

Halton expects to be okay with Y2K

Halton Region has announced it expects to be Y2K compliant by September.

Ensuring that the turn of the century date change is properly handled has been a priority for the Region, whose Y2K team has been making extensive preparations since May, 1998.

"The Region is working hard to ensure that Halton is well prepared for Y2K and that critical and essential services to the citizens of Halton continue uninterrupted before and after the year 2000," said regional Chair Joyce Savoline.

Director of technology services Jane MacGaskill agrees. "We are confident in our ability to be Y2K ready by September. Nevertheless, we are developing contingency plans so that the Region will be fully prepared to provide service to Halton residents in the event of any major Y2K-related incident."

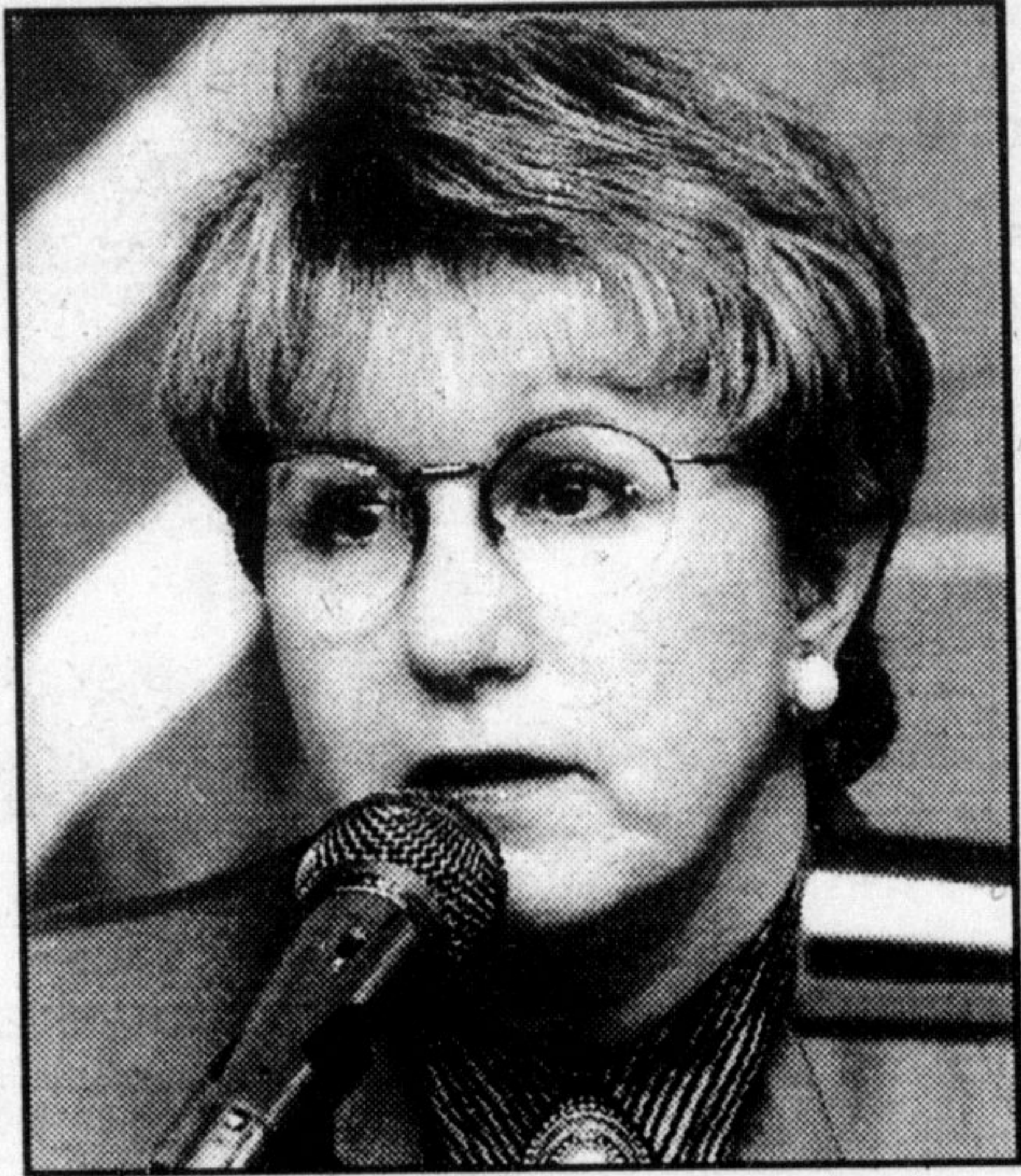
Special emphasis has been placed on services that directly impact the health and safety of residents and staff.

Bell Canada, for example, has confirmed that its 911 network - - which handles all 911 calls in Ontario - - is Y2K compliant.

In Halton, Bell routes 911 calls to the Halton Regional Police communication centre, where the nature of the emergency is determined and the appropriate agency (police, fire, ambulance) is notified.

Several Region-owned components of the 911 system are currently being tested for compliance but the Region assures residents these will not affect the provision of emergency services.

Upgrades to all 12 of the Region's water and wastewater treatment plants have been identified and are underway, scheduled for completion by September. Plans to operate equipment without computer assistance in event of a Y2K system failure are also cur-



Joyce Savoline

rently being developed.

There is also adequate back-up power to meet essential demands for water in case of an extended (more than one day) power outage.

The wastewater system also has adequate back-up power and capacity to run effectively during short or intermittent power outages.

An assessment of systems and equipment at Allendale, the Region's long-term care facility in Milton, has also been completed. A communications plan has been developed and emergency stand-by generators have been tested.

The status of critical suppliers and the education of Allendale staff are ongoing. Contingency plans for every critical function are being formulated to ensure the basic needs of Allendale residents are met in a safe and caring manner.

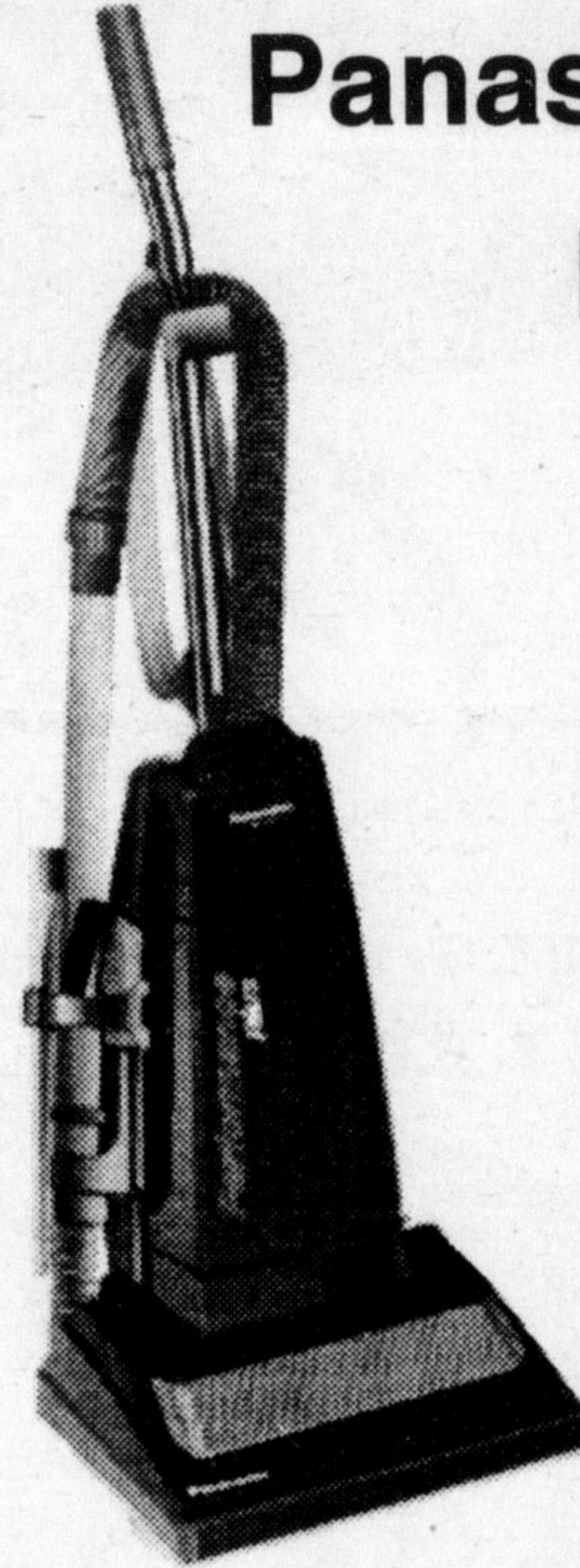
For full information about the Region's Year 2000 preparedness, visit its website at www.region.halton.on.ca or call the Region's Year 2000 Project office at 825-6000 ext. 7067.

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