

# Smitherman gets hero's welcome but says town must continue to grow

Continued from pg. 1

"Not every hospital is going to provide the complete range of services," he said.

When asked about the future of the obstetrics program in Georgetown he said the base of obstetrics numbers at the hospital are "pretty good."

"I think the community needs to continue to grow," he added. "It needs to be a community where people are building their families and if we do that then the obstetrics program can be very, very secure."

He added, "we need to make sure the program is of a good quality."

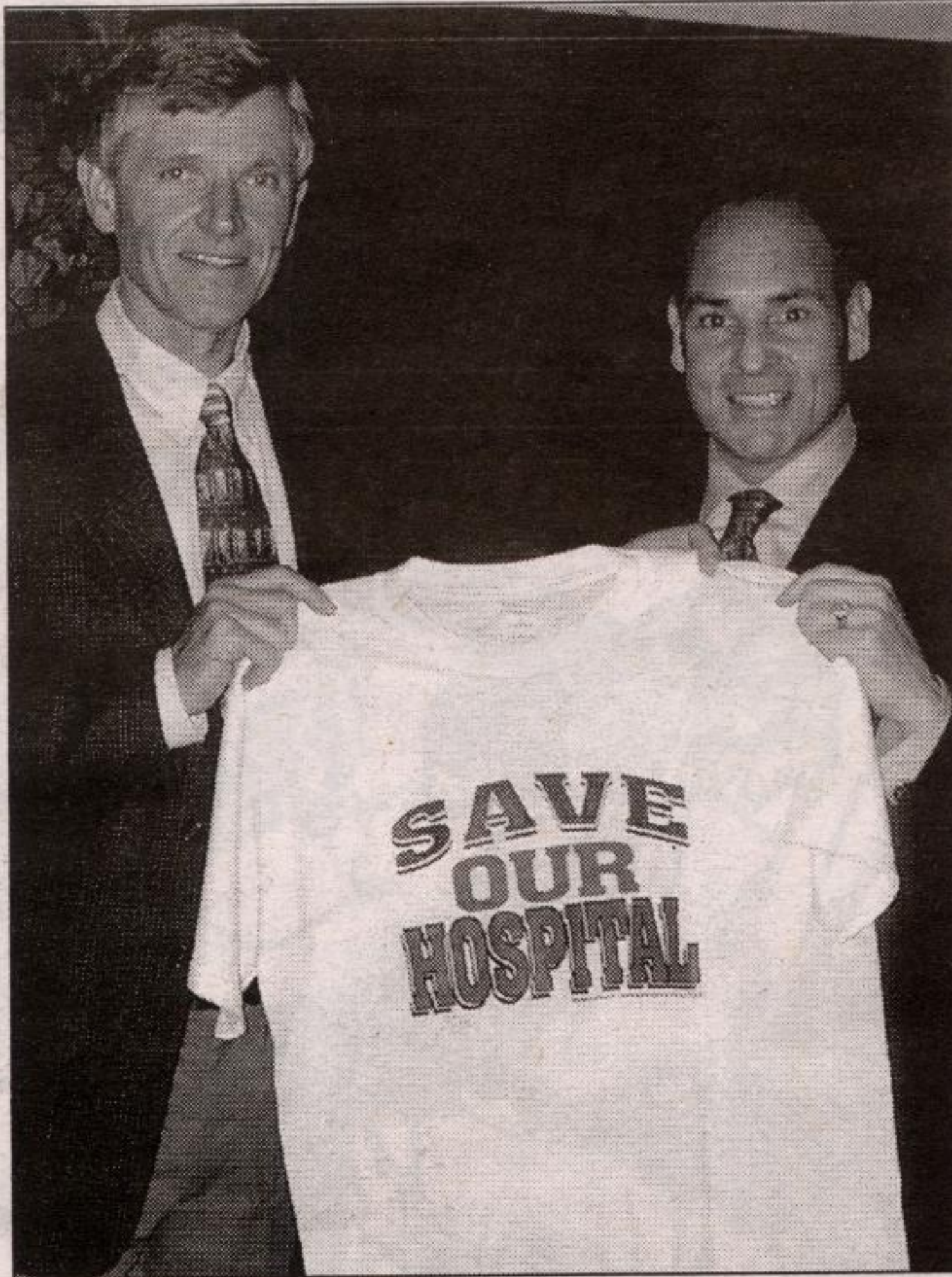
While the province has made the first step in keeping the obstetrics unit open Smitherman said, "I'm the first to admit we've got a lot of work cut out for ourselves."

"We've got to get William Osler, the whole corporation, functioning well for each of the unique communities served by it."

Smitherman said he stepped in and said in the legislature that his government wouldn't support a plan to close obstetrics at the hospital because he felt the impact the closure would have on the community wasn't being adequately considered.

"I just felt the the process did not appropriately engage the local community."

The health minister praised Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette for the "quality of leadership" he demonstrated to the community throughout the battle for the hospital, the dedication of other council



Dr. Don Trant presents Ontario Health and Long-Term Care Minister George Smitherman with a Save Our Hospital t-shirt Wednesday. Smitherman was thanked by the community for his efforts in saving the Georgetown hospital's obstetrics ward from closure earlier this year.

Photo by Lisa Tallyn

members and the energy and enthusiasm of area doctors.

He also passionately outlined his government's "transformation agenda" for health care.

—By Lisa Tallyn, staff writer

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- |                   |                      |
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