

# OPINION

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## Huge Town tax hike a bitter pill to swallow

While some may find it easy to dismiss a \$96 increase in Town taxes for 2008— after all it's only a couple dollars more a week— such a hike does not deserve a cavalier attitude.

It might be easy to dismiss the Town's 9.8 per cent tax increase if Halton Hills residents were seeing similar hikes to their weekly pay cheques.

However, we doubt they are.

So, for this year, homeowners, with a house assessed at \$300,000, will be forced to pay nearly \$100 extra for the same services they received last year.

That's a bitter pill for many residents, especially seniors living on fixed incomes, to swallow.

Unfortunately, (and stop us if you've heard this here before) it's the cost of the Town doing business today.

Roads need to be repaired, recreation programs need to be run, facilities need to be maintained, staff have to be hired, etc.

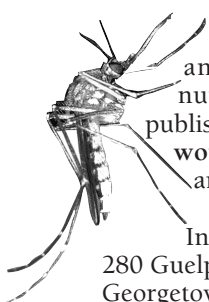
With neither the federal or provincial governments eager to provide sufficient infrastructure funding to municipalities, the pressure to keep tax increases to a reasonable number (and 9.8 per cent is not reasonable, necessary perhaps, but not reasonable) only increases.

Town treasurer Ed DeSousa has already forewarned that, with local assessment growth virtually stalled because of water and wastewater servicing constraints, tax hikes like this year's will become the norm instead of the exception.

With dire warnings of a downturn in the national economy, the stock markets taking a large hit, job losses mounting and now huge municipal tax hikes on the way, 2008 is not starting out on a positive note.

## 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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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:

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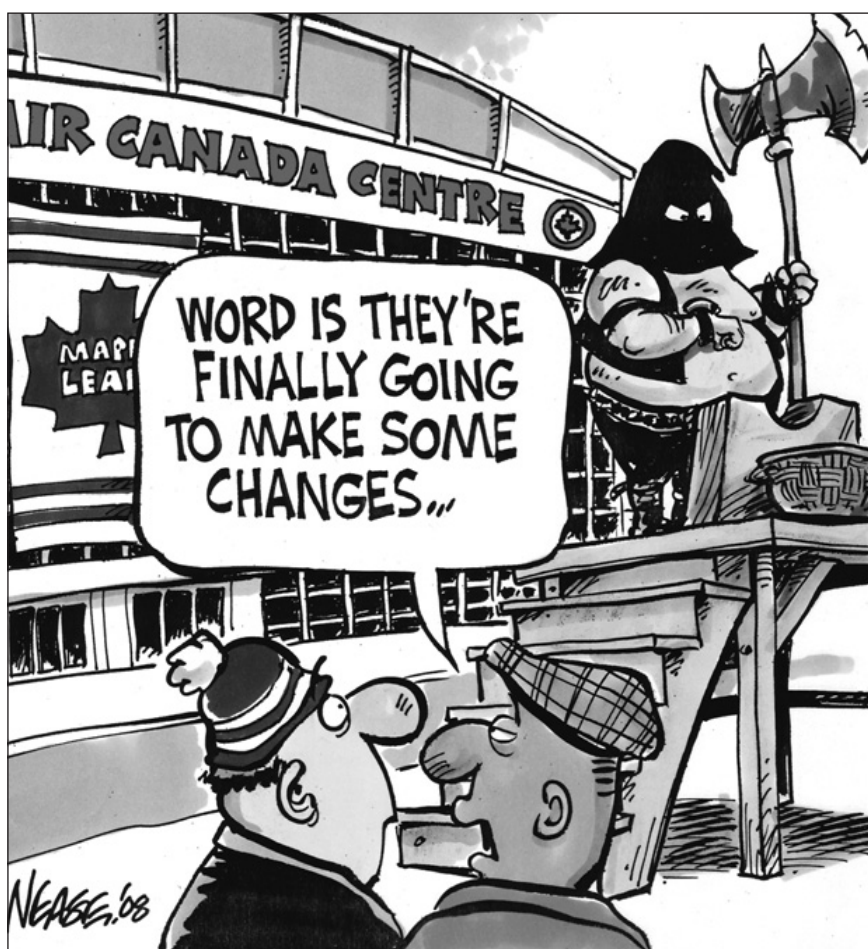
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Steve Nease



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Benefits of flu vaccine should be reviewed

Dear editor,  
In reference to the article titled "Region encourages residents to get flu vaccine" in the December 7 issue, I would like to point out some facts

regarding the flu vaccine provided by doctors across Ontario.

A product called Thimerosal, which is 49 per cent mercury, is used as a preservative in all three flu (0.01%)

vaccines currently in use in Ontario.

Among other things, mercury exposure has been linked to slowed development, and increased incidence of autism & ADHD in young children, which is why Health Canada has prohibited vaccines containing mercury typically given to young children.

According to a 2001 US Department of Education report, "autism and speech disorders were correlated with increasing mercury from childhood vaccines".

Although there is likely some benefit to having the flu shot, I would suggest that you carefully review the benefits of doing so.

Kevin Rumo, Georgetown

### Homecoming was a hit

Dear editor,  
The Homecoming 2007 Committee would like to thank all those who contributed to the success of our July 2007 event. With your help, we raised \$79,271 for our library. To think that we gave thousands of people a wonderful weekend and at the same time raised this much money for our community is very gratifying.

We are particularly grateful for the outstanding assistance from *The Independent & Free Press* for helping us get the message out (Amy, John, Steve — the whole staff). Georgetown is a most beloved town and the enthusiasm of all who attended attests to our affection for our hometown.

What a great place to be from!  
What a great place to live!

The Homecoming 2007 Committee

### Hamper committee appreciated support

Dear editor,  
The Acton Christmas Hamper committee sends sincere and heartfelt thanks to the individuals and *Youngster urges all to donate to cause*

Dear editor,  
Re: Angels 4 Abby fundraiser.  
My nanny's good friends, Margret and Roper, have a granddaughter who has a disease but it is not contagious.

At the mall (Dec. 15) there was a table where they were selling pins as they don't have enough money for the equipment for her so they are raising money to give her some medicine that makes her cheeks go puffy.

She is in the Hospital for Sick Children and her name is Abby and she is only five years old. With this disease you can get moody. My cousin Kylie has the same disease.

The pins are only \$5 so I hope you go and buy one.

Katie Harrison, Georgetown  
(Editor's note: An Angels 4 Abby Fund has been set up at TD Canada Trust, transit number 2472, account number 6283421.)

groups in Acton and surrounding areas for your generous support of this year's Christmas Hamper program.

We especially appreciate the amount of non-perishable food donated by the six local schools. Your kindness helped us to provide hampers for over 80 families, including more than 100 children. Christmas was much happier for these people because of your thoughtfulness.

Thanks also to the many volunteers who gave their time to sort the donated food and pack the hampers, helping to make this year's program such a success. This year the Knights of Columbus Council 8050 provided great help with the hamper distribution and we welcome them to our group of faithful volunteers. The spirit of caring and sharing is indeed alive and well here in our town.

Thanks again; we wish you God's blessings now and in the year ahead.

Acton Rotary Club,  
Lakeside Chapter IODE,  
Salvation Army  
Acton Family Services,  
St. Vincent Charities of St. Joseph,  
Patron of Canada