

OPINION

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Treading water in the budget pool

Town council began 2007 budget deliberations this week and we hope by the time meetings wrap up early next month councillors' ears are burning from suggestions on how to spend OUR money.

That said, we're not expecting to see a greatly expanded trail system in Town, three new arenas, a downtown underground parking garage or even something as dramatic— gasp!— Monday openings for the libraries.

Sorry folks, those things cost money and money is something the Town doesn't have in surplus.

Undoubtedly, many community groups and citizens have wish lists this year but Town Finance Director Ed DeSousa has already told council members there's little room for extras in this year's budgets— not if they want to keep to the proposed 5.3 per cent hike. That hike represents a \$49 hit to the average homeowner in 2007.

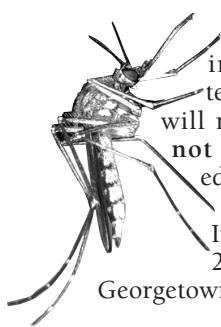
For the past several years Halton Hills councillors— like those in many municipalities— have opted, for the most part, to tread water when jumping into the budget pool. Money for big ticket items now has to be accumulated over a period of years, department heads look under every rock for savings and cuts to the budgets far outnumber the additions (heck this year they're even considering porta-potties for the Fairgrounds and Prospect Park).

The end purpose is to offer Joe Taxpayer a tax hike that will hit him just hard enough in the wallet that he knows someone was there, but not enough for him to file a police report.

"No" is a word many community members may be hearing in coming days from our council members. It's a word they may have to get used to.

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



Letters to the editor must include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited for content and/or length.

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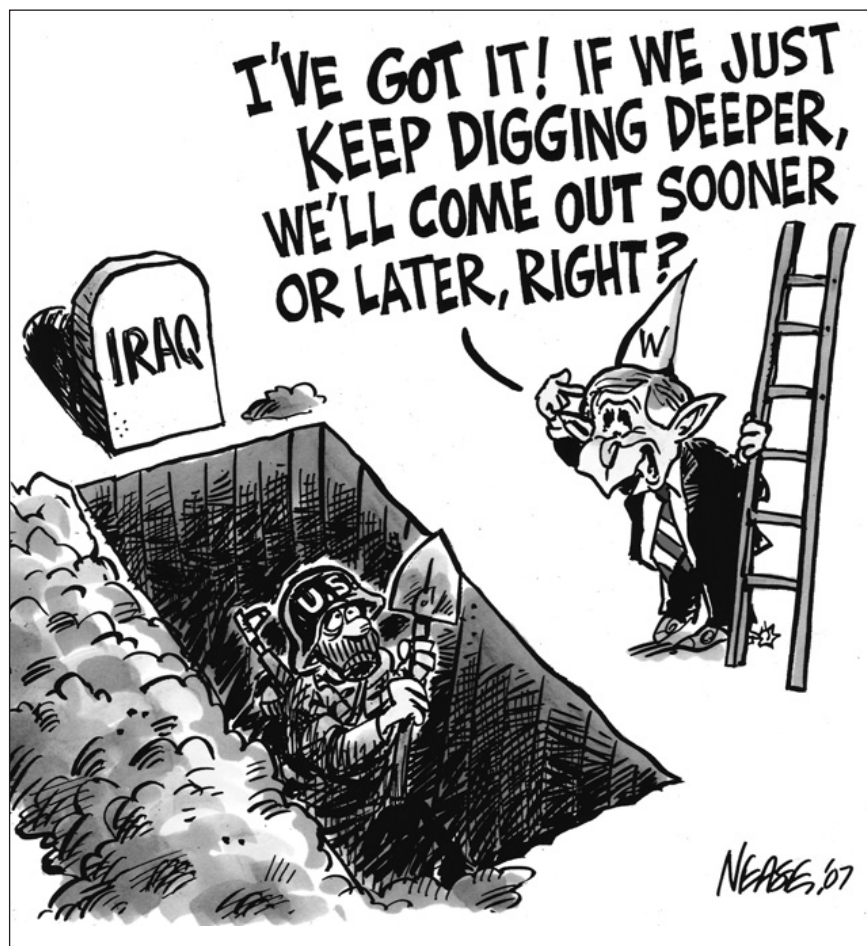
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