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Grandchildren are grand — but

GRANDCHILDREN are a real blessing. According to those who don't have any.

Well, my wife is lying prostrate in the living room and I am desperately searching my mind for a solution to two city boys, 8 and 6, who think such things as building a treehouse or carving out a cave in the jungle of our backyard are ridiculous pastimes.

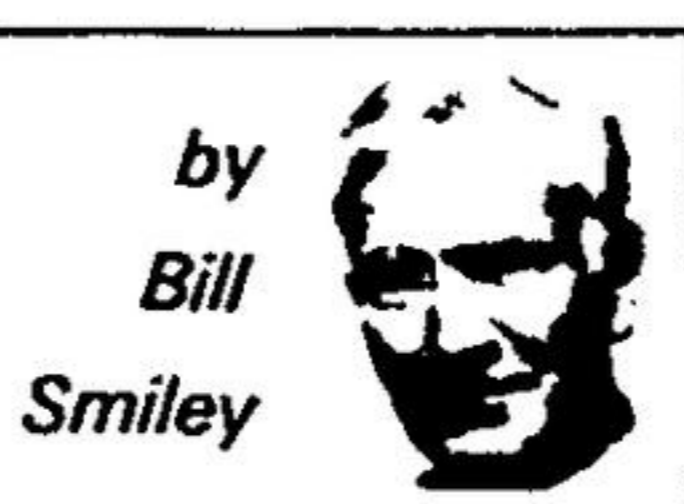
First few days weren't bad. Took them for a whirlwind tour of the town, most of which they remembered, not with nostalgia, but with boredom.

Spent a few devastating hours at the park, where all the swings and rides and slides that used to be thrilling are now "for little kids."

They spent a day at the beach with their mother and came home with beautiful sunburns, were properly greased, and quite indignant next morning when Gran insisted they put on T-shirts, rather than reclining on her newly-upholstered chesterfield suite with greasy backs.

Took them to see the movie E.T. (a wonderful experience by the way, which you shouldn't miss), and out for a Dairy Queen afterwards. Fine. Entertainment straight down the line, and none of this bucolic stuff of "playing" in the backyard.

Fourth day, Gran not now prostrate,



by Bill Smiley

but utterly supine, took them up to the school, showed them "the biggest gym in the whole world," and kicked them onto the playing fields. They ran around the track once, the older a quarter mile ahead of the younger, kicked a football around, then wanted to know, "what are we going to do now?"

We settled for some french fries at the park, sharing a table with several diarrhetic sea-gulls, and they were quite at home. Lots of people, lots of garbage, lots of junk food. City boys.

Right now they're out in the backyard, rolling their eyes with boredom, and waiting for Granddad to come up with something, preferably artificial, preferably bad for them.

Well, he ain't. They're going to bed with a story, maybe a hot-dog if I'm feeling right, maybe some canned spaghetti, which, unfortunately, they love.

But my old bones aren't up to another session of kicking the football, or

playing softball, or going for a hike. If necessary, I'll get a prescription and knock them out for 12 hours.

The only thing that saves them is that they're so damn' cute and smart, which used to mean the same thing.

They've been going to a French school. Took them to my school, to my room, sat them down in a front desk each, roared such things as, "Boy, wipe that grin off your face! You boy, sit up straight." They played the game straight-faced, enjoying it, trying to look scared and keep the grin off their faces at the same time.

"You, boy! Huit et sept equals?" Nikov coolly replied, "Eight and seven equals quinze." I had to give him 100 per cent and ask him how to spell quinze.

"You other boy! Comment l'appelle?" Ballind gave me a snide look and casually remarked, "J'mappelle Ballind." I gave up, and granted him 100 per cent also.

By the time this column appears in print, this column may not be appearing, I have vaguely promised a visit to a midway, with roller coasters and other horrid things that leave your guts up in the air, and another to a mountain slide that leaves your guts right at the top of the mountain, among other things and adventures.

To me, a suggestion is a vague

promise. To those two elephants, a suggestion is a thome made in stone.

Why don't they like horses, or cows, or pigs, or picking strawberries, or walking beside a stream in the woods?

Why do they love kicking a soccer ball at the china cabinet? Or uncovering an old exerciser of their Gran's made of ropes and elastic, tying it to the door-handle, and pulling the knob off?

Why does one love boiled eggs and can't stand fried, and the other is the opposite? Why do they drink two gallons of orange juice a day, and refuse to let wholesome milk pass their lips?

Why don't they have coloring books, instead of boxing gloves? Why do they love each other so much, be protective toward each other and wind up in a fight every 20 minutes.

Why do they start wrestling on the grass 20 minutes after Gran has put on their best bib'n tucker to show them off to somebody?

How can their mother stand them when they ask: "Why is God? Why does Granddad have a red nose and fall asleep after dinner? When are we going to...?"

I guess, because they're grandboys.

Parvo Virus conquered

The deadly canine disease Parvo Virus has been conquered.

Dr. Ron Trenton, of the Halton Hills Veterinarian Clinic, claims a vaccine has just come on the market which has virtually wiped out the disease in vaccinated dogs. Non-vaccinated animals are still susceptible.

The disease first showed up in Halton Hills in 1978, the same year it spread mysteriously world wide. Acton and Hamilton were the worst hit areas in Ontario, Trenton said, although there is no explanation for it. It (the disease) seemed to hit isolated pockets. It is spread by the animal's stools.

Last summer and the year before, almost all Trenton did was treat the disease, which causes severe diarrhea and vomiting. Now, he says, he rarely sees a case.

Because the illness was so similar to cat distemper symptoms, it was treated with the same vaccine. However, Trenton said, after a short time the disease built up immunities and this treatment was no longer effective.

A vaccine came out which arrested the disease, but was only good for three months. Boosters were necessary for year-round protection.

Then at the end of last summer, the vet said, a new vaccine came out which has eliminated the disease in vaccinated dogs. These shots are only

needed once a year. They are now given automatically when the animal is in for its annual shots.

However, Trenton said, even vaccinated animals can still be carriers. He explained that the dogs shed the living virus in their stools, which are spread to other dogs. He has noticed most of the dogs which get the illness run loose. He has also noticed dogs living near Fairy Lake in Acton are more prone to the virus.

Puppies of vaccinated dogs are protected with the mother's shots, Trenton said, as the vaccine is transferred through her milk. The mother builds up a protective antibody in the blood and passes it on to the pups.

However, lately puppies have been struck with Myo Carditis, which is an inflammation of the heart muscles. It usually results in death, the vet said, and strikes dogs less than two-months old.

Trenton said Myo Carditis is being labelled as the second outbreak of Parvo Virus. It came near the end of the first outbreak of the original disease.

When Parvo first broke out, and in the next few years, Trenton said it was impossible to control. He worked around the clock trying to save animals in vain. Specialists had no idea what the disease was, how it was contracted, or how it was cured. The situation looked hopeless.

Because Acton was hit so severely with the virus, Trenton became more involved in treating the disease than most other Ontario veterinarians. "I am greatly relieved that a cure has been found. We worked day and night just on Parvo," Trenton said.

13,700 jobs predicted

The Halton Region Official Plan predicts there will be 13,700 jobs in Halton Hills by 1986 and 17,000 by the year 2001. The Town's employment level for 1976 was 9,200 jobs.

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Meanderings
by Mabel Barkman



Pines, currants hide emnity

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Lucky is the person to have some black currant bushes in his garden as long as he has no white pines close by.

I am going to say "goodbye" to my bush this year, we want to keep our pines healthy. Apparently the black currant is host to a virus that destroys white pines.

Anyway, I shall make a bit of jam with my few berries as they are very expensive to buy. I love tarts made with the jam, and a glass of cold milk to drink with them is delicious. It takes me back to my childhood. Would you believe my mother made us take off the blossom end of every black currant! When I got married, I promptly forgot that tradition and I'm sure the jam has better nutrition because of my laziness.

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