

ACTON FREE PRESS



Acton student to hit 22 ports on floating classroom this school year

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Home, Lawn & Energy special section

8-Pages



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Halton Hills' award-winning newspaper

INSIDE



Diversity March held in downtown

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Raiders' home woes continue

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The annual Terry Fox Runs for cancer research were held Sunday in Acton and Georgetown. (above) Kaitlyn Bell, 14, of Speyside runs past the start/finish line at the Acton run held at Acton High School. (Right) At the Georgetown event held at the Gellert Community Centre participants (from left) Allison Sippel, 9, Jane Opie, Meghan Sippel, 9, and Brad Sippel of Georgetown make a donation. The Acton event, with more than 150 participants raised \$22,500, with more expected in the coming days, while the Georgetown event drew 418 people and raised \$21,000.

Photos by Brian LeVoguer

Going all out for Terry Fox



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FRIDAY...

Council votes the cash to get the Cultural Centre/Georgetown library project rolling again, but not without some debate ... read about it in Friday's edition.

For breaking news go to: www.independentfreepress.com

Preliminary Town tax hike set at 7.5%

CYNTHIA GAMBLE Staff Writer

It's still early in the game, but staff asked for—and received—approval from Halton Hills council to begin preparing the 2009 operating and capital budgets that could mean an \$81 increase on next year's tax bills.

Town Treasurer Ed DeSousa outlined the financial challenges facing the town at Monday's council meeting, when defining his need for a 7.5 per cent town budget increase. That represents a \$26.9 million operating budget—\$1,155 for each property owner with homes assessed at \$300,000, \$81 over last year's budget.

The increase—which could change in the coming months—reflects a 4.3 per cent base

budget increase, a 1.2 per cent Fire Services Levy, 1.2 per cent Special Infrastructure Levy, plus a new 0.8 per cent Library Operating Levy.

Combined with expected Halton Region and school board tax increases, the overall tax impact on the average homeowner with a property assessed at \$300,000 will be 4.1 per cent or \$130.

"We always come out with budget directions at this time of year, but that doesn't mean those will be the numbers come January ... we'll have lots of time to discuss numbers and figures,

etc.," said Mayor Rick Bonnette.

"It is a tough time. Every year it has been tougher. Last year it's getting more difficult with the low growth, and growth not paying for itself."

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2009 Projected budget

	2008 Final Budget	2009 Projected Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Town	\$1,074	\$1,155	\$81	7.5%
Region	\$1,317	\$1,366	\$49	3.7%
Education	\$792	\$792	\$0	0.0%
Total	\$3,183	\$3,313	\$130	4.1%

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