

ACROSS THE FENCE

With Joanne Stevenson



It's getting deep!

I took advantage of our recent January thaw and did a most unpleasant task – I cleaned up the dog poop in the backyard.

My apologies to those with weak stomachs, but this is a disgusting job. As a responsible dog owner, I stoop and scoop whenever I take the dog for a walk. And I check the backyard for "land mines" daily through the summer.

Even after the pool is closed, I'm out there in the garden, and so the doggy-doo-doo situation never gets out of hand (pardon the graphic image).

But as soon as the frost kills off the flowers and vegetables, and there's no more grass cutting 'til spring, I'm indoors sitting by the window, longing for warm weather.

As this is our first winter with the pooch, I'm learning as I go along, and I realized two weeks ago that I had made a serious error. I haven't cleaned up the dog droppings in the backyard since the snow started in November. With each snowfall, the yard looked fresh and clean, and I didn't give it a second thought.

But as I was out there during that mild spell, finally putting the lawn furniture in the shed (it's been frozen to the patio since November – winter came suddenly this year!), I saw what the dog had been up to for the past three months. I knew he was a pooping machine – if only there was a market for this, I'd be rich!

So as I was doing this unpleasant but necessary task, my thoughts turned, naturally enough, to government, taxes, and cutbacks.

I heard an ad on the radio last week, sponsored by the National Citizens' Coalition, which highlighted some of the more ridiculous studies and organizations our tax dollars have funded. The list included: \$100,670 for an interactive study of video games; \$33,800 to study the Detroit Tigers baseball team; \$105,000 for a study comparing hockey coaches and symphony orchestra conductors.

Our tax dollars have also paid \$3.5 million for an industry theme park in Chretien's home riding; \$500,000 for a Canoe Hall of Fame; \$95,000 to outfit the offices of MPs and senators with FM stereos. The figures I scratched down total \$4.3 million, and this is an incomplete list!

Closer to home, Town Council paid \$22,000 to survey 2,500 residents, to find out how we feel about the services the Town provides and whether those services are being delivered efficiently.

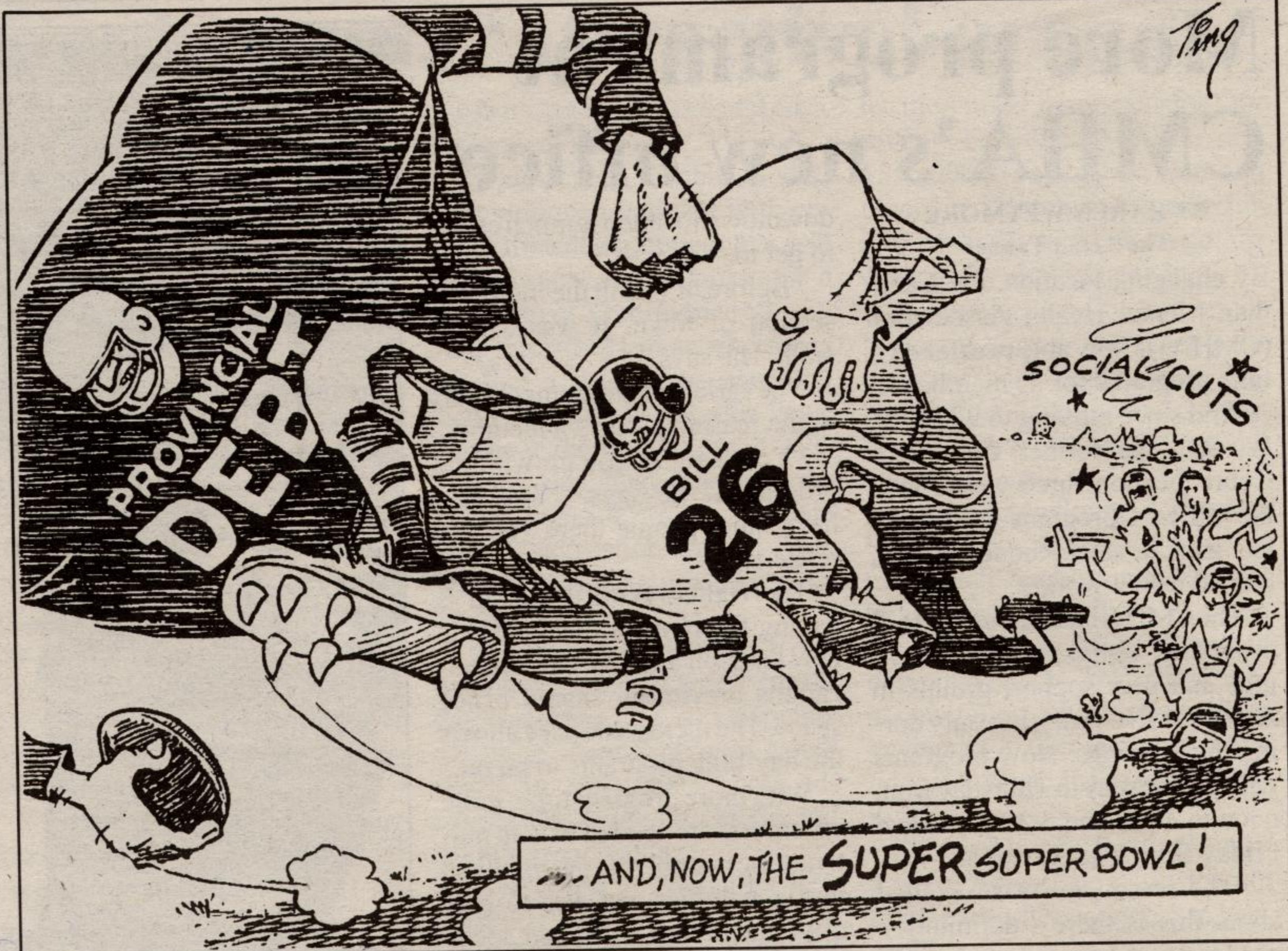
I don't know how many surveys were actually returned, but for roughly \$100 per response, I think this was an inefficient and frivolous way of spending our money.

Julia Walters, the research consultant from Inter-Link Inc. who conducted the survey, defended it, saying "it will make it easier for Council to get taxpayers' support when undesirable changes have to be made." I guess she would.

And for the 10th year in a row, the new Acton arena is in question. Council is looking for ways to meet the estimated \$4.5 million cost, as Provincial transfer payments have been reduced. One suggestion was to build the arena without seats and have Actonites come up with the \$75,000 to \$250,000 on our own. It gives new meaning to the phrase "standing room only" doesn't it?

The National Citizens' Coalition \$4.3 million list of wasted tax dollars would have paid for our arena easily. The \$22,000 price tag for the service survey could have covered seats and incidental costs in the arena.

I suggest our government officials get out in their backyards and start cleaning up the doo-doo. Experience has taught me there's no time to lose – it's getting so deep out there, you can shovel it!



LETTERS

C.P.R. blitz

To the Editor,

In just three short hours, YOU can learn the skills required to save the life of someone suffering from a heart attack or another life-threatening situation.

On Saturday, Feb. 17, a "C.P.R. Blitz" will be held to train members of the Halton Hills community to recognize the risks, signs and signals of heart disease, perform Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (C.P.R.) and how to assist a person that is choking.

Two sessions will be held at the cafetorium of the Georgetown District High School: one from 9 am to noon and the other from 1 to 4 pm. Both sessions will be taught by certified C.P.R. instructors and will meet the guidelines set by the

'CPP will survive,' says MP Reed

To the Editor,

The old axiom that perception is politics has once again been proven by the wide-spread belief that the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) will be out of business by the year 2020.

Last week, the study group confirmed what the government has been saying all along – that such is not the case – but some adjustments to the contribution rates will be necessary to fully meet future challenges. These include some rise in contribution rates.

There is a schedule already in place which was set up to look after the baby-boom retirement

GTA vote needed

The following letter was submitted to the Tanner for publication.

To Mayor Serjeantson and Councillors of the Town of Halton Hills,

Everyone I have spoken with over the last two weeks are very concerned over the Golden Report's effect on our community.

We, the taxpayers, have spent a

Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario.

The cost to register is only \$10 and all proceeds go to the Save-a-Heart equipment fund at the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital. Space is limited, so call 873-0111, ext. 243 to register before Feb. 9.

The C.P.R. Blitz is a collaborative community effort by the Georgetown and District Memorial Hospital, Halton Hills Ambulance Service, Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department, Halton Hills Fire Department and the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario – Halton Hills Chapter.

The C.P.R. Blitz committee would also like to acknowledge the support of Burger King, McDonald's, the Halton Board of Education, J.V. Clothing, Tim Horton's, the Royal Life Saving Society of Canada and Young's Pharmacy and Home Care.

*Shirley Andrechek
Manager of Ambulatory
Care, Georgetown and District
Memorial Hospital*

package, but it may have to be readjusted over the next few years. Today, 12 per cent of Canadians are over the age of 65. When the baby-boom generation has retired, approximately 21 per cent will be over 65.

By law, CPP must be reviewed by the finance minister of Canada and the provinces every five years. Changes are done in conjunction with the provinces and both levels of government must agree on any reforms.

But the myths will persist and one supposes it will trigger the sale of more mutual funds, which is probably not a bad idea in itself, but be assured, CPP will survive.

*Julian Reed, MP
Halton-Peel*

considerable amount of money on our landfill site. Our greatest concern will be an increase in taxes to subsidize the Municipality of Toronto.

As taxpayers we do not want to be part of the "Greater Toronto Area" and feel strongly that this important issue be put to a vote of the people.

Dorothy Rognvaldson

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"Neighbourhood News" from
Acton's Award-Winning
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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 (50 issues for price of 48) and \$4.80 for two months (eight issues).

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

Publications Mail Registration
No. 10457

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