

Opinion

Take a hike!

Sunday has been designated as Ontario Hiking Day by Hike Ontario, an umbrella group for trail clubs. The day will be an occasion to celebrate the outdoors in Ontario.

The outdoors is there for us to see (and hear) every day. The birds sing, the rabbits dart through the underbush, a doe watches cautiously from a distance — and we take it for grant.

Imagine if all was quiet and still.

The major threat to wildlife today is not overhunting — it's a menace far more insidious and dangerous. Wildlife and their habitat are being destroyed. In southern Ontario alone, over 70 percent of the wetlands have been lost, resulting in declining waterfowl population. Forests are being cleared and fields paved over for subdivisions and highways.

The result? A long list, and growing, of endangered mammals, fish, birds, reptiles, and plants that will no longer be a part of your hike through the woods — if there is a woods.

As of 1991, there are 45 species considered endangered in Canada including the Eastern Cougar, Spotted Owl, Sea Otter, and Harlequin Duck. Fifty are threatened including the Wood Bison, Burrowing Owl, Beluga Whale, Lake Simcoe Whitefish, and Red Mulberry. Ninety-eight are vulnerable — meaning they soon could be on the endangered list. They include the Barn Owl, Grey Fox, and Southern Flying Squirrel.

And the list goes on.

Ontario Hiking Day is an attempt to bring awareness to the public about our environment and our impact on it through the healthy and fun activity of hiking.

All trail clubs in Ontario plan to run easy hikes for all family members, on accessible sections of their trails. Local conservation authorities also have special hikes, with a naturalist or interpretive guide to lead the way. But remember trails often cross private land and depend on the generosity of landowners for continued access, so please respect the land and the hikers' code of behavior.

Ontario Hiking Day can be the start of an exploration of the land around us, leading to a better understanding of our fragile but beautiful province. So hey, take a hike!

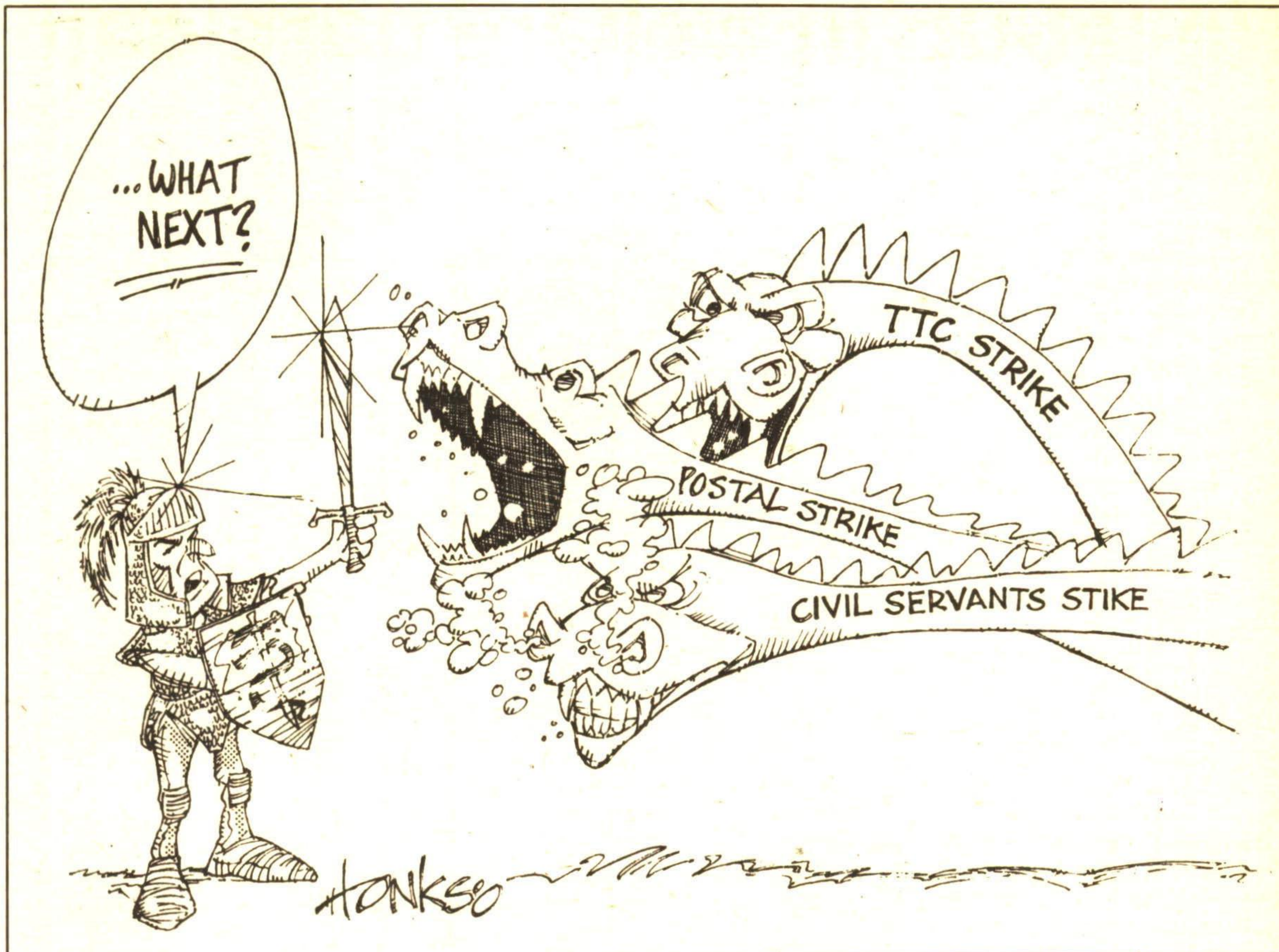
AIDS Awareness Week

Monday marks the start of AIDS Awareness Week, the first time it's being recognized across Canada. Organizers want to raise awareness that AIDS directly or indirectly affects every member of society.

Halton's Regional Health Department is using this week to launch its workplace campaign. Five workplaces in the region — including Georgetown's Neilson plant, will host an AIDS Project Information Display for a day during the week. It will be at Neilson on Thursday. This display, staffed by a member of the AIDS Project staff will contain posters, pamphlets and videos. Information will also be distributed to other workplaces, schools, hospitals, libraries, and community agencies.

Halton AIDS Project staff want to act as a resource to workplaces wanting to provide education materials and/or sessions to their employees.

Whether we like it or not, the presence of AIDS in our life, is here to stay (at least for the time being) and people had better start accepting that. One way to deal with it is to get the best information you can find — this week is a good time to start.



Our Readers Write

Some valid points in the Constitutional proposals

Dear Editor:

The Prime Minister has talked on the Constitution. The meaning of this word is the mode in which the state is organized.

I was surprised our aboriginal people were let down again, quite heavily. Last week on the radio I heard my government was looking towards giving our aboriginal people self-government — they had this before the white man came to this country. Now self-government will be in 10 years.

I really find this hard to believe. These people have very educated members; I would say quite equal to any of my Parliamentary members.

I am pleased at least, with the plan for an elected Senate. May it be one of the first things brought up

in Parliament. I did not care for the add-on members to the Senate. I felt this quite disturbing for Canada and to me it was very much a let-down.

Hopefully common sense will be used as far as Quebec is concerned. My late husband and our two children lived on the Island of Montreal for 34 years in the Town of Montreal East. Our two children finished high school bilingual. They had both French and English friends, went to French and English schools and we had French and English neighbors.

One and half million are out of work in Canada. Start building affordable housing. This is badly needed and will make work for many. Don't let Canada go down any lower. We need to save Canada.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Kathleen (Molly) Crowhurst

RAIDD pleased with greening of Georgetown Marketplace

Dear Editor:

We at RAIDD are delighted to see the "greening" of Guelph Street in front of the Loblaw's Plaza. The trees and landscaping are a real improvement to an otherwise dreary and cold scene.

Over the summer, then RAIDD Chair Gail Rutherford, made two presentations before Council regarding the McNally and Riciutto commercial applications on Guelph Street. She stated that both builders have a responsibility to help develop a scale and character for Guelph

Street. She suggested that an architect in common might work with everyone developing on Guelph Street to create a streetscape worthy of a main entrance to town.

Congratulations to Georgetown Marketplace. We are pleased to see this effort being made to maintain the warm, green, rural friendliness of Georgetown.

Sincerely,
Ken Thorn, Actin Chair,
Residents Active in Development Decisions

Letters to the Editor are welcome

Please send to: 211 Armstrong Ave., L7G 4X5.

Please remember to sign them and include your telephone number (in case we can't read your writing).

Halton Hills

WEEKEND

The Georgetown Independent and Acton Free Press

KEN NUGENT
Publisher

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