

Tax hike coming

It's probably safe to say that budget time is the least favourite time of year for municipal staff workers, politicians, reporters and likely, Joe Citizen.

Face it, budget discussions and deliberations and the reporting of same, does not hold the excitement of say, a weekend with Britney Spears.

For the average homeowner, budget time is simply a time to hear bureaucrats and politicians lament the fact that money is scarce and that they will need more from you— Joe Citizen— in order to meet demand for services or to maintain current levels.

That's no different this year.

While final numbers won't be determined until later this month, everything is pointing to Halton Hills Town Council laying a hefty tax hike on local residents.

Before any further number-crunching is done next week the Town is *considering* a hike of 9.3 per cent, which translates into roughly \$91 more a year for a Halton Hills resident with a home assessed at \$300,000. Combined with Region (a 1.3 per cent hike) and education taxes (a government mandated zero per cent increase) the overall final tax hike could be 3.5 per cent (for a total yearly increase of \$108).

Residents should consider these important facts:

1. The Town portion of their final tax bill is 34 per cent while the Region and education portion make up 41 and 25 per cent respectively.

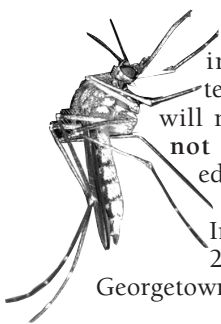
2. The Town staff recommended hike of 9.3 per cent is not carved in stone. However, recent history has shown budget committee members (read: Town councillors) rarely reduce that starting figure by more than more than a percentage point or two.

3. Tax hikes do not get progressively get worse every year... but they are as regular as clockwork. Town tax hikes in the past nine years have been 8.2% (1999), 2.8% (2000), 3% (2001), 5.9% (2002), 4% (2003), 5.8% (2004), 4.6% (2005), 4.7% (2006) and 5.4% (2007).

We can only hope this year's increase— whatever it is— does not become a trend towards double-digit hikes.

Something bugging you?

Send us a letter!



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Steve Nease



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Vaccinations are a matter of choice

Dear editor,
I am writing in response to Marinus Pater's recent letter re: vaccinations and the reductions of deaths worldwide.

It's wonderful to hear about the positive rewards of vaccinating ourselves and others; however, there are side effects that the public should be aware of. Providing people literature, knowledge and education about vaccinations whether it's 'pro' or contrary to one's beliefs is called 'informed consent'.

Freedom of choice is most important and in the best interest to the public. Remember, you are quoting stats from a site that supports vaccinations. People do react

and have suffered from side effects from vaccinations. Maybe they are few and far between and possibly underreported. When you quote stats from a country such as Africa, that suffers from malnourishment, war and poverty you must ask yourself, were they dying from measles or complications from being malnourished?

My parents were never vaccinated from the measles, mumps or rubella, and they suffered from all of those diseases and lived. Complications can arise from both disease and vaccinations. Regardless, whether the chiropractic community is on the 'bandwagon' they are providing the public

education and freedom of choice.

To our educational providers and community resources out there...please keep us informed!

Michele Moleta,
Georgetown

Businesses should keep tabs on carts

Dear editor,
In response to the letter from James Leach regarding shopping carts.

Ever since two new businesses opened in the old Loblaws location, I have noticed a proliferation of abandoned shopping carts in the Georgetown Market Place parking lot.

At times, driving can be dangerous there, especially on a windy day, as the carts take on a demonic nature and bullet themselves across the lot.

Likewise, valuable parking spaces are lost due to these rogue shopping carts.

While I do agree, that shoppers should be conscientious of their loaned cart, and return it, I also feel the businesses have an obligation to not only police this, but assist in the return of these menaces.

Zellers does a pretty good job of keeping their carts out of the lot, why cannot others not follow their example.

Russell Foster,
Georgetown

Homes for seniors needed in Acton

Dear editor,
There are a lot of seniors in Acton who would love to remain living here in their senior years.

A lot of us would like a complex as was described previously in the newspaper— some bungalows and town homes that are maintained and apartments that could be bought or rented. Most of us would like to stay in home for as long as possible.

For three years my husband and I have been looking for an affordable bungalow that is maintained (snow removal, landscaping, etc.)

Most of our friends from Acton have moved as far away as Port Rowan, Wasaga Beach, St. Thomas

and even British Columbia. They all miss Acton and their children.

This summer I visited a complex in B.C. and was so impressed as there were two-bedroom bungalows and townhomes similar to those found on Doctor Moore Court in Acton. There was a maintained and affordable low-rise apartment complex and the grounds were beautifully maintained. As I sat on his deck, I said to my brother that this was seniors' heaven.

Too bad we don't have one in our dear Acton. If someone built this for us they would be my heroes.

Mary Pilarczyk,
Acton