

THE HALTON HILLS WEEKEND

KEN NUGENT
Publisher

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A little common sense

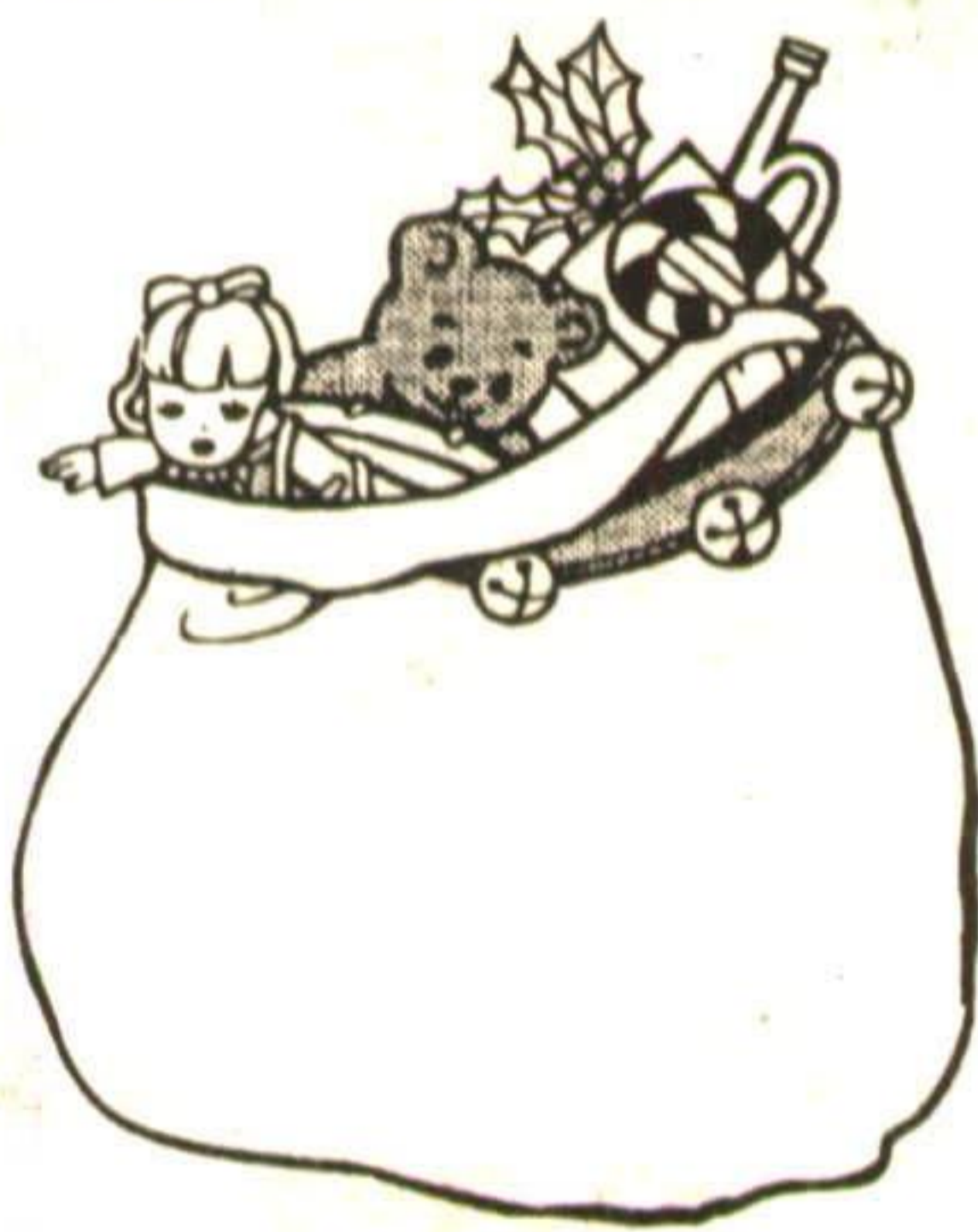
In the Halton Regional Police's RIDE program this month, only two of the more than 3,000 stopped have been charged with impaired driving.

That's still two too many!

There is no excuse for drinking and driving. It is a senseless act with potential deadly repercussions. This town has good taxi services, and a car ride from friends and family is only a call away. For goodness sake, this town is small enough that walking is also an alternative.

In this holiday season the number of parties increase dramatically, and part of the responsibility of ensuring their guests arrive home safely rests with the host. Limit the amount alcohol available, serve food and coffee as well, and make sure there's a designated driver in the group.

A little common sense will ensure everyone has a safe holiday season.



Christmas spirit

There's one week left until Christmas and we encourage everyone to remember to deposit a toy or food donation at the various locations around town. Share the Christmas spirit.

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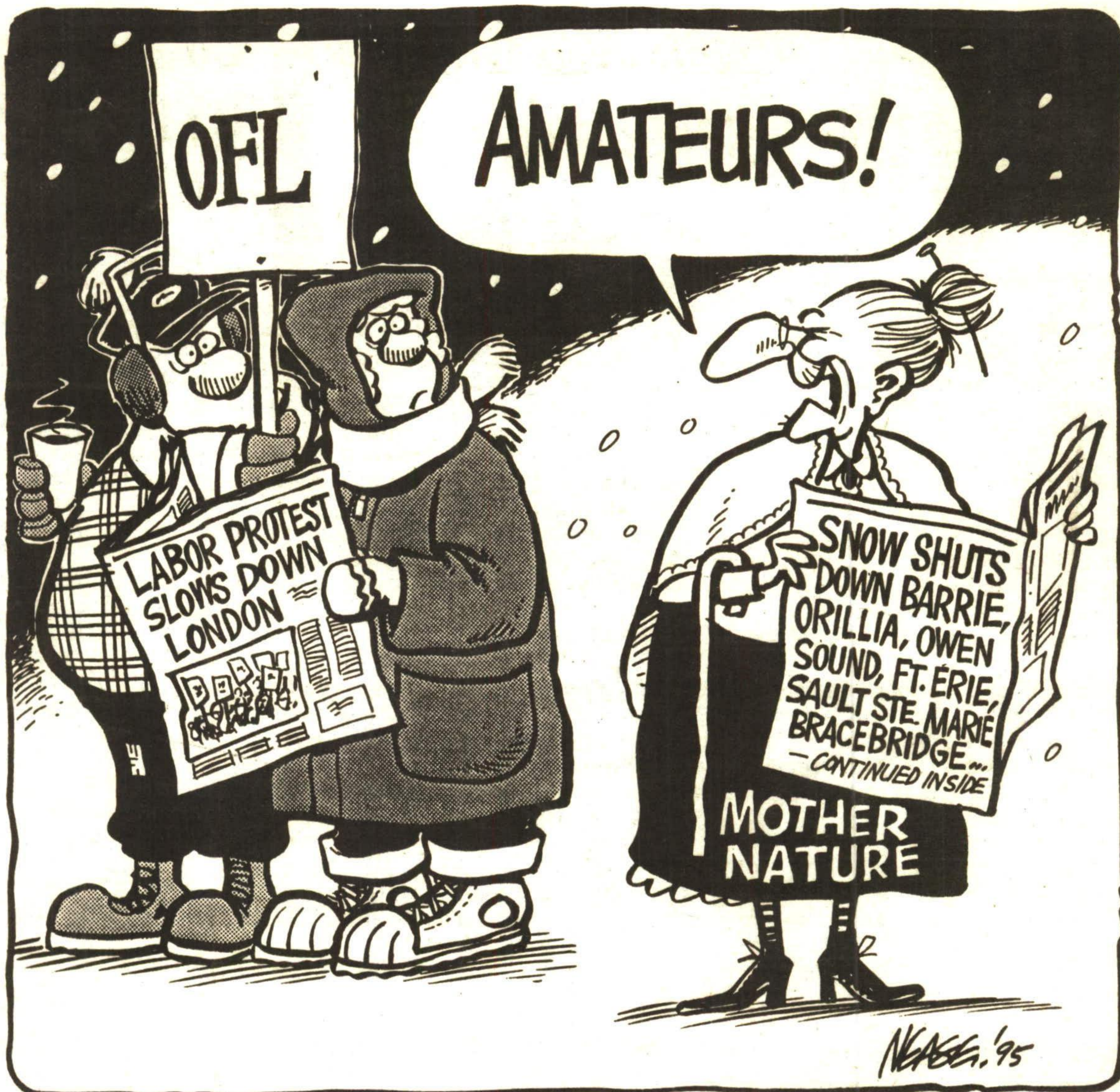


You should have heard the glad tidings and good will when I beat the lady to a parking spot

Did you know?

Don't be surprised if you are served roast elk or bison for Christmas dinner. Canadians' interest in non-traditional foods has increased considerably in recent years. More and more consumers are serving game such as wild turkey, pheasant, bison, and venison. Agriculture and Food Canada is working in cooperation with the game farm industry to develop marketing strategies and identify export niches for these new products in order to ensure the long term viability of this sector.

— Agriculture Canada



So long Steamer, it's been just super

Georgetown lost a unique character last week.

He was a former mayor of Georgetown, a tireless volunteer, and a terrific conversationalist.

He was Steamer Emmerson.

Although his real name was Wheldon, everyone knew him as Steamer. And everyone liked him.

"How're you keeping today Steamer?" I'd say during my travels about town.

"Oh, just super, Ted, now that I've seen you," was his pat answer.

He'd then start a conversation encompassing the weather, activities of town council or the latest happenings in the local service groups.

And he never complained, even when his health failed.

I knew Steamer long before I entered journalism. He knew my parents, my grandparents and probably every single relative of mine in Halton Hills.

That was his way.

As mayor of Georgetown back in 1969, Steamer found his niche, a flamboyant mayor basking in public office, shaking hands and kissing babies as he dealt with the ups and downs of municipal politics. And loving every minute of it.

He had a lot of loves.

As a veteran of WW2, he revered Remembrance Day, with its pomp and ceremony. And even when his declining health made it impossible for him to march in the parade in later years, I always found him and wife Muriel waiting near the Remembrance Park, ready to join his

comrades, as they marched to the cenotaph.

Steamer loved to talk.

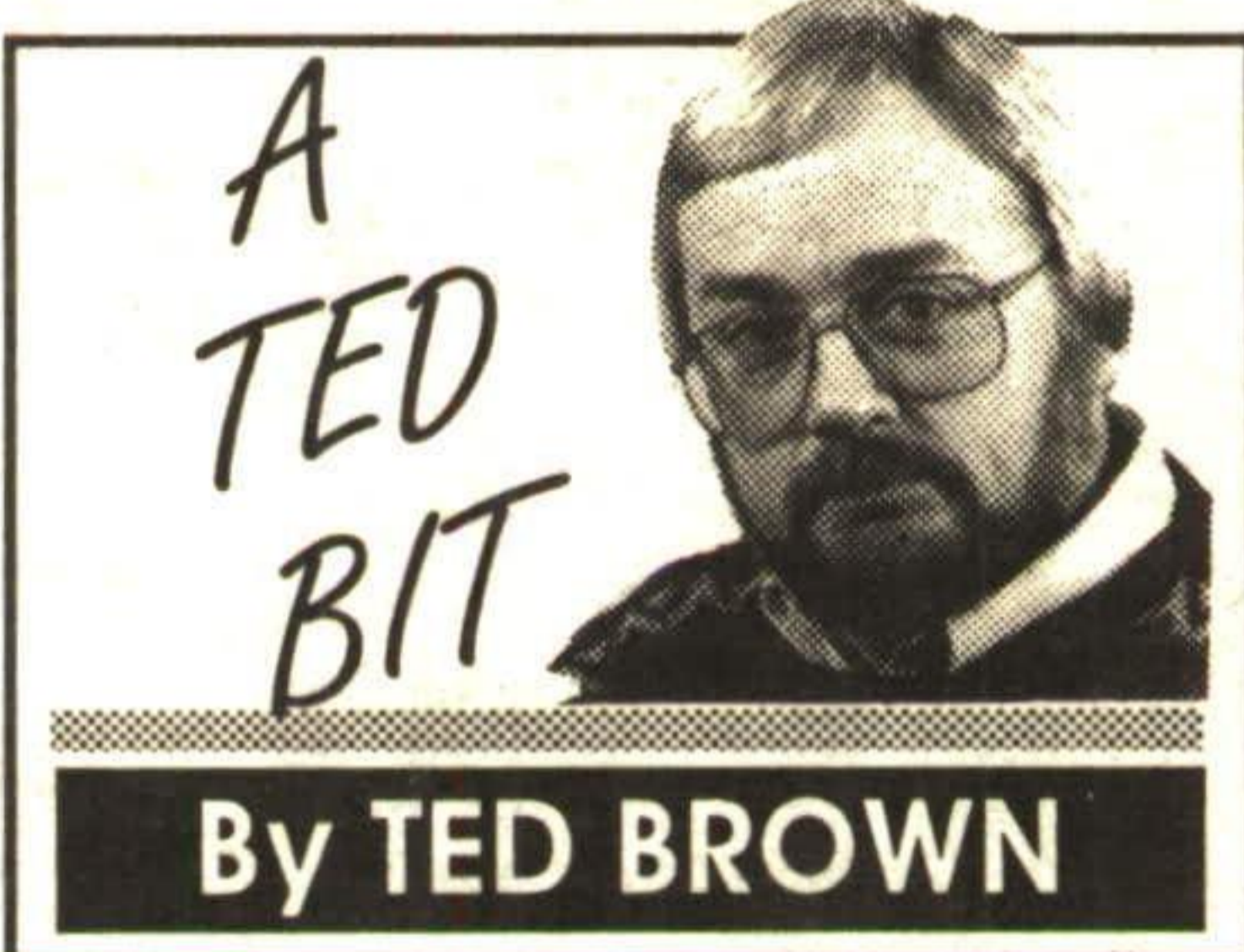
And talk.

And talk some more.

I admit to having cut many conversations short, simply because I was running out of time.

In the summer of 1990, then Halton Hills Herald publisher Bob Malcolmson approached Steamer to write a weekly column in the paper, reminiscing about bygone days.

I was always a little envious that Bob had the foresight to ask him to write for the Herald, our competition.



A TED BIT

By TED BROWN

The column was entitled "Have you got a minute?" but I always joked with Steamer that it might have been more aptly titled "Have you got an hour?" knowing how verbose he was.

His column dealt with the very things he loved — family, the town, old times and war stories.

And it was always great reading.

"It took a while to convince him to write for us," recalls Malcolmson, "But every time I ran into him, he had a story to tell — I knew I had to get him writing."

Steamer also worked with the Heart and Stroke

Association, holding a vested interest in the association, with his own health problems.

And typical of Steamer, following his own heart bypass surgery in 1988, he founded the "Zipper Club," a lighthearted support group open to those who had endured heart bypass surgery.

As a longtime volunteer for the Heart and Stroke Association, Steamer finally realized his greatest dream just this year, as the association established a local Halton Hills chapter. To top it off, the local chapter created the "Steamer" Emmerson Volunteer of the Year award, presenting it to Emery Thompson, last month.

Everyone who knew him will recall a favorite "Steamer story," and I'm no exception. The exact details of the story escape me, but he told of waiting in a train station in Europe during the war, with the rest of his outfit.

"Col. John R. Barber happened to be in the same station at that time," explained Steamer, "John R. approached and said 'Good to see you, Steamer, how are you doing?' We carried on a conversation for some time."

"You know Ted, after John R. left, the rest of the boys in the outfit were really impressed with me, a buck private, being on a first name basis with an officer," he grinned, his eyes dancing, "I just never thought to tell them. John R. and I both grew up in Georgetown."

So long Steamer, it's been just super.