

EDITORIAL

with Frances Learment

Money well spent

The Town's operating budget requires \$35-million in tax dollars – that's 6.9 per cent more than last year, reduced to 5.9 per cent by the additional taxes from new businesses and residents. When factored with Regional and school board taxes, it's a 2.6 per cent, or \$25, jump per \$100,000 of assessment, to \$979.

While never wanting to evade, but always wanting to avoid taxes of all kinds, it seems municipal property taxes are the best bang for the buck. For many, the cost of daily coffee, phone/TV and internet, equals what the "average" ratepayer in Acton shells out for services like roads, bridges, parks, libraries, fire, and police – to name a few.

Balancing often conflicting lists of wants and needs, is "never easy" according to Mayor Rick Bonnette who said the budget committee "pretty well stayed on course" with earlier directives to cap any tax increase at 5.9 per cent. Earlier he alluded to the difficult process and proposed 17 per cent tax hike in neighbouring Erin. New CAO David Smith said the budget sticks to long-term plans to build reserves.

The budget, to be approved by Council Monday, includes money for additional hours at the Georgetown library – Acton operating hours will be studied – two more full-time firefighters, and starter funds to prevent an Emerald Ash Borer, tree killing epidemic.

PAST PAGES

TEN YEARS AGO

- The proposed new ambulance station on Churchill Road drew good reviews at an open house with people glad to have additional service in a \$650,000 salmon-coloured brick building with a green roof.

- Kentucky Fried Chicken is moving from the downtown to the Sobeys plaza, along with a video store, Curves and a hairdressing salon. No word on a tenant for the KFC store leaving the IGA plaza.

FIVE YEARS AGO

- Acton and Georgetown Senior Centre members asked Halton's budget committee for more staff co-ordinator time to keep their centre up to provincial standards.

- Acton High School students got a look at future jobs at a career fair featuring local business owners – some of them Acton High grads – who have done well.



MEMORY LEAVES: Members of the scrap booking group at the Acton Seniors Centre added memory leaves to the Centre's Tree of Hope, including Wendy Muir (on ladder), Stephanie Westaway (left), Margaret Anderson and Marj McDonough. – Julie Conroy photo

Just what the doctor ordered

It's been an interesting week. Like so many people I've heard about and talked to, our household joined the land of sickies. The cold and flu had started with the head of the household and trickled down to the little guy. All of us were hit, one after another. During this time I found myself at the walk-in clinic in town, and calling the Provincial health help-line Telehealth and both items got me thinking about how lucky we are.

Many months back on a Sunday, the Dude was feeling really icky. Against his wishes, I insisted we go to a walk-in clinic in Georgetown to seek medical help. In the past I had always gone to the one by the old Zellers. When we got there this time, it had closed. That totally boggled me. Surely there were enough sick people to keep all the clinics open? We then drove to the south-end to another walk-in clinic. We were told the wait was over three hours to see a doctor and most people were sitting in their cars waiting instead of in the office. At that point we decided the Dude wasn't that sick and the aspirins at home would do him. If he was still sick on Monday he could go to our family doctor.

There was a three-hour wait to



By **Angela Tyler**

just see a doctor in a town with more than one clinic and for a reason unknown to us at least one clinic closed (or moved?). Yet, here in Acton, I have been to our walk-in clinic this past week a few times and each time I am blown away with the speed in which you can see a doctor. This past week specifically, my time from our house, to the clinic, seeing the doctor, getting the prescription and returning was under 45 minutes. That is awesome in my opinion.

Does anybody remember the old doctor's office? It seems like an eternity ago. If you think back a long time ago, can you recall when the doctor's office was in the building behind Halton Hills Furniture? I remember in the more recent "old doctor's office" the waiting time seemed forever. First, you would sit in the outer office what felt like millimetres away from someone hacking all their germs on you, to be moved into an exam room to wait for even longer. The office was so small and everyone knew exactly why you were there. It was too small

to be private. Every time I go into our new doctor's office I am impressed with what our town is so fortunate to have with not only the building but also the staff, some of which have been there for decades.

Also on the weekend I called Telehealth for some assistance. This is the provincial call-in centre where you can talk to a nurse and get assistance and receive medical direction. Telehealth is yet another example of how fortunate we are. This is a free service, by the way.

Normally when you hear about a government-run service you might have visions of line ups at the license bureau or waiting endlessly on hold while pushing "1" to speak to someone in English. With Telehealth they offer a call back service so you do not have to wait endlessly and if you are directed to an emergency room, they will forward your telephone transcript to the hospital you will be attending.

It's been a rough winter for colds and flu bugs for everyone, however, for me at least, when our family wasn't feeling well it is very reassuring to have the medical treatment available in Acton that we have and other services offered.



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