

THE HALTON HILLS WEEKEND

KEN NUGENT
Publisher

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Outdoor program at Jack Smythe Centre endangered

Dear editor:

The Peel Board of Education has been in the forefront of innovative education in order to meet the present and future needs of Peel students. Unfortunately, this is changing with each meeting of the trustees as they attempt to come to terms with insufficient financial resources. Certainly there must be budgetary restraint, but not at the expense of environmental awareness.

While many boards of education are expanding their outdoor and environmental education programs in order to better prepare students for the environmental challenges of the future, the Peel Board of Education is closing down their environmental education centres in order to save money. These centres give students opportunities to appreciate, respect and care for our natural environment and empower them to develop the skills to deal

Letters to the Editor

with future environmental decisions.

At a board meeting this past spring, Peel trustees closed down the G.W. Finlayson Field Studies Centre in Alton in order to reduce operating expenses.

This is not the time to continue the dismantling of these effective outdoor education centre programs, when the state of our environment is on everyone's lips.

The trustees for the Peel Board of Education intend to close down the only remaining outdoor education program at the Jack Smythe Field Studies Centre in Terra Cotta unless you contact your trustee and express your concerns about this backward step.

I urge all Peel residents to telephone their trustees today.

Sincerely,
David Spencer

Open Door says thanks

Dear editor:

The Open Door Youth Centre wishes to extend a thank you to: Pizza Hut, Foodstuffs, M and M Meats, Miller's Bakery, Knechtels, Loblaw's, Georgetown Fruit Market, Poppa Corn Company and St. George's Church.

Your generous contributions helped make our fundraiser Pasta Supper a delicious event. We hope residents will repay your generosity by patronizing your businesses. One good turn certainly deserves another. We also wish to thank this paper for printing our publicity releases. Your continued publicity is much appreciated as we want all Georgetown youth to benefit from the services available at both our Drop-in Centre and Young Parents Program. So a heart-felt thank you. We couldn't do it without you. Your community spirit is what makes this town such a welcoming place in which to live.

Most sincerely,
Ann Scheepers-Nevis
Executive Director

Premature move

It's premature for regional council to endorse a special interest group's proposal to transfer the responsibilities of the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) to municipal governments along the escarpment.

The Niagara Escarpment Landowners Coalition (NELC) convinced the region's planning committee to ask the Ministry of Environment that the NEC's power over development permits be transferred to local planning staff. The NELC argues the NEC has turned into a powerful and expensive bureaucracy that has no accountability to the local citizenry living within the escarpment's boundary, citing prejudiced and unfair decisions.

But the NEC will release a five year review of its plan later this month with expected changes to resolve some of the lobby group's concerns. At the very least, regional councillors should have waited for this report.

But more importantly, before their endorsement the regional councillors should have waited until the cost of the switch could be evaluated. Currently, the \$3 million a year budget of the NEC is shared by Ontario citizens. Transferring the powers to the individual councils with the subsequent increase in planning staff would be borne by the locality's taxpayers alone.

While there may have been abuses and mistakes made by the NEC, the effort should have been to correct them, not to dismiss the viability of the organization entirely. We're sure there's an equal number of people who feel the region's planning office haven't dealt fairly with them. Do we dismantle it as well?



How many swings can a refrigerator door stand?

Today, nothing lasts forever. It's a fact of life; in our society, things do wear out.

Over the years, I've worn out several things. Shoes, car tires, erasers on pencils, a few cars and many, many co-workers.

But I had a surprise Monday night as one part of a familiar appliance in our household gave up the ghost.

The refrigerator door. I kid you not.

As we sat at the dinner table, one of my kids walked over to get something out of the refrigerator and it happened; it fell off its hinges.

I wasn't all that pleased with the event. When something like that happens, it requires immediate attention; after all, it's not exactly energy efficient to run the refrigerator with the door off, and, as it sat, it wouldn't quite close.

The kids quickly cleared the kitchen table as I went for my tool

box. What could be the matter with the door?

After standing on my head to look under it, to see why it had become unattached, I found a gaping big hole where there once was pivot hinge.

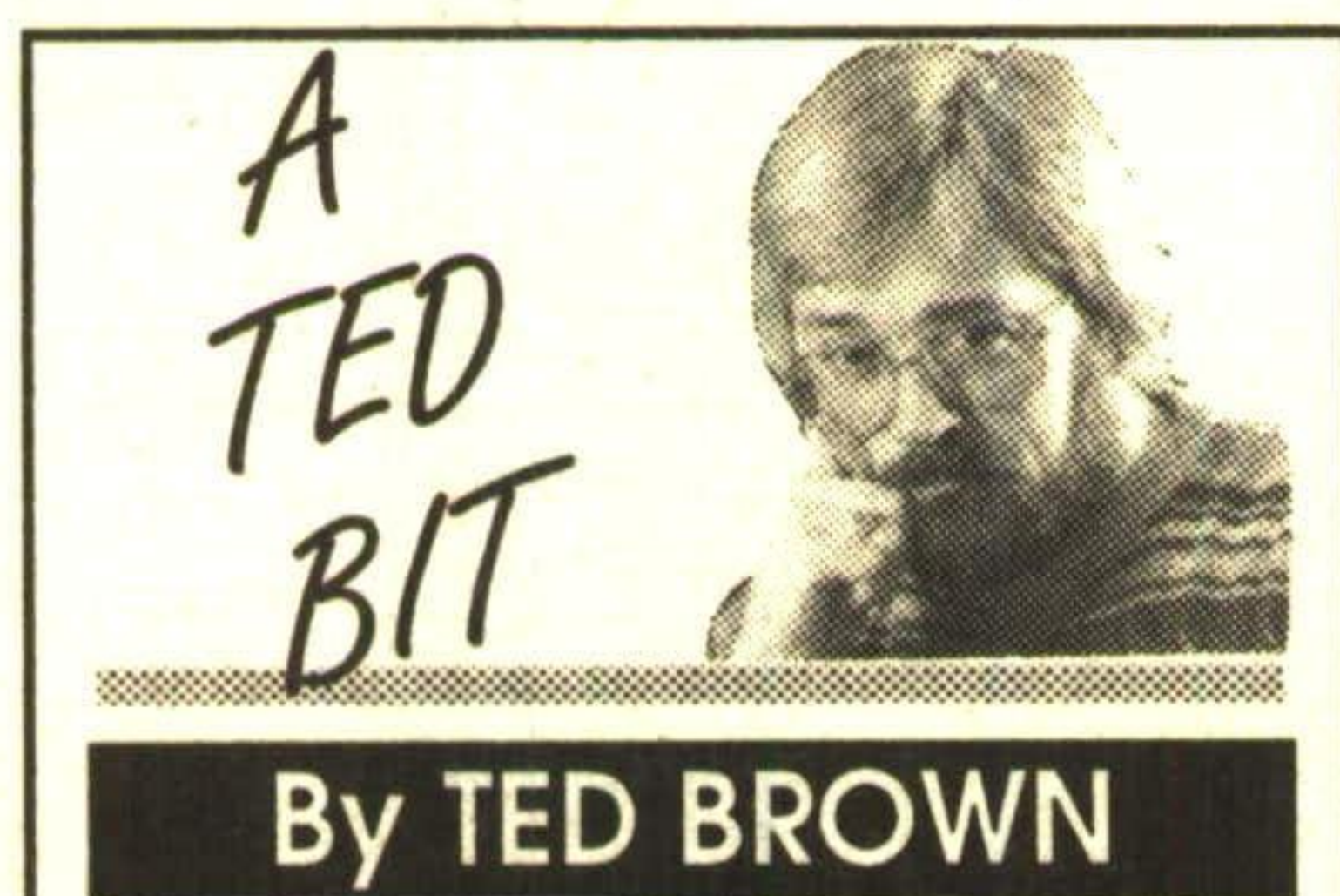
The hinge had worn right through the bottom of the door.

I guess, in retrospect, I should have known it was coming. After all, I had noticed a few grindings on the floor under the door a few weeks ago, but had no idea it had gone that far.

Two hours later, I had manufactured a new bottom and hinge for the door, while it lay across the kitchen table like a patient on an operating table and I was the doctor.

And it actually worked better than it has since the day it was delivered, some 15 years ago.

I was beginning to feel like the Maytag repairman.



After I finished, my daughters wondered out loud how it happened. I didn't say much, only thought to myself; the kids wore it out.

Not by swinging on it, or abusing it, but by sheer repetitive motion, opening it, gazing inside, then closing it again.

About a thousand times a day. Now I figure, since my eldest daughter started school some 10 years ago, she has come home in a famished state from school classes close to 200 days a year.

With a little simple math, that translates into 2,000 times she has entered the house-hungry and

made a beeline to the refrigerator door.

Now add to that daughter number two's contribution, who is only a year behind, and we have an additional 1,800 times.

And daughter number three has added 1,400 more swings while daughter number four has kicked in another 400 days in her short time.

That makes a total of about 5,600 days a kid has entered our house, famished after a day at school, ready for a snack.

And to top it off, each kid walks to the refrigerator door at least three times before supper, to open, peer in and contemplate the universe while swinging the door to and fro, before making a selection.

We've made it to about 16,800 swings of the door, without including any numbers for weekends or my wife and I.

Now consider for a moment, the stress applied to that swinging

appendage over those 16,800 movements.

And add to it the weight of the 37 pounds of magnets, school artwork and notes from teachers hanging on it and it's nothing short of a miracle it has lasted this long.

But it's repaired now, and my hope it will last for another few years, until it's time to replace the entire appliance. The steel plate on the bottom should be good for, oh, at least another 7,500 swings before it croaks.

But the kids are a little miffed with me when I suggest they're the ones responsible for wearing out the door.

"Geez Dad," they say, "It's the only thing in the house we've ever worn out."

And I will agree, they've never worn out anything else in our household.

Especially the vacuum cleaner. Or the washing machine. Or the clothes hamper...