

Editorial

Let's make a deal

Another school year has begun but, not surprisingly, the new year has not started with harmony in many Halton classrooms.

Elementary school teachers with the Halton District School Board, fresh from two month's vacation, are being asked by their union (the Elementary Teachers of Ontario) to not attend staff meetings until further notice.

This move is intended to apply pressure to the HDSB to get a contract settled with its elementary teachers who have been without a deal since August 2002. Earlier this summer, as contract talks stalled, the union pink-listed the Halton board—essentially asking teachers from across Canada not to apply for any HDSB teaching positions.

While the teachers are in the classroom (for now), the acrimony between the board and its teachers always finds a way to trickle down to the most important component of the education system—the students. It's only a matter of time.

According to Maureen Weinberger, president of the local chapter of the ETFO, the union is seeking a three per cent per year pay raise and the standard "improved working conditions". She says they have been offered a hike of 2.1 per cent in the first year and 3 per cent in the second.

Earlier this year the board gave its secondary school teachers a two-year deal worth six per cent—money freed up by the province.

So, we wonder, if Weinberger is correct in saying what the teachers have been offered, why are the elementary teachers not being given the same deal as their secondary school counterparts, especially since the province ponied up the money for just such increases?

Did the HDSB not set this cash aside for contracts? And if not, why not? Plenty of questions... so few answers.

At least so far.



Letters to the editor...

Pay-per-bag idea should be tossed out

Dear editor,

So, Councillor Rick Bonnette thinks it's a good idea to charge us all \$1 for each garbage bag we put

out. Only a few weeks ago, we were told, that along with a hike in hydro and water bills, our taxes would be going up, too. His reason for this (a per-bag charge)? We will put out less garbage! Wake up, Mr. Bonnette! If we have garbage we put it out for collection, that's how it works doesn't it? If you want less of it, then target the manufacturers who over-package our goods. Just what do you think will happen to the garbage that we WON'T put out? I'll tell you what will happen. Unscrupulous people will dump it in the country, others will sneak out the night before a collection and leave it outside someone else's house or (the one I favour) we all take it to the civic offices and leave the councillors to pick up the tab.

The councillors and the mayor, would do better to concentrate on other environmental issues, such as the heavy traffic on Maple Ave., Princess Anne Dr. and Charles St.

But then, I guess the mayor is

far too busy for that sort of thing. I'm sure she would go to the opening of an envelope if she thought there was a photo opportunity in it, after all, she has her picture in the paper every week. So, it would seem it is up to us as individuals to make our voices heard.

Tricia Cousins, Georgetown

Please stoop and scoop

Dear editor,

On July 29 at 8 p.m. I witnessed a lady lead a large dog into the hospital courtyard where he relieved himself in two spots. The lady did nothing but walk on—no stooping or scooping.

As a resident of the hospital I was shocked and disgusted by the disgraceful use of hospital grounds.

Is there no respect for private property or the town bylaws? Later staff told me that the same thing is happening in the parking areas.

Thank you to those who do stoop and scoop.

Ruth Donaldson, Georgetown

Individuals should have the right to decide on issue of euthanasia

Dear editor,

Re: Troubled by euthanasia (letter to the editor August 15).

The "slippery slope of euthanasia" is when governments and churches deny the individual the right to make this choice on their own.

I have worked and volunteered in many nursing homes, hospitals and chronic care centres. I have seen older people live their lives on medication unable to speak or move from a position and met teenagers in so much frustration and pain because their cancer has spread to yet another area and cannot be treated any longer.

Thirty of my 33 years I have spent in and out of hospitals and doctors' offices. I fought leukemia for many years and the tainted blood I received during this treatment now leaves me facing a liver transplant and a hope that, if and when the hepatitis C returns, it won't be a long and painful journey for myself and my family.

Until you experience the pain and agony of any chronic illness, you should not consider euthanasia to be a "slimy" issue. No more pain! This is my choice.

Andrea Mancuso, 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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