

# THE INDEPENDENT

## & FREE PRESS

Parks & Rec guide with today's edition



Recipe of the week: Peach salsa

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48 Pages

Halton Hills' award-winning newspaper

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Local groups receive Trillium grants

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Thunderbolts claim Ontario titles

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### WEDNESDAY...

Many of the top agility dogs in North America will be competing at Halton Place this weekend. See Wednesday's edition for details.

For breaking news go to: [www.independentfreepress.com](http://www.independentfreepress.com)



Limehouse area farmer Fred Anthony checks the growth on some of the cobs in his corn crop. With the recent dry weather, the cobs have not filled to the end of the cob, so Anthony predicts yields will suffer when the corn is harvested this fall.

Photo by Ted Brown

## Local crops suffering from lack of rainfall

TED BROWN  
Staff Writer

From May to July of this year, Halton Hills has experienced one of the driest spells in recent history, and local crops are telling the story.

Local farmer Bill Allison, who crops 1,400 acres in Halton Hills, is well aware of that story, having recently finished harvesting his spring wheat.

"The fall wheat was an average yield," said Allison, "but not unexpectedly, the spring wheat was down a bit. Fortunately, it matured early enough to miss major damage, but it's still down a bit."

Allison also feels the corn yields will be affected this fall.

"The dry spell has already impacted pollination and reproduction of the corn a fair bit, so the cobs haven't have the opportunity to fill out to the ends. If we get some decent rain soon, at least what is there will have an opportunity to fill a bit, but that won't change the number of kernels in each cob."

See SOYBEAN, pg. 12

## It's early, but Town is considering 6.6% tax hike

CYNTHIA GAMBLE  
Staff Writer

For the first time proposed Town taxes for 2008 will be break the \$1,000 barrier.

Halton Hills council gave direction Monday night to Town staff to begin preparing the 2008 budget with a proposed 6.6 per cent increase on tax bills next year. In 2007 the increase was 5.4 per cent.

That percentage equates to a \$65 increase on homes assessed at \$300,000. Taxpayers will pay \$1,045 compared to the \$980 paid this year.

Combined with proposed Town, Halton Region (\$1,354) and education taxes (\$792), the overall increase is predicted to be 3.8 per cent— \$117— that's \$3,191 for all taxes combined.

But it's early yet, with Town staff preparing to sit down to whittle away at their budgets this fall. Staff will also prepare "decision packages" that reflect an additional one per cent increase or one per cent decrease in programs and services.

In a departure from past practice, deliberation of the 2008 capital budget and the public delegation night, will be held in mid-

November while discussion of the operating budget will be held in early January.

The operating budget includes a base budget increase of 3.4 per cent plus 2 per cent (\$445,000) dedicated to the pavement management program and 1.2 per cent (\$275,000) dedicated to the hiring of four firefighters. This is the last year of the five-year pavement management program.

In a presentation to council, Finance Director Ed DeSousa outlined a number of factors figuring into the 2008 budget:

See TOWN'S, pg. 5

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