

THE HALTON HILLS **WEEKEND**

KEN NUGENT
Publisher

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Put on a red nose

Tomorrow we thumb our noses at winter and have some fun — it's the third annual Red Nose Day. This day was initiated by Acton resident Jack Carpenter, taken to heart by fellow Actonians and now celebrated across Canada.

Its purpose is simple — beat the winter blahs by putting some silly fun back into our lives. More importantly, the fun is just for us — this day is not designed to be a moneymaker or is a charity-driven day. It's just a day we can all forget about our worries and put a smile on our face.

Tomorrow (Monday), why not join Acton residents as they join hands throughout the downtown core, an annual record setting event.

So put on a red nose — it's silly, simple, and fun!

Back to math class!

It's back to math class after Wednesday's editorial. The cost of a town proposed information kiosk per person works out to about 16 cents per person, not the \$6 reported. However we still stand by our editorial that a \$6,000-valued kiosk is not warranted for the Civic Centre lobby. It's an unnecessary extravagance.

Becoming enlightened creates havoc with social lives

This being the information age, with everyday references to the Internet and "information highway," I find myself glued to my home computer, night after night, researching sometimes useless but fascinating facts.

Between that and exchanging messages with the rest of the world, I'm forced to admit, I'm fast becoming a "computer nerd."

Night after night, I dial into another gopher file server to look up something on yet another subject.

For hours on end.

It's great.

I've downloaded lyrics to songs from artists of years ago, as well as current work. I've pulled in computer programs of all sorts and have found other interesting little offbeat tidbits like a neat recipe for beer and cheddar soup, (which was terrific, I might add.)

I've even seen NASA close-up photos of Saturn taken by the Hubble telescope.

But this collection of information hasn't been without its downside.

In the process of becoming more enlightened about the world, I seem to be creating a little flack at home.

You see, my communicating with the rest of the world has a rather disastrous affect on my daughters.

It ties up the telephone line. And absolutely kills their social life.

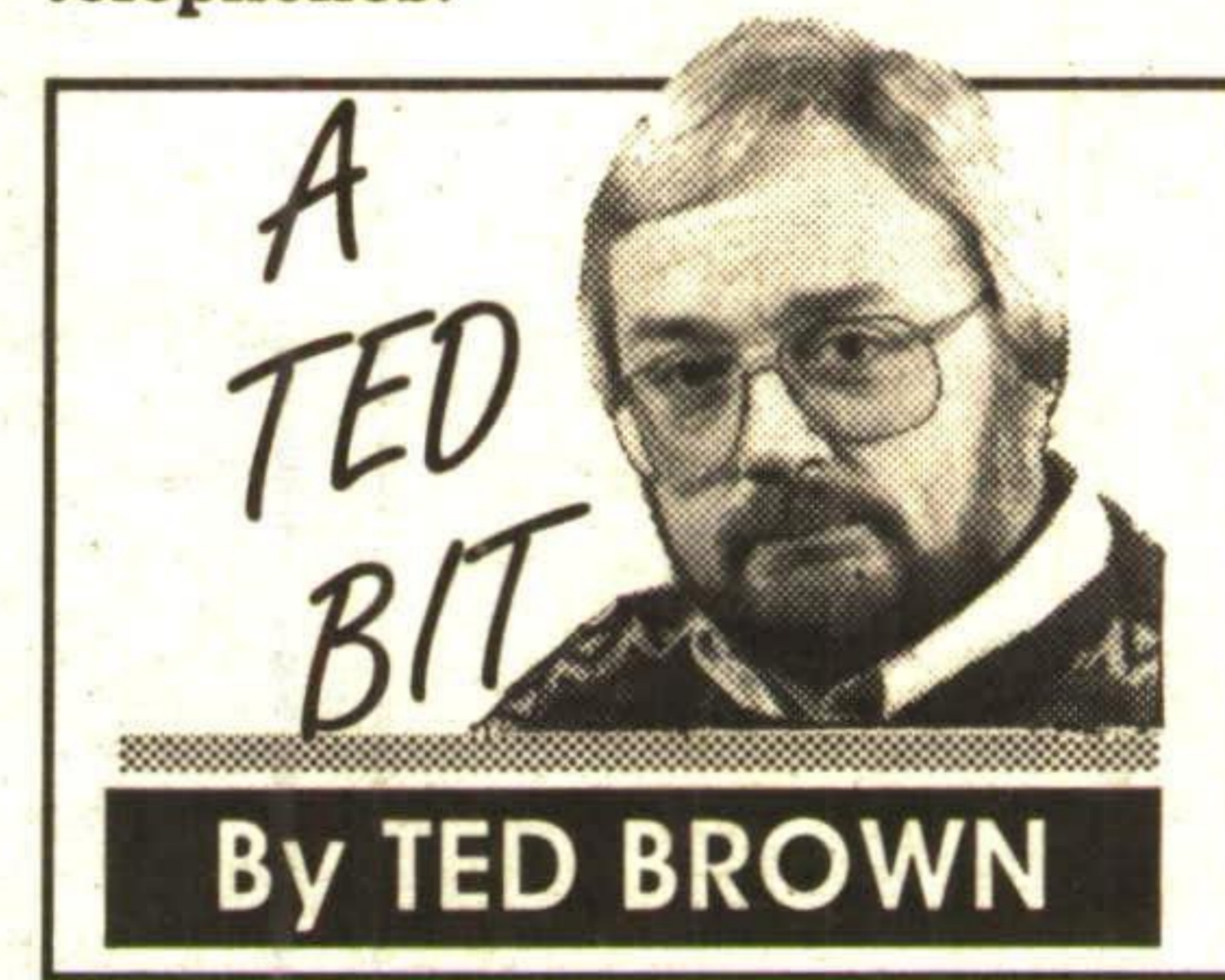
Now having the phone busy for hours at a time has been my chief complaint since the

day those kids learned how to direct dial.

Gawd, they could be off the school bus for no more than 10 minutes, and immediately get on the phone to that same friend they sat beside on the bus a scant 15 or 20 minutes before.

For hours at a time.

I'll admit, with the addition of Call Waiting, (that service sent from God,) to the Brown telephone line, we've managed to carry on a workable relationship, dealing with the long-winded nature of kids and telephones.



Our approach has been simple; a call comes in for the parents, the kids get off. (Mind you, I never get many calls at home at the best of times.)

So during the last couple of years, it's been a workable, but ongoing battle. Lately though, I've had the chance to get a tiny bit of subtle revenge.

You see, some time ago, when I was first bitten with the computer/modem bug, I used to do my computer linking in the late hours of the evening; or even the wee hours of the morning, when the rest of the household was dead to the world.

But that's all changed. The kids now stay up later than me. And more and more, I feel like I need my sleep. So I take over the telephone line whenever the urge hits.

I must admit I secretly smile to myself as I'm downloading a file from the other side of the world while I listen to the quiet protests in the background.

The kids are really subtle, and might even mention in passing to their mother how "it would be nice to call so and so, when Dad gets off the modem..."

But do they ask?

Rarely.

I guess they have heard that same old line about who pays for the telephone service too many times, and they usually back off.

Occasionally, they present the other side of the argument, how they want to install their own line, and would even pay for it themselves.

I usually squash that one, saying one phone line into a house is enough for any family.

And I've yet to see any money for that line. Besides, I maintain if the kids had their own phone line, those poor little telephone wires would never have a chance to cool down.

Either way, I admit I can't carry it off for very long.

I generally break down and terminate my connection with an information server in, say, Australia, to give them the opportunity to resume developing their social lives.

Via the telephone.

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Did you know?

Estimates are that 40 to 50 per cent of cohabitants never marry each other. And even if they do, they stand a 33 per cent higher chance of splitting up, than partners who don't live together before marriage. *Readers Digest*

Approximately 3,600 acres of Ontario soil are devoted to growing cabbage. In 1993 more than 80 million pounds were harvested, netting \$6.6 million. *Ontario Agriculture and Food*

'Lighten Up' ... Try it you'll like it. Smiles are not only tax free, but they create a lot of interest.