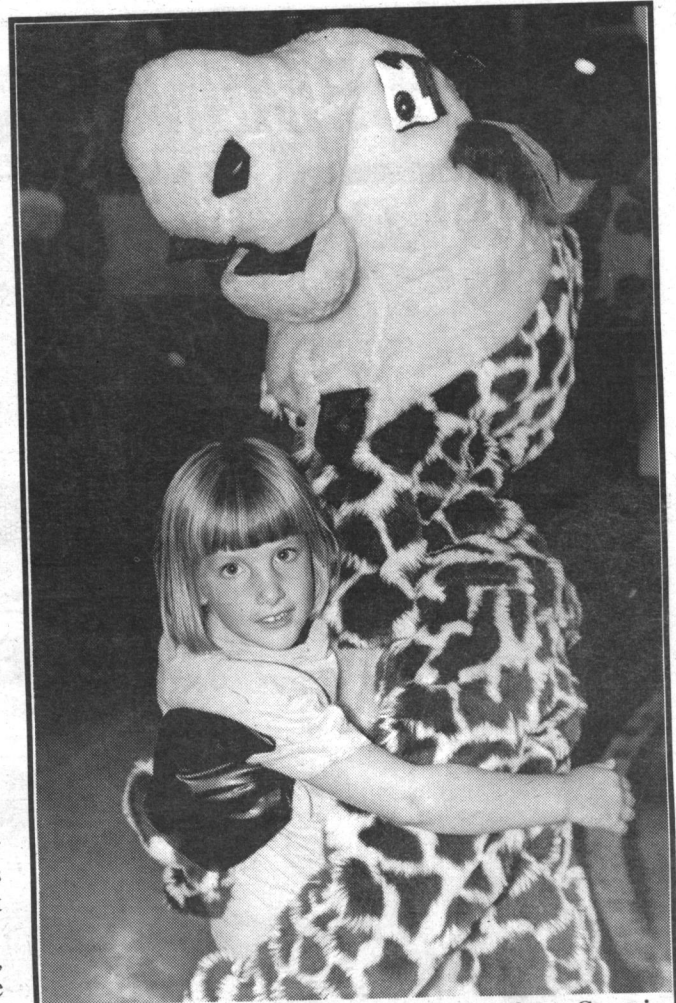
The decision to restructure has been made "very recently," said Julius Salamon, president of the company. He attributed the decision to poor economic times. "There just isn't enough volume," Salamon said. "The construction industry has been hurt more than others. We've really suffered in the last two years."

Ferro Structural Steel Ltd. is the second largest company of its nature in Ontario. "We used to get almost every school contract in the area," Salamon recalled. "Later we switched to industrial and commercial establishments, because they involved more money. A short while after, there was hardly anything in industrial-commercial, so we had to go back to schools. In fact, if it wasn't for the schools, we may have had to make this decision earlier."

Staff is already being cut down. Two years ago, the company employed almost 100 people, and this number has dropped down to approximately 30.

Although Salamon admitted closure is a possibility, he mentioned discussions with outsiders to plan a potential merger. "There's no definite plan," he said. "We have to take things step by step."

Salamon said the company will finish the jobs at hand, before "considering all the possibilities."



Five-year-old Laura Thompson got a hug from George the Giraffe (Christopher Cizmar) at Wednesday night's Town of Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department annual Big Top Summer Carnival held at Acton Arena. photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

Halton Hills This

WEEKEND

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Cops make break-in spree arrests

By Oksana Buhel

Police are still investigating 200 break-ins which took place in south-central Ontario, 20 of which took place in Halton Region.

Three suspects were arrested July 2 on Hwy. 6, outside Guelph. Guelph OPP caught the men in the stolen van they were driving, recovered almost \$10,000 in stolen property and charged them with break and enter, and possession of stolen property. Two of the men are still in custody awaiting trial.

The second arrest occurred in Halton Hills, at Trafalgar Rd. and Steeles Ave., July 7. Three men were arrested and charged with break and enter and possession of stolen property. The van they were driving had been stolen in Ancaster, and inside the van was \$18,000 worth of stolen property taken earlier in the day during a break-in in Caledon.

As a result of further investigation, four men were arrested at their Hamilton residences a short while later.

The Joint Force Unit, composed of members of the Hamilton Wentworth Regional Police Service, Halton Regional Police Service, and Ontario Provincial Police, Brantford and Guelph detachments, investigated the break-ins which mostly occurred in rural homes. Staff Sergeant Mike Kingston, of Georgetown 11 Division, said the group had been active for at least six months and estimated the value of stolen goods during this time at \$2 million.

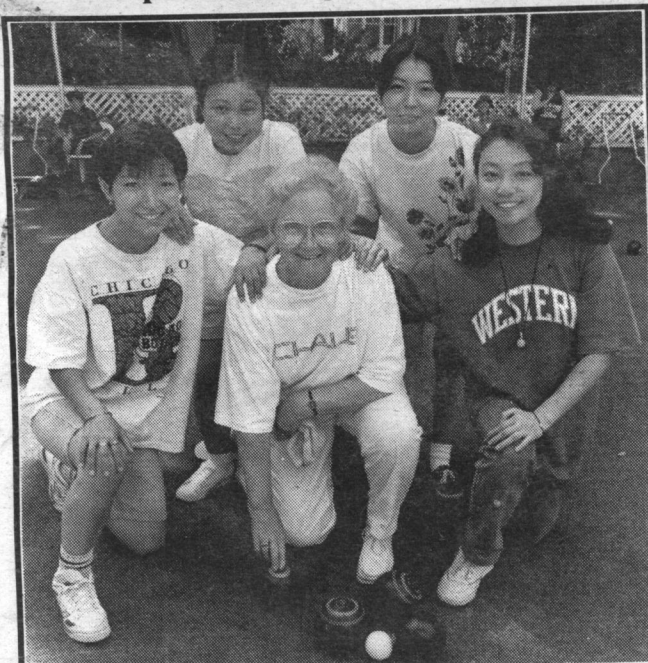
Search warrants, executed in Hamilton and the Six Nations Indian Reserve near Brantford resulted in the recovery of almost \$80,000 worth of stolen property. Kingston explained the property was being "fenced"

(sold) in the reserve. Property included vehicles, jewelry, figurines, collectors plates, stereos and computers.

Sergeant Marty Power, Halton Regional Police Service representative on the

Joint Forces, explained 75 charges have been laid to date, but "information (regarding other break-ins) is coming in daily."

No trial dates have yet been set.



The Japanese exchange students from Fukuoka University on the island of Kyushu tested their lawn bowling techniques last Tuesday at the Georgetown Lawn Bowling Club located on Edith St. Pictured below Mabel Williamson (front centre), Club President, instructed Ikuno Wakasaki (front left), Akari Inada (front right), Miki Fujisawa (back left), and Megumi Komiya on the rules of the game.

photo by Simon Wilson/HHTW

Wastewise cash

Noel Duignan, MPP Halton North, has announced a grant for \$77,850 to Georgetown's Wastewise Community Resource Centre for the implementation and operation of a reuse centre. Mr. Duignan made the announcement on behalf of Environment and Energy Minister Bud Wildman.

"I'm delighted to support Wastewise Community Resource Centre's reuse project," Mr. Duignan said. "This project has the potential to further promote 3Rs activities in the Halton area."

"Today, more than three million homes in Ontario use

the Blue Box to recycle materials that once went directly into landfill sites. Our government is convinced that with reuse centres such as this, along with the Blue Box programs, the amount of waste going to landfill will be reduced by at least 50 per cent by the year 2000," Mr. Duignan said.

Wastewise Community Resources Centre will receive the grant through the ministry's Municipal Recycling Support Program. The funds will go towards operating a demonstration project which will be open to all area residents.

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