

*Editorial*

# Good turnout

The election signs have almost disappeared, the promotional pamphlets have been discarded and Canada has a new Prime Minister-designate.

For a winter election that was supposed to test the patience of an already apathetic electorate, this 39th trip to the polls proved to be anything but boring.

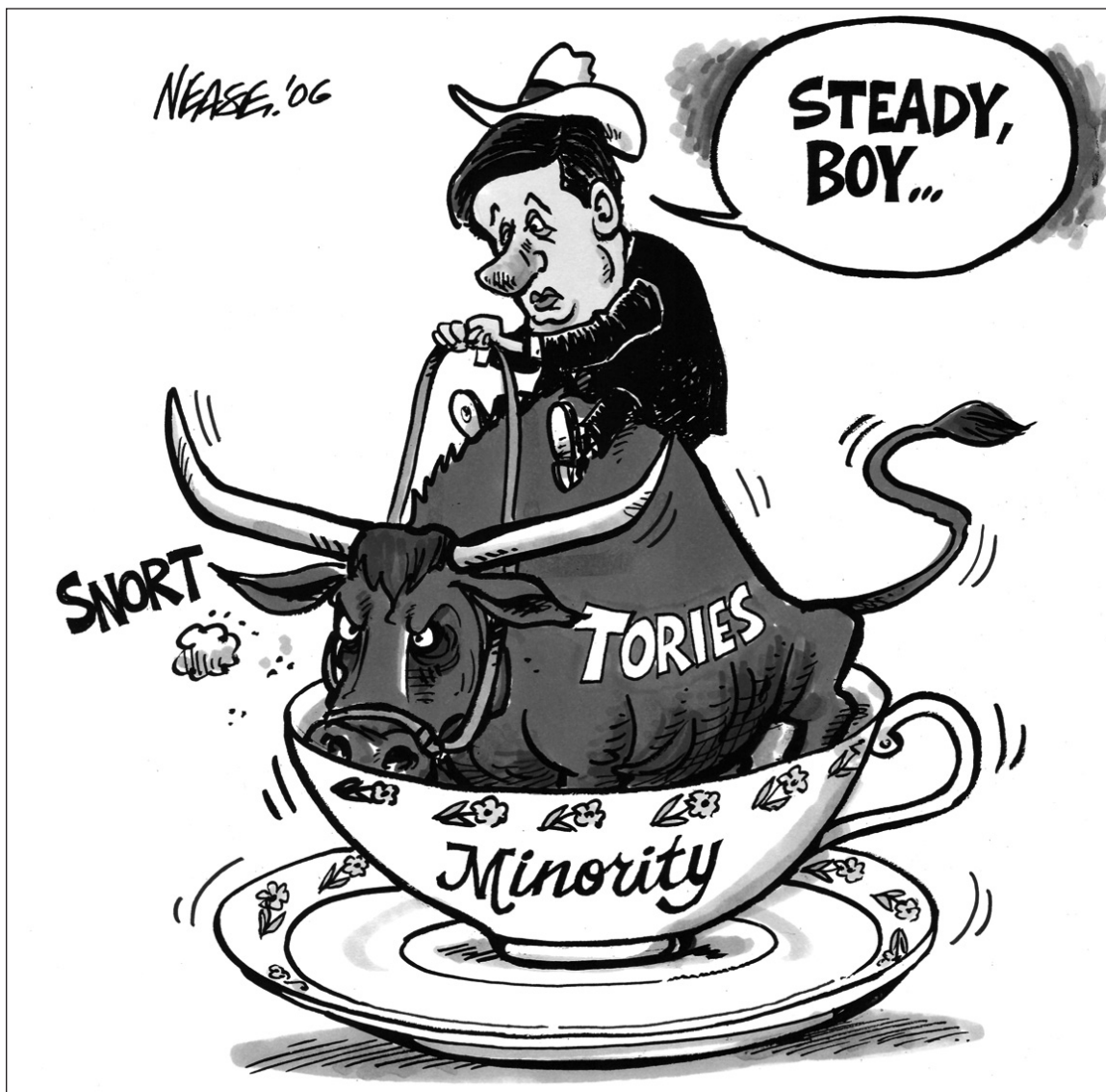
Wellington-Halton Hills residents demanded information from the local candidates and paid close attention to the national scene. So tuned in were residents that in the riding 55,242 of 77,441 registered voters cast a ballot. That represents a 71 per cent voter turnout. Pretty impressive when you consider that's more people voting than the 67 per cent turnout in 2004 and just 63 per cent in 2000.

Advance polls this year were just as busy as in 2004, with a total of 4,766 residents casting their ballot early.

The candidates themselves should collectively give themselves a pat on the back. They made this election interesting—no easy task during December. The political hopefuls should be proud that they managed to engage a frustrated electorate. All-candidates meetings, non-stop door-knocking and telephone campaigns kept voters in the know.

We wish Conservative Michael Chong all the best as he heads back to Ottawa.

We also hope residents will turn out in equally strong numbers this November when we head to the polls for the municipal election.



## Letters to the editor...

### Christmas Needs program aided 108 families

Dear editor,  
Halton Hills Community Support and Information would like to express its sincere thanks

to all those who helped make the holiday season special this past year for 108 families (243 children) in our community.

very grateful for your support of this program. We also appreciate the coverage outlining our need for sponsors that *The Independent & Free Press* and *The New Tanner* provided.

#### Letters to the editor

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 Unsigned letters will not be published.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

During November and December members of the Halton Hills community generously donated many items to our Christmas Needs program, including toys, clothing, knitting, gift cards and money. Thanks so much to everyone who made a donation.

The holiday season can be a stressful time for anyone who is in a difficult financial situation so we are pleased to be able to offer this program to the community and it is wonderful that we receive such generous support from the people of Halton Hills. We are fortunate to live in a community where people care for one another and demonstrate that caring attitude by sharing their resources with others.

**Cathy Gerrow,  
Community Support  
Co-ordinator,  
HHCSI**

There was a significant increase in the number of applicants this year and community members, including churches, businesses, groups and individual families responded to that need by sponsoring specific families. Sponsors were given a profile of the family (ages and sizes of the children) and then they purchased items of clothing specifically for that family.

Thank you so very much to all the hamper sponsors— we are

*More letters  
pages 7, 8*

### OFA thanks council for farm tax decision

*(This letter was originally sent to Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette. A copy was made available for publication.)*

Dear Mayor Bonnette,  
On behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), I would like to express appreciation for your council's action deferring property tax payments on farmlands.

You are obviously aware of the difficult financial times farmers are having. Your council's action will help some of them survive these times until remedies can be achieved. OFA and its commodity partners continue to work with provincial and federal governments on programs that will overcome many of the causes of the financial crisis.

Please be assured the farmers in Halton Hills are fortunate to have a council that is familiar with their circumstances and cares enough to help in this way.

**Ron Bonnett,  
President  
Ontario Federation of Agriculture**

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