

OPINION

Rover gets raw deal

British newspapers traditionally titillate their readers during the hot August days by referring to the number of people who walk their dogs and let them leave deposits on the sidewalks. A nation of dog lovers, readers respond in lengthy letters to the editor, complaining they have to play hop-scotch to avoid pooch poop.

It is probably why we refer to this time of year as "dog days." But the erudite Oxford dictionary defines the term as "the hottest period of the year." So doggone it, old Rover is maybe getting hung with a bad rap.

Maybe it's because Rover and all his ilk lay under tables, tongues hanging out, panting like steamboats when weather is at its hottest. Attempts to dislodge them is like moving the Rock of Gibraltar. Perhaps we're envious they can just flop while we still have to attend to day-to-day stuff. Meanwhile, the humidity index hovers at the top of the glass and the sun bores down like the Atlanta Olympics.

Even Rudyard Kipling, the poet laureate, aptly described life in India under the Rajahs with these immortal words, "Only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun." Noel Coward made the "dog" ma popular by writing a popular song of the Gay Nineties from it.

Think about it, why do we blame a lot of our irritations on the dog, man's "best friend?"

When a book is battered and corners worn, what do we call it? - "dog-eared."

When competitors are engaged in ruthless competition, how do we describe it? - "dog-eat-dog."

When someone hangs on to something just for the joy of denying others from using it, how do we describe the attitude? - "Dog-in the Manger."

When something is messy, unappetizing or unorganized, what do we call it? - "a dog's breakfast."

When someone lives a life of misery or harassment, what do we say? - "She (he) lives a dog's life."

When you're tired out, hardly able to lift a finger, what do you say? - "I'm dog-tired."

When one is ruined socially or lives a dissolute life, how do we describe it? - "He (she) has gone to the dogs."

When one has little or no chance of succeeding, what do we say? - "She (he) hasn't a dog's chance."

Even a small shark is described as a "dog-fish." A clergyman's collar is called a "dog collar." When two airplanes are engaged in mortal combat, how do we describe it? - "a dog-fight."

When someone is in disgrace, especially spouses of the male gender, we suggest they are "in the dog house."

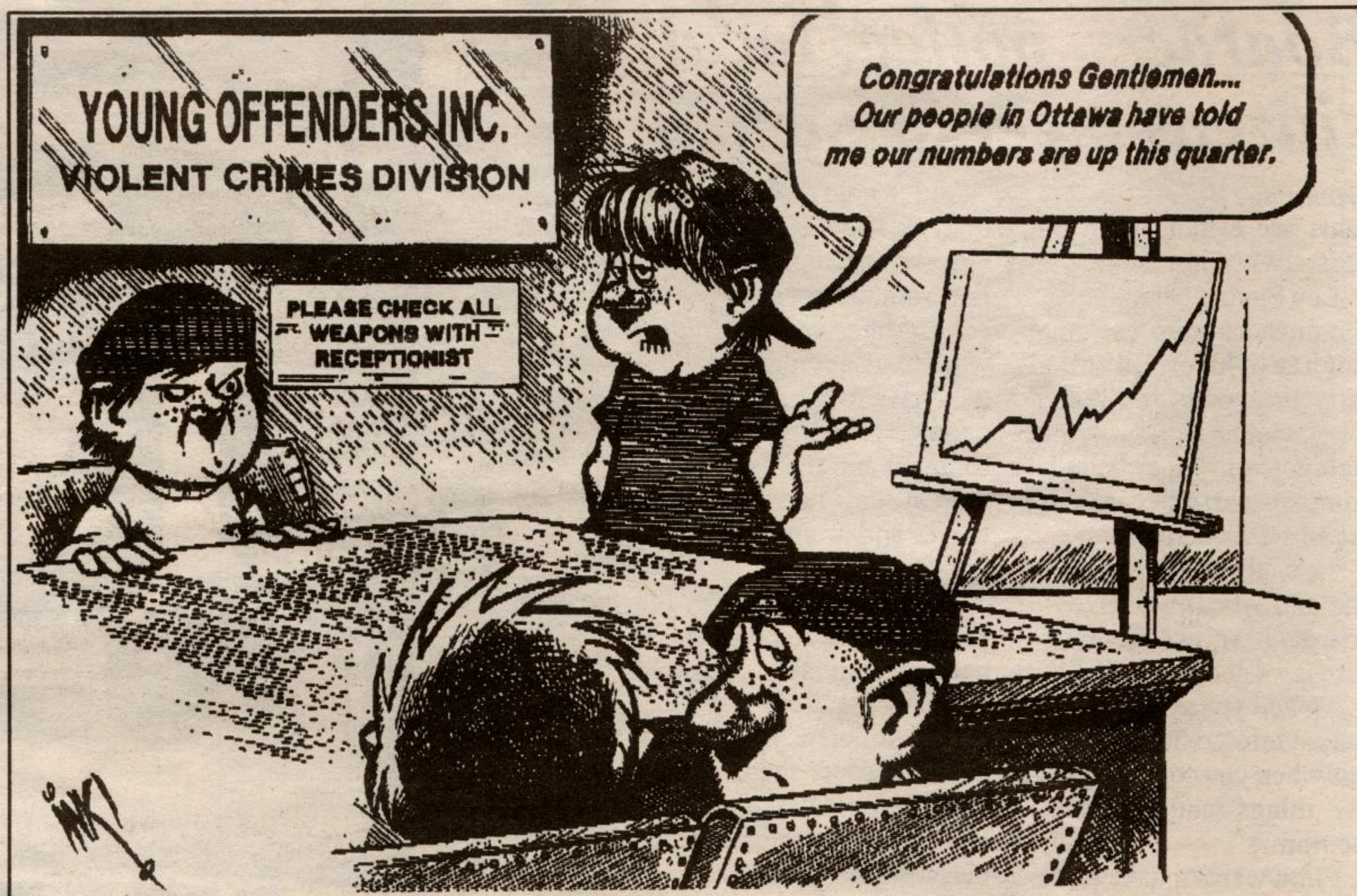
No wonder Bowser lies under the kitchen table, tongue hanging out, panting for breath. He is just plain old dog-tired of being maligned. He may have pooped in Cedarvale Park, got his tail caught in the screen door and run after the neighbour's cat, but we certainly blame almost every awkward situation in life in descriptive canine terms.

Even the old German sausage wrapped in a bun is called a "hot dog."

Personally, I've come to the conclusion that it is cat-lovers who direct their venom at the canine set. They've got the upper hand. Cats don't have to have a licence, can roam freely in people's flower beds, fight on the back fence at midnight and still no restrictions.

You've heard about the "dog-catcher" but is there such a thing as a "cat-catcher?"

These are serious concerns which should be addressed before the "dog-days" are over.



Your LETTERS

'Sensitive Street'

To the Editor:

We are writing to voice added concern to some of the questions raised in the Opinion piece and the article on the Main Street study in the Gemini on July 31.

Two members from Heritage Halton Hills (LACAC), along with representatives from TEAC, the BIA and interested residents and business owners along Main Street, formed, at the request of the Town, the Manager of Design and Development for the Town (Peter Linn) and the Consultant (R.E. Clipsham & Associates), a Residents and Neighbourhood Group (RNG) last November.

We, the undersigned are the representatives on that committee from Heritage Halton Hills. Our mandate was to provide input on the work being done to Main Street to the consultant and the Town, through Peter Linn.

Since that time, we have been studying the concerns of all interested parties and the solutions proposed by the consultant and attempting to marry the two in a way which will address these concerns without jeopardizing the historical character and ambiance of the street. Our fear is that this character will be in jeopardy.

We support the need by the seniors at Cote Terrace for safe access to the downtown core, but we do not want the street turned into a major thoroughfare, now or in the future, with wide pavement and extensive sidewalks.

The core of Main Street is a classic example of an early Ontario town. If Main Street South is made too accessible there is, in our opinion, a serious danger that this historical aspect will disappear. There are too many examples of Ontario towns that have been ruined by indiscrimi-

nate development and we applaud your suggestion that Main Street be restored, rather than redeveloped.

We do not advocate the extension of the median which the Consultant seems intent upon, nor extensive parking. As well, the impact of the development on the natural heritage of the area, such as the underground springs and particularly the trees which line the street, have been a significant factor in our discussions.

Heritage Halton Hills carried out an evaluation of the area and this was submitted to the Town through Mr. Clipsham. In addition, the RNG committee wrote a comprehensive Consensus Report. This report reflected the opinion of all the members of the committee and this was presented to Council, Mr. Clipsham and Mr. Linn at a Council meeting more than three months ago. In this report, the RNG committee stated it was not happy with the process, nor was it happy with the way its input has largely been ignored by the consultant. The report then laid out its proposed solutions. Since then, there has not been another meeting of the RNG group.

We are alarmed at the statement that the design process will be completed in five months, when one alternative, out of the several under study has not been chosen and there is no date set for this to happen since now, judging from the articles in your paper, it would appear that Mr. Clipsham and Peter Linn seem bent on their original plans for the street, without incorporating the suggestions of the people who have worked very long and hard to come up with the most equitable solution.

We ask that another meeting of the Committee be called as soon as possible, that the Consensus Report be incorporated into the design study and we continue the process of preserving the historical streetscape of an important piece of our heritage.

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