

# THE INDEPENDENT

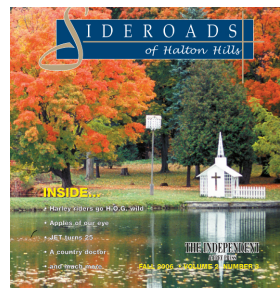


**Georgetown Soccer Club declares its Champions**  
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**Christian school modernizes library**  
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## FRIDAY...

Courtney MacGillivray is a driven woman. Read her story in the Sports section in Friday's edition.

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Alex Foster surveys the damage to his garage at 26 Sargent Road after the structure was destroyed by fire in the early hours Tuesday morning. Next door neighbour Bert Burns' house also sustained damage, melting the vinyl siding on his house as well as causing major damage to his detached garage which was adjacent to Foster's garage. *Photo by Ted Brown*

## Night inferno demolishes garage, extensive damage to two homes

**EAMONN MAHER**  
Staff Writer

Residents in the Sargent Rd. area of Georgetown were evacuated from their homes into the pouring rain early Tuesday morning when a fire destroyed a detached garage and severely damaged the house west of it, as well as the next door garage.

No injuries to residents were reported in the blaze, although a firefighter suffered a minor wrist injury.

The garage, which is not attached to the home, burned to the ground, while the back of the residence at 26 Sargent Rd. had damaged windows from the heat.

Halton Hills Fire Department chief of operations John Martin said a neighbour awoke at around 1 a.m. to popping and cracking noises, making a quick emergency call that allowed firefighters to respond quickly and extinguish the burning garage.

"Receiving the call when we did was instrumental in

getting us there," said Martin. "The aggressive attack by firefighters definitely saved the nearby homes."

The fire also extensively damaged windows and vinyl siding to the neighbouring home and garage at 28 Sargent Rd. As well, a 1997 Ford F150 truck and a Dodge Dakota Sport truck were damaged, at an estimated cost of \$4,500.

Neighbour Kristie Pells, whose backyard provided a clear view of the fully engulfed garage, was startled out of sleep by her family's barking dog. Residents were able to return to their homes about an hour after the fire began.

"We got up and saw the flames and called 911, but they had already received a call," said Pells. "About five minutes later, the police came pounding on the doors for everyone to get out of the houses."

A total preliminary damage estimate has been set at \$100,000. Halton Hills Fire Department staff and the Electrical Safety Authority were investigating the fire scene Tuesday afternoon.

*(With files from Ted Brown, staff writer)*

## 'Creative' budgeting to reduce tax hike

**CYNTHIA GAMBLE**  
Staff Writer

A new method of budgeting, which Halton Hills Chief Administrative Officer Dennis Perlin describes as more transparent to taxpayers, will result in a decrease of 1 per cent on the Town's projected 2007 tax increase.

At a special afternoon meeting on Monday, budget committee, which includes all members of council, gave the go-ahead to staff to pursue a capital charge-back percentage amount while preparing the 2007 budget.

Charge-back is method of accounting staff time and overhead spent on a specific construction project, and that cost will now be "charged" to the overall budget of that capital project—the Town is using a flat rate percentage fee of 3% per project. It's a method of directly attributing the town costs of managing a capital project to its actual cost. That charge-back from the capital budget will be transferred to the operating budget. For example, a construction project valued at \$100,000 will now be charged a three per cent charge-back (\$3,000). So the construction project will now be \$97,000 plus the \$3,000 charge-back.

"Indeed the taxpayers are already paying for that 3 per cent. It's hidden. It's hidden in the operating budget. What we're trying to start is a process of attributing the proper cost of every project to that project," said Perlin. "It is really to help the taxpayer understand what the true cost of a particular project is—right now they don't get that understanding if they just look at the capital costs."

See FOGAL, pg. 9

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