

# editorial opinion



by CORINNE ABATT

## Making some predictions

Without benefit of tarot cards or crystal ball, I would like to make a prediction about life in the suburbs.

In the years ahead, we will become a more stable society and more oriented to outdoor activity. In greater numbers, we will be participants in community and individual sports activity.

Instead of two cars in every garage, we will move toward three bicycles in every garage. There will be softball and soccer teams for every age group and those who don't play some kind of team sport will be in the minority. There will be a big emphasis on physical fitness and less concern with very expensive leisure time activities.

The swing to this was most noticeable this past summer. For 12 years I have lived next door to a high school playground and tennis courts. Now, crowded tennis courts aren't new. That sport has been rapidly growing. But, playgrounds being used steadily over the summer is a change.

For the sake of an expanding waistline and a desire for a tension reliever, I ride a bike for a couple of miles each evening.

THERE WAS USUALLY a men's softball game going at the high school after supper. When it was a pickup game, the women played too. In another area, there was usually a small crowd watching a soccer match and often as not, there was a girls' league softball game on another diamond.

Golfers picked the far corners to practice swings. One or two dog owners were working with

their pets on dog obedience exercises. It was the first summer I have seen these facilities used so consistently.

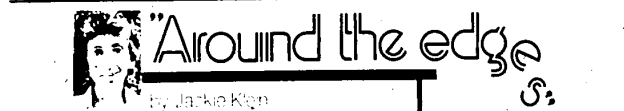
Some evenings when the weather was clear I would ride my bike to Twelve Mile in Southfield and pedal the bikepaths between Evergreen and Lahser. These were put in when Twelve Mile was widened last year. In many places there are sidewalks in addition to the asphalt bikeways.

Sure, I have heard comments about bikeways being frivolous when money is so sorely needed for education or other community improvements, but they are used and enjoyed. They keep bikers off the highways and encourage residents to unlock their doors and come outside in the early evening.

Besides, there's a developing spirit of goodwill among bikers. A woman who rides the bikeway on the other side of Twelve Mile always has a friendly wave for me, clear across the lanes of fast moving traffic. It's as if she is saying, "Hi fellow biker. Isn't this a great way to spend a summer evening?"

There is no age limit to these bikeway riders. They range from kids to very mature adults. They smile a lot, they exchange greetings and they look very pleased with themselves for having discovered how good it feels to be active on their own power.

Changes in attitudes can't be legislated, but such things as bikeways can implement them. It sounds so silly. The only thing is—it works.



by Jackie Kien

## A newsaholic confesses

The old saw about the busman's holiday applies to most newspaper persons. At least it does to me.

Whenever we go on vacation, we buy an extra carrying case for the out-of-town papers I save. That's probably one of the reasons my husband seldom suggests we get away from it. He has a fear of flying because the bundles of papers I accumulate always tip the scales.

The week before Labor Day, we drove to London, Ontario. Fortunately I had left in an office of clothes shopping so I had enough bags to stuff the London Free Press in. With inflation in Canada rampant, the Free Press set me back 35 cents a day. But I'm a shaver.

I FIND it fascinating reading publications from other countries or small American towns. On the front page of the London paper of Sept. 2, 1976, it says: "The Weather: Sunny High 18, Details on Page 2."

A high-pressure area centered over northern Ontario should move southeast today, bringing sunny skies, with a few cloudy periods, and cool temperatures. In southeastern Ontario, it said on page two: "Winds should be from the north at 24 km/h (15 mph). Expected high and low temperatures are 18 (63) and 8 (47)."

Canada is on the metric system which is completely confusing. You multiply something and add something else and it never comes out right the way I figure.

I bet you didn't know that Lake Erie's perch population has declined in recent years and it may take a couple of years to bounce back. Next

time you're gulping a tranquilizer after being stuck in bumper-to-bumper traffic in Southfield, think about the dramatic falling off of the fish population in Canada and count your blessings.

STRAY DOGS may be a problem in Southfield, but they make headlines in the London press. First, London City Council decided to seek authority from the province to impose tougher dog controls, including a maximum penalty of \$1,000 for owners whose pets trespassed, leashed or unleashed, on private property.

The province replied, mildly, that it was undertaking its own study of dog control and licensing. Council earlier rejected a \$6,000 dog census proposal. Either the budget was tight or the council members were.

Another bit of trivia I discovered in the paper is that only two doctors in a major Canadian city believe in sterilization on request for childless women. The writer argued that children will no longer be a must item for every marriage. A doctor rebutted: "Women who change their minds after sterilization leave scars on his psyche. Better on his than the patient. I maintain."

TOURISM IS way down in London and it's no wonder. I read that gas prices increased 49 cents an imperial gallon (5 U.S. quarts) and range from \$1.02 for premium to 97.2 cents for unleaded and 94.2 cents for regular. Even pump-it-yourself stations charged 83.9 cents a gallon for regular.

A cartoon picture postcard on the

editorial page of the London Free Press, dated "Summer, 1976," and addressed to Joe Tourist, Bicentennial Lane, U.S.A. read: "Dear Joe: Having a not so full time. Wish you were here. Yours longingly, Canadian Resort Operator."

On the front of the card were cartoons of a pump with a scowling face saying, "gasoline costs," a bulging money bag bearing the words, "food and lodging prices," and a frowning dollar bill stating "exchange rate." The American dollar is worth about 97 cents in Canada.

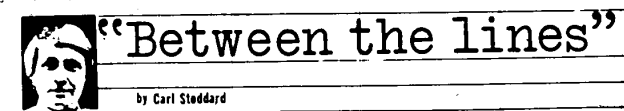
FEELINGS ARE running high in London's taxi industry about the need for a 22 per cent fare hike. Cabbies received a 26 per cent increase 15 months ago but they're caught in a gasoline and insurance price squeeze. No wonder we saw so many people walking in Red Cross outfits.

Southfield council members might be interested in an editorial in the London press. One liberal member of the Canadian House of Commons suggested working 150 days instead of 180 with a recess every six weeks and a two-month summer break.

"It's basically a good idea," the editorial read. "There are many hard working members who could perform their duties better with more time off from routine House sittings. Others could sleep as well at home as in the Commons."

To accommodate fewer sitting days, the maximum limit on most speeches could be reduced from 40 to 20 minutes. That's an even better idea."

My husband may grumble and my papers he may crumple, but what can you do when you are a newsaholic?



by Carl Stoddard

## The cat was not talkative

Stupid cat. I said to myself.

It was a weekday. I had the afternoon off and planned to sit in the shade with a tall glass of lemonade and a good book. The cat had other ideas. He spent the night prowling the neighborhood and found a cat who was willing to bite off as much as it could chew.

So by morning, my cat had an abscessed paw and I had an appointment with the local animal clinic.

Our cat doesn't like riding in the car. He likes veterinary offices less. By the time I got him into the office, he was wide-eyed and panting and leaving a thick trail of shedded hair.

"What a cute cat," a girl waiting in the reception room said. I didn't think the cat. He likes veterinary offices less. By the time I got him into the office, he was wide-eyed and panting and leaving a thick trail of shedded hair.

I sat in the reception room with both hands around the cat's neck and shoulders. He glared at the dogs sitting

around. The dogs curled their lips and strained at their leashes.

"Cotton in the shade," a nurse said. "The doctor can see you now."

THE CAT DIDN'T understand what she said. Or else he just wanted to ignore the invitation. I picked him up and carried him inside.

We named him Cotton because he's white and shrinks from water. He also shrinks from doctors.

"What seems to be the problem," the doctor asked. He was looking at the cat. The cat didn't answer. He never talks to strangers.

"He got in a fight," I said.

"Cats coming around looking for a fight?" he asked.

"No, he went looking for it," I told him. The cat heard me and hung his head.

The doctor dug through the fur and found the wound. He pulled a needle out of somewhere and stuck it in the cat. Cotton didn't like that and I didn't either. I was holding him at the time. Well, trying to hold him.

The doctor gave me a little packet of pills. "Have him take one of these a day," he said.

Easier said than done. You can grind a little pill into a pound of tuna and a cat can smell it a mile away.

I carried the shaking ball of fur and claws back out to the reception area and waited in line to pay the bill. The cat isn't covered by Blue Cross.

While we waited, a woman carried in a brownish-gray, mangy alley cat. It was spotted immediately by the girl who was still waiting in the reception room.

"What a cute cat," she said.

"I bet she says that to all the cats," I told our cat. He ignored the remark. Stupid cat.

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