

Weekender

# Comment

## Summer must be savored

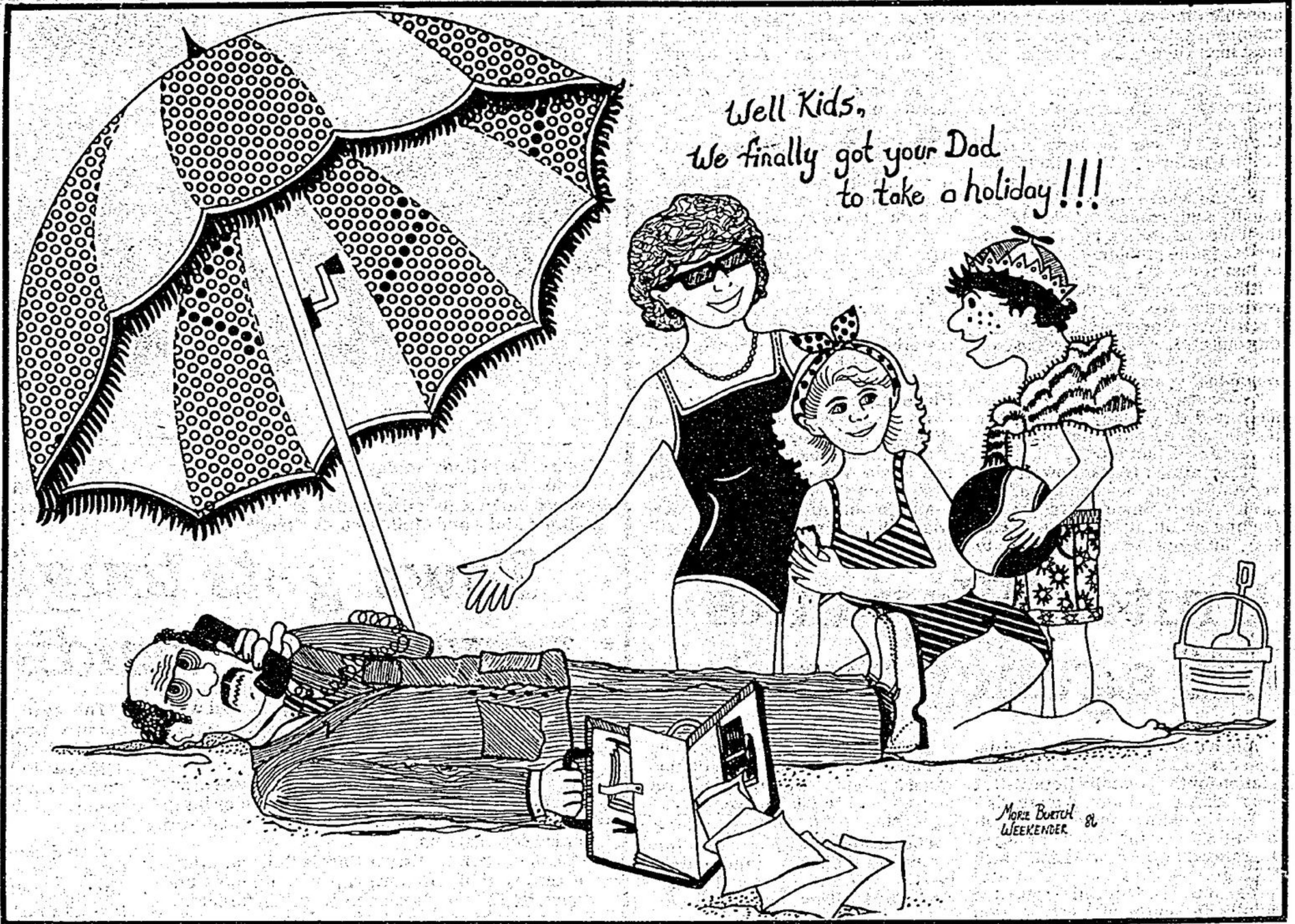
A cool breeze rustles the leaves. Water splashes and children laugh and shout with excitement. A bell rings as a street ice cream vendor makes his way through town. Summer is all of these things and more.

It's swimming lessons, trips to the cottage, summer school, cold popsicles, hot grass cutting and for adults it's a time when things slow down a little. For some reason the summer air in late July and early August is laden with something like a magic 'vacation' potion that cannot be resisted.

Summer allows us that much-needed respite from the hustle and bustle in the 'other' 10 months of the year. The busy executive suddenly finds time to get out on the golf course; the harried housewife leaves her housework behind and escapes to the beach.

What a welcome time of year — hot days and warm nights perfect for holidaying. Even those who remain behind to slug it out at the office or plant, or in the kitchen find a way to sneak away to enjoy their favorite summer pleasures.

In a country where seasons are so pronounced, summer is a most welcome time indeed.



# Awful truth is finally sinking in

I've been putting this one off for too long, I'm afraid, in the slim hope that something would happen to alter what has become a dreary state of affairs.

Canada's baseball team, the mighty Blue Jays of near-World Series glory only nine months ago, have lost the magic. After three years of teasing their fans with visions of mid-October sunshine and champagne, the boys of summer, Toronto chapter, are re-discovering mediocrity.

Just another lesson from the "baseball as life" textbook, I guess. In baseball, as in life, one can never assume that success is permanent. Especially when the competition is as thick as it is in the American League East where the Blue Jays must work.

What's happened to the Blue Jays? Well, for those who just jumped on the band wagon last summer when victory was a way of life, this may be a perplexing question. For those of us who have



been trying to figure this game out for decades, it's a simple matter of home economics.

The "income" is the same as always. No, we're not referring to the mega-salaries that have been showered upon these pampered sweatshops. We're talking runs scored per game, and equating that to take home pay.

Barfield, Bell and Co. have been bringing home the bacon in dazzling fashion. Where the problem has developed is in the "cash out" department. The Blue Jays are giving too much away. The pitch-

ing staff is spending runs as if it were on a Christmas shopping spree.

I won't bore you with statistics, but the Jays have lost a cart load of games this year in which they've scored a bundle of runs. The pitchers have been walking through minefields all season. Dave Stieb, the erstwhile maestro of the mound, has been bombarded with cannon fire from day one. He now finds himself mired in the summer of his discontent.

True, things have started coming together for the good guys

lately. Several of the pitchers are actually showing a pulse rate. But take it from the baseball doctor. It's not going to happen. I hate to be a carrier of gloom and doom, but we're merely being teased — again.

All you have to do is look at those games the Blue Jays have lost by walking in the winning run to see that they just don't have it in the clutch this year.

For those of us who have come to see a baseball season as one chapter in an ongoing story, this is but a minor setback. Next year will find the Jays bouncing back manfully. Victory will seem all the more sweet in light of this season's spin out.

In the meantime, there's still a lot of season to go yet, so the strategy must now be to concede the war while salvaging a battle here and a battle there.

Sweeping the Yankees three games to zip in the Bronx Zoo a few weeks back has provided a

memory that will still be savored years from now.

Jesse Barfield's meteoric rise after such a crummy start will have us watching him chase the home run title right down to the last day of the campaign.

And some of us still maintain that with a few design changes, Rance Mulliniks (don't you just love that name!) could be another George Brett. The way he has been pounding the ball of late, maybe he'll prove us right by year's end.

Then, of course, there's Bill Caudill. The same Bill Caudill who insisted only a year and a half ago that the Jays "stole" his services for a mere million dollars plus per season. Can Bill continue his arduous climb back to the realms of respectability, after bottoming out so badly every since donning Blue Jays threads?

As we said earlier. Some of us must learn the hard way that success isn't always permanent.

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