

LOCAL NEWS

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

MPAC

There is a simple way to explain how individual tax bills are calculated.

Each year when the township budget is finalized, the total amount of money needed is divided by the value of all the property in the township. This produces the mill rate. To calculate each taxpayer's share, the mill rate is multiplied by the value of the property owned by that person.

An increase in property value does not necessarily mean an increase in taxes. If the township needs the same money next year as this, and the property value goes up, the mill rate goes down.

Three members of council were clearly in agreement. Deputy Mayor Ray Kelly and Councillors Marc Coombs and Ed Van Egmond all concurred the goal is another zero tax increase in the township portion of the tax bill.

Councillor Tim Post could not see the sense of that. He sees a zero increase as "fiscal suicide." He would look at a realistic financial situation for the township and vote for that. Mr. Post has stated in the past that zero increases can mean that in future years the township will have to make up for the work not done that should have been.

Mayor Lee Dekeyser prefaced his comments with his observation that everyone's valuation went up. His was up \$40,000. The mayor explained there are possible county tax increases that the township can't control. He vowed to keep taxes as low as possible.

The MPAC assesses 4.4-million properties in Ontario. It costs less than \$34 per property for the assessments done by the corporation.

The current system was instituted in 1998 by the Progressive Conservative government under Mike Harris. It was established to replace an outdated system that gave inconsistent valuations, although there are some today who say the same thing is happening under MPAC.

Under the current value assessment (CVA) system, recent sales of similar properties in the area are used to determine the current assessed value of

a particular property.

CVA is the most commonly used approach to property assessment in the world. It is used by all 10 Canadian provinces and 128 countries.

For the 2006 tax year, assessments are based on current value as of January 1, 2005.

The total current assessed value for all property in Ontario is projected to be \$1.33-trillion for the 2005 base year.

People can appeal their assessment values. During the reassessment period, many MPAC offices across the province, as well as the customer call centre, will offer extended hours, and members of the public are invited to join the local MPAC information session and open house scheduled for this area on Tuesday, October 18 at the Lions Club in Brighton from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

MPAC suggests, as a general guideline, property owners test the accuracy of their assessed value by asking themselves if they could have sold their property for the assessed value on January 1, 2005. If property owners do not believe their

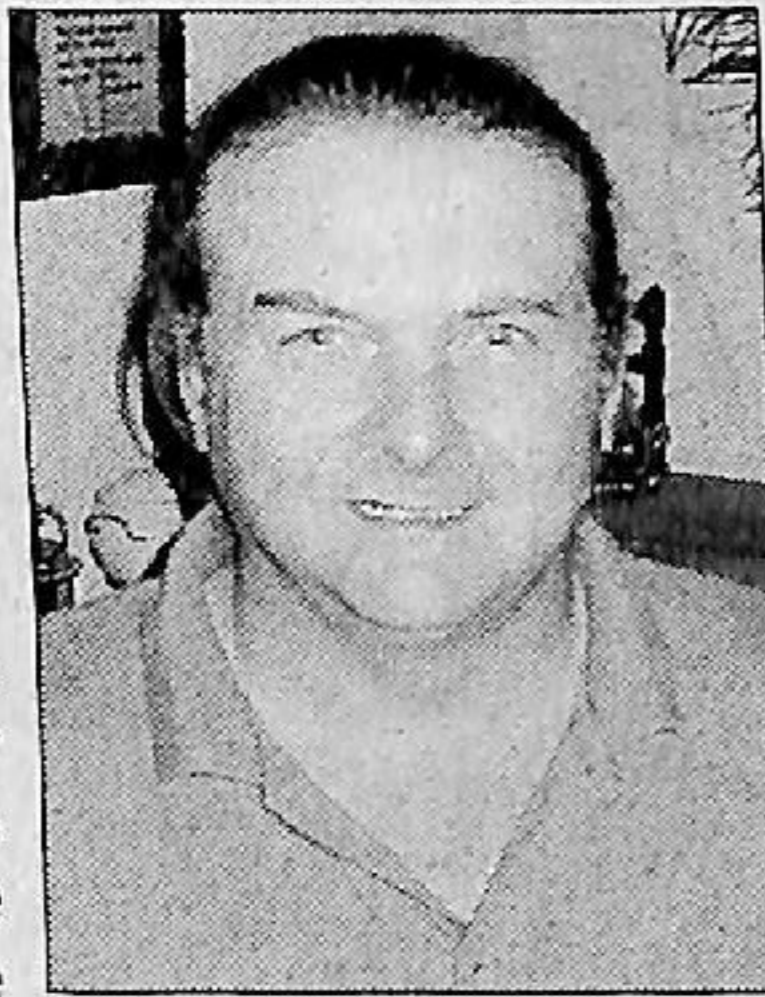
assessed value or classification is accurate, they have three options.

- They can contact MPAC to ask questions and confirm information;
- submit a Request for Reconsideration to MPAC; or
- file a Notice of Complaint (appeal) to the Assessment Review Board.

With a Request for Reconsideration, MPAC will review the assessed value and classification of a property for accuracy and make appropriate adjustments if an error has occurred. Owners have until December 31, 2006 to request a review.

Cramahe Township is not the only municipality to see its property values rise.

In Quinte West, Belleville, and the counties of Northumberland, Hastings and Prince Edward, the assessed value of residential properties has increased by an average of nearly 19 per cent since June 2003 according to Christine Burden, municipal relations representative in the Trenton office of the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Cramahe's rose by an average of 14.95 per cent.



Ed Van Egmond
Councillor

LIFESTYLES

'Friends' starting in Brighton

by CINDY WOODS
The Independent

In recognition of Ontario Public Library Week next week, Lesley Simla is spearheading the drive to start a Brighton 'Friends' group.

"When I moved to Brighton about three years ago, I wanted to join the Friends of the Library, but there wasn't one," Ms. Simla says. "I have been on library boards in other communities I've lived in, so I felt it was time to start one here."

A 'Friends' group is an autonomous organization that works with library staff and the library board to advocate for more funding, as well as promote and raise the library profile in the community.

With funding cuts to the Southern Ontario Library Services coupled with rising costs, a 'Friends' group would be beneficial.

And Brighton's head librarian, Maureen Venton, certainly thinks so.

"It would be a wonderful benefit to our library. It would allow us to purchase



Cindy Woods photo

Lesley Simla is spearheading the formation of a Brighton 'Friends of the Library' group starting with various promotions at the library next week.

smaller items that aren't covered in our annual budget, but would provide value-added services for the library," Ms. Venton says.

Starting next week, library users will find bookmarks in the books they borrow soliciting their volunteer time for 'Friends of the Library'.

"More than 600 people

signed a petition in this library protesting cuts to library funding," Ms. Simla adds. "If there are 600 people in Brighton who use the library regularly, I'm sure there are people who would help with 'Friends'."

For more information, contact Lesley Simla at 613-475-8873.

INDEPENDENT OCT 12/05

Davidson, William "Bill"
Peacefully at his residence in Trenton, on Saturday, October 8, 2005, age 74 years. Bill Davidson, formerly of Brighton and Warkworth, son of the late John Davidson and the late Vera (Demorest). Loving husband of Eleanor Ann (Smith). Dear father of Barbara, Bonnie and Brian, Sheryl, Allen and Yvonne. Dear brother of Bernice, Alice and Ross; Gerald and Jean, Ron and Anne. Brother-in-law of Roger and Geraldine, Ken and Sue Anne, and son-in-law of Nellie Smith. Sadly missed by his seven grandchildren, his five great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. The family will receive friends and the Wals Funeral Home, 130 Main Street, Brighton on Wednesday, October 12th at 3 o'clock, with a Masonic service immediately prior. The Reverend Charles Buchanan officiating. Cremation with interment Mount Hope Cemetery. As an expression of sympathy, donations to the charity of your choice, would be appreciated by the family. www.walsfuneralhome.com

see pg 7.