

## ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson



### Only a flesh wound!

I donned long pants, impenetrable gloves, rubber boots, and a bee-keeper's hood. Freshly-sharpened blades caught the sunlight, blinding me momentarily.

A light breeze cooled the sweat from my brow, calming me at the same time. As I went forth, I summoned all my courage, steeling myself for the inevitable battle.

With a kiss to my loved ones, I set out to trim the bushes.

I have, in my backyard, a large, prickly shrub — The Shrub That Took Over Acton. At first glance, it looks harmless enough. It has soft, light green leaves, a round-ish shape, and at the moment, has a few flowers that are not unattractive.

But as soon as I go near it with clippers in my hand, the branches seem to reach out for me, scratching, poking and releasing bees to keep me away.

A recent bout with the hedge left people asking if I was in a cat-fight ... I had scratches and welts up and down my arms.

Despite the risks, I do enjoy gardening. I'm continually amazed that anything manages to grow in my little patch of soil, never mind those flowers that return each year.

Every winter I study gardening books and magazines; every spring I head out to the garden centre, armed with pictures, garden plans and credit cards.

And every year about this time, I wonder why I had to be so ambitious just a few short months ago. All those plants require time and attention, the two things I just ran out of.

I find pulling weeds to be therapeutic. I tune out external noises (i.e. kids fighting), block out any stress from my mind (i.e. what's for dinner?) and totally immerse myself in the microcosm that is my garden. Not exactly a mud bath, but I do end up with stained knees and dirt under my finger nails.

I am no master grounds-keeper, by any means, but I have learned a few things over the years. Mostly, I learned I wish I had paid more attention to my parents, both avid gardeners, and picked their brains a little more before I moved away from home.

There's no danger my garden will win any awards, or that you'll find me in *Landscape Architect's Digest*. On the whole, though, my garden is OK, and bits of it are pure poetry.

I want to thank all the gardeners in town. Your gardens provide me with inspiration and a smile during my early-morning walks with the dog.

I'd also like to thank the owners of the property on Trafalgar Road, who've planted a succession of tulips, peonies and roses along that one stretch of highway.

And I should apologize to the drivers behind me, who must slow to a halt as I drive through neighbourhoods making notes as to how people have landscaped their yards.

Soon enough we'll be buried in snow, when I will nurse my wounds and dream of next year's garden.

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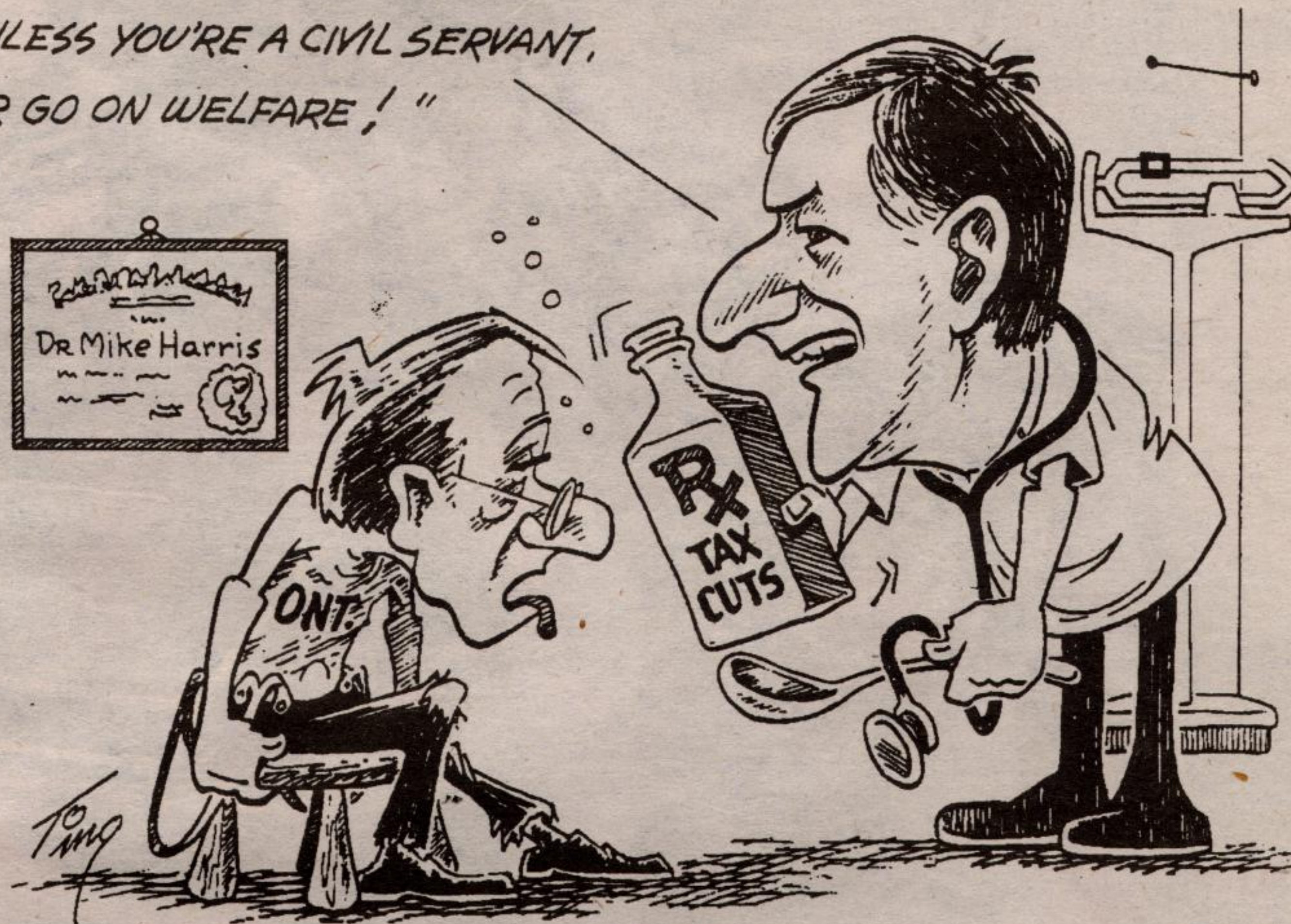
Halton Police recently participated in an Aggressive Driving Campaign, which ran from June 18 to July 3. The campaign came up with the following statistics: Vehicles Stopped: 3,146; Provincial Offence Tickets Issued (speeding not included): 32; Twelve-hour Suspensions: 5; Impaired Driving Charges: 2; Warnings: 84.

The slogan for this year's campaign was "Have you seen/been a bad driver today?" The focus of the effort was on a more personal level by focusing on individual drivers and how other drivers perceive them.

It's easy to point to bad drivers. They're the ones who drive aggressively, who speed, tailgate and don't signal. But ... how do others see you when you drive?

Aggressive driving increases your risk of a collision. Remember: Every eight hours someone dies on the roads of this province. No matter how good a driver you think you are, one mistake could be costly.

"THIS'LL MAKE YOU FEEL 30% BETTER!  
ANY SIDE EFFECTS SHOULD BE MINIMAL  
— UNLESS YOU'RE A CIVIL SERVANT,  
OR GO ON WELFARE!"



## LETTERS

### Congratulations!

To the Editor,

What a great afternoon!

Aided historically by Janis Fread, with personal additions by the ladies and gentlemen in our group, we spent a wonderful afternoon July 1 touring through downtown Acton.

"What was then and what is now" was our theme, and with the

historical tour we also sampled the scrumptious foods of The Big Scoop Cafe, Red Dog Cafe, Tim-Bri Teahouse, Wetherby's, Andy's and The Towne Friar.

Congratulations to the eateries, the Acton BIA, and all those involved in the making of what we hope is an annual SampleFest event!

Not only was this event an excellent way to partake of the fine food we have here in Acton, but it was a great way to learn more of the history of the town too (which even includes some ghosts!). Congratulations!

*Arlene Fritz, Diane Galka  
R.R. 2, Acton*

### See you next year

To the Editor,

Acton's first annual Sizzling Summer SampleFest has just wrapped up and what a great turnout!

Thanks to the wonderful food and service provided by TimBri, The Towne Friar, Red Dog Cafe, Andy's and The Big Scoop, plus samplings at Wetherby's, all 115 visitors had a true taste of the delicious variety of foods Acton restaurants have to offer.

Thank you to each of the par-

ticipants.

Thank you also to our informed and interesting historical walking tour guides, who told us about Acton's colourful past. Stories from Jessie Coles, Mac Sprowl and Doug Fread made our history come alive!

Downtown Acton is rich in history and can compete with the best when it comes to excellent eateries. See you next year at the second annual Sizzling Summer SampleFest!

*Janis Fread  
BIA Coordinator*

## Drivers are needed

### ASSIC ALERT

The Meals on Wheels program provides nutritious, well-balanced meals to people who have difficulty preparing their own. Friendly volunteers deliver the meals to your home Monday to Friday with the option of multiple meals for weekends. The cost is \$3.50 per meal and special diets are available.

Volunteer drivers are needed one hour per week to deliver the meals. If you are interested in receiving Meals on Wheels or would like to become a volunteer driver for this program please call ASSIC at 853-3310.

**Transportation program**  
Transportation to medical, legal and counselling appointments is available to individu-

als who are unable to use public transit due to some limited disability or because none exists. There is a charge for transportation services but it is geared to income.

Volunteer drivers are always needed to provide this service and drivers need only drive where they feel comfortable. If you would prefer to drive locally only, that's fine. If you feel comfortable with further distances, drivers are always need to go to Toronto, Hamilton, Mississauga or Guelph. Drivers are compensated for mileage.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer driver or are in need of transportation services, please call ASSIC at 853-3310.

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