

# Editorial Page

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## Take it easy

Here it comes. The last long weekend of the 1989 summer. Many people take advantage of the extra day off work to travel to visit friends or relatives, go camping, fishing, or do some shopping.

That means there will be a lot of traffic on the highways this weekend. Some people will drive at the speed limit, others will be travelling slower and no doubt many will be going faster to try to save some travelling time.

No matter which category you fit into, here are some words of caution. Take it easy. Don't travel if you're tired - or especially if you've been drinking. Always be prepared for the worst. If a transport or car is approaching, be ready for it to suddenly veer into your lane.

By doing this, and by being ready to hit the brakes, steer clear or take some other evasive action, the life you save could be your own.

Already this year the OPP have investigated over 500 traffic deaths - a seven per cent increase over the same period last year.

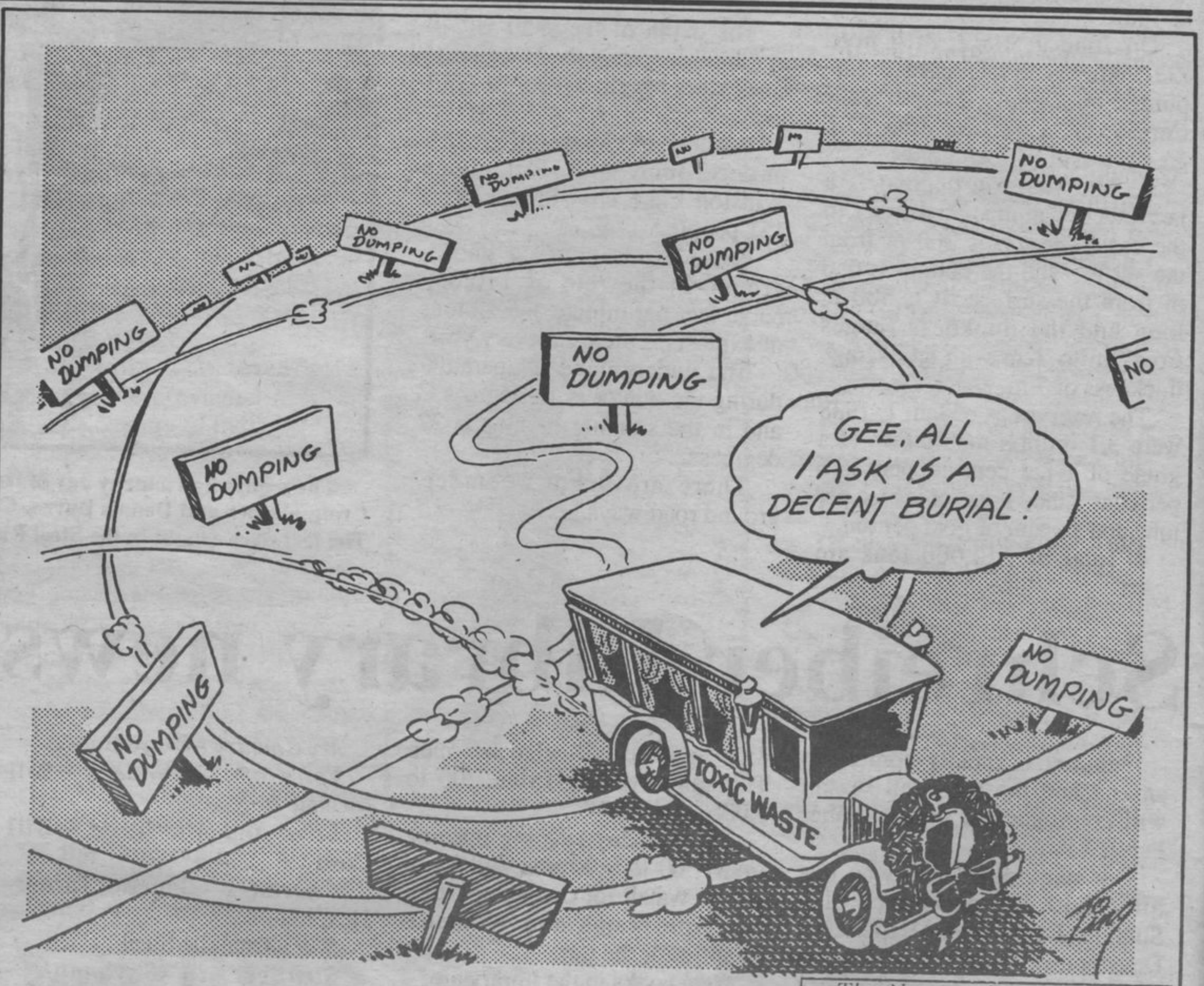
The OPP have warned motorists they'll be out in full force and will be utilizing everything at their disposal - radar, radar detector detectors and RIDE programs.

They'll also be checking for seat belt use. In the first eight months of this year, in accidents investigated by the OPP, 35 per cent of the victims were thrown from their vehicles.

Last year, during the Labor Day weekend, 19 persons were killed in 11 accidents. That's an increase from the same weekend in 1987 when 11 persons died.

Safety consciousness should also come to mind on the water. In 1988 the OPP investigated 64 boating deaths. It's a good sign that there have only been 28 deaths so far this year on Ontario waterways - although that's still 28 too many.

So take it easy this last weekend of the summer. Drive defensively, and don't become a statistic.



## MP blames Tories and Liberals for VIA's state

Dear Editor:  
As the campaign to save VIA Rail rolls into high gear, perhaps your readers may wish to view the issue in its full political context - and the real reason VIA is so vulnerable to the cuts about to

be made by the Conservative government.

VIA was created by a Liberal government as a means of bailing out Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways, there-

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The News welcomes your letters to the editor. Feel free to express comments, opinions, appreciation, or debate anything of public interest. Write to:

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So we may verify authorship, please sign your letters and include your phone number.

## No immunization for modern ailments

Do you ever feel hard-done-by? I do sometimes. It's kind of luxurious to wallow in self-pity once in a while. The trick is to know when to quit. Feeling sorry for yourself is okay as an occasional indulgence. As a lifestyle, it's decidedly unattractive.

Fortunately, I have a mental mantra that instantly levers me out of the Woe-Is-Me mode and back to real life.

I simply remind myself that, but for modern medical technology, I wouldn't even be around to feel sorry for myself.

A few years ago, I went through a bout of acute appendicitis, followed by an encore of peritonitis. The doctor who Hoovered out my innards and blanket-stitched my midriff back together came by my hospital bed a few days later to check on my recovery. He asked me how I felt. I told him I'd had more delightful experiences. He

laughed and said, in effect, Big Deal.

"You're lucky you're alive at all," he told me. "If this had happened 20 years ago, you wouldn't be. We'd have lost you on the operating-table."

That's when I remembered that, when I was growing up, it wasn't at all uncommon to hear of people popping off from appendicitis.

And polio.

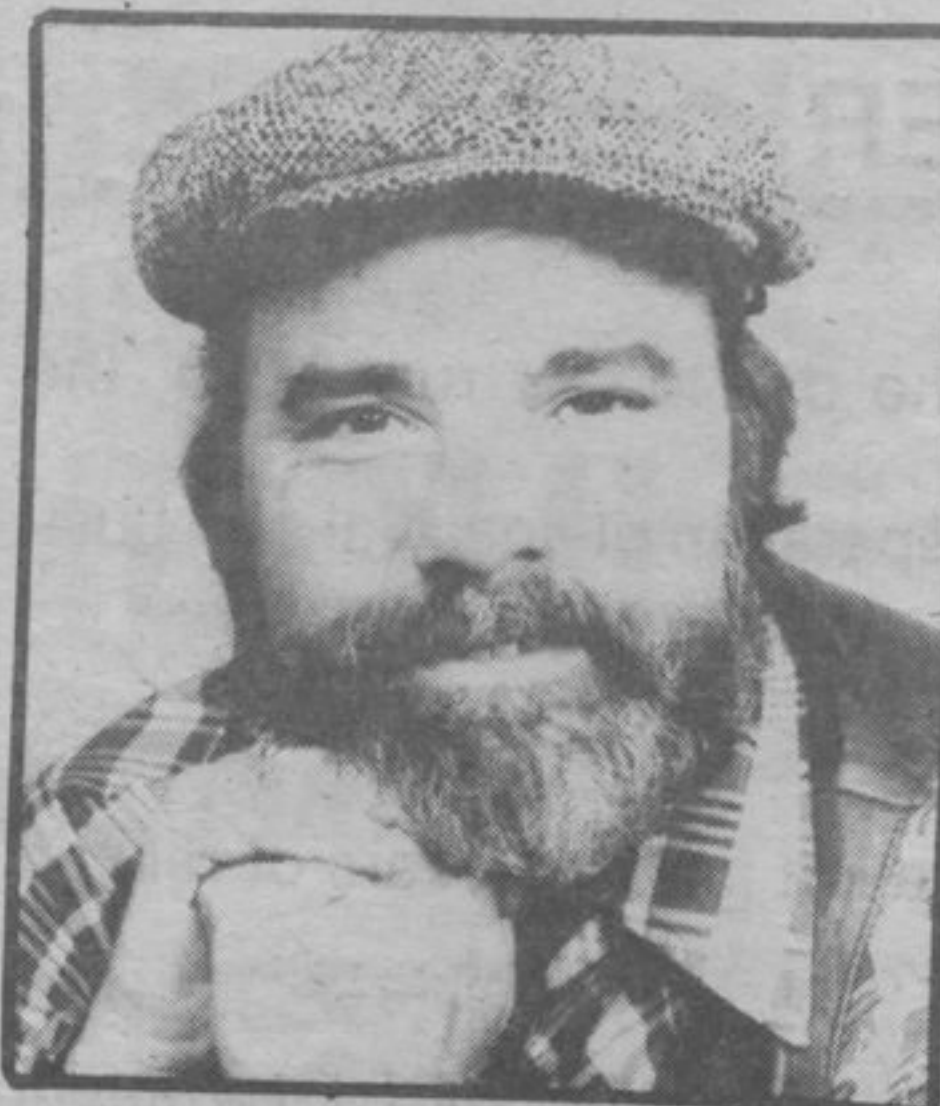
And cholera and typhus and rheumatic fever.

Today, thanks to vaunting medical strides, kids think you're speaking Italian when you toss those words around.

Alas, in medicine as in most other earthly arenas, every great leap forward usually precipitates at least a half-step back. Herewith a compendium of 20th century ailments you probably didn't know were lurking out there, ready to do you in.

**JEANS FOLLICULITIS.** This is an affliction that strikes those disgustingly fit-looking folks you see walking

down the street wearing jeans so tight they look like they were spray-painted on. Tight jeans can, in fact, cause an inflammation of the hair follicles in the upper thigh. Painful, but easily remedied:



Arthur Black

just wear baggier clothes.

**SLOT MACHINE TENDONITIS.** A particular hazard for those little old ladies with dixie cups full of quarters who spend hours yanking the levers of slot machines in casinos.

Prescription: Switch from one-armed bandits to lottery tickets. You'll still be throwing your money away, but you won't be straining your tendons. Mind you, you do have to contend with those long lineups at the Lotto 649 booths. There may be a pair of fallen arches in your future.

**FRISBEE FINGER.** A painful inflammation of the hand, usually around the first knuckle of the index finger, caused by -- you guessed it -- excessive frisbee flinging.

**JOGGER'S NIPPLE.** A minor irritation caused by friction between the affected protuberances and the jogger's sweat suit or T-shirt. The next time you encounter someone wearing two strategically placed Band-Aids, don't assume he or she is a two-time loser to a bout with a potato peeler. It could simply be a serious marathoner recuperating from a bout of JN.

**RUBIK'S THUMB.** A

second cousin to the aforementioned Frisbee Finger, Rubik's Thumb is an excruciating inflammation of the thumbs afflicting people who still haven't discovered that the correct solution to the Rubik's Cube involves the brisk application of a ball peen hammer.

Late bulletin: The New England Journal of Medicine has just published a list of "Trivia Traumas" -- normal everyday activities that, says the Journal, have the potential to cause strokes. The activities include heavy lifting, childbirth, diving into water, knocking back a shot of booze...and brushing your teeth.

Good grief. I'm beginning to feel sorry for myself again. Think I'll jump into bed and pull the covers over my head.

No. On second thought I'll call the Victorian Order of Nurses and get them to send someone over to tuck me in.

Wouldn't want to risk a stroke