

Halton cops get provincial grant to boost programs

Province sends \$100,000 as part of 'Partners in Community Safety'

By HOWARD MOZEL

Special to The Champion

Halton Regional Police received more than \$100,000 recently as part of "Partners in Community Safety."

Solicitor General and Minister of Correctional Services Bob Runciman announced \$3.2 million in grants as part of the five-year, \$25 million community policing/enforcement program.

The money — \$105,674 — represents the first installment for year two of the initiative, with the remainder to follow this December. A total of 48 police agencies are taking part.

Partners in Community Safety is a cost-shared program between the province and those municipalities which take part. Over time the provincial contributions slide from 50 per cent in year one (1995/96) to 10 per cent by the end of the program. At that time, Halton police will have received approximately \$600,000.

Funding will be used to improve community policing and boost enforcement in high risk areas.

In Halton, for example, Staff Sgt. Joe Taylor said last year's money (about \$100,000) was used to do the following: One DARE program officer/educator was hired, as were three high

school liaison Officers. One community policing co-ordinator was also brought on board. Money was also earmarked for the Select Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP).

In addition, a pair of front-line officers were put on the road.

This year's funding, Staff Sgt. Taylor said, will be used to continue these programs.

Last year the province doled out more than \$7.9 million while municipalities and police services added roughly \$9.2 million. According to the ministry, this resulted in the hiring of 271 fulltime recruits and the delivery of 526,000 hours of additional police presence.

"The positive results of the first year of the program proved the value of this initiative in helping to provide increased visibility and enforcement in targeted areas," said Mr.

Runciman. "The enhancement of front-line service delivery, has reduced crime and improved community safety."

According to Gary Carr — Oakville MPP and parliamentary assistant to the solicitor general — the program marks a distinct change in philosophy at the provincial level.

"Each community has different priorities and I am very confident our local police will make better decisions than Queen's Park," he said. "The ministry wanted each community to decide how best to use the money. We won't dictate. Halton police will obviously put it to very good use for what is important to the Halton community."

Funds were used for everything from community patrols and the operation of storefront locations to increased enforcement and the provision of 24-hour policing.

Other initiatives include robbery prevention programs, strategies for dealing with firearms, hate/bias-motivated crimes, domestic violence, sexual assault, drug abuse and more.

All police agencies were invited to develop a proposal to increase front-line service. Municipal participation was voluntary. Maximum provincial funding is based on each service's size.

One condition of funding is that police agencies must begin or continue activities related to community policing. The ministry provides backing through research, the development of training programs and field support.



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Escarpment group frets

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Without a single authority naturalist club committee members are concerned lands will lose protected status. In addition, they wonder if the provincial government policy will shift legal expenses to municipalities, which are currently paid for by the province, when municipalities want to defend sections of the Niagara Escarpment Plan against development challenges.

Charity bike tour helpers are needed

The Multiple Sclerosis Society is recruiting volunteers for its Brampton to Guelph Noranda Forest MS Bike Tour.

The event takes place over the August 17-18 weekend and sees cyclists travelling through scenic routes in the country while raising funds for the MS Society.

Volunteers are needed to assist with registration, man checkpoints along the route, and help with various activities at the University of Guelph and the start/finish line. A free MS volunteer t-shirt goes to every volunteer.

Those interested in volunteering should call Dana Renaud at (416) 922-6065 ext. 321 or 1-800-268-7582.

Homes doused on Maiden Lane

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there is a pumping problem and a drainage problem. It's just rainwater but it doesn't have a very pleasant smell."

Mr. Thomson said he does not have a finished basement so damage from the flooding was limited. Some of his neighbours had huge piles of waterlogged carpeting and garbage bags filled with ruined goods on their front lawns.

"I have full confidence in Mr. Marshall at the region that they will find the problem," said Mr. Thomson. "I've been assured that it won't happen again." Mr. Thomson said he was concerned about his future ability to get flood insurance as well as reduced marketability for his home.

"Mother Nature is not being good to Milton in terms of these significant storms," said Mr. Marshall, who described them as the type of that would occur once in 100 years. He said during the most recent flooding problem there was a significant initial storm and then a second storm overnight, as well as a three-hour interruption in electrical service.

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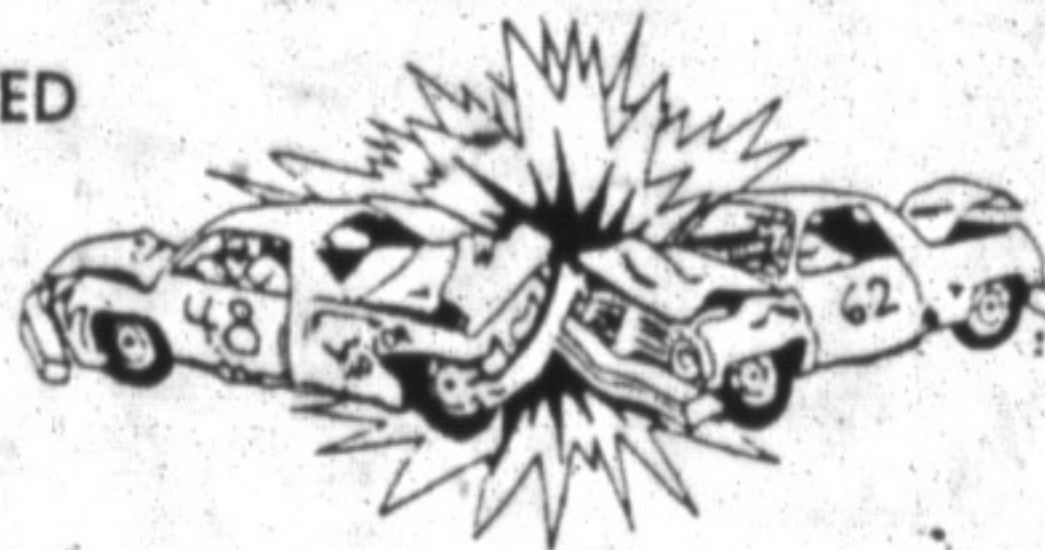
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