

# Opinion

## It's a good time for a Region review

Halton Region has literally taken the "bull" by the horns and decided to do a limited review of regional government in Halton. The subcommittee formed to tackle the task wants the public to participate in the process with written submissions to the Region.

Although the Province paid for similar reviews in other areas, Halton was left to go on its own; consequently the review is modest compared to other recent studies of regional government in Ontario.

Halton's review process will be managed in two parts, the first to be completed by July focuses on accountability and representation. The second part will look at the division of program responsibilities between Halton's four municipalities and the Region.

Regional chairman Peter Pomeroy says this is a good time for Halton to examine basic issues such as the method of election, representation, the size of regional council and the relationship between councils on the two tiers of government.

We agree, the review process is long overdue, especially the public input. Sixteen years of experience has allowed Halton to streamline some responsibilities but there are a number of areas where the general public could generate some thought-provoking recommendations.

Should the regional chairman be elected by council, appointed or elected by popular vote? Should the municipalities take back the responsibility for sewers and water? Should members of the Region council sit on both municipal and region? Should garbage disposal again become part of a local responsibility. All questions with food for thought.

You probably have others and The Region Review Subcommittee will welcome your contribution. Written submission should be forwarded to the committee, *Regional Municipality of Halton, P.O. Box 7000, 1151 Bronte Rd., Oakville, L6J 6E1* by March 1 of 1991.

### Drive my kids to school? no way, says Janet Duval

By JANET DUVAL

Hands up if you drive your kids to school. Many parents do. But not me.

My kids have strong legs, good bicycles, warm scarves, mitts, boots and raincoats. If any of the latter aren't "cool," that's their problem.

One walks two kilometres to Centennial school, the other is 10 minutes from Kennedy, and both know never to expect a ride from me, barring hurricane warnings or nuclear threat.

OK, so I'm an ogre. But think of the implications of driving children distances that most of us walked when we were young, rain or shine.

We're teaching them a lifestyle the world can't afford any longer. 1990 ranked as the earth's hottest year on record, and the burning of fossil fuels - gas - is a likely cause. Are short, single-purpose trips in the car really necessary, if global warming is the result?

Walking is good for kids. It keeps them fit. On snowy days, they clamber up and down snow banks along the way and slide along ice patches. They delight in rain puddles and worms on the sidewalk in spring, in birds and budding trees as the weather warms.

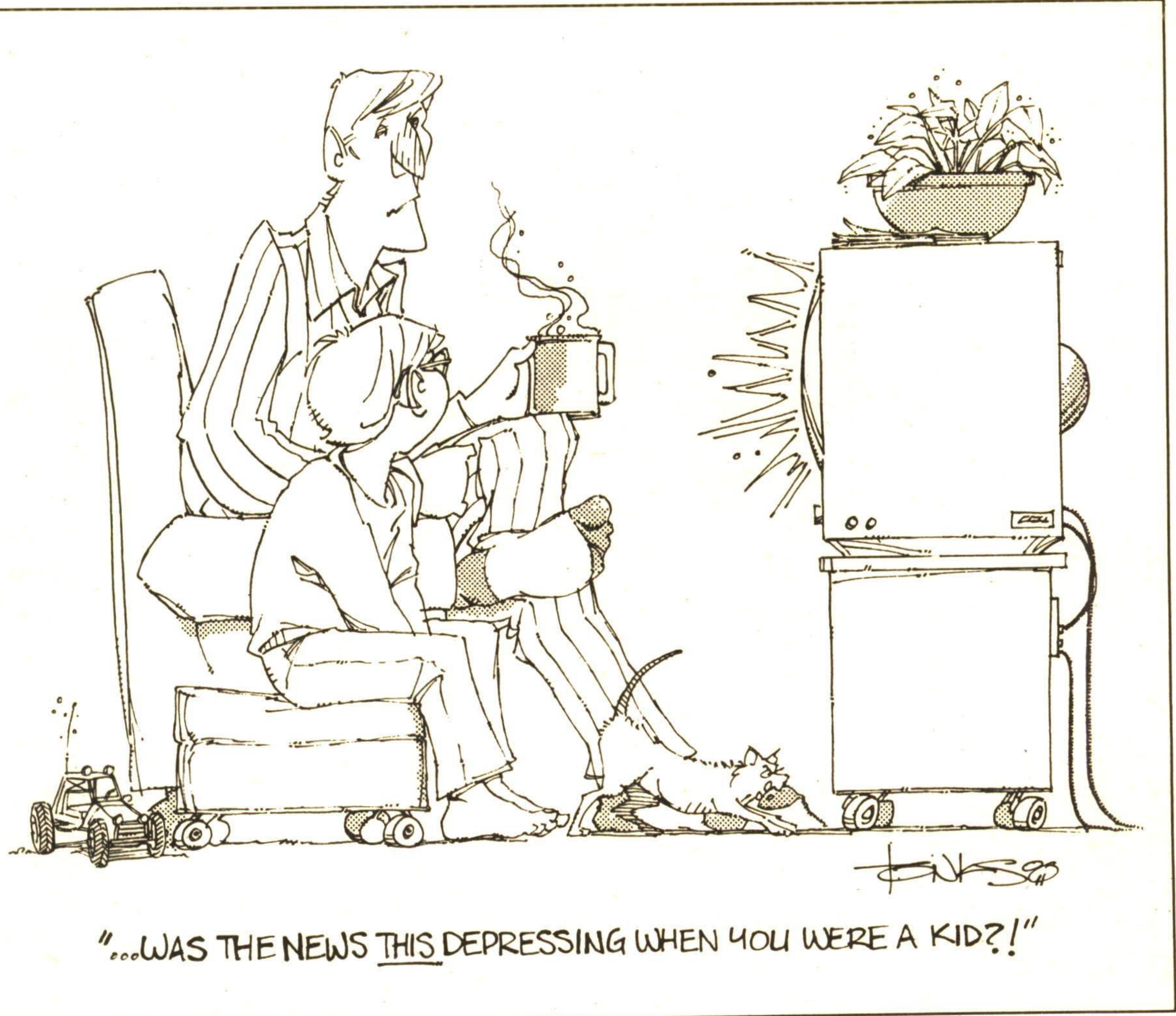
They learn social skills too, if they walk with others: encouraging dawdlers to keep up, settling squabbles, or just talking over the day's activities.

None of these things happen much in the back seat of a car.

David Suzuki says that for trips of up to 10 blocks, his family walks or bicycles. It's a good rule, and it represents a mentality that we all need to learn.

If everyone started thinking that way, maybe we wouldn't be fighting a needless war in the Persian Gulf.

(Janet Duval is a free lance writer, and a frequent contributor to this newspaper.)



### Seeing war through children's eyes

By TED BROWN

With the outbreak of war in the Persian Gulf, many of us have had our eyes opened.

War to some brings back memories of WW2, when it was admirable to fight to defend one's country. Troops returning from battle in Europe were welcomed with open arms.

Myself, I'm too young to have experienced that conflict. The only recollections of war for me come from the Americans' involvement in Viet Nam.

I still recall nights spent in front of the TV set as a teenager, watching the journalists interview soldiers right in the midst of a jungle fight. Spats of automatic gunfire interrupted the interview, while the soldier returned fire. It was pretty bizarre compared to war coverage of the past. The media had no restrictions in Viet Nam; and we'll never see that much freedom given to the press again.



At the time, it didn't really move or scare me. That war was always justified with "Give the Commies Hell" and "Fight 'em over there instead of on your doorstep" attitudes. It made sense at the time. It was on the other side of the world, so why get upset? I was only aware of the fact the soldiers interviewed were about my age; they were at war and some died.

Peace protests filled the other half of the news. I even knew Americans living in Canada to avoid the draft. Peace was in; War was out. "Make love not war, Brother."

Back then, it was all so simple.

But now Canada is involved in a war, and the images are back on TV.

We now live in a world of technology. An event can happen on the other side of the world, and we see it a few seconds later via satellite. War coverage in Viet Nam was often 12 to 24 hours old by the time we saw it.

Last week, I watched a television reporter in Tel Aviv put on a gas mask during his broadcast, because a missile attack siren sounded. A CNN news crew gave commentary while bombs dropped a few blocks away from their Baghdad hotel. It was all

happening live; right in front of our eyes and right now!

Since January 16, words like SCUD, or PATRIOT, AWAC's and B- 52's have entered our kids' vocabulary. I have nephews who know more about F-18 fighters than I ever will. Does this have an affect on our children? Do they feel threatened or scared?

Remembering the feelings I had about war some 20 odd years ago, I took the unique opportunity to interview some young people close to me: my four daughters. I wanted their views on the war in the Persian Gulf.

Lindsay is 12. At the ripe old age of 12, one really doesn't have a lot to worry about outside of peer pressure at school.

To her, the war is "kinda scary, because I never thought I'd see Canada in a war in my lifetime. When the Berlin Wall came down, I hoped peace would have been easier all over the world."

She is concerned for the safety of the soldiers involved, the Allied forces, and interestingly the Iraqi soldiers as well. "They didn't get involved in this fight," she says, "they are only doing what they're told. Saddam Hussein has put them in this danger."

To Lindsay, Saddam is a modern day Hitler, attempting to take over the oil rich Gulf area, country by country, much the same as Hitler invaded Europe. Oil is money; money is power.

While watching the coverage on TV, Lindsay says war looks like a giant video game, sort of like a board game on TV, where the players assemble their pieces as the bombers attack.

She realizes the attacks are happening as the news broadcast are transmitted, and that she finds "interesting," but adds she hopes the journalists aren't injured or killed doing their important job, keeping the world informed.

Her last comment is "I hope it's over soon, before too many more people are killed."

With Mary Ann, 11, her first concern is "someone close to us is going to get hurt."

"I'm afraid Saddam Insane is going to blow up a whole country before he's done," she says, "I know the Persian Gulf is on the other side of the world, but

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Halton Hills

# WEEKEND

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KEN BELLAMY  
Publisher

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Staff Writers: Cynthia Gamble, Robin Inscocoe, Paul Dorsey, Stuart Johnston, Janet Baine, Scott Kline. Photography: Ted Brown

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