

ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson



It's déjà vu all over again ...

I had a déjà vu experience last week that has left me slightly unsettled.

My sister had a baby and I took her other children while she was in hospital. The similarities between our lives are too obvious to be ignored.

She had three kids in three years; I had three kids in three years. She moved to a new house just one month before having her baby; we moved to our house in Acton four days before I had my third baby. She has two girls and a boy; I have a boy and two girls. She's in for the ride of her life over the next few years; I'm enjoying the lull before the teen-age storm that's in store for me.

When you are caught between midnight feedings and three-year olds who won't eat, with one learning to talk and the other blabbing all your secrets, it's hard to believe life will ever return to normal.

I hadn't realized just how much things had changed-back for me until my nieces stayed with us last week. Here are a few observations:

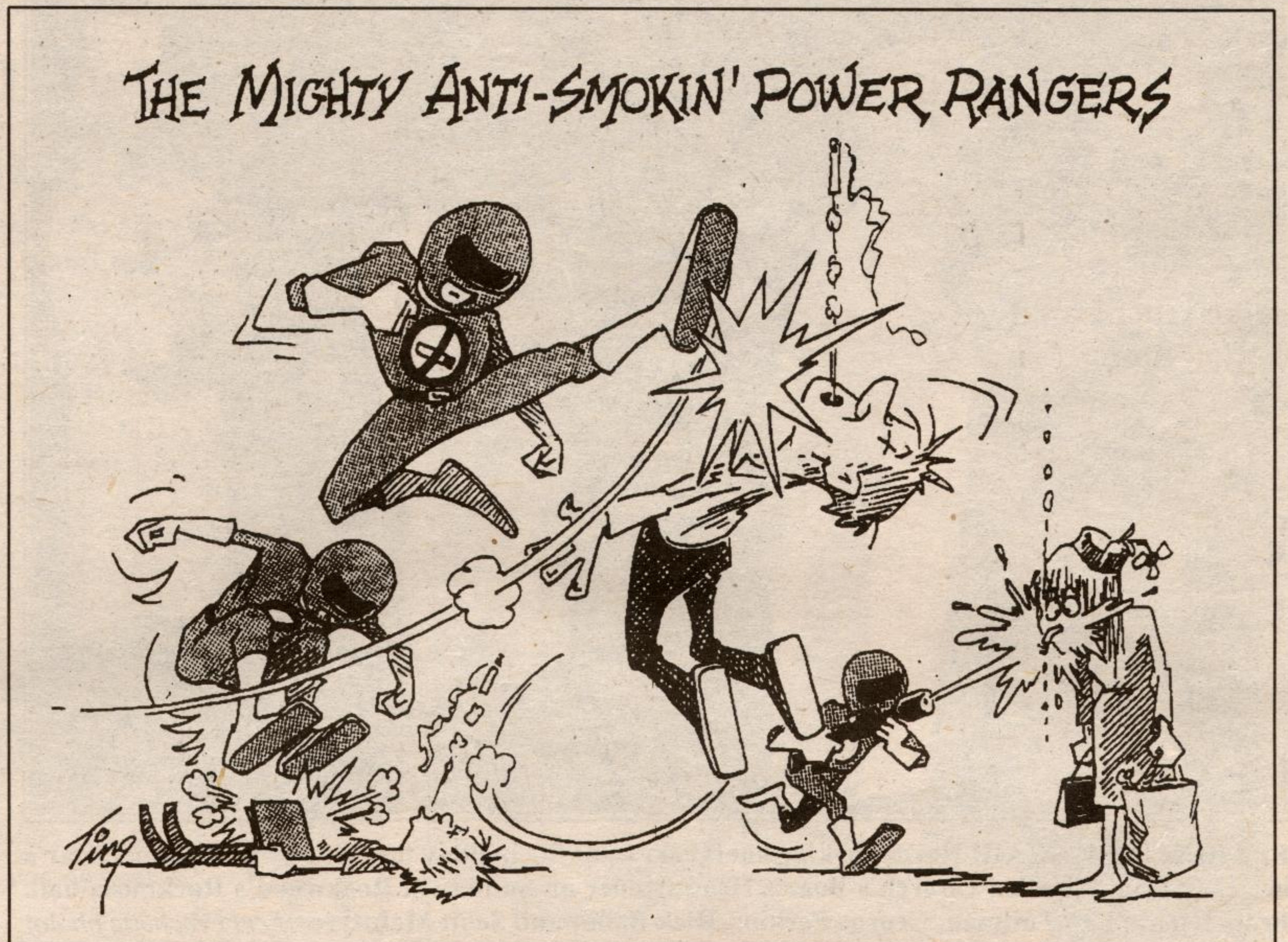
- I'd forgotten how often just-recently toilet-trained toddlers need to be reminded to go to the bathroom.
- I'd forgotten how much a can of apple juice can hurt when it drops on your toe.
- Fifteen-month-old babies will eat anything – including cat food.
- I have great respect for Barney, the big purple dinosaur. He may have the most annoying and dopey voice of all children's characters, but his message is wholesome and created a half-hour diversion so I could make beds and clean the kitchen.
- Never phone anyone with small children between 2 and 4 in the afternoon. Nap time is sacred and that peace should never be interrupted.
- A trip to the park after lunch will tire out the little ones just enough to make nap time easy.

I'd also forgotten how fascinating a shadow can be, how many different colours there are in a stone, how the snow sparkles, and how counting birds nests is infinitely more important than getting anywhere on time.

I also have unlimited respect for my own children. They were fantastic with their young cousins, they never tired of playing Barbies or peek-a-boo (or at least they never showed it), and they were terrific about reading bed-time stories ... again and again.

I'm still a little breathless from the experience and will spend the rest of the week recovering.

And I can't help but wonder how I did it every day for so many years.



LETTERS

MPP supports MSA for community

To the Editor,

Your editorial entitled "What about ASSIC?" in the Nov. 16 *Tanner*, requires response.

Our NDP government is committed to establishing a system of long-term care that will enable elderly people and people with disabilities to stay in their own homes and with their families, if that is their wish. At the same time, services must be provided to assist families in providing care.

In-depth discussions with local seniors, their families, care-providing agencies and others, have convinced me that our government is on the right track. Elderly people, for the most part, want to remain independent for as long as possible; families want to care for their aging parents.

My talks with all concerned confirm that special services are needed to make in-home care possible – from daily or occasional care by qualified nurses, to meals-on-wheels, to rest and relaxation for caregivers, and so on. In fairness, these services must be available as equally as possible in all areas.

Easy accessibility to services is

also important. With this in mind, our Ministry of Health, in consultation with professional caregivers and those who need care, has determined that a Multi-Service Agency (MSA) can provide "one-stop shopping" for long-term care needs.

The idea is that the various services required can be obtained through the MSA, with a minimum of shopping around by families and those in need of care.

These Multi-Service Agencies are now taking shape. Consultation with all those involved continues to be paramount. And I want to assure everybody, especially volunteers, that their contribution will continue to be valuable and valued.

The local community of Halton Hills wants its own Multi-Service Agency. I am already on record as strongly supporting this endeavour. Our community has an enviable record of caring social service, which is a strength on which to build. As well, the north part of Halton Region is partly rural, with needs different to those of the more heavily populated south.

I am committed to ensuring that our area is well-served in regard to long-term care. I shall continue to work with everyone involved, the dedicated people of Halton Hills, as well as with my friend the Honourable Ruth Grier, Minister of Health, to ensure that the riding of Halton North gets its own Multi-Service Agency.

Noel Duignan
MPP Halton North

Big help for Kevin

To the Editor,

The "Help for Kevin" project has now been completed, and we are happy to report that we were able to send off a cheque for \$500. We have received a heartfelt thank you from Kevin and his wife, Heather.

We would like to thank everyone who helped us in any way in this endeavour, particularly to Knox Presbyterian Church for allowing us to use their parking lot for the garage sale, and to *The Acton Tanner* for their interest and assistance.

Kevin is still able to be up and around, and makes two trips a

week to Toronto General Hospital to have his heart and lungs monitored.

Heather and the little boys have settled in to life in the big city and the boys are going to school. All they can do is wait for the call to say that the transplant is scheduled.

With all their friends and relatives, we are praying for them and know their new-found friends in Acton are too.

Thanks again!

Mary-Beth Robertson, Jane Robertson, Renee Watson
Acton

WRITE US A LETTER!

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WHAT'S HAPPENING!

A Weekly Round-Up of Coming Events in Acton & Area

Dec. 7, Wednesday – 7:30 to 9:30 pm: "Coping with the holidays," a free presentation offered by the North Halton Bereavement Resource Centre, for those who have experienced the death of a family member or a friend, at the Indoor Mall, 318 Guelph St., Unit 13 in Georgetown.

Dec. 9, 10, Friday, Saturday – 7 pm and Dec. 11, Sunday – 3:30 pm and 7 pm: The Hands Up Puppeteers invite you to come see their newest production, "Angels Aware." It's the awesome musical story of why God came to Earth as a baby. All shows at the Acton Baptist Church, 80 Mill St. E. Tickets at the door: adults \$4, teens and seniors \$3.50, children \$2. For info call 853-0690.

Dec. 11, Sunday – 2 to 4 pm: The Acton Citizens' Band warmly invites you to help us welcome the Christmas season with an old-fashioned concert at 85 Wallace St. Refreshments, door prizes. Admission \$3, free for pre-schoolers. Call 877-7148 for info.