

# *45th year of publication* **FARM** **VIEW**

December 2022  
Volume 45 #12

*A newspaper with something for everyone*



*Merry Christmas from the 5 n's*

Complimentary copy for  
the FARM household



# AGcalendar

Farm View's Ag Calendar is free to non-profit agricultural groups, up to a maximum of 40 words. All others are invoiced at \$25 per month. Please note the format of the listings below and submit your item by mail or email, in a similar fashion.

## December 14th: News and Advertising Deadline

The advertising and news deadline for the **January** issue of Farm View is **Wednesday, December 14th**.

*The January issue is a perfect place to wish the agricultural community a Happy New Year and a prosperous year ahead.*

## December 15th: Scholarship Applications due

York Region Federation of Agriculture offers two scholarships that are offered to students that are pursuing post secondary education in Agriculture. The deadline for submitting an application is **December 15th, 2022**.

**Please see the article below for full details.**

## YORK REGION FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Supporting the development of future farmers is important to the York Region Federation of Agriculture. Each year the York Region Federation of Agriculture offers two scholarships that are offered to students that are pursuing post secondary education in Agriculture. The \$2,000 scholarships are awarded in two annual payments. Applicants must be residents of York Region and registered in a minimum 2 year program at a recognized Agricultural University or College. Selection will be based on academic achievement, citizenship qualities demonstrated by extracurricular activities in school, in the community and in Agricultural organizations.

Contact the York Region Federation of Agriculture for application forms. (905)-888-1235 or [york@ofa.on.ca](mailto:york@ofa.on.ca) The application deadline is December 15, 2022.

## Grey Bruce Farmers' Week returns for its 57th consecutive year in 2023!

This annual conference and tradeshow will be held in-person at the Elmwood Community Centre, or can be livestreamed from your home, between January 4th and 10th 2023.

Organizers look forward to seeing producers, agribusiness professionals, and industry experts gather together after two years of airing the conference virtually. They anticipate a stellar event with strong support from sponsors and exhibitors, as well as lots of enthusiasm from the audience. Not to be forgotten, the return of the in-person event also brings the return of the excellent hot roast beef meal! Goat and lamb will be served on their respective days, and pies will line dessert tables once more. Networking is always better when done over dinner!

New this year: whether audience members purchase tickets for livestreaming or in-person attendance, all will be given access to conference recordings for a thirty day span post-event. Producers can make use of this 'Encore Access' in order to catch up on pieces that they may have missed, or to recap information that they found especially useful.

In addition to Encore Access for the live presentations, audience members will also find available twenty-one 'On Demand' presentations. These are pre-recorded and available for watching on the attendee's own time, from home. Topics covered are broad, and access to all twenty-one presentations are included with tickets purchases for any day of the week. This roughly triples the content available to the GBFW audience.

The program will be strong as ever in 2023. Keynote speakers include:

**On Beef Day:** Dr. Jordan Thomas, Cow-Calf Specialist from the University of Missouri, presenting The 'Silent Killer' of Cow-Calf Profitability

**On Dairy Day:** Mike Hutjens, Ph.D., Professor of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois, Urbana, presenting

Strategies with High Feed Prices

**On Goat and Sheep Days:** Dr. Robert Van Saun, Professor and Extension Veterinarian from Pennsylvania State University, presenting: Understanding Colostrum Quality and Passive Transfer and Pregnancy Toxemia and Milk Fever in Goats & Sheep

**On Horse Day:** Dr. Wendy Pearson, Associate Professor – Equine Physiology from the University of Guelph, presenting Leaky Gut Syndrome in Horses

**On Ecological Day:** Dr. Vicky Levesque, Research Scientist – Soil Health, with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, presenting Biochar: Ancient "Black Gold" Amendment Method May Improve Agricultural Soil Health of Today

**On Crops Day:** Andrew Pritchard, Senior Meteorologist for Nutrien Ag Solutions, presenting Disruptive Weather Patterns in Production Agriculture & Weather Outlook

Many, many more excellent speakers fill out the schedules for each day, as well as panel discussions covering (by order of the day they appear) ROI on Grazing Cover Crops, Robotic Milking Systems: Past, Present and Future, Culling Tips for Goat Farms, Outwintering Sheep, My Must Haves for Horse Management, All About Cover Crops, and The Fourth Crop – Winter Canola, Winter Barley and Edible Beans.

Livestreaming tickets must be pre-purchased online. It is recommended that attendees purchase in-person tickets online as well but for those unable to do so, cash, cheque and debit will be accepted at the door.

Would you like more information about Grey Bruce Farmers' Week's program or tickets? Go to their website: [www.gbfg.ca](http://www.gbfg.ca), or contact the organizers directly by emailing [info@greyagservices.ca](mailto:info@greyagservices.ca) or calling 519-986-3756. Don't forget to follow the event on social media too! Twitter and Facebook: @GBFarmersWeek, Instagram: @GB\_FarmersWeek, #GBFW23.

Joy is knowing  
folks like you

Seasons come and go,  
but our best wishes remain with you today and always.  
Thanks for your generous support and faith in us.  
We appreciate you, and we wish you a wonderful holiday.

*Merry Christmas*  
*and warm wishes from all of us at*  
*Charwen Farms*



# Opposing opinions; Possible South Bruce Deep Geological Repository

By Cathy Hamill-Hill

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) needs to find a place to safely store used nuclear fuel waste. The NWMO has decided that a Deep Geological Repository (DGR) is the best option. A DGR, in simple words, is a storage site built under the ground in rock. The DGR would consist of underground tunnels and rooms networked to house used nuclear fuel containers. It would be built 500 metres or 1,640 feet underground. The two potential sites to build this DGR are in Ignace in northwestern Ontario and locally, in the Municipality of South Bruce.

There are two sides of equal strong opinion about whether South Bruce should, or should not, be home to the DGR.

Rita Groen is a first generation dairy farmer and was a recent candidate for Mayor for the Municipality of South Bruce. She has been a strong opponent to having South Bruce as home to a DGR to store used nuclear waste as it represents too much risk to the environment.

The decision to choose between two destinations, either South Bruce or Ignace, has been postponed to 2024. Groen says the only reason the date has been postponed is that the NWMO needs a stalling tactic. "The NWMO is concerned that if they truly asked the (South Bruce) community about willingness at this time in an honest and true paper ballot referendum, they (NWMO) would not get the answer they are looking for."

Being chosen for the DGR site would mean changes to the area chosen- and Groen says the changes to South Bruce would only be negative. The area's new stigma, she said, would be "The Nuclear Waste Capita of Canada." She further predicted that there would be no new jobs created with the DGR site for longterm as the jobs would just be relocated that exist in the area now. "Bruce Power is scheduled to close at about the same time the DGR is suppose to come into operation. This is where the workforce is coming from." The area today, she says is a small town with strong agricultural roots and food processing but if a DGR was part of the area, it would change into "a busy industrial mining community with increased traffic, noise and dust."

South Bruce was chosen as a possible site for the DGR because, Groen says, the Municipality asked to be entered into the site selection process. "NWMO asked what communities were willing to learn more in exchange for money for community projects. That was in 2012 and council didn't ask if the community was interested in being part of this

process much less hosting the DGR."

When asked if a DGR site and farming can operate together in harmony, Groen's short answer is "No." She explained that agriculture buyers and consumers are "already concerned about the source of their food. Given the option, consumers will not select food grown next to a nuclear waste site." She adds that she has been told directly from a reliable source that the local ice cream plant is concerned over the stigma that "could threaten their ability to sell their ice cream produced near a nuclear waste site." She added that "butcher shops from Toronto have also indicated that they would not risk purchasing lamb produced next to a nuclear waste site."

In response to the #1 reason why Groen doesn't agree that a DGR site should come to South Bruce, she said the DGR is too much of an unknown. "Nowhere in the world has a DGR for high level nuclear waste even been built, much less operated," Groen stressed. She added that such a huge facility needs to be quickly accessible- not tucked away under the ground, "The waste needs to be monitored constantly and if issues arrive, they can be dealt with quickly and are easily accessible above ground in hardened concrete steel lined containers." She said an emergency situation at this DGR could be an environmental disaster, "protecting our groundwater, aquifers and the environment from radioactive contamination has to be utmost importance." She added that for 60 years the nuclear industry has stored its waste above ground- and that is the only option that has been proven safe.

Sheila Whytock grew up on a cow/calf farm in Orillia and now lives in Teeswater. She believes in local agriculture and supports it at every opportunity. She works as a nuclear operator at Bruce Power. Whytock supports the possibility of a DGR site coming to South Bruce as it represents new opportunities. NWMO decided, in Whytock's opinion, to wait an extra year before deciding whether South Bruce or Ignace will be selected as the DGR site as a courtesy to the local communities to allow more time for community input. "The pandemic had a negative impact- not being able to physically meet with community members impacted the NWMO's engagement with residents," she said adding that virtual meetings had low attendance.

If the DGR was approved to come to South Bruce, Whytock says it would mean prosperity at many levels. South Bruce could be known as "an international research site,"

she says adding that the DGR would include a "Centre of Expertise" and eventually an "Underground Research Lab" and would be looked as a hub for "international research on DGR's and will offer advantages yet to be discovered." The current need to leave South Bruce to find work would be reduced with all the job types that come with the project, she added.

The reason South Bruce has been considered for a possible DGR site, according to Whytock, is because "ours was one of the 22 that originally put their names forward as interested in learning more and potentially hosting the DGR for Canada's used nuclear fuel."

In response to whether a possible DGR site and local farming can operate in harmony, Whytock's short answer was "Absolutely yes." She explains, "we have seen successful farming operations occurring around Bruce Power and other reactor sites around the globe with no issues. If operating reactors don't impact agriculture, neither will passive spent fuel storage." She says, "I have personally reached out to many (farm) organizations and there are no restrictions to food production near nuclear facilities." She adds that "food produced near nuclear sites is regularly and thoroughly monitored."

The #1 reason Whytock supports having a DGR site possibly coming to South Bruce is to give today's youth a future in their hometown. "I think this facility will provide opportunity for our community's youth to raise their families in the community they grew up in," adding, "we're looking at generations benefitting from local jobs with good pay scales, benefits, pensions, etc. all in our backyards." She said the DGR is a "forever project, and as long as we deem it necessary to monitor the site, there will be jobs." She also says that she "really likes the idea of extensive environmental monitoring occurring and around our community" because she considers the idea "interesting to see how we are impacting the environment in our everyday actions." She says that nuclear waste storage is "not the only area of concern" for our environment and this monitoring would have additional information processed that could be of huge benefit to everyone.

For more information, there are two pages on Facebook, "Willing to Listen- South Bruce Proud" and "Protect South Bruce- No DGR."



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# Merry Christmas!

HOLIDAY HOURS: Closed Monday & Tuesday, December 26 & 27, and Monday, January 2.

From all of us at Huron Tractor, a sincere thank you for your valued support and our warmest wishes to you and yours for a safe and happy holiday season!



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**FROM THE EDITOR****It's the most wonderful time of the year!**

Roslyn Watkins  
Publisher/Editor  
Farm View Newspaper  
farmview@on.aibn.com

I won't spend too much time re-hashing my comments from last month's editorial. I haven't received too many letters on those topics but I have received countless comments in person and by phone from neighbours, family and readers in general who are all in accordance with my opinions. The new year holds much promise of getting busy and finding out how to make a difference for our children's future.

In regards to my short article in the November issue (Highway 413, for the good or bad?) I did learn that the proposed area is slated for urban development whether it be hwy 413 or other forms of development. This area has been in limbo for 15 to 20 years. I also learned farmers in that area really just want a decision to be made one way or the other. I have heard it is very difficult to farm, plant, expand, build, wondering if your efforts are going to be paved over.

I do find it interesting that amid much controversy over highway 413, the Ontario government announced it is proposing to rezone thousands of acres of farmland in the Greenbelt and other regions for development. Please take a minute to read the articles from the OFA, page 17, and the NVCA, page 25. Both go into detail in regards to how dangerous opening up the Greenbelt is going to be for agriculture. The OFA article in particular highlights reasonable, doable solutions for creating more housing in Ontario without developing on protected land or farmland. Hopefully our government is listening. Ours aren't the only tables that will be empty one day.

Tony Nahuis from Simcoe County shared a victory with us about growing Alfalfa seed on the former proposed dump site 41. You can read his story on page 24. It is a wonderful reminder of the good that can happen when the government listens to the people.

The December issue is definitely my favourite to work on. There are so many warm holiday greetings from the County Federations, advertisers and the columnists. It is an absolute pleasure to have so much positivity wrapped up in one issue. This month we welcome a new advertiser to the Farm View family. Chris Bell is a farmer who also owns and operates an electrical company. Please have a look at his ad on page 10 and keep Mr. Bell in mind in the future. This issue features many wonderful articles to read with a hot beverage on a snowy day such as a lovely Christmas story from Joyce Ernyes, beautiful Christmas memories from Soul Sisters, Cathy Hamill-Hill and Andrew Hind's Village Stories and photos of the 100th Royal Winter Fair from Dr. Tim Henshaw.

I'd like to thank Carolyn Morris of Railfence Books for sharing the Farm View newspaper during the Royal Winter Fair. For information on where to find Carolyn's books please visit [www.railfencebooks.com](http://www.railfencebooks.com).

Thank you readers, for making this another successful year for the Farm View. I love hearing your comments whether it be in person while I'm filling the racks, by email or on social media.

Too quote a favourite song by Zac Brown Band, I hope the month ahead is full of everything you need, and nothin' that you don't.

Merry Christmas from my family to you and yours!

**The DEADLINE for the January Farm View is December 14th.**



Pictured above is Author Carolyn Morris of Railfence Books and Iain Morris. One of the local exhibitors at the 100th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

**LETTERS****Instill more of the values, citizenship and skills that our society has grown from**

In response to your editorial in the November issue of Farm View; You (the publisher, Roslyn Watkins) raised many questions. People these days pose questions as a way of making a point. I argue that by nature, a question can NOT make a point... it is a question not a statement. I appreciate that your questions were presented as questions, situations you are curious about. I hope perhaps over the past month, some of your questions have been answered and those bits of information will be shared here in the paper.

Your concerns are very valid. Never has society been so removed from the farming community, how to run a household and good citizenship. I believe this underlies why so many people are struggling, hungry, homeless and turning to crime; they were not provided a firm foundation.

What many of us may refer to as traditional values (dare I say old-fashioned?) have been shunned more than ever. It is argued that no one is any more correct than anyone

else; facts are fluffed off as opinions. I say there is right and wrong. There are facts. Some people have a better attitude and are better grounded. Sure, one can find cultures that vary from ours, but we are not living in those cultures. We need to instill more of the values, citizenship and skills that our society has grown from, built upon and I am sure, aspired to be.

I applaud you for being curious, with better ways being cast aside. I hope you find some answers. If we don't like them; we have the opportunity to discuss them and improve them.

I recognize that some folk may point to traditional or old-fashioned values to include gender disparities and such... those are situations we are improving on, and can improve upon even more, but the basic "Do unto others" should be the only rule we need. Life-skills are vitally important to a just society.

—Don Beaulieu, Springwater Township

**Compliments from the 169th Sunderland Fair**

The following are compliments paid to Cathy Hamill-Hill while she was reporting for the Farm View at this past summers Sunderland Fair.

"I give my copy of Farm View to the neighbour who is very particular. He reads it page by page at meal time for the whole day until he's finished. Even he can hardly ever find a mistake."

"Farm View is the only "good" reading I get all month with so much bad stuff happening in the world these days."

"After the Chores is like reading James Herriot stories. It is every day life told in a different way."

**New reader enjoys Farm View**

Dear Roslyn,

Thank you for having me in the paper (Community members and passersby enjoyed a wonderful time at the Anten Mills Artisan Fair, November 2022). I wasn't aware this paper existed within the community, it really opened my eyes. I really enjoyed reading many of the articles.

Have a nice day,  
Milan (Anten Mills)

**On the Cover**

Santa and the elves take a break to pose for a picture. From left to right in the back row are Trenton, Roslyn and Shawn Watkins. Front row from left to right are Lillian and Harrison Watkins.

— Photo by Don Beaulieu

**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR**

Farm View invites letters to the editor. They should be fewer than 300 words and deal with a single topic affecting farmers. All letters must be signed, including your full name, address and daytime phone number. All letters are subject to editing for brevity. Please no phone calls.

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**In memory of Jill Beischer**

Farm View attempts to present a forum for varying points of view from the agricultural community. Editorial opinions are freely expressed by individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the executives or directors of the federations unless specifically noted.

**"Burn down your cities and leave our farms,  
and your cities will spring up again as if by  
magic, but destroy our farms and the grass  
will grow in the streets."**

*W.J. Bryan*

**OFA Members Service Representative:**

Leah Emms 1-866-660-5511 email: [Leah.Emms@ofa.on.ca](mailto:Leah.Emms@ofa.on.ca)

**OFA Zone Director for Peel, Simcoe and York:**

Paul Maurice: 705-444-1398 email: [paul.maurice@ofa.on.ca](mailto:paul.maurice@ofa.on.ca)

**2021-2022 Executive – Simcoe County**

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	<a href="mailto:simcty.fed.agriculture@outlook.com">simcty.fed.agriculture@outlook.com</a>	

**2021-2022 Executive – York Region**

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Contact YRFA:	<a href="mailto:york@ofa.on.ca">york@ofa.on.ca</a>	

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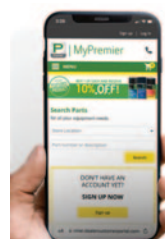
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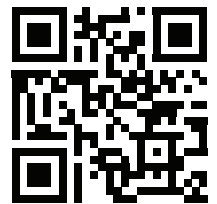
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Growth and planning are the biggest issues at the OFA right now



By Leah Emms  
OFA Member Services Rep.  
1-866-660-5511  
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www.ofa.on.ca


What a spectacular fall this has been. One for the record books for sure. Seems strange to be writing this “December” article with the window open, enjoying a 17 degree day. As the saying goes, enjoy it while you can. Often members ask me, “what is happening at OFA these days?” And I always hesitate briefly to decide how to answer because there is a lot going on and it is difficult to decide what to highlight.

Today, the largest issue is growth and planning. Our team of policy analysts are extremely busy reviewing the latest proposed changes to legislation to support Ontario’s new More Homes Build Faster Act. Another aspect in the planning context that is becoming a larger issue for our members that employ foreign workers is farm employee accommodation. We are all aware of the labour shortages and challenges across all sectors. For agriculture, this poses an even greater challenge because zoning by-laws were not designed to accommodate changes that farm businesses must make to survive. Many current regulations are not flexible to current farm business needs, which is not only frustrating but costly to our members. The red tape involved to facilitate a Zoning By-law Amendment and or an Official Plan Amendment to allow additional farm employee accommodation is significant. Members usually need to hire professional planners to assist them through the application process. Official Plans use language that at first glance would seem to support agriculture. Such as this example, to support the economic viability of the Countryside

economy and to support local food production by: a. protecting prime agricultural lands from development; b. developing land use permissions that provide flexibility to maximize farming. The following uses are permitted in areas designated as Agricultural: i. farming activities associated with: the growing of crops, including nursery and horticultural crops; raising of livestock; raising of animals for food, fur & including poultry and fish; aquaculture; apiaries; agroforestry; maple syrup production; and, associated on-farm buildings and structures, including accommodation for full-time labour when the size of the operation requires additional employment. But upon examination of the accompanying Zoning By-law, it will only allow one accessory accommodation unit on a property consisting of at least 35 ha or 100 acres. Many Zoning By-laws restrict farm employee accommodation by declaring that a farm property must be of a certain size to allow one accessory farm employee accommodation; usually a 100 acre parcel. However specialized, intensive operations such as horticultural and greenhouse operate on smaller-sized parcels, and undertake manual labour which requires higher numbers of workers. Many of our members farm on smaller acreage but at an intensive level. For example, horticultural operations or greenhouses. Manual work requires people. We are coming to a critical period of time when agricultural policy will have to be elevated at the municipal level. Farms and farmers have been taken for granted for far too long. It is time to review and update by-laws to allow accessory farm employee accommodation “as of right” on agricultural land. In order for farm businesses to have the flexibility to grow, consideration must be given to permitting multiple dwellings to accommodate farm labour in a format that doesn’t require hiring consultants to argue the case. Planning is a necessary tool to control development but when those planning tools become overly cumbersome and costly for farmers, farmers get fed up and make tough deci-

sions about their operation that they may not want to make. Our work is to educate municipal staff on the challenges faced by our members. It is easy to promote and seem to support agriculture with words, but actions are proving to be more difficult for governing bodies. Supporting protection of the land base is a great first step, but we need to keep advocating for simpler methods of planning controls that are not financially draining to the farm operation. That is what is happening in my OFA world lately while I wait for old man winter to arrive. Season’s Greetings to everyone!

### Vanishing Barns



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## Help keep the history of Essa Township alive

By John Beischer

Covid and aging has taken a toll on the membership of Essa Historical Society; maybe you would like to help this small group of volunteers expand their membership. The objective of these dedicated individuals is to recognize, maintain and preserve the history of the “garden” township of Simcoe County. Bordered by Highways 89 [south], 90 [north], 27 [east] and CFB Borden in the west, Essa Township has a wealth of historical hamlets and villages as well as pioneer families of note, that need to be recognized and promoted. Over the past many decades, former and present members of the EHS have produced numerous books and calendars as well as coordinating plaque installations with Township council and staff. In addition, arranging cemetery designations and maintenance has been a priority, so that those who have gone before will be properly acknowledged and commemorated for future generations. Do you see a place for yourself in the future of the Essa Historical Society? If so, please see the contact information below. Membership is \$10 annually. They hold monthly meetings on the 4th Saturday of the month at the Utopia hall in central Essa Township with a guest speaker and refreshments. New ideas are always welcome, as are new members, guests and visitors. Not sure if this group is right for you? Come out to a meeting or two and decide for yourself, you will be most welcome.

CONTACT: Richard Blanchard at 705-516-7570  
John Beischer at 705-726-5308  
Joan Truax at 705-424-9895



## Opportunity to reflect upon all the good things

By Doug Downey, MPP

It's almost Christmas time once again. This season brings forward the warm memories of years past, and the promise of the new memories we will create with our friends and loved ones as we celebrate the holiday. Each Christmas season also brings the opportunity to reflect upon all the good things we have in our lives, and to think of those who may be less fortunate than us. It is a time where the very best of our collective spirit is on display, and the generosity in our hearts spills over in unexpected ways. Throughout this Christmas season, I wish you all a happy time spent with those you love the most.

It is also important that during this season we spare a thought for those who do not have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas as they may have wished. Whether it be due to the financial burden, or due to a physical or emotional estrangement from their family, it is important to remember these people during the holiday season, and offer them help and support in any way we can. I encourage each and every one of you to get involved with a local charity like the Food Bank or Christmas Wish to help lift up those suffering in our community and ensure everyone has a wonderful and memorable.

The Christmas season also offers a chance to reflect upon the past year. I am so grateful to be able to continue to serve this community as your Member of Provincial Parliament. This role has provided me with the opportunity to meet people from all across Barrie – Springwater – Oro-Medonte, and from all walks of life. Though we may not always agree, I am grateful for the chance to hear from all the diverse voices that make this community so great. To be able to continue to serve as a conduit for these voices at Queen's Park is one of the great honours of my life.

The holiday season is also about the fun and excitement that Christmas brings. From the first November snowfalls, right through to New Year's Day, this season is full of special events that help mark the season and raise the spirits of our community. It is always so exciting to see the smiling faces of children as they eagerly await Santa's arrival at the end of a Santa Claus Parade, or to hear carols sung throughout or city streets. Please visit your local municipalities website to learn about all the great events being hosted in your area. There's always something fun to do, from ice skating at the Simcoe County Museum, to taking in the lights at the Barrie Waterfront during this time.

From the bottom of my heart, I want to wish each and every one of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, or if you celebrate in another way, I want to wish you a joyous holiday season. May each of you enjoy this special time with friends, family and loved ones.

Merry Christmas.



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# Visitors from more than 30 countries visited the 2022 Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

*Story and photos by Dr. Tim Henshaw*



Pictured above Dr. Tim Henshaw and Horse Winston, mascot of the 100th Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.

The first Royal Agricultural Winter Fair was held in 1922. Except for the war years, 1939 -1945 and the Covid years, 2020-2021 the Royal has been held annually, bringing together the best of Canadian livestock. Agricultural fairs were integral for the exchange of ideas and knowledge. They continue to remain an important venue for farmers to market livestock and improve their herds.

The 2022 Royal did not disappoint. Bringing together exhibitors from across Canada and from several of the United States, the 10-day event returned in a big way. International visitors from more than 30 countries came to check out the best of Canadian livestock and to network. Important connections are made, many meeting online friends for the first time.

The first weekend was highlighted by the

Masterfeeds National Junior Beef Heifer Show where over 300 4-H members participated. National shows for the Charolais, Hereford, Limousin, Simmental, Shorthorn and Angus breeds also took place over 3 days in the Semex Ring of Excellence. Monday and Tuesday, the focus was the TD 4-H Dairy Classic which brought together 313 4-H members from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario. Later in the week, National Shows for the Ayrshire, Jersey, Red and White Holsteins and Black and White Holsteins were held. Over 470 Holsteins and 260 Jerseys competed. Throughout the week, there were also small livestock shows including Sheep, Swine, Dairy Goats, and Rabbits and Cavies. There was no poultry show this year as or-

ganizers wisely cancelled the event due to the threat of Avian Influenza.

The Royal Horse Show returned and was a popular event. Featuring line classes, show jumping and heavy horse competitions, fairgoers were also delighted with the RCMP Musical Ride. Once a year, the Country comes to the city and the Royal is also an important event to educate the non farming public about modern agriculture and animal husbandry practices. Commodity groups representing Dairy Farmers, Beef Farmers, Egg Producers, Pork Producers, Fruit and Vegetable Producers all had education zones.

Congratulations to all the organizers and participants and everyone who worked so hard to showcase Canadian agriculture to the world.



Pictured above is a hardworking group from Peel County moving in for the Royal TD 4-H Classic.



A great crowd took in the opening ceremonies of the Royal TD 4-H Classic.



A presentation during the National Angus show was made to the Chalmers family of JPD Angus in Oro Medonte, the 2020 Purebred Angus Breeders of the year. In the photo at left are, left to right, Evan Chalmers, Owen Chalmers, Faith Walker, Nolan Chalmers, Michaela Stoneman and Chris Stoneman.

One of the highlights of the week was the presentation of this award for longtime service to the industry to Hank Vanderpost of Beeton. Pictured below from left to right are Don Schwartz, longtime friend, Hank Vanderpost, Joan Lau of the Semex Alliance and Ari Ekstein of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair.



Shown in the photo above is Norman Kyle of Ennismore with winning giant pumpkin 1634.2 lbs.



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# Meet the Farmer: Shawn Horner, Mobile Farm Mechanic and Simmental Farmer

Story by Cathy Hamill-Hill, photo by Shawn Horner

“If it has a motor and you can use it on a farm, I can fix it,” says Shawn Horner in a rare few quiet minutes between calls to fix equipment and work at home on the farm near Innisfil with his herd of Full blood/full Fleckvieh Simmental cattle.

Shawn grew up in a household where his Dad also worked two jobs. His Dad, Allen Horner, worked as an auctioneer in Cookstown and had a 150 breeding cow farm at home. “Dad insisted I get a trade. He said after you have a trade, then you can go farming and you will be okay.” Shawn says adding that advice is what he built his life on.

There are no advertisements about the business that Shawn has built for himself. He is a licensed mechanic and he works entirely on his own fixing both farm and construction equipment on site. He has worked as a mechanic at different places but decided, three years ago, to work on his own. Shawn’s business has grown to the point he tries to keep his week’s work down to 44 hours on average. His work territory has expanded to cover Bobcaygeon, King City, Chatham, Alliston and Collingwood and many points in between. He adds, “I work full-time on my own- and never handed out a business card. The business was built all from one customer to another as in word of mouth.”

Shawn’s expertise specializes in John Deere equipment but he also has a customer base that includes other brands including Massy Ferguson, Case IH, Ford and Kubota. He says he strives to “keep the equipment working so the farmer (or construction business) can get the work done in time.” Shawn reported during the dry, warm days of November he was on the road nearly all the time as that was prime time for crop harvesting. He says he fully understands the urgency of using the good weather days because he too is a farmer.

There has been a bit of time with no cattle, but Shawn says most of his life has been spent working around cattle- by choice. He currently lives on a 200 acre farm that can be traced back into the 1800’s and it has always been uncertified organic. He grows his own

grain and hay to feed the cattle. “I appreciate my job because I can plan for days off to do stuff at home. My customers understand when I tell them I have stuff I must do at home on the farm and reschedule for another time,” he explains.

The home farm is all about Shawn’s herd of Simmentals under prefix “Sunset Simmentals.” He enjoys the challenge of genetics. With careful bull selection that includes AI, he is in the business of raising breeding stock for other Simmental cattle producers. His Dad, Allen, was one of the first to bring Simmentals to Ontario in 1971 so he was educated in genetics at a young age. Most of the Sunset Simmentals are sold in breeding stock sales for the purpose of herd builders.

The biggest challenge with farming today according to Shawn, are higher costs for doing everyday farm business. He credits the high cost of petroleum as the root of these high costs. He explains that petroleum costs have skyrocketed like the price of a litre of diesel fuel now- and the products it makes for example, bale wrap costs being greatly increased.

Advice to anyone just starting in farming, Shawn says is “to have perseverance, you can’t give up on bad days. You have to really love farming to do it.” Farming is not about a paycheque, it is about doing something you want to do in life, he explains adding for him he likes time with the cows the best. The Sunset Simmental cows each have names that include Eleanor, Goldie and Reba. The cattle herd numbers will be up to 23 producing cows this season. He claims each cow has her own personality that include the “bossy cow,” the “flighty cow” and the “strong silent” types.

Giving treats to the cows is one of his best parts of farming, he says. Sunset Simmental cows have an absolute favourite treat that will be served at Christmas. Shawn will be in the barn at Christmas handing out a slice of raisin bread to each of his cow friends.

For information on Sunset Simmentals, see the Sunset Simmental Farm Facebook page.



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& Happy New Year



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## Times may change, but the magic of the holidays remains a constant

I've been knee-deep in smalltown lore over the last year as I researched and wrote two books detailing Ontario ghost towns. Along the way, I unearthed a number of holiday tales that reminded me of the universality of the Christmas spirit – times may change, but the magic of the holidays remains a constant.

Here are two uplifting stories that inspired.

Music has always been a part of Christmas. After dinner, people would retire to the parlor where a harp or fiddle was brought forth and carols sung until the wee hours of the morning. In a period before radio and film, live entertainment was all people had and so they looked forward to such opportunities for revelry.

For the same reason, school concerts were a much-anticipated part of the holiday festivities. Indeed, in small rural communities, in the absence of other entertainments, the school Christmas concert was one of the social highlights of the year.

This was certainly true in the tiny hamlet of Spence, in Parry Sound District, where the Christmas concert was simply known as 'The Entertainment.' Spence was a hardscrabble community where farmers struggled to eke a living out of the threadbare soil. Life was hard and any opportunity to escape the toil of the farm was eagerly anticipated.

"There was a lot of pressure put on teachers to put on a good show," remembered Reba Keppy. "Planning usually began as soon as the new school year began in the autumn and teachers made sure to thoroughly train their pupils in their songs and skits."

A bad performance would lead to tongues wagging and subtle displays of disapproval. The schoolteacher would also have to delicately manage the pressures of parents demanding higher-profile roles for their children. It was a lot for a young lady who often was not much older than some of her students.

Keppy remembered how the community was poor – especially during the Depression –

and that there was little money for presents. And yet, the magic of Christmas prevailed...

"At the end of the evening, everyone carried the festivities outdoors," Keppy continued, noting that there was dancing and singing, games and refreshments. "Santa came and always found the children a gift and a bag of nuts and candies, on or under the two towering spruce trees. As long as I live, I will

never forget the magic of those evenings, fortified by the fragrance of the evergreens."

Money problems also hung like a dark cloud over the Taverner family of Lewisham. Pearl and Harold had to stretch meager earnings as far as they could, but it never seemed enough. One year was particularly dire. Pearl had always been able to tuck away some money for Christmas presents for the kids, but not this year. She just couldn't manage.

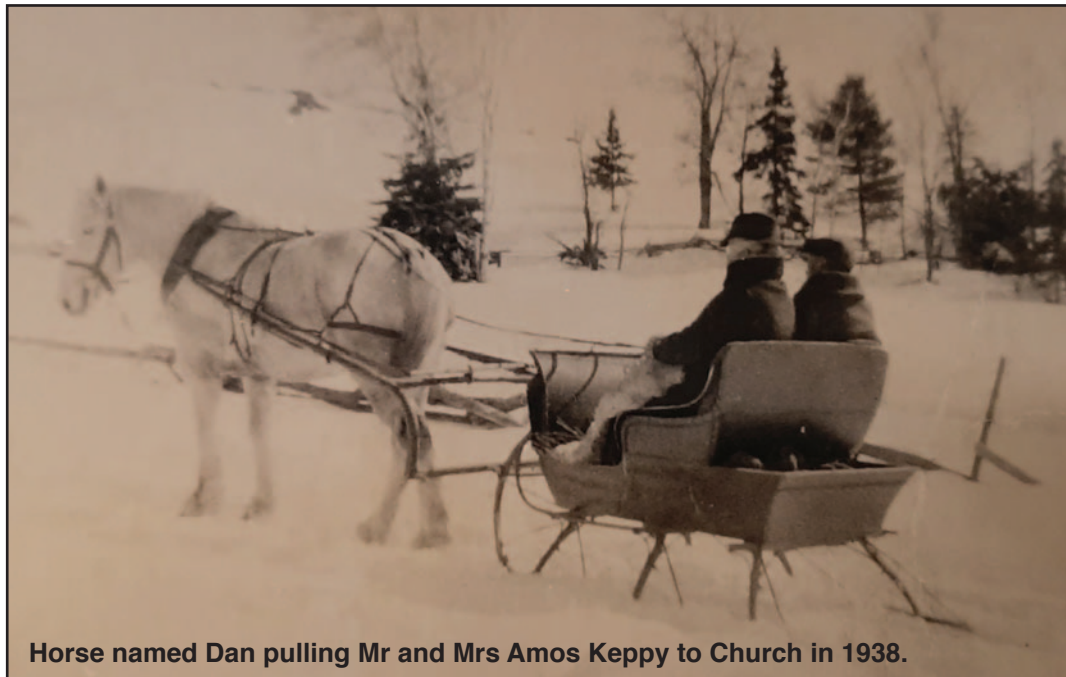
The thought of her little ones waking up to find no presents under the tree was devastating. So, on Christmas Eve, she scraped together some coins and handed them to Harold. Go to the store, she implored, and get some candy so the kids could still believe in Santa Claus.

Harold trudged into the store downcast, but his mood swung to euphoria when he found himself staring at a

mound of gifts waiting for him, one per child. The presents had just arrived that day, courtesy of one of the wealthy American hunters Harold guided every autumn.

Harold scooped them up and raced home in excitement. Pearl broke out in happy tears at the sight of the gifts wrapped in ribbon and bows. A notably pious woman, Pearl thanked God for bringing some happiness to her children.

Thereafter, whenever a child questioned whether Santa existed Pearl would insist that he did. She knew he did, she would say, because she had witnessed his magic firsthand.



Horse named Dan pulling Mr and Mrs Amos Keppy to Church in 1938.

## Village stories

by Andrew Hind



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## After The Chores: Christmas Tree Hunting

By Cathy Hamill-Hill



Christmas Tree selection is a conflict in our family.

Mom wanted a Christmas tree one cold December, years ago. We had boxes of ornaments, tinsel and decorations from over the years that had to go on every Christmas tree. She was ready to buy a Christmas tree from a tree lot. My Dad owned family property that was half covered in trees.

Dad selected me to come with him to "get the tree." He was not impressed with being taken from farm work this clear cold winter day to do this but Mom had dropped the final card. Mom said she was going to buy an artificial tree if she didn't get a real tree this weekend. My brothers and I were horrified of a fake tree. We had a dear Auntie that had a fake tree that was the colour of aluminum foil silver, an uglier tree has likely ever been made. We were convinced that Christmas was over with a fake tree. Dad knew the household was going to be one wailing, devastated mess soon so he agreed to drop farming this Saturday afternoon when he had no bus runs to plan around and go tree hunting.

My Dad wore his barn clothes for this day out- and he smelled like corn silage. Our transportation was the 33 Massey Harris tractor, Dad was driving and I was sitting with both hands hanging on to the fender. The Massey pulled the "spreader" which was a cleaned out manure spreader Dad used like a wagon, he appreciated it had sides which the wagon did not.

The property was just across the highway from our home farm but on a cab-free tractor, we both were cold by the time we arrived. This was in early December, before climate change or whatever this wild weather time we have now is called that can see +10 in the morning and -18 by supper time on the same day.

My visions of a section of the bush being rows and rows of Christmas trees were shattered because this bush was mostly cedar trees. Dad assured me there was Christmas trees here- he had seen them but he wasn't exactly sure where. This bush had a natural spring fed creek which meant it was wet. Every step was in soggy snow. We had to dodge around fallen trees and push back branches from standing

trees. There was no path but Dad was sure he had a destination. Lloyd cut out a few cedar posts in the bush so Dad came to visit Lloyd to check on his progress. Lloyd was as much of a free spirit as my Dad was grounded in his life as a farmer and family provider. Lloyd might spend a whole day drinking tea from his thermos, smoking cigarettes while he happily sat and watched birds in the bush. Most of the bush was totally untouched as Lloyd wasn't that high in productivity.

We came across a Christmas tree, finally. But this tree was small, there had to be better we decided and we were off to look again. By this time, we were hot and unbuttoning and unzipping some of the layers we were bundled in. It had to be at least an hour when we came on the same little tree again. Dad would not answer "are we lost?" questions directly saying he knew this bush and the "crick" flowed in one direction only. My Dad's sense of direction was not his strongest skill- and I really should not comment much on that. One time I decided to go to the Bracebridge Fair and got to Bracebridge- and if some business there did not have a big green dinosaur outside of their business, I could still be in Bracebridge today looking for the Fairgrounds. It was Lloyd's cedar posts that got my Dad on track again, that was in the northwest corner.

Now we were in a serious tree hunting situation because chore time was getting close. The sun was dropping in the sky. The next set of Christmas trees made us so happy. There was one that was the perfect height. We just could not believe our great fortune, this tree had a crown that would fit the Christmas star and it was wide and full. It was covered in snow but everything in December those days was covered in snow. Dad took his axe he had been carrying all afternoon and chopped the tree down. We each took a side and we weaved our way past trees, pushing back branches and dodging unknown clumps in the snow, one soggy step at a time. We finally reached the Massey and spreader again when the sky turned into a brilliant sunset. We were hot, tired out but feeling so pleased with this magnificent tree.

It was a proud moment when we hauled that Christmas tree to show my Mom on the front porch. First, we had to knock the snow off the tree. The living room floor was hardwood and it, even to this day, is so stunning gorgeous it seems wrong to even step on it. Mom did not want snow on this hardwood floor and that we understood. Dad knocked snow off the tree clunking the back of the axe against it- and the first layer shrunk some of the tree's fullness. Mom said it had to be ALL off and so Dad strongly shook the tree the next time.

"Charlie Brown would not have this tree!" Mom half

yelled as the tree's true size came to our shocked eyes in the porch lights. There was an empty space big enough to hold an adult Labrador retriever on one side. The trunk was crooked. The branches were few and kindly described as thin- on the good side. It was incredible how snow could have swept in and made this tree look so great was what I was thinking. The tree was rejected. My brother said he would go get another tree tomorrow as no tree could be any worse. This was the last Christmas tree me or my Dad ever had to choose.

When we moved to this property, Sweetie went out to get a Christmas tree. Apparently that spindly droopy cedar tree he brought here even after it was fully decorated was not acceptable. A relative saw it and told my Mom that our tree was awful and asked how anyone could tolerate having a Christmas tree looking like that.

When your Christmas tree comes from the land you own, my opinion is that it is beautiful.

The smell of corn silage always reminds me of Christmas.

Note: I would like to publicly thank FarmView publisher, Roslyn for allowing me to write here for 2022. I say this all the time, and honestly Roslyn is one of the sweetest, kindest people ever and it's a joy to work with her. I am grateful to everyone that reads this column each month. And thank you to each of you that have taken the time to comment on something you read here. I don't think 2022 has been an "easy" year for anyone but as we look back, we all have some good memories that we can hold on to that will help get us through the frozen water bottle/blocked lane/tractor won't start season in front of us next. Pandee the llama advises that a hug solves any problem, at least for short term. Thank you, Merry Christmas and may God Bless you all with a peaceful, happy 2023.

Sincerely, Cathy



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## Christmas With Noël

Story by Joyce Ernyes

"Not my first rodeo or my last," said Clyde, to no one in particular, as he limped out of the corral dusting himself off and spitting out the remnants of a plug of Copenhagen chewing tobacco. The rodeo reference was but a euphemism for being thrown from yet another horse he was attempting to break.

Clyde was a sixty something, seasoned cowpoke, who boasted more broken bones than Evel Knievel. He had enjoyed the rodeo circuit in his youth, primarily because of the female groupies that were ever present at events, but his true love was breaking horses—a term he considered to be a misnomer as the only breaks that occurred were to the bones of the riders.

Lately, he had been feeling more tired than usual and his aches and pains were lasting longer. He was also losing his grip and falling to the ground more frequently. As recently as a year ago he would not have been thrown from a horse the caliber from which he had just fallen.

Retirement was inevitable and the time was drawing near to leave the horse breaking to younger men. It was difficult for Clyde to abdicate the throne, however, as he had been equivalent to royalty among his peers.

He didn't need the money and he owned a thousand-acre ranch near by that he called home. He also had more than three dozen horses to care for at any given time, many of which needed on going medical attention. With the exception of a few riding horses, most had been rescued either from cruelty, abandonment or had been destined prematurely for the slaughterhouse. Ever present in his mind was—who would look after them should he be incapacitated in a fall.

Clyde loved them all, but one horse held his heart as no other. The foal had come into his life two years prior when Clyde was out scouting his property in late spring. His ranch was adjacent to the North Dakota Badlands where hundreds of wild mustangs roamed. It was not uncommon to see the herds grazing on his land and he welcomed their presence. On this day, however, there was no sign of wild horses but a

movement in the distance drew his attention. Upon investigating, he discovered an injured foal he estimated to be about two months old. It was obvious that its front right leg was broken and the animal was in distress. Despite its injury and weakened state it put up a valiant struggle as he approached and its mustang determination to fight to the end was present in the dark eyes.

The trauma kit that Clyde carried for horse emergencies contained nothing that would help at this point. Gazing down at the small body on the ground he knew what he should do. But he could not pull the trigger. Unless extenuation circumstances dictated otherwise, Clyde would not end a horse's life until he had exhausted all viable alternatives.

Years of caring for sick and injured horses, and having spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for medical treatments for them, had put Clyde in good standing with veterinarians near and far.

Within an hour of his call, help had arrived. The young horse was sedated and transported to an equine medical facility where its leg was set and put in a special cast of resin and fiber. Recovery was slow but due to the horse's young age and light weight he was eventually able to walk and run normally. Clyde had spared no expense and had given the colt a great deal of personal care as well.

The following year when the young horse was approximately twenty months old by Clyde's estimation and in excellent health, an unprecedented situation was now facing him. He had initially intended to nurse the colt back to good health and then release him in the vicinity of one of the herds of wild mustangs as they traversed his property. He felt that the young horse deserved to live its life, free and wild, as was intended by its birth. Clyde knew of no one, however, who had attempted such a manoeuvre and could provide direction.

Clyde had never before been in such a quandary. Second thoughts kept him awake at night as he agonized over the possibility that the young horse would not be accepted into

a herd. Would he be injured by the stallions or worse still, killed?

He had intentionally not given the colt a proper name. As a child, he had grown up with farm animals that were not pets but sources of food or income. His father was adamant that it was difficult to sell, kill or eat an animal to which you had given a name. He recalled seeing tears in his father's eyes when he had no choice but to euthanize his old work horse, Moses.

Clyde finally reached a decision. It was mid December and a small herd of mustangs, grazing on his property, was observed through his binoculars. The majority of horses seemed to be pregnant mares with a few foals and yearlings among them. He determined that there was but one stallion protecting the herd. It was now or never.

He rarely drank whisky but decided that a swig of Jim Beam was in order for the job at hand. Hooking up his smallest horse trailer to his 70 Chev pick-up his heart had never felt heavier. The young horse was as reluctant to board the trailer as Clyde was to load him.

He drove slowly in the direction of the herd and stopped when the horses became aware of his presence. He quickly opened the trailer doors and released the little mustang as close to the heard as was viable. He drove away quickly with tears streaming down his wrinkled and weathered face, blurring his vision. Then, wiping his eyes with the rough fabric of his sleeve he chanced one last look back via his rear-view mirror. What he saw shattered his heart. The colt was making a valiant effort to follow the pick-up.

Clyde instantly made another decision. He geared down, made a wide turn with truck and trailer bouncing over stones and clumps of dirt. He headed back as the young mustang continued to close the distance between them.

With the newest, permanent addition to his equine family safely in the trailer, they headed home.

It was not quite Christmas—but close enough. He named the little horse Noël.

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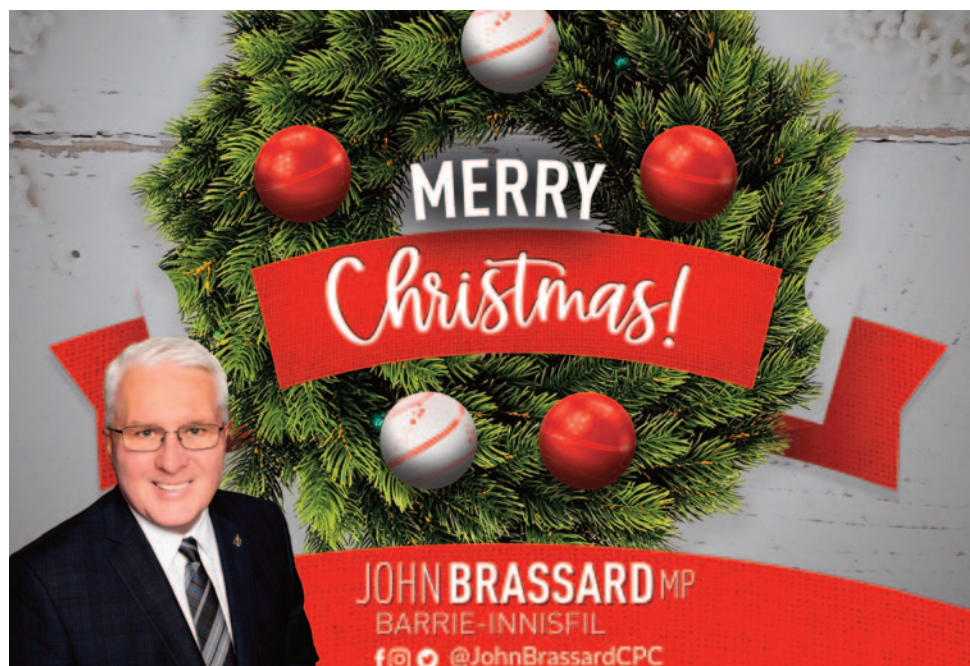
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*From everyone at the  
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## Tips to have a safe and happy holiday

By Dennis Gannon

With shorter days and colder nights we look forward to all the lights that shine so brightly in December as we celebrate Christmas and other festive holidays. December unfortunately is also the one month when historically more people perish due to fires. As we gather together to celebrate in December, let's remember to keep these safety tips in mind so that we have a safe and happy holiday.

Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms are critical to keep you and your family safe. Check the expiration date and replace the units as necessary. Install fresh batteries and test them monthly. Smoke alarms are required on every level of your home and consider placing one in the bedroom if you haven't already. Carbon monoxide is called the silent killer. Don't leave a vehicle running in the garage and ensure that your carbon monoxide alarms are up to date and tested.

Careless cooking is the number one cause of home fires in Ontario. Most of these fires start because pots and pans are left unattended on the stove. If you must leave the kitchen when you are cooking, turn off the stove. While cooking, always keep a large lid nearby. If a pot does catch fire, slide the lid over the pot, then turn off the stove.

Alcohol and fire are a dangerous mix. If someone in your household cooks or smokes under the influence of alcohol, you must be aware of the risk. Keep a watchful eye on drinkers. Remember, there's more to responsible drinking than calling a cab.

If you enjoy a real Christmas tree, buy a freshly cut tree and keep the stand full of water at all times. Check all decorative lights before placing them on the tree and discard any frayed or damaged lights or cords. Never place lit candles on or near the Christmas tree. When large amounts of needles begin to fall off, it's time to get rid of the tree.

There's nothing more appealing on a cold

winter's night than a blazing fireplace and the warm glow of candles. But an open flame can be an invitation to disaster. Please treat fire with respect this holiday season. Never leave your fireplace unattended and always use a fireplace screen. Don't burn wrapping paper or ribbons in your fireplace. Make sure candles are in a secure holder and place them out of the reach of children.

Heating equipment is another leading cause of home fires. Ensure woodstoves, fireplaces and fireplace inserts are installed by a qualified technician according to manufacturer's instructions. Allow ashes from your woodstove or fireplace to cool before emptying them into a metal container with a tight fitting lid and keep it outside, not in the garage or shed. Have your heating system, vents and chimneys inspected and cleaned annually by a qualified service technician. Ensure all outside heating vents are not blocked.

Testing your family escape plan is key to having a safe holiday season.

Everyone must know how to safely get out in the event of a fire and where the meeting place is. Call 9-1-1 from outside and know your address.

Enjoy this holiday season festivities and may you and your family have a fire safe and happy holiday.



## Worth a Chuckle...

and life lessons

by Aunt Hazel

### Christmas Puns

- "Resting Grinch face."
- "You sleigh me."
- "Your presents is requested."
- "But wait—there's myrrh."
- "Sleigh my name, sleigh my name."
- "Hold on for deer life."
- "Yule be sorry."
- "I'm pine-ing for you."
- "I have the final sleigh."
- "It's the most wine-derful time of the year."
- "Oh, deer."
- "All the jingle ladies, all the jingle ladies."
- "A mistle-toast to the holiday season."
- "Sleigh, what?!"
- "The snuggle is real."
- "I love you from head to mistletoe."
- "You're sleigh-in' it."
- "It's the most wonderful time for a beer."
- "Love at frost sight!"
- "Make it rein."
- "Sleigh queen, sleigh."
- "It's lit."
- "How rude-olf of you."
- "That look soots you."
- "I'm Claus-trophobic."
- "Christmas has me feeling extra Santa-mental."
- "Rebel without a Claus."
- "A round of Santa-plause, please."
- "Santa cleans his sleigh with Santa-tizer."
- "Claus I said so!"

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## Farmland produces food, let's work together to keep it that way

By Drew Spoelstra, Vice President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture



**Ontario  
Federation of  
Agriculture**

moderate folks that want to call this province home in the future.

Ontario also needs a strong, stable, sustainable supply of farm and food products grown, harvested and processed right here in one of the best food producing regions in Canada. These two complex issues deserve to carry equal weight in the planning processes and decision making for our growth areas, cities, towns, rural hubs and communities.

Earlier this month, the Ontario government announced it is proposing to rezone thousands of acres of prime farmland in the Greenbelt and other regions to build up to 50,000 new homes as part of its Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act.

That's a change that's of serious concern to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA).

Our members from Windsor to Winchester have told us over and over again that prime agriculture land is irreplaceable and worth fighting for. Farmland losses are already at an incredible 319 acres per day in our province, according to the 2021 Census of Agriculture.

Those 319 acres of farmland represent the yearly production of 75 million carrots, 25 million apples, 510,000 chicken wings, beef for 2.2 million quarter pounders, eggs for 5.4 million omelettes or enough feed for 25,000 Clydesdale horses for a day, to name just a few.

Farmland is farmland no matter what colour its belt is or what designation it receives. Once it's lost to development, it is gone forever, and that's why preserving it is one of the OFA's top priorities.

Ontario has a limited supply of what we call arable land – land that is suitable for growing crops for human consumption. In fact, it accounts for only about five percent of all the land in Ontario.

For me, this issue hits very close to home. I'm raising my children on our family farm just outside the urban boundary of the City of Hamilton, which happens to be in the Greenbelt. These new proposals raise serious concerns for me as a farmer, father, and businessperson on what the future of the protected countryside actually looks like.

How should I plan for our future? How will our business grow? How much certainty does the Greenbelt designation really give us? And where does the local, on-the-ground, real life community input come into play? These proposed changes represent a real and permanent loss of food production that in the long term won't impact just me and my family's farm, but every single person in our province.

However, as someone who farms in an urban municipality, I also recognize that our province is in the midst of a housing crisis. OFA understands that rapidly rising costs and a shortage of available housing have created a serious affordability problem for many Ontarians, and that the government needs to find solutions to this issue.

Some of the proposed changes in Bill 23, like cutting bureaucratic red tape and increasing consumer protection are long overdue policy changes. OFA knows that the balancing act between farmland protection and further urbanization doesn't come with an easy answer and that the issues facing us today are complex.

That's why we are proposing the following solutions to meet the needs of the growing urban areas and ensure that we can continue to produce an abundance of farm and food products now and for future generations:

- Focus provincial housing policy first and foremost on opportunities inside existing urban boundaries, like developing brownfield sites and underutilized land, and looking to mixed-use approaches that maximize available land.

- Return to minimum density targets of 80 people and jobs per hectare and enforce them throughout the growth plan area.

- Make targeted infrastructure investments in rural hubs, small towns and communities that are primed for responsible growth to support farms, agri-businesses and employers across rural Ontario.

- Enact a 'use it or lose it' clause on development approvals

Ontario needs more homes, built faster – that much is true. The Golden Horseshoe area is poised to see unprecedented growth over the next few decades and it's important that we work towards a better plan to accom-

modate folks that want to call this province home in the future.

- Address exclusionary zoning policies within municipalities to allow more density and missing middle housing to be built in residential neighbourhoods. Roughly 70% of Toronto and other surrounding cities are zoned for detached houses only, which restricts even modest forms of density such as triplexes or small apartment buildings.

With a responsible land use planning approach, it is possible to build complete communities that can provide for the needs of residents while minimizing sprawl, preventing the loss of farmland, and avoiding additional pressures on urban-rural boundaries.

The OFA understands and supports the government's stated goal of building more houses for Ontarians, but the proposed changes to the Greenbelt and paving over prime farmland, represent a step in the wrong direction.

The best use of our arable land is agriculture and by working together, we can come up with solutions that will protect farmland loss and address our province's housing crisis. The key is a collaborative approach to responsible long-term land use planning that balances meeting housing needs and supporting economic growth with protecting agricultural land.

# Season's Greetings

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## Soul Sisters Celebrations Christmas Wreath

We grew up knowing that December was a very special time of the year. There was always something to celebrate from family birthdays to holiday festivities. It has always been a time for fun, creating great memories and festive traditions. The arrival of the snow brings back such nostalgic magical memories of baking, decorating, and the best tobogganing luge run in the backyard built by dad each year. What most of these great memories have in common is laughing and spending it with people that brought us joy. This past weekend, we had some laughs with friends and family organizing our workshop in the barn for the newest season tradition of creating fresh greenery wreaths. Although it was started as a creative outlet and a way to spend time with family and friends, it has turned into much more than that for us. Moments around the farm leave us so grateful.

Watching our kids, cousins working together to trim a tree that was planted by their great grandfather, initially intended to be harvested years prior as a Christmas tree from Wilson Tree Farm, has been a proud and powerful experience for us. The flashbacks of us hanging out with our cousins around the farm, creating core memories and lifetime influences is part of it. Most notable is the trees that were planted by our grandfather are now being used to repair, build and contribute to bringing this farm that he was so passionate about back to life. Every part of each tree has a purpose around the farm, nothing goes to waste. It is full circle, bringing family and friends together, connecting us with our ancestors and all the hard work put into this farm throughout the generations. We found a way to use each part of the tree, including the boughs in wreath making, circling back to traditions being celebrated.

Like all traditions, there is a foundation and story behind wreaths, and they are much more than a way to adorn your door in Christmas decorations. Wreaths have meaning in many denominations, and we thought it would be a great opportunity to share with you some of them as we approach the season of celebrations for many denominations. Traditionally, wreaths are in the shape of a circle, holding many meanings including the cycle of the seasons, hope of life renewing, the continuous love of God of your understanding, and the hope of eternal life, to name a few.

Christmas wreaths have become a symbol of Christmas celebration in Christian communities, especially after the Advent wreath was introduced by the Lutheran church. The four week time period before Christmas, set aside by many Christian denominations is known as Advent. An evergreen wreath placed on table, decorated with 5 candles, each holding its own significance intended to signify the light of Jesus that arrived on his birth, Christmas day. Three of the candles stand for love, hope and peace, 1 symbolizing blood shed on the cross and 1 symbolizes purity. The circular shape a symbol of God's unending love.

In Yule celebration, evergreen wreaths mark the holiday celebrating the sun returning and the seasons continuing cycle, known as the winter solstice. The greenery and use of natural materials celebrates nature.

Harvest wreaths are used as a symbol of cycle of seasons never ending and the importance of each season on crops. Wreaths are often found at funerals as a symbol of continuation of life and Remembrance Day services symbolizing many things including bravery and strength.

Wreaths have many symbols and meanings. Different cultures, religious beliefs, regions and even the items used to make the wreath hold significance. To some, they are just a great way to decorate over the holidays. Whatever your wreaths story, we hope you have a beautiful December enjoying all that it has to offer. For us, we will continue to appreciate the joy it brings us to gather with family and friends in celebration. There are several religious celebrations this month, and we want to take some time to wish everyone best wishes and blessings throughout your festivities.

Have a blessed Bodhi Day,  
Happy Hanukkah,  
Best wishes on Yule,  
Merry Christmas,  
Happy Holidays

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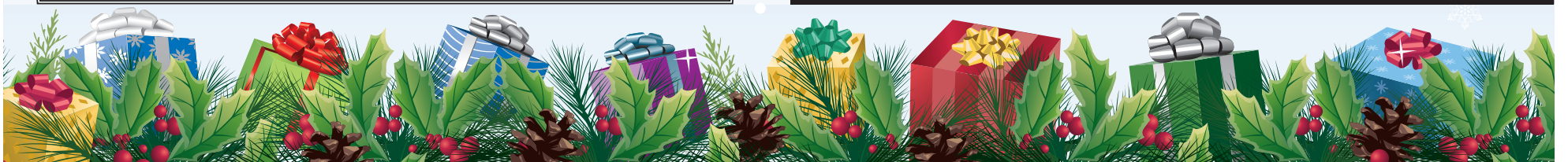
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## Seven Seed Grower Organizations Connected, Communicating, Collaborating

This past November The Canadian Seed Growers' Association announced a new affiliation agreement with its regional branches, the Alberta-British Columbia Seed Growers Association, the Saskatchewan Seed Growers' Association, the Manitoba Seed Growers' Association, the Ontario Seed Growers' Association, les Producteurs de semences du Québec and the Maritime CSGA Branch.

CSGA and its branches have worked together for decades on behalf of Canadian seed growers and the national seed certification system. The affiliation agreement is the first to establish clear roles and responsibilities for all and formalize the arrangements as an inclusive and service-oriented approach. It aims to ensure stakeholder engagement in a next-generation seed certification system that is professional, resilient and meets the diverse needs of Canada's agri-food economy.

"This agreement brings together the national and provincial CSGA associations for joint work planning, education, advocacy, and communication. Through close coordination, com-

munication, and issue awareness, at both provincial and national levels, we can continue to build a strong Canadian seed certification system," says Executive Director Doug Miller. "Standing together from coast to coast, we are better positioned to support the seed certification system and ensure grassroots participation from every seed-producing province in our organization."

Under the affiliation agreement, CSGA national assumes the lead role on national interest issues, any work related to national and international seed bodies, and other national associations aligned with CSGA's national mandate. The branches will develop and strengthen relationships with their relevant provincial government and regulatory bodies, provincial value chain associations, and other regional stakeholder groups to create and promote a forum of exchange on relevant issues and policies.



### Agricultural Anecdotes from Farmer Tim

Generally, I love the lifestyle that dairy farming gives me. You get to work outside and care for animals. You are also your own boss which can have its perks. However, there is a downside.

This fall it has been particularly hard catching up on farm life. Thankfully, we are one of the lucky ones who have finally finished harvest but there is still so much to do before winter hits. Dairy farming is all about routine. Every single day brings the same chores of milking, cleaning and feeding. You can't just turn off a switch and step away and there is no way to cut corners when you are making a quality product and caring for livestock. We live where we work and it can be hard to separate the two.

Christmas becomes a season of trying to buy presents between chores or missing out on family gatherings because they live too far from the farm. It's about getting up extra early and rushing through chores so your family can open a few gifts together on Christmas morning before you need to get back to the barn. It is about missing out on evening parties because they usually happen at chore time and morning milking comes early. The worst part is leaving a family member behind to do chores because there is no one else to do the work. It's no wonder that Christmas can feel like an inconvenience to some. I can't even fathom what it's like to have downtime over Christmas because my life has always been this way.

My memories of Christmas are different from most but I wouldn't trade them for anything. Yes, they involve the hustle and bustle of farm life but that makes the time I do get with family and friends that much more special. I've had extended family come stay with us and help with chores because they understand the challenges of travel over the holidays. I've had friends drop by with a coffee and a quick conversation knowing that quality time is more important than quantity. I have vivid memories of stepping out on Christmas morning to milk my cows with a sense of pride and peace knowing that I'm surrounded by everything that I love - the farm, the livestock and most of all my family. No matter what lifestyle you lead I hope that you never take the time you have with family and friends for granted. Christmas is only an inconvenience if you treat it that way. Let the magic of the season shine even if it's for a brief moment. We all have so much to be thankful for. So, from my family to yours have a great holiday season and from my cows have a Dairy Christmas and a Happy Moo Year! Don't forget to leave some real Canadian milk out for Santa!



Farmer Tim farms in Southern Ontario and has been sharing his stories through social media for many years.

Tim is quoted saying "All farmers need to get their stories out there and have fun while they do it!"



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Be sure to register for the conference before January 9, 2023 to get the Early Bird discount pricing!

We are hosting a variety of amazing virtual sessions from January 23-27, the tastiest Organic Dinner on the evening of Friday January 27th, plus over 40 in-person, not-to-be-missed workshops. As always, our FREE public trade show

will be at the University of Guelph (University Centre) on Saturday January 28th and Sunday January 29th.

With programming for farmers, consumers, and a variety of other organic value chain members there's something for everyone! Whether you've attended for years or never joined us before, we'd love to have you join the 1800+ attendees the conference attracts annually! Check out the 2023 GOC Program to learn more about the show. New sessions are being added regularly.

Want to help out with the conference? Sign up for a vol-

unteer position to be part of the show and get exclusive benefits like free workshop entries.

Since 2003, the Guelph Organic Conference has been organized to promote organic agriculture and related topics through educational workshops and panel discussions, showcasing products and services through the trade show, and connecting individuals, businesses and organizations within the organic sector.

For full details and to register visit [www.guelphorganic-conf.ca/conference-registration-details](http://www.guelphorganic-conf.ca/conference-registration-details).

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# Merry Christmas



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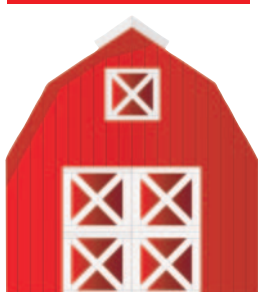
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## Simcoe County 4-H represented at the 2022 Royal Winter Fair!



Pictured above is Jacob Martin of the Elmvale 4-H Beef club. Jacob is posing with his entry in the National Junior Beef Heifer show, he was one of over 300 competitors at the 2022 Royal Winter Fair. —Photo by Dr. Tim Henshaw



Members from the 4-H South Simcoe Rabbit Club showed at the Royal Rabbit and Cavy Show. Pictured above are Milana and Nicole Palmateer with their rabbits Dakota and Denver. —Photo by South Simcoe 4-H



Thirteen members from the 4-H South Simcoe Sheep club participated at the Royal Junior Sheep show. Left to right in the photo at left are Madeleine Cullen, Isabella Cullen, Danica Kirby, Nicole Palmateer, Lauren Cowan, Sierra Steuernol, Gwenyth Jutzi, Milana Palmateer, Olivia Livingston, Scarlett McCallum-Pinho, David Kirby, Keagan McCallum-Pinho and Thys Blank. —Photo by South Simcoe 4-H



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## Grain Farmers of Ontario Welcomes House of Commons Agriculture Committee Decision to Report Grain Drying Bill Back to the House for Third Reading Vote

Grain Farmers of Ontario, the province's largest commodity organization, representing Ontario's 28,000 barley, corn, oat, soybean and wheat farmers thanks the Members of the House of Commons Agriculture & Agri-food for their careful study of Bill C-234, which culminated in the Committee reporting the Bill back to the House of Commons.

Bill C-234: An Act to amend the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act, proposes to exempt grain drying from the Carbon tax and will now come up for its final vote at third reading in the House of Commons in the winter session, before beginning the legislative process again in the Senate.

"We were pleased with the support Bill C-234 received from Members of Parliament at the Agriculture Committee," says Brendan Byrne, Chair, Grain Farmers of Ontario. "It is clear that these MPs understand the lack of current alternatives for grain drying and the need to provide an exemption until viable technological solutions are developed. Now we need the Bill to pass the House and for Honourable Senators to pass the Bill into law

during the life of this Parliament."

While Grain Farmers of Ontario expects the support the Bill received at Committee to carry through to the House vote at third reading, Ontario's grain farmers call on all parties to urge the Senate to pass the Bill expeditiously. A previous Private Members Bill on the same topic passed the House but died on the Order Paper with the dissolution of the previous Parliament for the 2021 general election.

"Since its introduction, farming as a sector has borne an unmanageable burden from the carbon price. Farmers pay the tax for on-farm fuel used for drying grains and pay the increased costs added to necessary inputs and services as vendors try to recoup carbon costs at their end," adds Byrne. "Our food system cannot support this and we need all MPs and Senators to show leadership in the protection of our food system through support for this Bill."

## Alfalfa seeds in Simcoe County

By Don Beaulieu



Thirteen years ago Site 41, the North Simcoe landfill, was scheduled to begin accepting garbage from Midland, Penetanguishene, Tiny and Tay. Many of us remember the uproar from the community against this 50 acre site (20.7 hectares). In September of 2009 Simcoe County Council voted to shelve the project due to the protests. In the years following, the land returned to being farmed.

Most recently, landowner Tony Nahuis

has grown alfalfa, with much success. This season he harvested 80 bushels of seed from 25 acres. He also has a good stash of hay from the crop. Moisture content of the seed at harvesting was 7.6% off the combine. Winter wheat has also been grown on this site as well as standing hay over the years.

Nahuis was a little excited over the alfalfa seed as this is not a common crop here in Ontario. Generally this is a western prairie crop when it comes to harvesting the seeds. Harvesting for hay is more common here. After the first cut in mid-June he had more hay than he knew what to do with. Nahuis may sell some of the hay, but it needs cleaning first. The long hot late season weather provided good conditions for his harvest. We may see another field of alfalfa in the field next year.



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## Proposed changes to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System a dramatic shift away from historic wetland protection

By Doug Hevenor, CAO of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

In Ontario, wetlands are very important for flood control, water filtering, groundwater recharge and discharge. When there is a lot of rain or snowmelt, wetlands absorb and slow floodwaters, helping to alleviate property damage and can even save lives. In the face of climate change, these wetlands are ever more important as we experience more extreme storm events.

Wetlands are diverse and delicate ecosystems that provide important habitats for plants and animals. These include many familiar species, such as great blue herons, turtles, muskrats and beaver.

Currently, Ontario's wetlands are scored for importance through the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System. Wetlands that receive a higher score are considered provincially significant wetlands and are heavily protected. In the Nottawasaga Watershed, these include the Minesing Wetlands, Osprey Wetlands, Wasaga Beach Wetland Complex, Midhurst Wetland Complex and Silver Creek Wetlands and Copeland-Craighurst-Guthrie Complex.

On October 25, 2022, the Ontario government proposed changes to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System in support of Bill 23, the More Homes Built Faster Act.

In the proposed changes, some scoring criteria have been removed from the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System, yet wetlands must still meet the same score to be considered provincially significant. This makes it much harder for wetlands to reach provincially significant wetland status, meaning that many of the wetlands have the potential to be slated for development.

Many wetlands in Ontario are grouped together in complexes – this includes wetlands big and small that are less than 750 metres apart. This is important for fish and wildlife that live in wetlands, as the entire complex makes up their habitat.

The proposed legislation changes will no longer allow wetlands to be grouped together, treating each wetland as its own entity. Smaller wetlands will most likely not meet the

criteria to be provincially significant, and may be open for development.

It is important for wetland evaluations to be reviewed by arm's length agencies with an objective view. The proposed legislation is not allowing the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry or conservation authorities to review wetland evaluations, leaving this responsibility to municipalities.

If municipalities are responsible for development, as well as preserving natural heritage like wetlands, where do they find the balance? Many wetlands cross municipal boundaries. How will the different municipalities determine the level of importance for the wetland?

Ontario has legislated habitat protection laws for good reason. Since the 1970s, waterfowl populations have bounced back thanks to wetland protection. Species that did not enjoy the same habitat protection, such as grassland birds, have seen a significant decline within this same time period.

Most turtles in Ontario are endangered or species of special concern, mainly due to habitat loss. Turtles rely on wetlands for food, breeding, and hibernation. By protecting wetlands, they will continue to insects, fish and vegetation to eat, sand to lay their eggs in, and deep pools for hibernation.

Ontario's wetlands are not only important for local animals – they support migrating birds from the entire Western Hemisphere. Many of our wetlands are resting stops for migrating birds travelling north. By allowing development in our wetlands, migrating birds will have fewer resting stops and more competition for food which will make these long migrations even more challenging than they already are.

It takes generations for wetlands to become viable, sustainable and ecological communities. The removal or damage to wetlands is not easily reversible, and many species may not be able to recover from this loss.

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Dr. Emily began her veterinary career as a volunteer at North Simcoe Veterinary Services before becoming an employee as a veterinary assistant. Dr. Emily graduated from the University of Guelph before completing her MVB at the College of Veterinary Medicine in Dublin, Ireland.



We are excited to welcome Dr. Emily to our  
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Dr. Edith (Haberfellner) Rumney - Small animal practitioner  
Dr. Rose Rumney Mixed animal practitioner  
Dr. Shauna O'Brien - Mixed animal practitioner  
Dr. Elri Oosthuizen - Large animal practitioner  
Dr. Stefanie Nickerson - Mixed animal practitioner  
Dr. Ashley Mann - Small animal practitioner  
Dr. Suzanne Abray - Small animal surgeon

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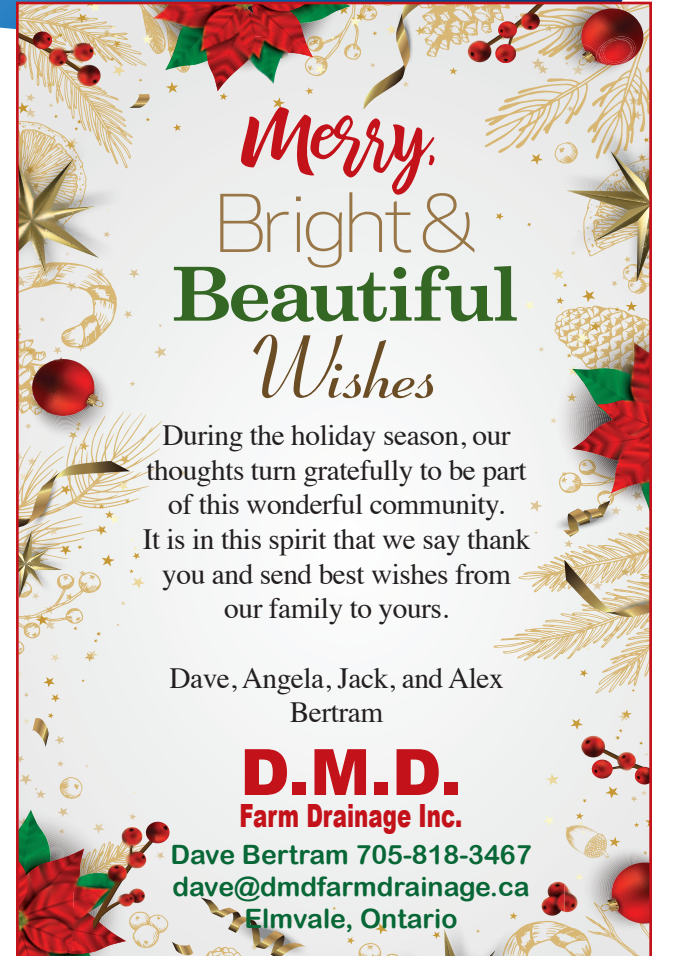
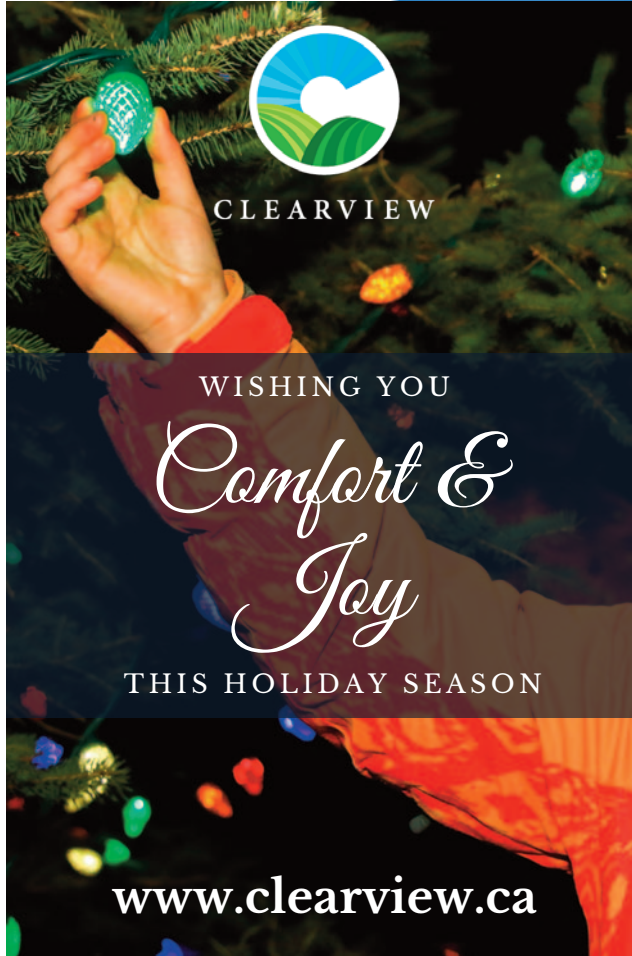
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**JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

**SOUTH SIMCOE 4-H ASSOCIATION  
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COORDINATOR  
PART-TIME POSITION**

The South Simcoe 4-H Association is a non-profit organization that brings together youth aged 6-21 and passionate, engaged volunteer leaders to learn about selected topics through fun, hands-on activities and mentorship. The Association is comprised of elected Directors whose mandate is to plan and coordinate quality programs that adhere to the 4-H vision and philosophy and are valuable for members, parents, volunteers and other participants.

We are looking for a dynamic, self-motivated individual Secretary-Treasurer-Membership Coordinator to provide administrative support for the Directors and the approximate 150 volunteers, members and their families. Renumeration for this position is based on an annual honourarium.

**Qualifications:**

- Ability to communicate effectively – orally and in writing.
- Ability to maintain sound financial records for all Association transactions and prepare reports for review by the Directors.
- Word processing, spreadsheet and graphic design experience required.
- Ability to maintain confidentiality at all times.
- Access to technology (i.e. computer and printer) as well as Internet.
- A strong project manager, who is extremely organized and detail-oriented.
- Pro-active and self-directing, with a good sense of when it is necessary to seek guidance, confirmation, and direction.
- Must commit to complete all criteria to become and maintain volunteer in good standing status.

**Time Commitment:**

- Approximately 40 hours per month completing job responsibility on behalf of the Association.
- Attend all Association meetings and special events.
- Attend all appropriate teleconferences, hosted by 4-H Ontario.
- Attend 4-H Ontario's Conference and Annual Meeting (held each March).

Please submit a cover letter and resume by December 31, 2022 to:

South Simcoe 4-H Association  
Attention: Donna Lange, President  
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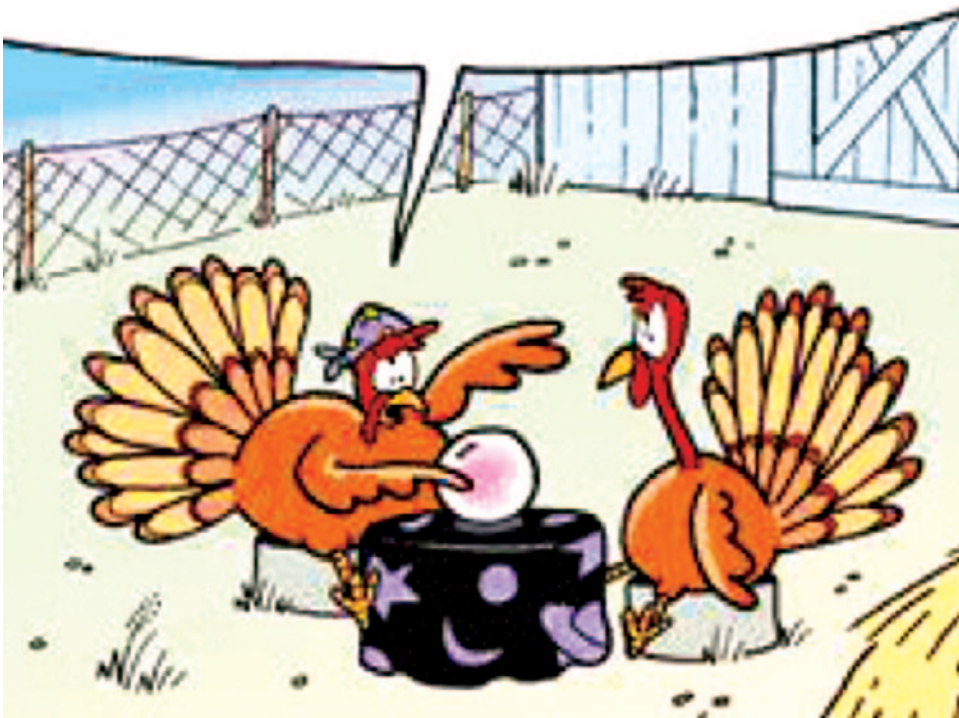
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