

# THE HALTON HILLS WEEKEND

**KEN NUGENT**  
Publisher

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## A sensible solution

The dilemma: finding a way to accommodate the Ontario Social Contract requiring Halton public school elementary teachers to take four days off without pay and secondary teachers three.

The solution: extend the March Break by two days and eliminate some PA days. Students are still in school the same number of days.

That's what the Halton Board of Education decided to do Thursday night, after much negotiation with its teachers. (The Catholic Board is still wrestling with this dilemma.)

For some it's a sensible, albeit confusing, solution. Many parents had feared the public board might decide what the Wellington Catholic School Board had done: eliminate most of the PA days and extend the March Break by a full week — creating major babysitting headaches mid-year.

But this is a more workable solution for parents, teachers and the board.

We agree with both local public school trustees — Dick Howitt and Dave Whiting — that the Ontario government had to find money somewhere to pare back the deficit. But we also concur with Whiting's added aside — it's too bad that at this late date, the board is being forced to turn the school calendar upside down to accomplish it.

## Arts Alive appreciates help

Dear editor:

The Arts Alive Committee would like to publicly acknowledge the support we received from Artcast Incorporated in producing our Arts Awards medallions.

The medallion will soon be on display, along with the names of award recipients, in the Cultural Centre foyer.

Artcast has generously donated \$550 towards this project and we are most grateful for the assistance.

Sincerely,  
Lois Fraser  
Arts Alive

## Chretien begins with honor

Dear editor:

Prime Minister John Christian begins his term with honor. As he promised, the helicopter deal has been canceled.

Joe Hurst, Acton

## Letters

to the Editor

## POWER starts seventh year

Dear editor:

It's hard to believe, but POWER is approaching our seventh year in its battle to defeat the Acton Quarry Landfill proposal. Our job hasn't always been easy, nor without controversy, but speaking as someone who has been involved over the entire course of those seven years, I can honestly say that all of our decisions have been made with the strong belief that the actions we take are in the best interest of our defence against this landfill proposal.

Our battle however is far from over. RSI, despite an initial hearing ruling that cited gross inadequacies with the process followed in their

original application, has decided to further pursue the issue, by re-applying for a new hearing. This hearing is likely to be reconvened in the very near future. More information on this is contained in our fall newsletter, which has just gone out to all past and present members. Thanks to all who have sent in their membership renewals, and a special thanks to the many people who added financial donations as well. If you haven't already, please, we need your renewal, or your membership if you are interested in joining POWER.

On Wednesday December 1, at 8 p.m. POWER's annual general meeting will be held at the Georgetown High School cafeteria. Our guest speaker will be Paul Muldoon from Pollution Probe. At this time, we will also be electing our board of directors, who will guide POWER through the all important next year. Our board is at the centre of the decision making process of our group. If you would like to have an input into what we do, please consider joining our board, and give me a call at 853-1328 before November 25.

Ruth French



"THEY SAY YOUR AIR SICKNESS WILL HAVE TO WAIT 'TIL THE NEW YEAR. - SOMETHING ABOUT 'SOCIAL CONTRACT CUTBACKS'..."

## I'm really not sensitive about my age, but ...

Over the years, I have come to accept my place in the office.

I'm always 'the old guy.'

With my editorial co-workers all younger than me, it's understandable they would feel like I'm the senior person in the office.

It's been that way since former managing editor Hartley Coles retired.

And it doesn't bother me a bit, as they make little wisecracks about my age, and my fast approaching transition to that dreaded "middle age."

I even smile at the quips about my grey hair.

But I had the ultimate humiliation the other day.

It happened as I bought a cup of coffee.

The lady behind the counter was polite, and slid the cup across to me and handed me my change.

So far, so good.

It was as I was leaving she happened to mention in passing.

"By the way sir," she smiled, holding up a sheet of paper with cartoon

characters on it, "Would your grandchildren like to take part in our coloring contest?"

"Grandchildren!!!" I snapped.

"Did you say 'grandchildren?'"

I guess I wasn't very diplomatic about it, and she looked up at me and quickly apologized for her obvious mistake.

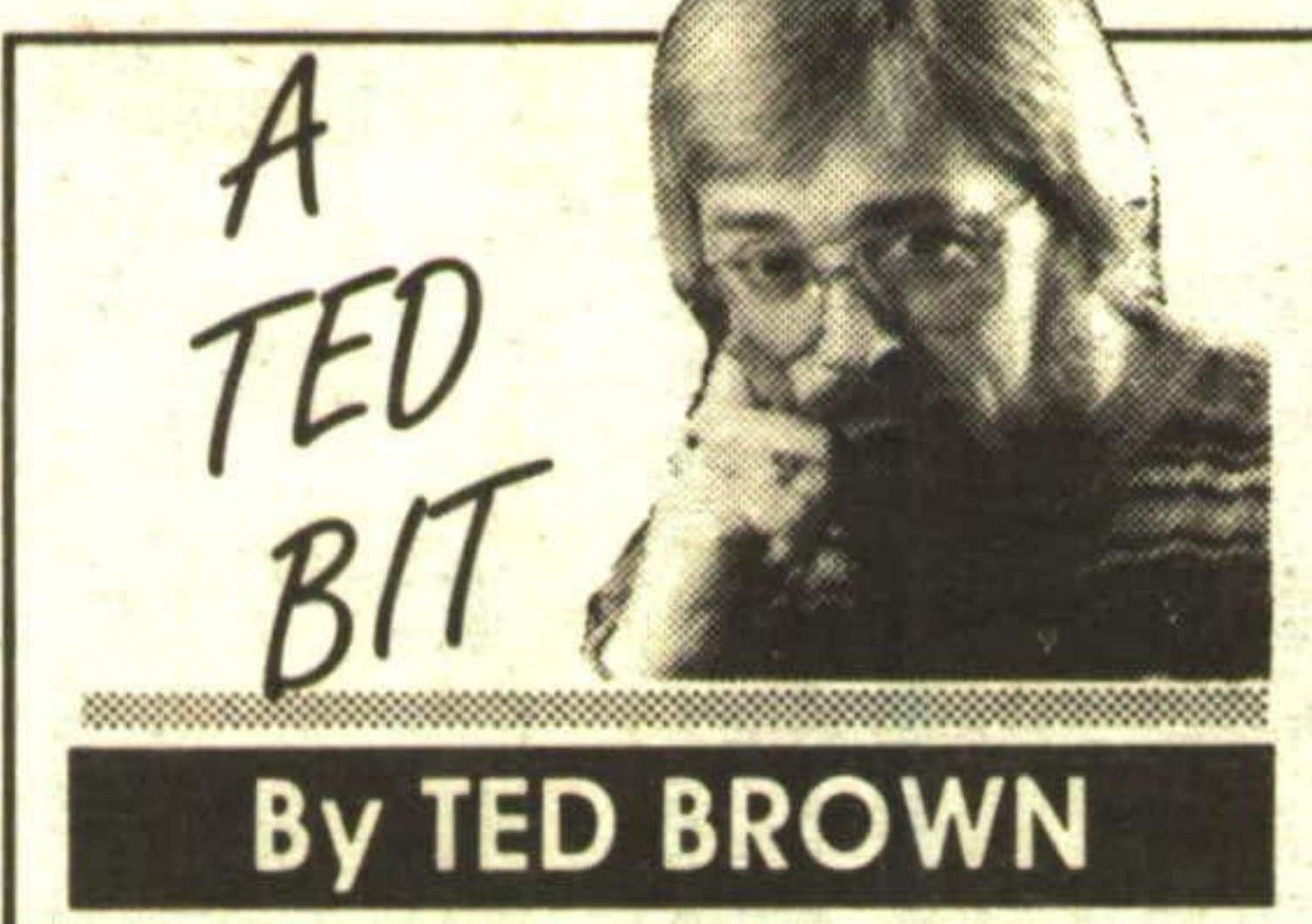
"Er, I meant your children, sir," she blushed.

As my youngest daughter is seven years old, I suppose I was a little over sensitive about her innocent comment.

I dragged myself home later that day, weary at the thought of being mistaken for somebody's grandfather.

How could it happen? I've always strived to keep a youthful attitude and outlook. This was a massive blow to my self-confidence and, worse yet, my ego. Sure, I've passed that 40-year milestone, but, dammit, I don't really think I look like somebody's grandfather.

Of course, my wife wasn't very supportive.



I walked in the door of our home, and poured out my heart about this obvious mistake by the sales clerk, and expected to have my bruised ego and hurt pride kissed and made better. She laughed.

"It's probably your grey hair, Ted," she smirked, "And the lady only saw your hair and never really gave it much thought. In fact, she's probably a grandmother herself and is used to talking about her grandchildren."

"Yeah, sure," I growled, "It's easy for you to brush it off so easily. Nobody called you 'Grandma.'"

A few days went by, and I had almost put the whole incident out of

my mind.

Until last weekend when the phone rang.

It happened to be one of those rare times in our house when the silence wasn't shattered with a chorus of four young female voices shouting, "I'll get it!" while clambering over each other to answer the phone before the second ring.

I answered the phone.

"Hi, ...uh Grampa?" the voice responded on the over end of the line.

"Ah, no, I don't think so..." I replied, suddenly feeling the hair on the back of my neck bristling all over again. "What number were you trying to reach?"

After chatting with this young fellow on the other end of the telephone line for a few minutes, I learned he had made a slight slip of the finger during dialing, and was out by one number.

I breathed a sigh of relief and made the mistake of telling my wife about the call.

She laughed again. (The woman

has no compassion.)

She mentioned I was perhaps a little too sensitive about these two unrelated incidents. They were honest mistakes she said.

In response, I decided to re-examine my inner thoughts to see why I felt so threatened by those 'honest mistakes' — twice.

I looked at my parents. They revel in being grandparents to my kids and my sisters' kids. They enjoy the respect being grandparents brings and are able to love and spoil our kids and not have to accept the consequences.

So after giving it lots of thought, I decided I was over reacting to being mistaken for a grandfather. Hey, it's almost a compliment, like I've got lots of sage wisdom buried under my graying hair, and people are impressed with my opinions on life. And after considering the options, my wife is right; I'll just laugh it off and smile at that poor lady's mistake.

But it better not happen again, or I'm buying my coffee elsewhere.