



EASTER TREAT: The Everton Church held its Easter Pancake Breakfast last Sunday morning. Win Braun is shown cooking up the goods.- *Submitted Photo*

Township budget includes \$14.93 hike in taxes

By Rebecca Ring

Guelph/Eramosa Council unanimously approved the 2009 Township budget last week, which includes a 1.73% increase in its portion of the property tax bill. In real dollars, this represents about \$14.93 per year for a \$300,000 home. Of a total property tax bill, 20% goes to the Township, 56% goes to the County, and 24% goes to the Province to fund education.

The actual rate of taxation decreased from 0.271% in 2008 to 0.259% in 2009. Manager of Finance Linda Cheyne explains that the 1.73% increase that property owners will see is due to increased property values as determined by MPAC.

"Council and staff have worked together to continue to provide the services people expect and invest in our future, while keeping the tax rate increases below inflation," says Mayor Chris White. The budget includes a wage freeze for the mayor and councillors.

Total expenditures and revenues for 2009 are estimated to be \$16,991,457, with \$3,958,934 of that raised through taxation. The largest expenditure this year will be \$7,734,689 for Recreation and Culture Services. Of that, about \$6.2 million is set aside for the development of Marden Park, which includes a 50,000 square foot sports facility with an indoor sports field, running track and an outdoor football field.

The Township will get about \$4 million back in federal and provincial grants, covering two-thirds the cost. The Township portion will be paid with \$350,000 from development charges and a \$1.71 million debenture that should be repaid through user fees.

Also in the Recreation and Culture services budget are:

\$40,000 for well decommissioning and washroom accessibility improvements at Lloyd Dyer Park;

\$10,000 to expand the Rockwood Cemetery;

\$29,260 for an enabling garden at Marden Park;

\$9000 to improve ball diamonds at Lloyd Dyer and Rockmosa Parks;

and \$49,065 for a wide area mower.

Other budget highlights include:

\$500,000 for leasehold improvements at the new Rockwood medical centre, which will be repaid through East Wellington Family Health Team fundraising;

\$990,000 for 2nd Line East reconstruction:

\$47,700 for a municipal parking lot at Station Street;

\$20,000 for the Commercial Corridor Improvement Committee to prepare for Hwy. 7 improvements, scheduled for 2011;

\$32,000 for sidewalks on Inkerman and Alma Streets;

\$34,000 for the demolition of the old fire hall to clear the site for construction of the Rockwood medical centre;

\$25,000 for a site plan for the proposed expansion of the administration centre in Brucedale;

\$44,100 for construction of two bridges.

The budget was developed in three meetings in March, which included one for public input on March 30, for which only one resident showed up. Copies of the budget are available at the Township office or at www.get.on.ca.

Earth Day in Eden Mills celebrated this Saturday

By Rebecca Ring

The Eden Mills Going Carbon Neutral Youth Group is once again hosting a plethora of green activities to celebrate Earth Day, which falls

on Wednesday, April 22. The celebrations will take place in Eden Mills on Saturday, April 18, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The day begins at the park at 9 a.m., where everyone who ordered trees can pick them up for planting. To order trees, contact Bill Allen at bill.allen@wragroup.ca. All are invited to join in picking up garbage in the park.

At 12 noon at the park, enjoy a potluck lunch. Veggie burgers and veggie dogs will be provided. Bring a potluck contribution. Pre-register for one of the many interesting and inspiring workshops held in the afternoon, including kite making, pottery, bicycle safety and

skills, vegetable gardening, sketching, canoeing, a bio-diversity hike, digital photography, earth friendly home products, and art from nature. For a schedule and registration form, contact emmpca@sentex.net.

New this year is a "Big Tree Contest for All." Measure the circumference of the largest tree you know in Eden Mills or surrounding district. Measure it 50 cm or 1/2 M from the ground and include species if known. Submit your entry to Eden Mills Carbon Neutral Youth Group, c/o Robin and Kit Bresnahan, 48 Ash St., Eden Mills, On. or emmpca@sentex.net.

The winner will be announced on Earth Day.

The ROCKWOOD Miller

More tree coverage for Guelph/Eramosa approved

By Rebecca Ring

At their meeting last week, Guelph/Eramosa Council unanimously committed to increasing the overall tree coverage in the Township to 30% from its current 21%, with a 40% tree canopy for settlement areas, within the next 50 years or less.

The proposal was presented by Township Environmental Stewardship Committee members Mike Nagy and Libby Little. GRCA forest experts Martin Neuman and Tracey Ryan were on hand to answer questions. They confirmed that 30% coverage is the minimum recommended by Environment Canada to

maintain a healthy watershed. This target was adopted by the GRCA in "A Watershed Forest Plan for the Grand River."

Nagy and Little highlighted the legacy of tree planting in the Township. More than 10,000 saplings were planted between 1981 and 1992, thanks to the "vision and drive of Bob Hamilton, former roads superintendent of Eramosa Township."

They described the benefits and urgent need to increase tree coverage, such as mitigating the effects of climate change by sequestering carbon. These effects include a trend towards increased winter precipitation, which makes roads dangerous with blowing

snow, more run-off in spring, which increases flooding risks, more frequent and intense heat waves and drought in summer, which seriously threatens agriculture. More tree coverage can also add moisture for agricultural lands and protect against soil erosion.

More Benefits

Other benefits listed include improving water quality and aquatic habitat, cooling streams, moderating stream flow, providing a "snow pack reservoir" during spring freshet, retaining soil, rebuilding damaged soil, cleansing the air, moderating local climate, counteracting urban "heat island effect," shading homes

Continued on page 11

Holly Silzer Dance
at the
Rockmosa Community Hall

10 Week Spring Session
Class & Registration starting April 20

Dance Development
Ages 2 - Adult
Registration rates \$70 - \$90

More info at:
<http://web.mac.com/hollysilzer> or
519-993-6827

Briella's Healing Touch
Reflexology and Tibetan Massage

Now at
Village Beauty Boutique
155 Main St. S., Rockwood
Call for an appointment

519-856-0803

brielleh@rogers.com



www.briellashealingtouch.com