

OPINION

www.independentfreepress.com

Phone: 905-873-0301
Fax: 905-873-0398

Town budget a taxing time

So, when it was all said and done, the nit-picking concluded and the haggling completed by local councillors, you—the Halton Hills homeowner—will be paying roughly \$50 more this year on your property tax bill for Town services.

Surely, you didn't think you'd be paying less.

We've said it before, folks, that the days of near-zero per cent municipal tax hikes are likely a fond memory. Combined with the Halton Region tax hike, local homeowners will fork over \$82 more in taxes in 2007 (based on a home assessed at \$300,000).

Essentially, tax hikes go towards items most residents take for granted—having the lawn cut in the cemeteries, the sidewalks cleared of snow, fire service, recreation facilities and programs, park maintenance, etc. There is a cost behind each and every one of those items and the cost to deliver those services is not getting cheaper each year.

This year's 5.4 per cent Town tax hike is a somewhat misleading number in that 2 per cent was already earmarked for the pavement management plan (a five-year plan—which ends next year—to ensure money is there each year for road improvement) and 1.3 per cent had been dedicated to hiring four full-time firefighters.

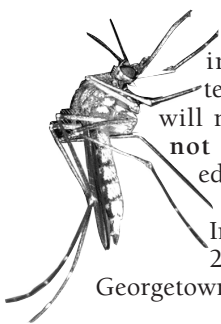
Some could argue this year's "true" Town tax hike is 2.1 per cent but don't try telling that to Joe Taxpayer as he forks over \$50 more than he did last year.

While any tax hike is a bitter pill to swallow, we doubt we'll hear much of an outcry from the public over a tax hike that will amount to less than \$1.60 a week for each homeowner.

That is, unless the grass in the cemeteries isn't cut or the sidewalks aren't plowed...

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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.

Mail or drop off:

Independent & Free Press,
280 Guelph St., Unit 29,

Georgetown, ON., L7G 4B1

E-mail:

jmcghie@independentfreepress.com

THE INDEPENDENT & FREE PRESS

The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of several newspapers published by Metroland Media Group Ltd.

Advertising is accepted on the condition that, in the event of a typographical error, that portion of the advertising space occupied by the erroneous item, together with reasonable allowance for signature will not be charged for, but the balance of the advertisement will be paid for at the acceptable rate. In the event of typographical error advertising goods or services at wrong price, goods or services may not be sold. Advertising is merely an offer to sell which may be withdrawn at any time.

Editorial and advertising content of The Independent & Free Press is protected by copyright. Unauthorized use is prohibited.

Price: Store copies 50¢ each; Subscriptions \$26 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130 per year in all other countries. Plus G.S.T.

Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Independent & Free Press is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.



Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Literacy carol reading a huge success

Dear editor,
Sold out in advance, the CBC and Literacy North Halton reading of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, December 9, was a huge success. Supported by the generous donations of Maple Lodge Farms, community businesses and citizens, \$7,600 was raised to facilitate adult literacy in this community.

The production featured notable CBC personality Kevin Sylvester, along with an extraordinary cast of talented local performers and the St. John's United Church Choir. The event was put together by a dedicated group of Literacy North Halton volunteers. Without their year-round enthusiasm for giving there would have been no story to tell and no one to read it.

Charles Dickens, himself was dedicated to education and literacy. The transformation of Ebenezer Scrooge

from a miserly curmudgeon to a man with community purpose and hope for the future, is an inspiration to us all. We can make a difference in our community by making a difference in the lives of others. Literacy North Halton has dedicated 20 years to the needs of adults in this community who wish to improve their skills in order to find fulfilling employment, go on to further education and become better citizens.

Thank you to: Maple Lodge Farms, The Smith Family of Glen Williams, Lois Fraser, Purity Professionals, Paul C. Armstrong, the Halton Hills and Milton Public Libraries, *The Milton Canadian Champion*, *The Georgetown Independent & Free Press*, President's Choice Loblaws Brands Ltd., K & B Chippis, Georgetown Little Theatre and Lever Canada.

Special thanks to all of the volunteers who made this event such a

special addition to the season of giving. In the words of Tiny Tim, "God bless us, everyone."

Amelia Steinbring,
volunteer committee chair
CBC Christmas Carol/
Literacy North Halton

Thrift shop says 'thanks'

Dear editor,
As you may know, the Upper Credit Humane Society recently opened its new Thrift Shop in the Moore Park Plaza, Georgetown.

Due do the increasing number of animals at our main shelter in Erin, space was needed and the thrift shop there, had to relocate. We finally opened November 1/06.

Since then, we have been overwhelmed by the support shown us in this wonderful community. From the amazing donations we receive, to those who stop in to say hello and browse around to see what's new or ask about animals available for adoption. Most often people leave, delighted to have found a good buy and sometimes a real treasure.

On behalf of the dedicated volunteers who keep our shop open and all the animals at our shelter waiting for their forever home, I wish to express our sincere appreciation to everyone who has come to visit us, and welcome those we've yet to meet. We are open Tuesday through Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wendy Jones, volunteer,
Upper Credit Humane Society

Parent echoes call for new movie theatre here

Dear editor,
Ditto to the youngster who recently wrote in about the lack of a modern movie theatre in town.

As a father of two teenage girls, I am forever driving my kids and their friends to Brampton or Milton to watch a movie, not to mention the time and cost of fuel to get there and back.

With all the young kids in Georgetown and families moving into new developments in Georgetown south, you would think

that this town can support a movie theatre. Heck, even I would go since the last time I went to the movies Leonardo DiCaprio was sinking with the *Titanic*. We have plenty of grocery stores and convenience stores, but a movie theatre in Georgetown south would have been nice since there is plenty of land to play with.

I'm sure I am not the only parent feeling this way.

P.S. Is a Home Depot in Georgetown pushing it?

Jack Scolieri, Georgetown