

OMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Accomplishments of Hadfield are inspiring

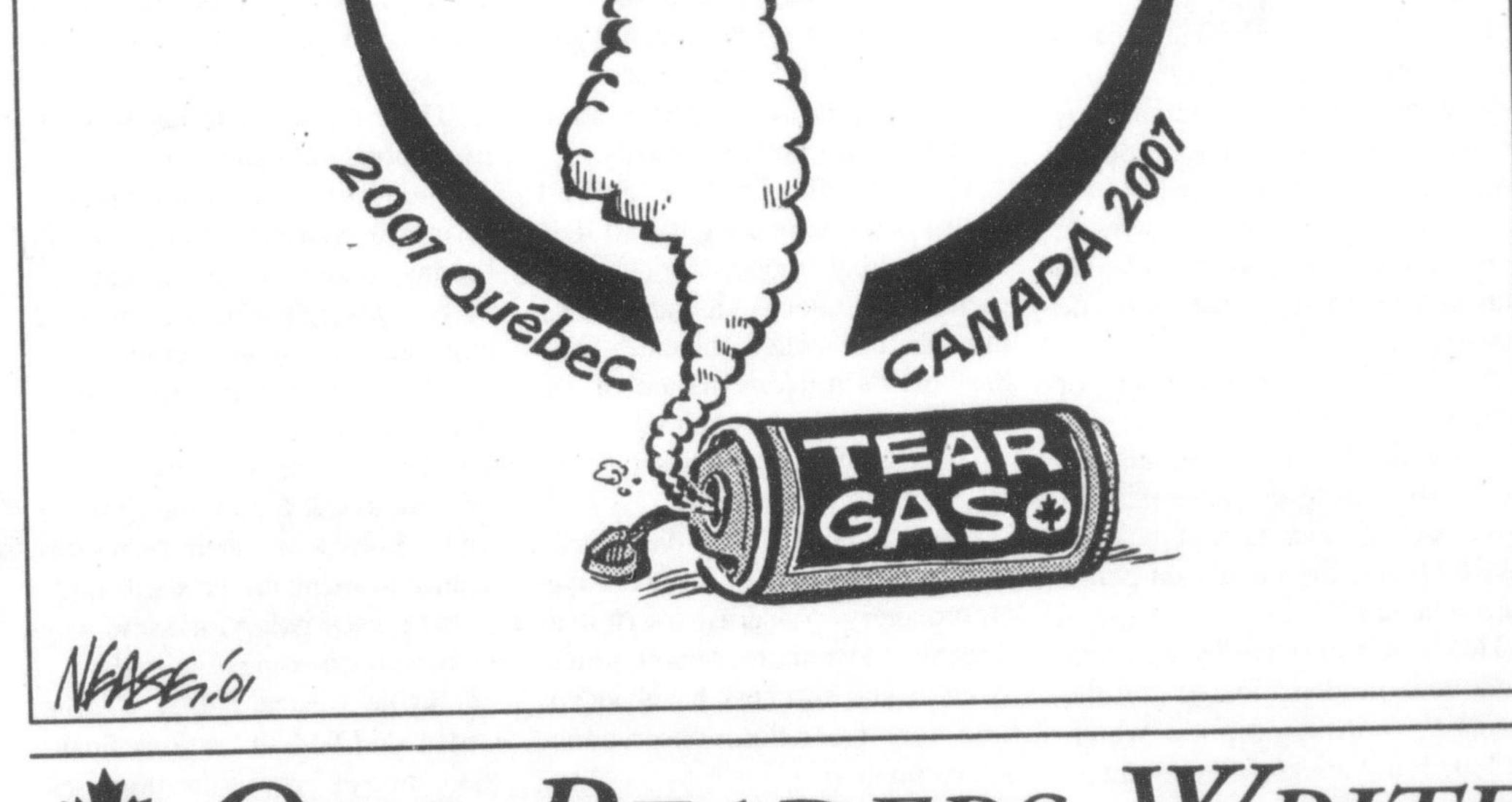
Thursday's launch of the Space Shuttle Endeavour was an amazing sight.

We've seen many launches before, but this one was extra special since Astronaut Chris Hadfield was about to make history by being the first Canadian to perform a space walk.

However you feel about the space program, you have to admit the accomplishments of Col. Hadfield are inspiring.

First, he was selected by the Canadian Space Agency as one of four astronauts out of 5,000 applicants. That's stiff competition. He's gone up in space not once, but now twice, and this time he walks in space. It's a reminder that achieving your dreams in life may not be out or reach even if they seem that way.

In a story published in our special Space Walk 2001 section Friday, we asked Col. Hadfield's proud father Roger if he thought his son was a hero. He responded modestly, "I suppose he is." Then he added that Canadians need to recognize their heroes. Well, we would like to recognize him right now as a true hero — a true inspiration.



OUR KEADERS WRIE

It's because of dedicated volunteers that the Cancer Society leads way in fighting cancer

Dear Editor:

volunteers.

volunteers that the Canadian Cancer Society leads the way in the our goal of eradicating cancer and

fight against cancer.

In recognition of National Our volunteers work as council people living with cancer. Volunteer Week (April 22 to 28), I members, sell daffodils and go I'm fortunate to work with such want to thank the many wonderful door-to-door during Daffodil committed people who dedicate volunteers of Milton who support Month in April. They drive patients their time and efforts to the the Canadian Cancer Society. This to and from cancer treatments. They Canadian Cancer Society and their is also the United Nations' offer compassion and support in community. International Year of Volunteers, a cancer clinics and lodges. They special time to celebrate the work of plan and organize our special my sincere gratitude. We couldn't fundraising events and put on pub- do it without you. It's thanks to our many dedicated lic displays and forums.

Our volunteers are committed to

improving the quality of care of

To all volunteers, please accept

Davina Burns, unit manager Burlington unit and Milton branch

Providing a steak sandwich is the least I can do

He was a homeless person in downtown Toronto and I knew he was going to ask me for money because he was looking straight at me and there was nobody else on the sidewalk.

I've become accustomed to ignoring them, like most of us. I normally just shake my head and keep walking.

I work hard for my money and have debts, so I'm not in a position to give it away to somebody whose job it is to panhandle.

As I approached him he said: "Can you spare \$150,000 so I can buy a house?"

That was pretty funny, and I couldn't help but smile. Mostly, I was trying to keep the parking money in my pocket from jingling so that he wouldn't hear it when I told him I had none.

"Sorry," I shrugged. "No change."

"Well," he said, as he crossed the street, "Somebody bought me a steak sandwich last night and I want to get me another one."

He didn't say it in a way to convince me to change my mind, or even to feel sorry for him. He smiled and his face lit up in a way that suggested it was the most exciting prospect that he anyone else, maybe even more so, but they're not could possibly imagine. And it was believable a part of my daily life, so it's like out of sight out

because he wasn't hanging around waiting for me to say anything else.

It made me stop. He had just gotten personal, unlike most of the panhandlers who make it easy for you to ignore them when you walk by.

It was around dinnertime on Easter Sunday and I had been feeling sorry for myself because I had to go to work without an Easter dinner. I was headed into the Hockey Night in Canada studio where they would lay out all kinds of treats, bottled water, coffee, or anything else we wanted.

The streets were deserted as I watched him shuffle away in his raggedy clothes. A steak sandwich? Easter Sunday? I fingered the loonies and toonies in my pocket. The parking prices down there are ridiculous.

and reaching into my pocket.

He didn't hear me. He turned a corner and disappeared out of sight.

I stood there for a moment longer, picked up my things and went on my way. I'm as compassionate about the homeless as

"Wait," I called out, putting down my things other younger panhandlers in downtown Toronto. They're con men as far as I'm concerned, who intimidate a lot of people and give the city a black eye. They can work; they just choose not to because they're lazy, although I wouldn't say they're not smart because getting money for

of mind. Like most of us, I think this is bad and

they should do something about it. Now, pass the

I wouldn't give a cent to the squeegie kids or

nothing is a good gig if you can get it. I don't see the squeegie people with squeegies anymore, they just walk around at stoplights in

Toronto with a cup, seeking donations. Not a chance from me.

Most of us give to charity in some form or another, whether it's donations at work, or something else. We know it's important and we care. But, we rarely see where the money goes or what they do with it, so we're able to keep a certain loose distance between ourselves and the people in

I think we like it that way. Keeping it impersonal, so as not to remind ourselves how fortunate we are and that it's possible that we could be in the same situation as them.

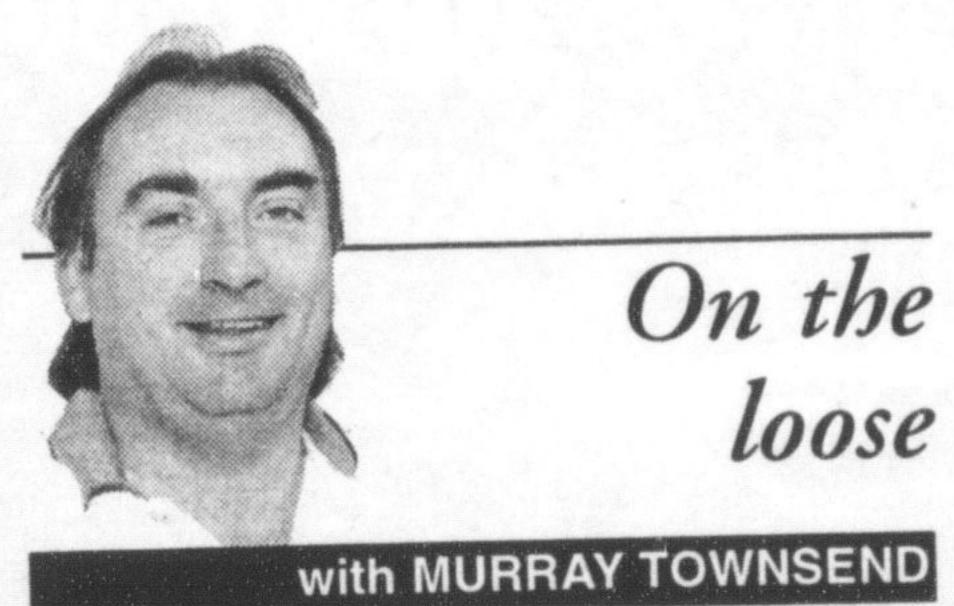
The key is that they're people. It's too easy to forget, unless you come face to face with them.

Since Easter Sunday, I've taken to parking further away from where I need to go, where it's considerably cheaper.

Instead of keeping my eyes on the sidewalk, I've been searching the crowds, looking for the same man, making sure I have money in my pocket beyond my parking fees.

A steak sandwich to make one person's life a little more tolerable?

That's the least I can do.



steak sauce.