

# THE WEEKEND

**KEN NUGENT**  
Publisher

The Halton Hills Weekend, published every Wednesday, at 211 Armstrong Ave. Georgetown Ont., L7G 4X5 is one of the Metroland Printing & Distributing group of suburban newspapers which includes: The Georgetown Independent and The Acton Free Press, Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, The Aurora Banner, The Barrie Advance, The Brampton Guardian, The Burlington Post, The Collingwood Connection, The Etobicoke Guardian/Lakeshore Advertiser, Halton Hills Week End, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Markham Economist & Sun, The Milton Champion, The Mississauga News, The Newmarket Era, The Oakville Beaver, Orillia Today, Oshawa/Whitby This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, The Scarborough Mirror, Today's Seniors, The Uxbridge/Stouffville Tribune.

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Price: Store copies 50¢ each; Subscriptions \$26.00 per year by carrier; \$92.50 per year by mail in Canada; \$130.00 per year in all other countries. Plus G.S.T.

Second Class Mail Registration Number 6869. The Georgetown Independent is a member of The Canadian Community Newspaper Association and The Ontario Community Newspaper Association.

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## Seniors finally get funding

Finally!

Funding for seniors centres here — both in Acton and Georgetown. And none too soon.

Local seniors have been busy over the past few years raising funds and preparing for this day in time. It has finally arrived.

The Georgetown Seniors Association and the Acton Seniors Recreation Centre committee have been working long and hard to see to it they would have the needed cash required to open shop. Georgetown has already raised \$72,000 toward their new facility and with the Ministry of Health grant of \$30,000 annually, they can now get on with the business of setting up their floor plan at the Indoor Mall.

The Acton group has raised more than \$40,000 and received approvals for an additional \$20,000 New Horizons grant. They too, will get \$30,000 annually. They haven't finalized a location but are optimistic that the old FlightLine building on Mill St. E. in Acton will soon become their home.

It has been a long drawn out process for these groups...but the wait is finally over!

## Foreign aid can create 'welfare bums'

Dear editor:

Regarding your recent editorial cartoon depicting the fifth horse of the apocalypse as Global Indifference to the problems in Rwanda.

We are all shaken by the news-reel footage of the dead and dying in Rwanda. It would only be the most callous and cold hearted who would not be moved by these well contrived images. It's easy to blame the governments of "wealthy" countries for inaction. However, the track record shows that foreign aid is, for the most part, diverted to the black market, sometimes not even into the country intended. Indeed, much privately-collect foreign aid never even leaves the donor countries. It's either chewed up in administration or spoils on the loading docks, even in Canada.

Here are some interesting facts to keep in mind about Africa: the U.S. government alone has given \$170 billion dollars in aid to Central

## Letters

to the Editor

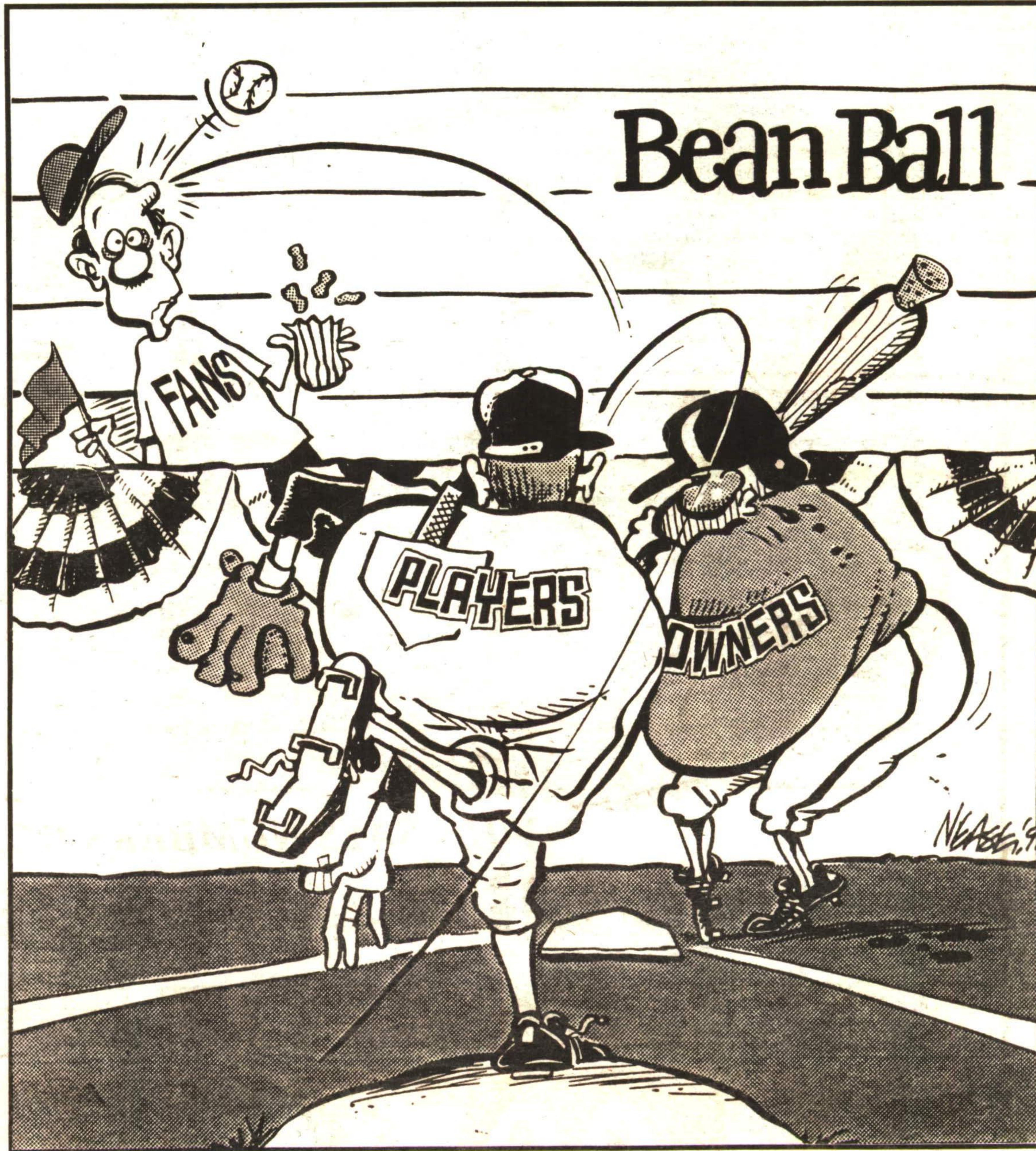
African nations in the past 10 years. Central Africa receives 38 per cent of world foreign aid. Of those governments, 11.7 per cent of Gross Domestic Product is Foreign Aid, double what it was 20 years ago. Continent wide, population growth is out of control. For example, Kenya's population has tripled in the past 20 years alone.

History is a good teacher. Some of us can still remember when Ethiopia was in the headlines as the disaster of a previous decade. Good news, they they now spend a whopping 13.5 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product on their Military Infrastructure while their people continue to suffer.

Many "developing nations" in Africa spend much more of their GDP on military expenditure than Canada. In effect, foreign aid is allowing several African countries to fund a dirty little arms race on that continent. The sad fact is that Africa is much worse off today than it was 20 years ago when aid started pouring in. Africa has become the continental equivalent of a welfare bum and no amount of foreign aid will fix it.

As to Canada's military involvement in Rwanda. It will be like our disastrous involvement in Somalia. Some people will want us there and some won't. Again, our troops will be under fire in a war they can't stop and can't win. It is another lose-lose situation. After the recent failure of our peace missions in Bosnia and Somalia, I would have hoped that our leaders would have had the smarts to avoid standing in the middle of yet another civil war. Apparently not!

Don Dagenais



## I guess, to Paul, we're all antiques

Every year, we seem to have a progression of young people who "do their time" in our office, fine tuning their journalistic skills while honing and polishing their writing style.

I'm referring to journalism students.

This year is no exception, and here at *The Independent/Free Press* office, we have been graced by the presence of a Carleton University student who thinks he wants to be a news guy.

Paul Ferreira is a talented writer with lots of professionalism, and great style, and has taken delight buying himself in sports copy since he took up residence at his desk last May.

In short, I think the kid's okay, and I'll even overlook his love of soccer over baseball, given his background.

(But I'll never understand how someone can get so excited about a team chasing and kicking a ball from one end of the field the other...)

But, as I said, he's okay.

To a point.

You see Paul has acquired this warped perception (above and beyond his love for soccer) since he arrived.

He thinks everybody here is old.

And he's starting to collectively tick off a select (and probably insecure) few in the newsroom, with his comments about age.

Paul is a couple years into his second decade, and he innocently made a comment to one of my co-workers about her age.

You see, she is into her thirties; "thirtysomething" is the catch phrase these days.

And he referred to her as "middle aged."

"WHAT DID YOU CALL ME?" she snapped.

(Someone should have warned Paul about using the words "middle age" in any reference to a female type person. It's a political mine-field.)

"Ah, er, middle aged," he replied, a little guarded all of a sudden.

"I AM NOT middle aged!" she snapped, eyes squinting and nostrils

A TED BIT



By TED BROWN

flaring.

Turning to me she said, "Paul thinks I'm middle aged; what does that make YOU, Ted?"

Now I'll be the first to admit, I gave the kid a chance to redeem himself.

"Paul, you didn't REALLY mean either of us were middle aged, did you?" I asked slowly, "that was just a slip of the tongue, a figure of speech, so to speak."

(I didn't want to beg him to retract it, but it was close.)

"Oh no," he replied cheerily, "I believe you're all middle aged people."

"And just what is your definition of 'middle age?'" I asked.

"Oh, anyone over 30," he replied self-assuredly. (And a bit too damned cheery, I might add.)

"Excuse me? Anyone over thirty?"

I was tempted to tell him that he might be right, if he were talking about dogs or horses.

But people?

I don't think so.

Since then, the discussion has escalated over the past month or so, and the female employees in the editorial department (all "thirtysomething," I might add) have taken exception to Paul's definition.

And he doesn't know when to quit.

I guess we're all antiques to Paul.

As the discussion raged, I asked a few people in the office what middle age meant to them. The results were interesting.

One said around 55, while another said between 50 and 70. (All the people in her family live to their late 90's she added.)

One said she used to think 40 was middle age, but since her husband

turned 40, she has had to rethink that one, so she moved it up to 50.

(My editor said he felt from 35 to 50 was middle age, but I quickly disregarded his opinion, because everyone knows editors are out of touch with reality.)

But Paul still adamantly clings to his definition of "anyone over 30." It scares me when someone who is 20 odd years of age thinks he is less than a decade from entering middle age.

But his reasoning is simple. People live to be about 70 to 80 years, so half of that is 35 or 40. Thus middle age is 35 to 40. (I think he shaved off five years to upset us.)

I suggested, by clinging to his theory in this office, (along with his persistence to call us middle aged people) he might have reached his "middle age" about 10 years ago....

Whatever the case, I have developed my simple formula to figure out what age is middle age.

It's about five years older than I am.

At any given time in my life.