

## ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson



### Home Alone, Part I

There was no mad dash to the airport, no over-sleeping and no one was forgotten in the attic, but I recently found myself home alone.

My husband, bless his soul, took the kids — and the dog — up north for a few days of R&R. I stayed home to work and get caught up around the house.

It's debatable who had more fun.

You'd think you'd do something wild and impulsive given the opportunity. For my part, I washed the kitchen floor and watched it stay clean for four days.

I also removed the toothpaste blobs from the bathroom sink ... they didn't return till the family did. Ditto the bathtub ring.

I took a break from cooking and ate microwave dinners.

I spent one evening with Brad Pitt and another with Michael Douglas. I listened to *my* music and no one complained — not even once.

I invited some people over for burgers and a swim. And I even read a book!

My husband, meanwhile, had only one day of water skiing and fishing with the kids. Lots of fun, for sure.

But the other days were rather wet, forcing everyone indoors for those rainy-day-at-the-cottage-activities. (Should I be alarmed that my 8-year-old can now play poker like a pro? Five-card draw, Aces and Deuces are wild, high bid of five cents, everyone ante-up.)

And on top of the rain he got two flat tires while moving out of the way of a dump truck. (We have affectionately named the road into the cottage Last Ditch Effort.)

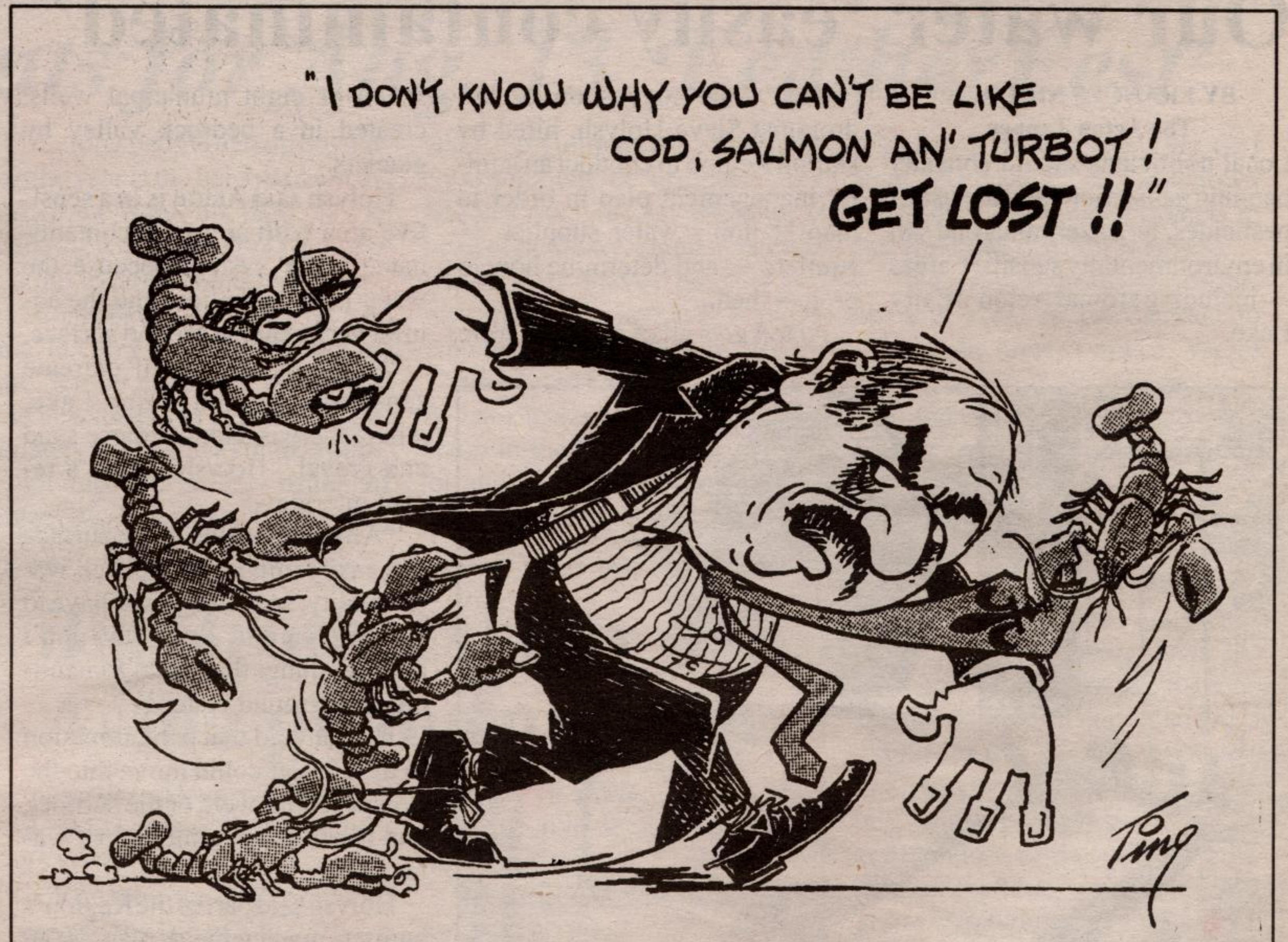
He had to drive the remaining three miles to the cottage on the flat tires.

He spent much of his time looking out the window, wondering at the wisdom of renting a cottage with no TV, no phone, and no civilization for miles around.

They say absence makes the heart grow fonder. I certainly missed my family at the end of the four days and was glad to see them again. And I think they were glad to see me too — or maybe it was the new tires and rims I brought that made me such a hit.

It might not win an Oscar, but I think my holiday 'home alone' deserves two thumbs up.

And I can hardly wait for the sequel.



## LETTERS

### War on the poor?

To the Editor,

While shopping at an out-of-town mall recently, I met up with a group of protestors who were asking passers-by to help "stop the war on the poor."

Although all appeared to be well-clothed and nourished, they railed against the Harris government's spending cuts as if they had been sentenced to life in a work house.

Watching the demonstration, I was reminded of a time when practically everyone was poor by today's standards and I wondered just what made these people think they are so badly off.

It was not so long ago that people felt thankful if they had reasonable health, a roof over their heads and a couple of square meals a day. Many households lacked modern conveniences; some had no hydro or running water. Furnishings came from parents' throw-aways. Not everyone had a motor vehicle. Eating out was a rare luxury. Children wore hand-me-downs, played with home-made toys and slept two or three to a bed — if they were lucky enough to have a bed.

Only the "better-off" could go to college. The not-so-fortunate

took whatever jobs were available and made the best of it.

In spite of the conditions those days (or because of them?), people seemed more contented.

Maybe what needs to be stopped is not the "war on the poor" but the pity people feel for themselves because they don't have every blessed thing they want handed to them on a silver platter. A change from the attitude that the world owes us a living is needed.

Welfare recipients moan that they cannot live on their benefits, but there are people less well-off than they doing low-paying jobs that the moaners think they are too good to work at. While welfare is not a lot to live on, it is a lot to receive for doing nothing!

And then there are single mothers who made the choice to have a child and raise it alone. How can they expect to be fully supported, supplied with daycare and an education by taxpayers struggling to provide for families of their own?

Any decent human being would be willing to pinch a little, even a lot, to support the disabled or to temporarily help those who are down on their luck. Supporting the able-bodied who don't work because of their own choices is quite another matter.

The government can cut funding for the province's free-loaders, but changing attitudes to make people aware of their responsibilities to themselves will be a much more difficult task.

Eileen Hutcheson  
Knox Street

### We got the message

To the Editor,

On July 21, I was at Queen's Park for the release of the financial statement. This statement is unprecedented for a government that is only 3½ weeks old.

The financial statement announced by the finance minister is the first step in putting Ontario's fiscal house in order, which will make this province prosper again and in doing so, create jobs.

The NDP government left Ontario with a spending crisis, and without swift and decisive action by the government, the deficit would have exceeded \$10 billion and not the \$5.8 billion announced

last April by the former finance minister.

Steps taken today are a commitment to the people of Ontario. We got the message June 8.

This action, along with a mini budget anticipated in the fall, follows the principals espoused in the Common Sense Revolution, which will begin to bring our fiscal house to order.

Please feel free to contact my office at (905)878-1729 for any further highlights on the financial statement.

Ted Chudleigh, MPP  
Halton North

**WRITE US A LETTER!**

## Our Team is Looking for Another Player.

The Acton Tanner, our area's leading community newspaper, is looking for an ad salesperson.

To qualify for this part-time position (two to three days per week), you should be familiar with advertising and retail concepts and love to work with people. Enthusiasm, organization and communication skills are valuable assets.

This is a good job, and it will give you an opportunity to work in your hometown with our dedicated team here at The Tanner.

Drop off your resume, or phone us at 853-5100.

The Acton Tanner  
12 Church Street East



## THE ACTON Tanner

**Publisher & Editor**  
Paul Nolan

**Office Manager**  
Georgena Petty

**Reporter-Photographer**  
Doug Harrison

**Copy Editor**  
Joanne Stevenson

**Production Assistant**  
Deb Quaille

**Advertising Sales**  
Josie Gidman  
Elaine Petkoff

**Distribution Manager**  
Irene Birrell

**Regular Contributors**  
Hartley Coles  
Eve Martin  
Frances Niblock  
Mike O'Leary

THE ACTON TANNER is published weekly on Wednesdays by Wicklow Hills Publishing Co. Inc. at 12 Church St., E., Acton, Ontario, L7J 1K4. Mailing address: P.O. Box 150, Acton, Ont., L7J 2M3. Telephone: 519-853-5100. Fax: 853-5040. Reproduction without permission is prohibited. Ideas expressed herein are those of the author only.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Rates are: \$28.80 for one year (52 issues for price of 48) and \$4.80 for two months (eight issues).

ADSALLES: Publisher is responsible for errors in advertisements to extent of cost of that portion of the space occupied by erroneous item.

**PHONE:**  
**519-853-5100**  
**FAX:**  
**519-853-5040**