

*Editorial*

# Fight for your hospital

Early this morning Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette was scheduled to chat with doctors at the Georgetown campus of the William Osler Health Centre. As part of Physician Appreciation Week, the get-together was intended to be an informal way for the town to say thank-you to its fine doctors.

We're betting the mayor and the doctors had plenty to talk about.

Since word leaked two weeks ago that WOHC officials have decided to move the Georgetown hospital's obstetric/pediatrics unit permanently to the Brampton campus July 5, public opposition to the plan has been mounting. Monday, area doctors and nurses let their feelings be known to town council and, to put it bluntly, they're not happy—with good reason.

This heavy-handed move by the WOHC board of directors came without any consultation with local staff (primarily those doctors and nurses affected), with no formal announcement (we're still waiting for a press release) and the board still has not responded (10 days later) to a letter 28 Georgetown doctors sent to the board outlining their concerns.

WOHC officials, trying to rid itself of a debt created mostly out of its Brampton location, is trying to save nickels when it needs to save dollars and they are trying to do it at the expense of this town's hospital—a hospital built by the community, for the community.

Health practitioners here fear, and rightly so, this closure will only snowball into further departmental cuts. By closing this unit, there will be less work for anesthetists, forcing them to look elsewhere. That would also impact surgeons which, in turn, would affect the emergency department.

We don't for a minute believe WOHC officials want to listen to reason. We haven't seen any proof they care about this town, its hospital or its future. We believe our hospital must have an obstetrics unit and that is why we have launched a campaign to get WOHC officials to listen. Please fill out the ballot on page 1 to make your voice heard and show our doctors *someone* does appreciate them.



## Letters to the editor...

### Closing OB ward will drive away doctors

Dear editor,

I am a first-time mom expecting in August and was quite alarmed to hear of the obstetrical unit closing

after much anticipation of delivering there.

But beyond my personal and immediate concerns, this decision also affects the family practitioners—many of them who are newly-minted graduates, lured to practice in this underserved area—who choose to deliver babies.

A number of them are sure to be reconsidering their decisions to

come to Georgetown and could eliminate our community as a well-rounded destination for any future doctors.

Does this decision mean that residents will again be forced to look outside our town for primary medical care when the doctors have also given up on Georgetown?

Sarah Herbert,  
Georgetown

### Birth experience here was 'the best'

Dear editor,

I couldn't help but feel disappointed after learning about the obstetrics ward closing in Georgetown.

I am a mother of four. I had my first child at Hamilton McMaster hospital, the next two were born in Oakville and my last child was born here in Georgetown. I have to tell you the best hospital experience I had was in Georgetown. I was very impressed in the excellent care and compassion from the Georgetown nurses.

I was also very lucky to have Dr.

Paul and Dr. Debbie Zeni both there for the birth of my fourth child. It was truly a wonderful experience. I feel sad to know other mothers will not get to experience what Georgetown has to offer.

I believe with another OB doctor in town Georgetown could get its numbers up. A lot of mothers have to go to Brampton because there is not a doctor available in Georgetown. Surely, due to the rapid growth in Georgetown, this could be possible.

Tina O'Reilly, Georgetown

### Clinic is the next step

Dear editor,

Re: Hospital obstetrics ward to close. I suppose we should not be surprised by this, the latest move to once more hit Georgetown.

With the cost of an ever-increasing administrative overhead at the William Osler organization, patient services is the only area left to "save money".

Our hospital, being part of the William Osler group, can be looked upon as the "mouse sleeping with the elephant". Our previously well-run and efficient set-up will be crushed.

Welcome to the future William Osler, Brampton West Walk-in Clinic.

Rein Pater, Georgetown

### Business students say thanks

Dear editor,

The business students of Georgetown District High School would like to thank the many local businesses and individuals for their generous donations to the school's Easter carnival and silent auction.

This event was a tremendous success and was enjoyed by hundreds of children and their parents. The money raised will go towards student scholarship and to the Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills.

Phil Peden, GDHS

### 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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The Independent & Free Press is published every Wednesday and Friday at 280 Guelph St., Unit 29, Georgetown Ont., L7G 4B1. It is one of the newspapers published by Metroland Printing, Publishing & Distributing Ltd., which includes: Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alliston Herald/Courier, Bancroft This Week, Barrie Advance, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes,

Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Acton Free Press, Huronia Business Times, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, Midland/Penetanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Mississauga Business Times, Napanee Guide, Newmarket/Aurora Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Oldtimers Hockey News, Orangeville Banner, Orillia Today, Oshawa-Whitby/Clarington

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Price: Store copies 50¢ each; Subscriptions \$26.00 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130.00 per

year in all other countries. Plus G.S.T.

Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Independent & Free Press is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.

