It just takes a moment to sum up my entire summer

Remember when you used to go back to school and you'd have to write a paper the first day entitled 'What I did on my Summer Vacation?'

Well, not once did I ever have to write a paper such as that when I was in school so I'm going to do it now.

During the summer, I worked (finished my 11th book), went to baseball, went to hockey, went to the cottage, went to the hospital, and watched television.

That didn't take long.

Here are some other things that have been on my mind.

- · How do I know if I'm an idiot or not? Idiots don't know that they're idiots.
- I've never quite got the hang of the pound key on the telephone. On my telephone, I've got a star and a number sign. The recorded message will say, "Press the pound key," and I won't know which one it is.
- Memo to all teenagers. It's really, really tough to quit smoking, which you will want to do some day, so it's best not to start. I think teenagers smoking is the same as putting a sign above their heads that says, "Hey, I'm an idiot."
- I've got fabric softener that smells like peaches. But, then I was thinking about it, and if our clothes smelled like peaches from peaches, then we'd wash them.
- In a previous column, about couples walking, some couples got edited out because of space. It's too bad, because, of course, the column was really funny. Champion Editor Karen Smith apologized for it. It was just one of those things that couldn't be helped. So if Berty and Doug Moffat along with Michael and Angela Timbers were wondering why the dopey guy who stopped them on the street wasted their time, that's why. It's a good lesson for Angela, who's a would-be writer.
- · Here's the thing about tomatoes. You get a whole bunch of them and you think, "Oh boy, look at all the tomatoes we have." A couple weeks later you're forcing yourself to eat them just to get rid of them, and you start to dislike them.
- This is a personal invitation to Tiger Woods, who is playing down the road in Oakville in the



On the loose

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

Canadian Open. If you'd like to save a few bucks, you can stay at my place. You can have all the tomatoes you want, too.

- I haven't had the chance to say this before, but last year I spent time in at least 40 hockey arenas from as far north as Sudbury and as far south as Detroit and, by far, not even close, the best popcorn I had was from Scooter's Snack Shack at Thompson Arena. Once I stopped there, bought some popcorn, and took it to a game at a different arena.
- I know what to do with the casino money we get from the Mohawk Raceway slots. We should build an 80,000-seat football stadium and get us an NFL team. We could call them the Milton Coydogs.
- · My youngest daughter was hurt over the summer in an accident, and badly burned on her leg. She spent time at three different hospitals, saw about eight different doctors, two physiotherapists, and was attended to by more than a dozen nurses, including those who came to the home. When it's your kid that's hurt, you want them to be treated with the greatest care and concern, and I can honestly say that she received even better than that, especially from Milton District Hospital, the Milton chapter of the Canadian Red Cross Society and the Victorian Order of Nurses. I believe that even the attitudes of these people helped in the healing process. When fundraisers come up for Milton hospital and other health care organizations in the area, don't overlook them. We have something special here, and should ensure it remains that way.

An apple can cost \$7

• from YOUNG on page 20

western culture are something the young visitor has grown quite accustomed to this summer.

Certain types of food he said like rice and fruit can cost several times more in Japan, where some stores charge a whopping \$7 for a single apple. And eating vegetables raw, perfectly normal over here, is considered bizarre in Japan.

While many of the things he's had to get use to have taken some time, patience and general effort, there's one aspect of Japanese life that's been absolutely no ordeal at all — that of how the country embraces its visitors.

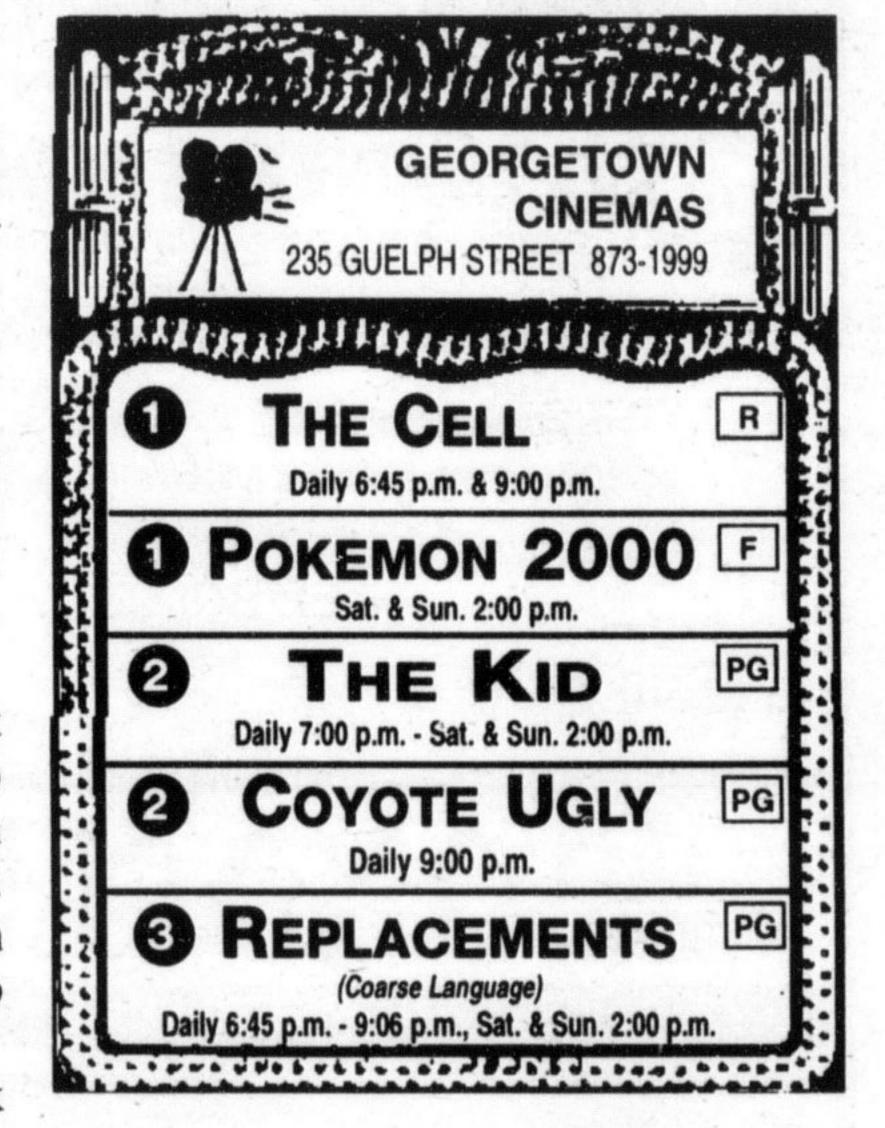
"The people are amazingly friendly. The amount of kindness they have shown me (a complete stranger who does not speak their language) is nothing short of phenomenal," said Kindree.

In return, the local world traveler is not only teaching them English but also widening their knowledge of North America. He began doing that within an athletic arena last week, as a coach of both a high school girls softball team and club basketball team.

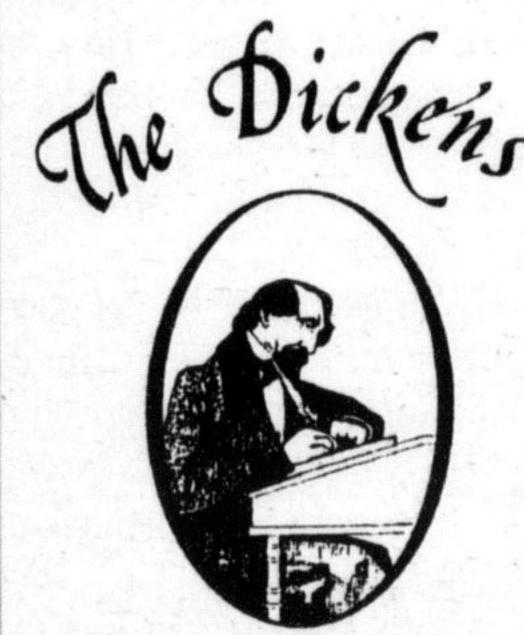
All this instructing and leadership work

will no doubt look great to future employers, but Kindree stressed that beefing up his resumé isn't the purpose of the trip.

"I have never thought of it leading to a career. What this year really provides for me is a chance to see a part of the world that I would be otherwise unable to visit."







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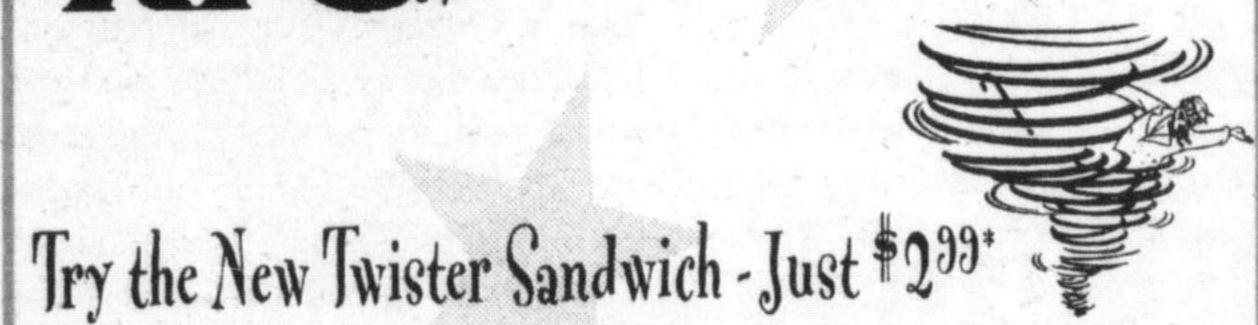
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