

Police

Blotter

Stove fire

The Halton Hills Fire Department was called to Sargent Rd. at 5:56 p.m. Wednesday for a stove fire. They disconnected the power cord and there was a lot of smoke, but no damage reported.

Aggressive driving stats

During the crackdown on aggressive driving on Guelph St. Feb. 3 to 17, Halton Regional Police issued 153 tickets and 57 warnings. The vast majority of tickets were for speeding, and some were for going through amber lights and not yielding. Sgt. Larry Brossard said that these numbers indicate a problem on Guelph St. and the police will continue to monitor the area, although not as intensely as during the campaign.

Local man in accident

A 53-year-old Georgetown man was driving a tractor-trailer carrying rolled steel Wednesday at 5:40 a.m. on Hwy. 401 east of Keele St. when a 1993 Mazda pickup truck struck the tractor-trailer in the rear. The 26-year old driver of the Mazda, a Scarborough resident, was killed but the Georgetown man was not injured. The accident is still under investigation.

Budget debates begin

By LISA TALLYN
Staff writer

Budget committee began wading through the town's \$17.3 million operating budget Tuesday afternoon.

The budget is about \$1.5 million or 8 per cent less than the 1995 operating budget. If approved the operating budget combined with the town's \$8.1 million capital budget would result in an average increase on the town portion of the tax bill of \$4.86 or a 1 per cent increase.

Before budget committee members, councillors and the mayor, began perusing the budget town administrator Ray King commended town staff for all their efforts in coming up with suggestions for cuts.

King said requests for new staff members originally proposed, which he believes were all valid, have been deleted from the budget. Several summer student positions were also deleted. He added the cuts that were made should have the least impact on services to the public.

King said staff will do a comprehensive review of town rates in 1996 with the changes to be implemented in 1997.

In his remarks to budget committee town treasurer Andy Koopmans said the two key challenges facing town staff when formulating the budget were a funding reduction of \$875,000 from the province and the fact the Reclamation Systems Inc. (RSI) landfill proposal for the Acton quarry has resurfaced. Koopmans said an additional

\$125,000, at a minimum, had to be budgeted to cover legal costs for battling the RSI proposal.

The budget includes several new and increased user fees for several departments within the town. User fee increases over tax hikes were supported by the public in the town's recent service review survey.

Some of the cost cutting measures in the budget include: the reduction of education, convention and seminar costs for town staff, the delay in hiring a full-time Acton Arena staff member and the transfer of two full-time arena staff members to the Parks department for 20 weeks during the summer.

A total of \$50,000 has been included in the budget to cover the costs of hiring a consultant to do an organizational review for 1996. The review is to look at the structure of the organization and how it provides the services. It could lead to changes in staffing levels.

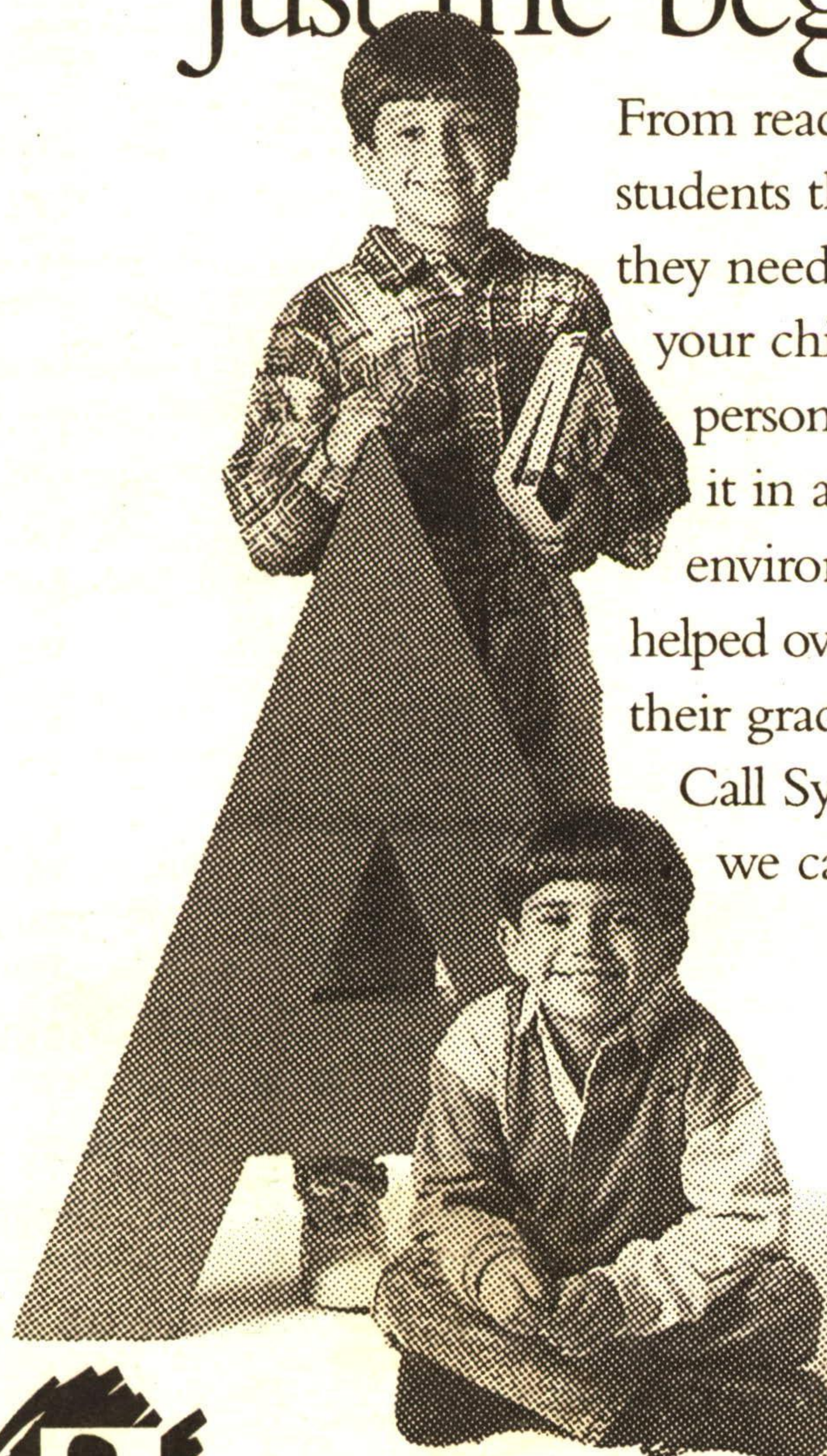
Councillor Gerald Rennie spoke in support of the 1 per cent increase.

He said he is sure the inflation rate has risen by more than 1 per cent over the past four years and said the town should not set a zero per cent increase as its "ultimate goal this year."

Councillor Al Cook said he would not support any increase. "If Mississauga can do it, the region can do it, there is no reason we can't do it," said Cook.

Councillor Ron Chatten said he would support a zero increase this year, and hopefully for the next two or three years.

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