

Editorial

Ban owners, not dogs

We'll say up front that we are not fans of pitbulls. These dogs, over the years, have been bred to be aggressive, have 10 times the strength of most other dogs and will fight to the death.

Even in the case of the most recent "pitbull attack" in Toronto in which a man was mauled by two pit bulls he was walking for the dogs' owner, it took 16 bullets from police officers' guns to stop the beasts.

These dogs have the potential to be killing machines.

That said, Ontario Attorney General Michael Bryant is wrong to be considering a province-wide ban on the breed.

For starters, pitbulls are not a breed, but a collection of breeds. Should a ban then cover mutts? Bull terriers? Cross-breeds?

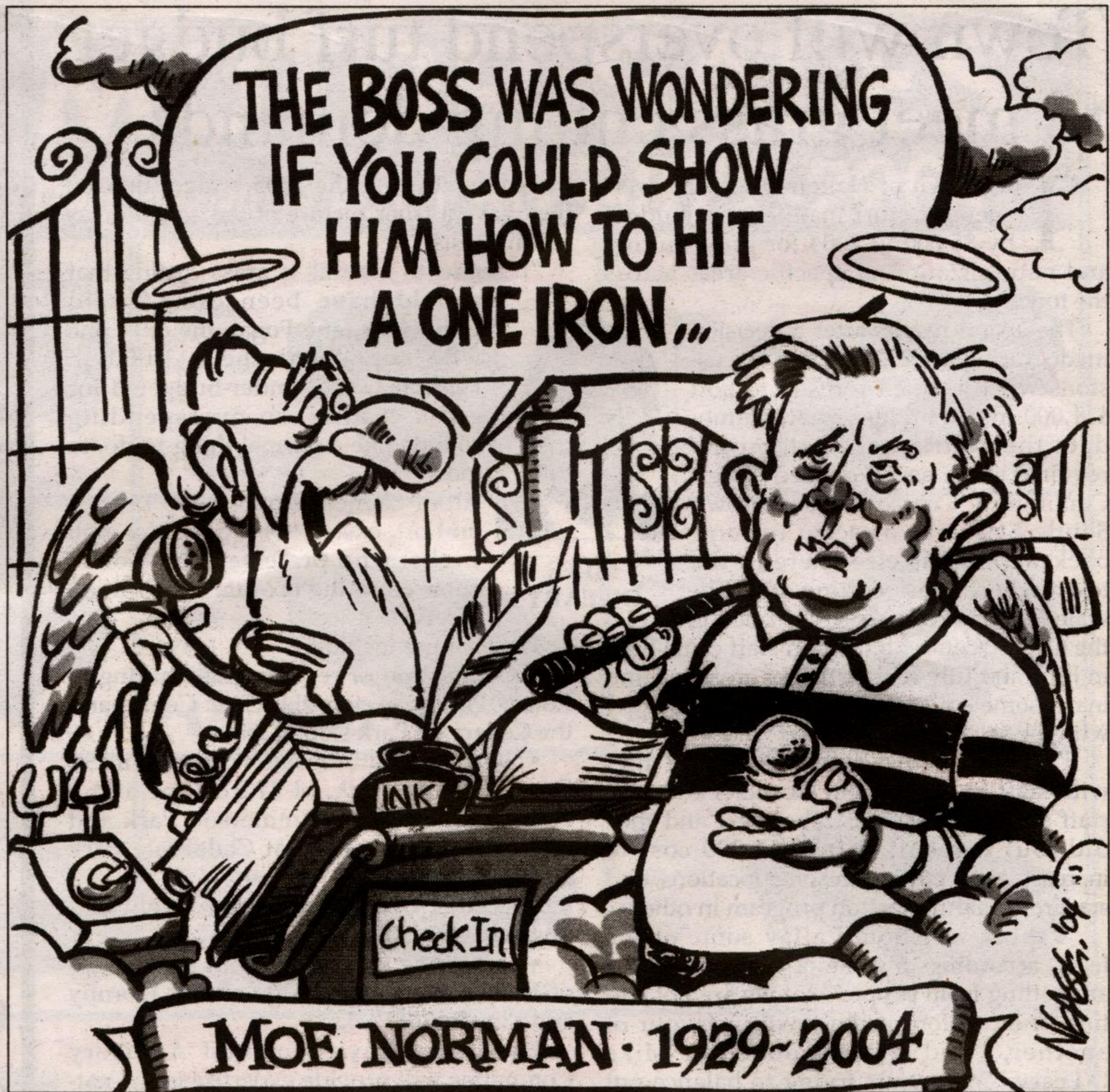
A recent federal study on dog bites indicated that the four breeds most likely to bite are German shepherds, cocker spaniels, rottweilers and golden retrievers. Should we ban these breeds?

The problem with "pitbulls" lies not with the dogs, but with the owners who have these dogs solely because of their aggressive nature. There are many good owners of pitbulls and it would be wrong to penalize them because of the stupidity and irresponsibility of bad owners.

Rather than making political hay with a "ban the pit bulls" cry, politicians like Bryant and Toronto Mayor David Miller should be pushing for laws that, pardon the pun, have some bite.

Irresponsible dog owners and breeders should be charged criminally— jail time, if warranted—for attacks by their dogs. Municipal politicians, if they truly believe there is a problem with dog attacks, should consider bylaws that require dogs of certain sizes and/or breeds, be muzzled and leashed when outside. Owners not complying should face significant fines.

Punishing bad owners, not their dogs, makes sense to us.



Letters to the editor....

Province must end auto insurance 'rip-off'

(This letter was originally sent to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty. A copy was made available for publication.)

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor must be signed and include an address and daytime telephone number. Unsigned letters will not be published. Letters should not exceed 200 words and may be edited.

Mail or drop off

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Dear Mr. McGuinty,

Thank you for responding to my previous e-mail regarding automobile insurance for my son. My son is a 20-year-old with driver's education; an Ontario G licence and a clean driving record. As of right now, I still have not been able to obtain affordable insurance for him. I also have received no communication from (Finance Minister) Greg Sorbara regarding this issue.

As I stated before it is criminal to treat our youth and young adults as guilty until proven innocent, as seems to be the case in trying to obtain auto insurance. It is no wonder there are people driving the roads in this country without insurance. We have made it illegal to drive without insurance, so why is it also not mandated that it also be made economical enough for people to be able to afford to purchase it? People are being forced to cheat and drive illegally, and that is wrong. As I already said I still have no affordable means to insure my son so he can commute to college in September.

Another situation has also occurred again regarding auto insurance. My

other son has recently been asked to be ready to help out his grandparents by driving them to their doctor's appointments and other various outings. But it seems that he also cannot be insured on their policy or any other policy economically. He has his Ontario G 2 driver's licence, also with his driver education certificate. His grandmother cannot drive because of health reasons and his grandfather needs some assistance also. They have tried to put him on as an occasional driver to help them out and all of these companies want at least \$2,000 for six months. This is a total rip-off—and that quite simply is what it is.

It is the responsibility of the governments to put some controls on these rip-off artists (insurance companies).

I think it is time to act on this matter now and stop passing the buck like Mr. Chudleigh (our Progressive Conservative MPP) did in his condescending response to my initial letter. The Conservatives had 10 years to fix this and did not. Everyone should and must get together and fix this mess. We need action on this matter now.

Keith Poullos, Limehouse

Life is too short to complain...

Dear editor,

This letter is in response to the recent letter sent in by Bill Xanthios and his experience he had with a noisy child in the library.

All I have to say to him is "boo-hoo". I was simply appalled by his letter. There are worse things in life than this. When I read his letter I had just finished a training walk for the Weekend to End Breast Cancer.

Everyone I walked with had someone die of cancer—a family member or themselves with cancer—and then, to read about him going to the library and there was a little noise... come on—get over it!

If it was that bad the library staff would have said something. Life is too short to get upset about this.

Laura Pydych, Georgetown

...but others are glad he did

Dear editor,

Screaming children in the library? I wouldn't like it either! Introduce your child to the love of books at HOME until she learns how to BEHAVE in a library environment.

Hats off to Mr. Xanthios for having the guts to say something about the noise.

Deena Zahavich, Georgetown

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