

Editorial

# Pitching in

If you've driven anywhere in Halton Hills during the past four days you're likely to have noticed something missing from our streets, parks and schoolyards.

Garbage.

The sudden dearth of trash is thanks to the efforts of several hundred volunteers who, this past Saturday, descended on local streets, ravines and parks to clean up our town as a first step in the annual Communities in Bloom competition slated for this summer.

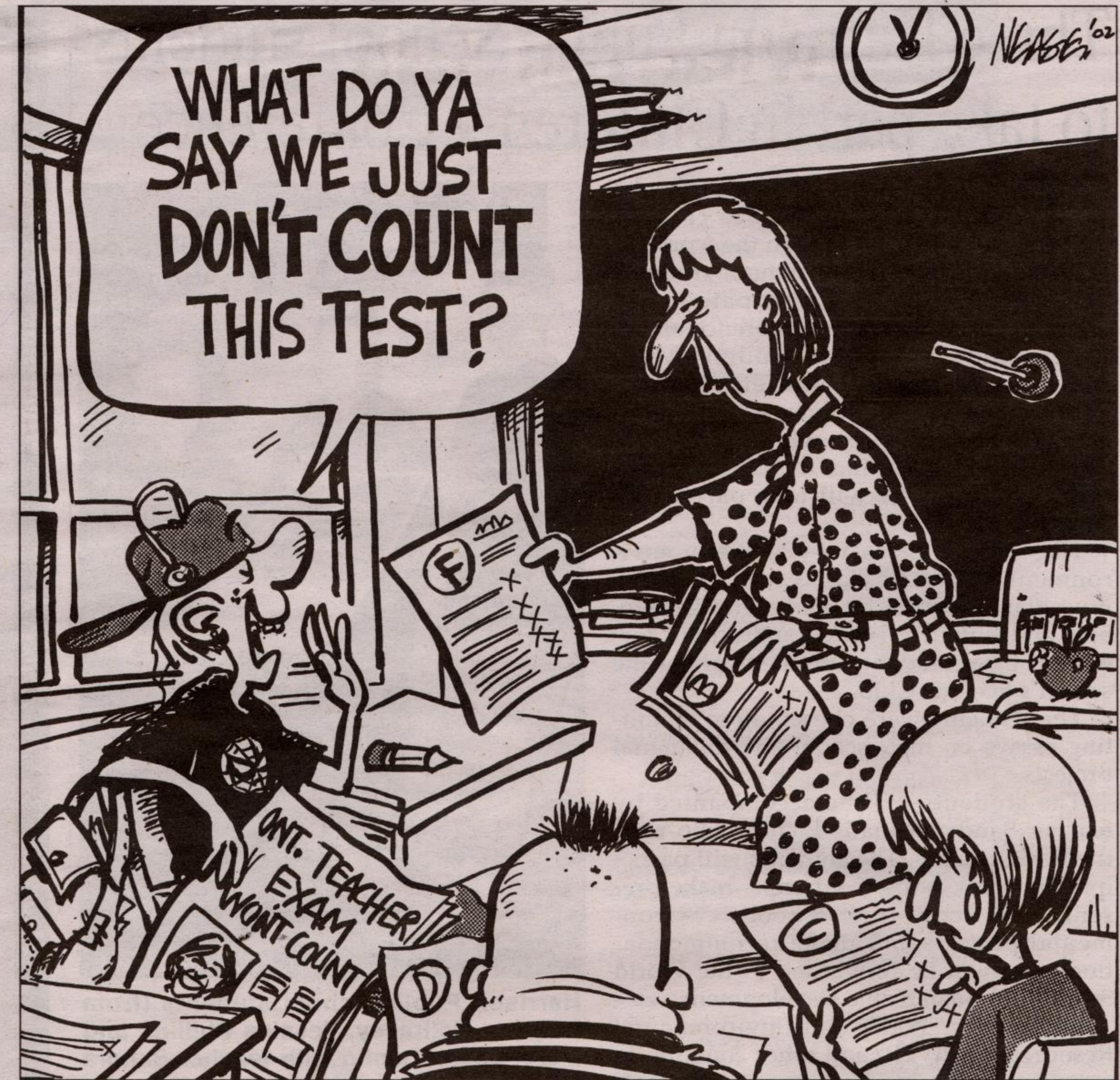
A total of eight tonnes of garbage— more than 500 bags— was collected by local residents who took a few hours out of their day to help beautify the town.

"It was a tremendous success," said Councillor Jane Fogal who headed the operation. "It became a real community event. When we do these things together it's not so much a chore as an event."

An event, we believe, that can only get bigger and better.

Clean Up Halton Hills Day has the potential to be a can't-miss day on the calendar for future years. Perhaps local businesses can chip in some money to host a community barbecue for all the hard workers after they're done their labour of love. Maybe more schools can get their students involved. Perhaps challenges between local businesses and/or personalities are other twists that can be added.

The end result is that our town looks much better today than it did last week at this time, and we owe it all to those who pitched in Saturday.



## Letters to the editor....

### Hospital should give midwives privileges

Dear editor,

I am writing this letter with thoughts generated from the recent headlines about the possible closing

of Georgetown's Obstetric department.

I can only assume this decision is being contemplated by people other than women in their child-bearing years. The thought of a woman labouring while transporting to the next nearest birthing facility (other than her own home) during rush hour, or any hour in between, seems like the most senseless and unnecessarily painful experience one would ever have to endure.

This community is growing daily with new, young couples and families and one would almost assume from that, that our hospital would not be eliminating our obstetrics department, but rather would be expanding it.

Five years ago I found myself pregnant with our first child and when it came time to find out where we were delivering we discovered Georgetown was not an option. The birthing suite was closed and we had to travel to Oakville. My partner and I considered this a huge inconvenience for both our prenatal visits

as well as labour and delivery. It isn't much wonder that we looked into midwifery care when we found ourselves pregnant again.

All of our prenatal care was able to be managed here in Georgetown. Imagine our surprise when we realized the only way we could have our baby in Georgetown was to have a homebirth!

Again we had to travel (this time to Mississauga) to deliver and the car ride was not very enjoyable. Considering how this community is growing and evolving, why is the thinking of the local medical establishment not following suit?

Midwives save the taxpayers of this province hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. Why are they not given privileges in our own community hospital? Why are more families not up-in-arms about the prospect of closing the obstetric department and demanding that our rights as consumers be considered?

We should be moving forward, not backwards!

Samantha Leeson, Georgetown

### Board did the right thing

Dear editor,

Re: Janet Horwood's April 12, letter.

The Greece trip cancellation was an informed choice. Many parents cancelled the trip even before the school board made its final decision.

My 15-year-old child was to be on that trip. With the war in Afghanistan and the Americans having access to Greek air space, I had reason enough to question my child's safety. Parents would have been sending their most precious gift into a potential war zone.

Canceling the trip was not an easy decision for me to make. Though disappointed, my daughter understood my fears. No responsible school board would send its students during such a crisis. To criticize the school board seems unfair.

There is no surprise some teachers approved of the trip. To the best of my knowledge, as chaperones they were going for free. The students on the other hand each had to pay \$2,800, encouraging the travel agent to be so accommodating.

Furthermore, the agency did not return trip deposits to most families though the owner had verbally promised to do so. I am pleased that Ms. Horwood's trip went so well. If anything had gone wrong though, how responsible would the school board have been then? As a parent, I would have never been able to live with myself.

Charlene Humenick, Georgetown

### Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited.

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