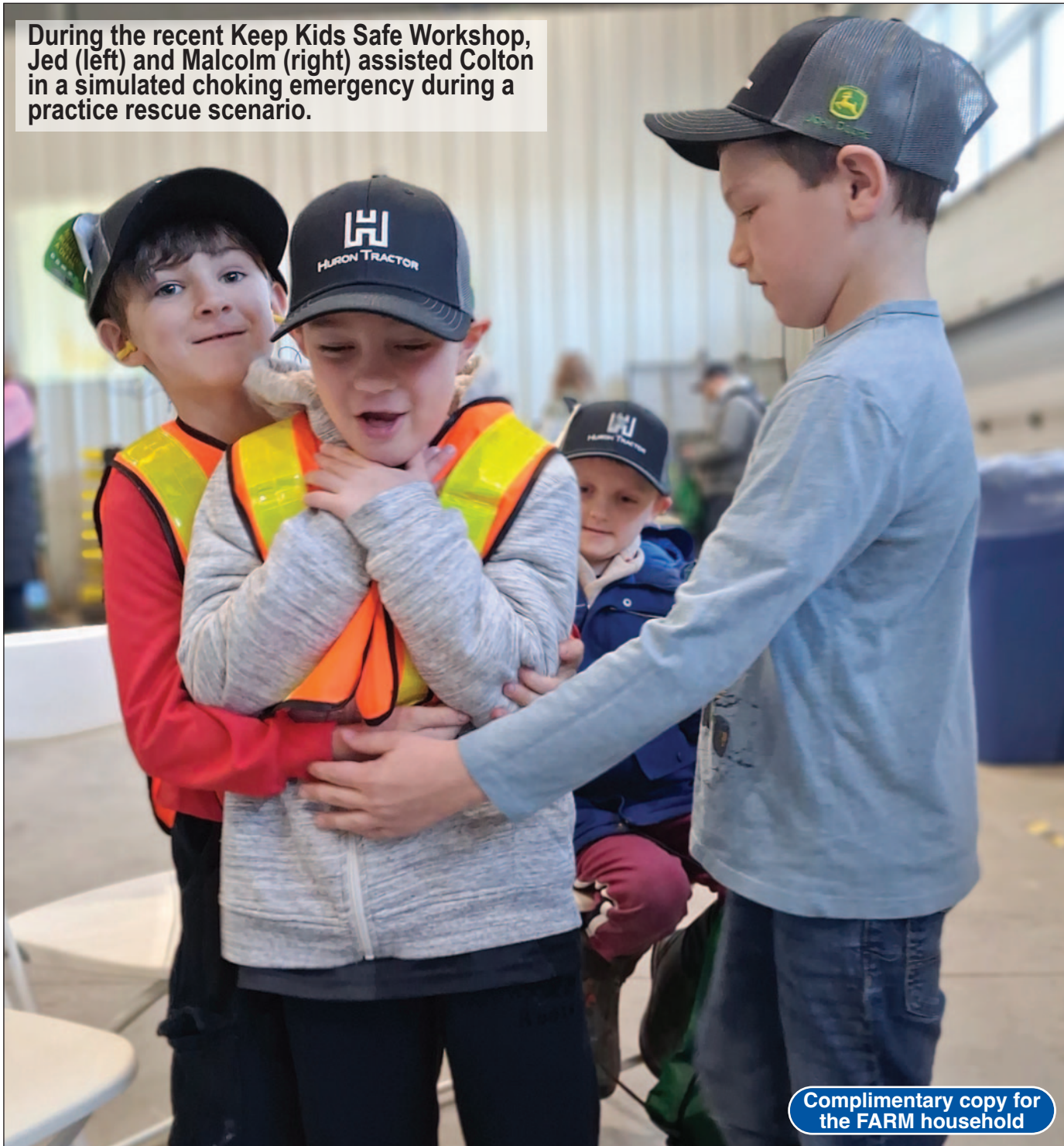


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A newspaper with something for everyone | May 2026 | Volume 49 #05

During the recent Keep Kids Safe Workshop, Jed (left) and Malcolm (right) assisted Colton in a simulated choking emergency during a practice rescue scenario.



Complimentary copy for
the FARM household

Inside this issue: Celebrating York Region Federation of Agriculture's 85th Anniversary · Maple Weekend at Maple Heights Farm · Keep Kids Safe Workshop · Marketing Updates from Addis Grain's Spring Meeting · New projects and funding announcements for the Ag Community

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. Submission deadline is the 14th of the month for the following month's issue.

May 2nd: Sunshine Fibre Fest

Fabulous fleece and fibre festival featuring diverse vendors, demonstrations, live animals and more! Taking place on May 2nd at the ODAS Park 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.
<https://sunshinefibrefest.ca>

May 14th: News and Advertising Deadline

The advertising and news deadline for the **June** issue of Farm View is **Thursday, May 14th.**

May 22nd: Elmvale 'We Lend a Hand' Screening

The documentary film We Lend A Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes screens in Elmvale, Ontario on May 22nd at the Elmvale Community Hall (33 Queen St W, Elmvale, ON.) **More information and how to purchase your tickets can be found in the article on page 9.**

May 23rd: E.D.G.E. Annual Plant Sale

E.D.G.E. plant sale will take place on **May 23rd.** Locally grown perennials, hostas, ornamental grasses, shrubs and veggies. Location Heritage Park Hwy 92, Elmvale 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. **Please see the ad on page 19.**

June 26th: Bolton Truck and Tractor Pull

The Bolton Truck & Tractor Pull will be held at Albion Bolton Fairgrounds 150 Queen St. S., Bolton on Friday June 26, 2026. 6 p.m. start
 Contact: Tom & Heather French at 416-580-9323.

Wednesdays ongoing: Open Stage at The Hive

Wednesdays, after chores: Open Stage at The Hive Restaurant & Pub, 1441 Mosley Street, Wasaga Beach, 6-9 p.m. A supportive place to share music, poems, stories, or magic! Host Don Beaulieu. Professional sound system. Reserve a dinner table: text 705-606-0500. Sign up for stage time after arrival.


Minister MacDonald announces Agriculture Canada collaborating with Soil Council to develop National Soil Health Strategy

This past March the Honourable Heath MacDonald, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, announced that the Government of Canada is committed to advancing the National Agricultural Soil Health Strategy, with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) partnering with the Soil Conservation Council of Canada (SCCC) on its development. This work builds on the important leadership undertaken by the Senate, including significant contributions from the Honourable Robert Black, Senator for Ontario, and is supported by Bill S230, An Act respecting the development of a national strategy for soil health protection, conservation and enhancement. It recognizes the critical role of soil health in supporting Canada's agricultural productivity, sustainability, and resilience.

Minister MacDonald emphasized that the Strategy is being developed collaboratively with partners across the sector, reflecting soil as a critical national asset that underpins the livelihood of Canadian farmers, national food security and environmental outcomes. The significant work already underway by the SCCC and industry partners was recognized as having created strong momentum, which will be leveraged to inform and accelerate the development of the Strategy.

The development of the National Agricultural Soil Health Strategy will be informed through regular engagement with provinces and territories, Indigenous agricultural groups, producer organizations, academia and industry. Engagement will take place starting this Spring to ensure the Strategy appropriately reflects regional realities and long-term sector priorities.




AAFC will collaborate with SCCC to establish a committee structure and advisory working groups to guide the Strategy's development and provide an opportunity for expert input across key areas, including research, extension, data, and incentives.



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85th anniversary for York Region Federation

Photographs and synopsis by Don Beaulieu.

The York Region Federation of Agriculture is marking their 85th anniversary in 2026. A celebratory dinner-dance was held at the end of March with 170 members and supporters in attendance. A lovely chicken dinner, with spectacular desserts was presented by Mary's Country Kitchen (based in Port Perry). Following dinner, a few dignitaries spoke and the evening finished off with a 6-piece band providing some grand country tunes.

After dinner and before the music began, YRFA President Paul Reesor addressed the crowd acknowledging and introducing the many officials in attendance including past board members and politicians.

Paul Maurice, representing the Ontario Federation of Agriculture expressed appreciation of the good relationship that organization has with the YRFA. He emphasized the accomplishments made through collaboration and co-operation allowing for a strong agricultural community in Ontario and across the country.

President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, Keith Currie also addressed the crowd. He brought up the concerns of the Rouge Park lands in Pickering with agricultural land slated to be rezoned parkland.

Currie also touched on the Canadian, U.S. and Mexico Agreement. (CUSMA). Our own government is looking for ways to expand existing markets and new markets, which he cites as being very positive.

Confirming and expanding on what Maurice said about the economic importance of agriculture, Currie said "We are the largest economic driver in the country, the largest manufacturing sector... When you combine oil and gas, aluminum and steel, the forestry industry and the automobile sector; they aren't as big as agriculture in Canada." He added: "Agriculture employs three times those four industries combined".

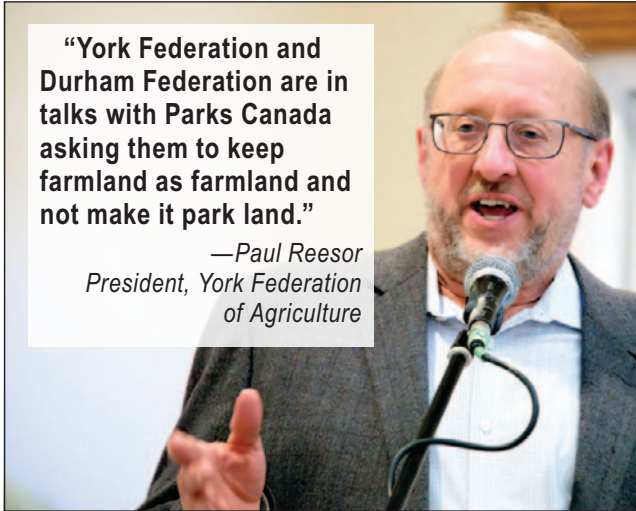
The final guest speaker was Phil Vandenberg. He had put together a comprehensive history of the YRFA. His retrospect was very much enjoyed.

Jordan Coates made a special presentation to Kim Empringham for her many years, and more to come, of being a key figure in keeping the YRFA on track. He said "Speak to any director on the board [they'd say] if it wasn't for Kim Empringham, the Federation just wouldn't be what it is today." He continued "Kim is the most passionate person in York Region for agriculture" after which he presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

The evening ended with dancing to the country band.

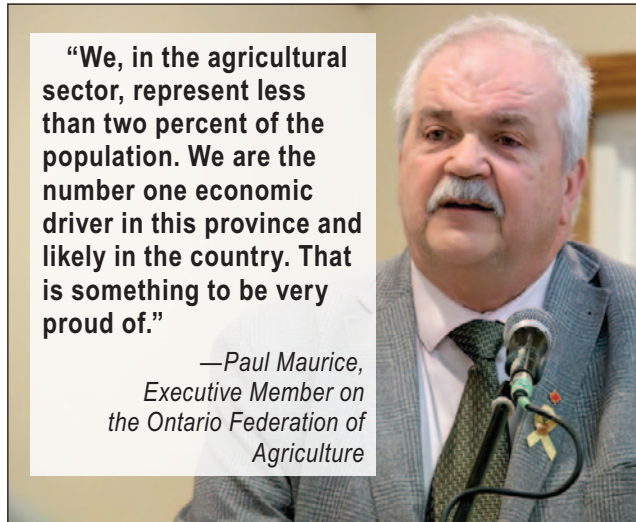
"York Federation and Durham Federation are in talks with Parks Canada asking them to keep farmland as farmland and not make it park land."

—Paul Reesor
President, York Federation of Agriculture



"We, in the agricultural sector, represent less than two percent of the population. We are the number one economic driver in this province and likely in the country. That is something to be very proud of."

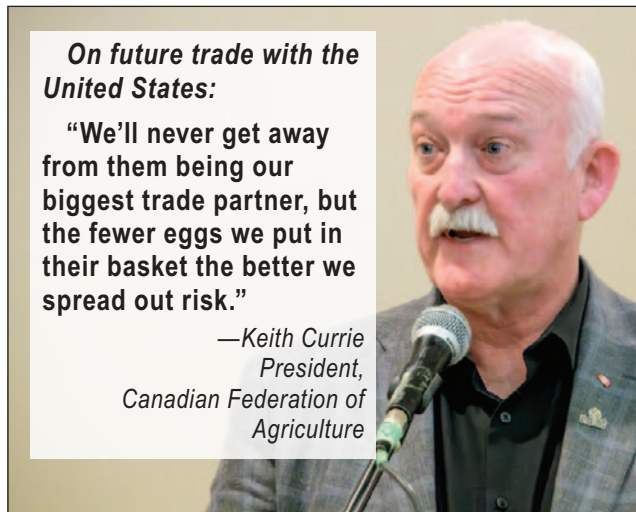
—Paul Maurice,
Executive Member on the Ontario Federation of Agriculture



On future trade with the United States:

"We'll never get away from them being our biggest trade partner, but the fewer eggs we put in their basket the better we spread out risk."

—Keith Currie
President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture



Above, we see some key agricultural figures cutting the official cake. Left to right are Paul Maurice (OFA), Paul Reesor (YRFA) and Keith Currie (CFA); always a team effort.



Here we see Kim Empringham having received a bouquet, some seeds and a spa certificate in recognition of her extreme dedication to the YRFA. With her are Paul Reesor and Jordan Coates.



It was a grand finale to the evening as this family band offered some wonderful old country tunes after dinner at the YRFA 85th celebration. A variety of instruments and harmonies brought a good mix of tunes for the dancers and listeners. Members include siblings, cousins and in-laws. Harmonies played a big part in their arrangements as well as a variety of instruments, including fiddle and mandolin, bass guitar, acoustic guitars, electric guitar and drums.

EDITORIAL

Celebration, Memories & a Safe Start to the Season



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

My husband, Shawn, and I had the pleasure of attending the York Region Federation of Agriculture's 85th anniversary celebration dinner. Unfortunately, we were only able to stay for the meal, but the warm, celebratory atmosphere made it clear we were missing what would be a truly memorable evening. A heartfelt thank you to Valerie for sharing her table with us and Don Beaulieu, and for introducing us to her beautiful family—you made us feel genuinely welcome. If you

weren't able to attend, you can read more about the celebration on page 3, and explore the rich history of the YRFA on pages 6 and 7.

As May arrives, it brings a mix of emotions and many cherished memories. This is a month where we celebrate the birthdays of my mom and our son, Trenton, while also remembering and grieving my mom's passing. She had a beautiful smile and a fun loving personality with plenty of cheekiness to make us laugh. With her birthday and Trenton's just three days apart, we were lucky to share many joint celebrations that have left us with treasured memories.

And on that note, Happy 19th birthday, Trenton! We love you very much and are so proud of all you've accomplished through your hard work, determination, and focus.

As we move into the busy planting season, I'd also like to take a moment to wish everyone in the agricultural community a safe and successful start. Wishing you favorable weather, smooth progress, and a strong start to the season ahead.

*Take care of yourselves and one another,
 Roslyn Watkins*

Ag Snapshot



A full house gathers in celebration as the York Region Federation of Agriculture marks 85 years—members and supporters share conversation, laughter, and a memorable evening of good food, community spirit, and country hospitality. Read about the celebration on page 3.
 —Photo by Don Beaulieu

In Memoriam



Jill Beischer
 May 27th, 1953 - May 17th, 2019

I Am Always With You

I am always with you
 When I am gone, release me, let me go.
 I have so many things to see and do,
 You mustn't tie yourself to me with too many tears,
 But be thankful we had so many good years.
 I gave you my love, and you can only guess
 How much you've given me in happiness.
 I thank you for the love that you have shown,
 But now it is time I traveled on alone.
 So grieve for me a while, if grieve you must
 Then let your grief be comforted by trust
 That it is only for a while that we must part,
 So treasure the memories within your heart.
 I won't be far away for life goes on.
 And if you need me, call and I will come.
 Though you can't see or touch me, I will be near
 And if you listen with your heart, you'll hear
 All my love around you soft and clear
 And then, when you come this way alone,
 I'll greet you with a smile and a "Welcome Home".
 Author Unknown

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The Farm View is delivered to these businesses between the 25th and 29th of each month, with copies available while supplies last.

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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.

"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

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York Region Federation of Agriculture history

Researched and compiled by Phil Vandenberg, past director of the York Region Federation of Agriculture

It was the 1930's; individual farm families were struggling with their farming operations. Farmers had to find their own markets for their products. There were local issues regarding land taxation, land use and low-cost produce coming into Ontario. It was felt that packing houses and commodity buyers were taking advantage of individual farmers and not offering fair prices. At this time there was no formal farm organization in the province of Ontario. But, it was believed that these issues could better be addressed through a unified body.

York County forms branch of CFA

It was decided by farmers and agriculture organizations in York County to form a branch of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. Peterborough County was the first to organize in 1939. York County became the 2nd county to organize. The organization was comprised of township councils, co-ops and commodity groups. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture was later changed to the Federation of Agriculture. Legislation was passed to allow the Federation to collect membership fees by means of a levy on the farm assessment and was paid through taxes.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture was also organized at this time but was not always seen to be aggressively supporting farmers' needs. The OFA was not incorporated until 1955. In 1969, the OFA was restructured and decided to go directly to their members with a membership fee.

The York Federation was formed to give farmers a voice in agriculture and to improve the economic and social life of farmers. The Federation was financed by direct levies paid by farmers in five townships with two other townships contributing grants. The Women's Institute, Junior Farmers, Co-ops, Credit Unions, Milk Producers, Cream Producers, Beef, Wheat and Hog producers, the Crop Improvement and Bradford District Vegetables Growers Association... all had representatives on the board and contributed to the finances of the Federation. Various committees were struck; Public Relations, Membership, Property, Insurance and Safety Committee. In 1980 a scholarship committee was struck.

At the beginning of the 2nd world war in Europe, Jim Rennie became the 1st president of the York Federation and held 3 terms, 1940, '41 and '42.

Number of farms decreasing

The 1956 York County Census reported 3342 farms in York, family farms with an average acreage at 148. Twenty-five years later, in 1982, the census reported the number of farms in York had dropped to 1572, a 50% decrease. As of the last census in 2021, it was reported that York Region is down to under 600 farms.

Farms started to increase in acreage where there was opportunity to purchase land from a retiring farmer or when land owned by land speculators or government could be rented.

Major highways were cutting across the region. Urban sprawl was evident as the urban population quickly in-



Phil Vandenberg is a volunteer ambassador in Ontario for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank; a Christian response to hunger. We see him here, presenting this interesting history of the York Federation of Agriculture at the organization's 85th anniversary in March this year.

creased north of the city of Toronto. Farmers started to specialize in livestock or commodities, and the sale of their farm products became increasing directed towards corporations; dairies, meat packing plants and processors of farm products. York Regions population in 1971 was 169,000 people. Today, 55 years later, the population sits at 1,265,000.

Demographic changes

With the movement to larger farms, a decline in the number of farmers and with the growth in the urban population living in towns and cities in York Region, many of the residents of the county no longer had contact with rural living or farmers.

In response to these changing demographics, the York Federation felt the need to focus on education opportunities, promoting agriculture whenever possible. That included information tents at county fairs.

There were cooking demonstrations at the Sutton fair using locally grown produce; The Dairy Princess competition promoted dairy product consumption. The Federation organized displays of livestock and commodities in Hillcrest Mall and malls in Richmond Hill and Newmarket with the Milk Committee supplying twin calves. In a conversation with Walter Rae recently, he told me that he walked around the Newmarket mall for an evening dressed up in a pig costume, representing the Pork Producers Marketing Board.

The York Federation's Public Relations/Education and Communication committees took opportunities to promote clear communications between farmers as well as educating the urban population.

The York Federation monthly newsletters highlighted local news and events and included Ontario Federation of Agriculture news. These newsletters were mailed out by the OMAF Newmarket office. Consumers were educated on where local foods could be purchased. These fliers were also used at mall displays and fairs.

In the summer of 1963, three farm-related accidents in Markham Township spurred the creation of the York Farm Safety Committee. In 1984, the Farm Safety Association, represented by Ted Whitworth, gave safety presentations to York directors and farmers. Ted also led first-aid training days and represented the Ontario Farm Safety Association for many years.

Farm equipment prices and parts

In the '60s, York Federation prepared a brief to the OFA special committee investigating the sale and use of farm machinery in Ontario. Farmers were concerned with the fact that new tractors and machinery did not come with a warranty. They were also concerned with the price of spare parts and in some cases the unavailability of spare parts. For example, the cost of a mower guard was \$1.34 which was equivalent to the sale price of a bushel of wheat or 2 bushels of oats. A similar mower guard purchased 2 years previous was \$0.40.

Concerns such as these that led to the creation of the Farm Machinery and Implements Act that encouraged manufacturers to have spare parts available and that all new equipment be tested and inspected by an independent body and that there be at least one parts depot in Ontario that stocked all parts for machines manufactured.

With support of the OFA, York Federation hosted spring "implements & parts days" at the farm of Jim Sellers and Harvey Brown. Farmers with OFA memberships could purchase repair parts for machinery at significantly reduced prices.

In 1961, the York Federation purchased a used fire truck from the Whitby Township Fire Dept. This truck was stationed at VanDorf, providing fire protection to farms in that area of the county.

Assessments and taxation

In August 1963, York Federation hosted workshops on "Farm Assessment and Taxation". Mr. Jack Latner, Assistant Deputy Minister of Revenue, was present to hear the concerns. 20 years later, in 1983, discussions were continuing and reforms such as tax rebates were on the table, (the farmhouse and one-acre rule), with legislation to follow later.

The York Federation Property Committee continued to be very active assisting and advising York County farmers

Continued on page 7.

HAPPY
Mother's
DAY

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DOWDALL ^{MP}
SIMCOE-GREY

YRFA history continued from page 6.

in matters concerning expropriation or easements on their properties as well as identifying unfair municipal taxation.

In the '70s submissions were made to the OFA representing the views of York County in respect to the Farm Truck License Program proposed changes in driver licensing in Ontario. This included weight limits for a single axle drive truck registered as a "farm vehicle". These conversations resulted in the Farm Plates programme that continues today. Slow moving signs for farm machines operating on public roads were also introduced at that time.

There were meetings raising concerns regarding compensation for animals reacting to Brucellosis, Warble fly and Tuberculosis Test under the Animal Diseases Protection Act. A vaccine to prevent bacterial "calf scours" was introduced and available through the local veterinary.

There was correspondence relating to the formation of the Ontario Trails Council, policy recommendations to the government of Ontario for the management of public trails and the liability of landowners towards people using their land for recreational purposes.

There were meetings regarding land expropriation in York Region relating to the north extension of the Don Valley Parkway (Highway 404) as well as protests on the proposed Department of Transportation "Radar" domes in Vaughan township which are today relied upon by the airports for air traffic control.

Property taxation remained a real concern as assessments were based on the market value of land. York Federation together with the OFA pushed the government for tax reforms.

The Federation was also encouraging farmers to learn about Farm Business Management. The Newmarket OMAF office offered 3-day winter courses in 1982 focusing on farm records, credit, tax management and family succession.

Many events sponsored

In 1983, the promotion of Agri Food Week at local fairs was spearheaded by Dr. Terry O'Connor and his committee. Commodity boards were invited to have displays. The Pizza Project was a great educational opportunity as school boards, teachers and students came to the Markham Fair for many years to learn about where the ingredients to make pizza came from.

Many high-level visitors were invited to be speakers at the York Federation meetings and social events: MPP's Bill Hodgson, Don Cousens, Ross Stevenson, the Honorable William Newman (Minister of Agriculture and Food in 1976), the Honorable William Davis (Minister of Education 1965). Various presidents and directors of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture also attended events sponsored by the York Federation.

In the '80s farmers had the following concerns that needed to be addressed: There were the issues of high interest rates and farm bankruptcies and the forming of the Government Emergency Task Force.

There was the issue of dye separation in coloured diesel fuel and furnace oil that was causing the plugging of fuel

filters on engines. In 1982 the property tax rebate was finally settled on. There were threats from Ontario hydro, expropriation of land for hydro towers and conversations about the fair compensation for loss of farmland. The line fence act was established. There was a need for life insurance for farmers and directors through OFA, and for farm family group life insurance plans.

Eventually The Co-operators became a partner with OFA in 1977. On the Bradford vegetable farms there was a need for seasonal labour. Other issues that came to the Federation; in 1982 when it was announced that the first Newmarket hot air balloon festival was going to be held. York Federation felt there needed to be a proposed code of conduct on how to deal with these new threats; issues with balloonists, parachutists and gliders landing in farmers' fields, especially the risk of landing in high value crops such as fields of carrots, onions and celery in the Bradford Marsh.

There was correspondence with the Ministry of Natural Resources for assistance in the control of the wolf population in Georgina Township that were killing sheep. (a trapper was hired who caught three wolves the next month).

There was correspondence with Dominion Grocery Stores when it was learned that 50 stores in Ontario were stocked with produce grown in Quebec, not local produce.

**Beginning of Canadian Food Bank aid**

In 1982, York Federation responded to the Ethiopian famine with a donation of \$1,000. I suspect these needs outside of Canada spurred members like Dr. Terry O'Connor to champion the cause of the Canadian Food Grains Bank. A second donation of \$1,000 was given to the Mennonite Central Committee in 1984, also in support of the food crisis in Africa. In the minutes of the June 1985 directors' meeting, Mr. Ellie Cavanagh reported on the damage the tornado of May 1985 caused in the Bradford Marsh. \$1,000 was donated to the disaster relief fund.

The scholarship committee offered a \$500 scholarship annually to one worthy individual residing in York Region who will go on to college or university and study in an agricultural related programme.

In 2001 the York Region Agricultural Advisory Liaison Group was established by Regional Council to advise council on protecting and promoting agriculture and to support the agriculture industry in rural communities. York Federation was given a permanent seat on the committee. That same year the Oak Ridges Moraine Protection Act enforced a moratorium on development on 470,000 acres.

In 2002, the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan was established to protect ecological and hydrological features of the Moraine. This plan overrides local municipal planning

decisions. It provides directions on land use and resource management for the land and water located within the moraine. It protects agricultural land by designating areas for farming while restricting non-agriculture development to protect water and natural features.

In 2004, farmers lobbied and attended consultations and rallies against the proposed Greenbelt. The Greenbelt was established by a Provincial Act to protect two-million acres of environmentally sensitive land, farmland and forests in the Greater Golden Horseshoe region, from urban sprawl. It is governed by the Greenbelt Plan and covers 750,000 acres of prime agricultural land to safeguard and support local food production.

In 2005, the Greater Toronto Agricultural Action Committee was established as a partnership of four regional municipalities: Halton, Peel, York, Durham, the City of Toronto, farming federations and provincial/federal ministries of agriculture. The purpose of the committee was to tackle challenges facing the agri-food sector and ensure a thriving, integrated food and farming cluster in the GTA.

Tractors at Queen's Park

In March 2005 the OFA held a rally at Queens Park Toronto. The York Federation sent two busloads of members and many tractors to support the One Voice March which demanded financial aid and government action against the severe farm income crisis. Eight thousand farmers and 100 tractors participating in a slow-rolling convoy to Queens Park and around the circle all day before the slow drive back to the farms.

2006: Four-hundred-fifty people attended the very successful AgriFest Celebration held at Markham Fairgrounds in July. This celebration of Agriculture in York Region was a joint project of all agriculture groups in the region, putting on a dinner celebration of agriculture and dance.

In the spring of 2012, the first inaugural Safety First For Kids Workshop was held at Markham Fairground featuring seven safety stations.

2019: The Annual Farm Safety Corn Roast held in August each year moved from Markham Fairgrounds to Sutton Fairgrounds.

2020: The COVID pandemic spread rapidly across the world resulting in a complete lockdown in March 2020. Only people working in essential services could continue working outside of the home.

Agriculture and Food processing were declared essential services to allow production to continue but farmers faced major labour, market, supply chain and health challenges requiring rapid adjustments and pivoting of their normal practices. York Federation sat on advisory committees identifying and advocating the issues facing the local agriculture sectors.

Preserving farmland today

2026: This year, the York Federation is very involved in the consultations for the remaining Pickering Airport Lands and their future uses including possible transfer to Parks Canada to expand Rouge National Urban Park and Affordable Housing.

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Meet the Advertiser: Brad Ayres of Fire-Alert

Brad Ayres Launches Fire-Alert Franchise to Boost Fire Safety in Simcoe County

Article by Andrew Hind

Brad Ayres has dedicated his life to fire prevention and mitigation, first as a long-serving fire fighter with the Innisfil Fire Department, and now as owner of a new Fire-Alert franchise in Simcoe County.

"Fires will happen, but there are ways you can reduce the risk and the damage," says Ayres. "That's where we at Fire-Alert can help."

Ayres knows a lot about dealing with fires. You might say it's in his blood. His father and uncles were in the fire services before him. One of Ayres' uncles only recently retired at age eighty-two after sixty-two years in service, the second longest term in fire services in Canada.

As a child, Ayres would eagerly follow his volunteer fireman father on calls. It was almost inevitable that he became a fireman as well. Ayres started as a volunteer and has served full-time for the last twenty-one years and risen to the rank of captain.

"I'm approaching the end of my time at the Innisfil Fire Department because of mandatory retirement rules, but I still have a passion for assisting people in mitigating fire risk, so I purchased a Fire-Alert franchise," he explains.

One of the primary services offered by Fire-Alert is servicing fire extinguishers. This is more important than most people realize. In 80% of fire incidents, a fire extinguisher is sufficient to put out or control the fire. But that only works if fire

extinguishers are present and in proper working order.

"If maintained, a good fire extinguisher can last as much as forty years, but few people service them," Ayres explains. "They should be inspected and maintained every six years. We do that for our clients. We also recharge fire extinguishers. Recharging costs one-third of the cost of purchasing a new one, so with a business that might have many on site it makes financial sense to recharge instead of buying new."

Fire-Alert covers farm, commercial, industrial, and residential customers. "It's the law in commercial and industrial businesses to have fire extinguishers so we do a lot of business in that sphere," Ayres notes. "And with fires potentially costing tens or hundreds of thousands in damage and lost revenue, bringing us in is really an excellent return on investment."

Ayres hopes to impress upon more farms the importance of having maintained fire extinguishers on hand. The combination of hay, fertilizers and other chemicals, wood barns, and gasoline mean that farms are inherently fire hazards. When it comes to agricultural fires, most people think of barn fires, but Brad notes that equipment fires – balers, combines, fertilizer trucks, – are perhaps more common. "We see them a lot and they can be dangerous and costly. Having fire extinguishers in every piece of equipment is important," he as-

serts.

Fire-Alert also installs and services emergency lighting, ensuring they are properly placed and in working order so that in the event of a fire, losses do not include human life.

"Buildings can be rebuilt, insurance covers physical losses, but nothing can replace a human being," Ayres stresses. "Emergency lighting can be the difference between getting out safely and having a catastrophe."

Other services offered by Fire-Alert include fire extinguisher training, fire hose inspection, and supplying of medical kits.

Ayres is joined in his Fire-Alert venture by his two adult sons, making it a family affair – and marking a third generation of Ayres' in the fire business of mitigating the risk and loss from fire.

"Fires can be devastating and frightening," Ayres said. "We can provide some peace of mind that your business or home is as prepared as possible in the event that a fire breaks out."

For more information: call 705-241-4574 or go to <https://fire-alert.ca>

The Meet the Advertiser series is a complimentary news article for Farm View advertisers. If you are interested in being featured, please contact Roslyn Watkins at farmview@on.aibn.com.

Andrew Hunter Essay Writing Award

The Andrew Hunter Award was originally offered to post-secondary Canadian History students at Laurentian University's Barrie Campus. When Laurentian phased out its History program, the award was retooled to focus on students at high schools across Simcoe County.

Winners of the Hunter Award received cash prizes as well as a copy of 'The History of Simcoe County', written by Andrew F. Hunter, the award's namesake. Andrew Hunter was an early local historian of Simcoe County and a co-founder of the SCHA.

The SCHA is now accepting submissions for the next Andrew Hunter Award throughout the current academic year. Interested students can contact the SCHA for more information, or submit their essay to info@simcoecountyhistory.ca

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Award-Winning Documentary "We Lend A Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes" to Screen in Elmvale May 22, 2026

A largely forgotten chapter of Canadian history will be brought to light as the 50-min documentary film *We Lend A Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes* screens in Elmvale, Ontario. The film has been selling out theatres across Ontario and will now be screened at the Elmvale Community Hall (33 Queen St W, Elmvale, ON L0L 1P0) on May 22, 2026.

Created by Director/Producer Colin Field and Historical Producer (and Exeter resident) Bonnie Sitter, the documentary tells the extraordinary story of 40,000 teenage girls who volunteered on Canadian farms during and after World War II and helped sustain the nation's food supply when young men left to fight overseas.

Bonnie Sitter, an author, was searching through old family photographs when she found a captivating image of a group of young women taken on her late husband's family farm near Thedford with a caption on the reverse that read: "Farmerettes 1946."

This led Bonnie to research the Farmerette story, and publish an article in *The Rural Voice* asking for women who served as Farmerettes to get in touch with her. Shirleyan English, a retired London Free Press journalist, read the article and wrote a letter to the editor, explaining her own experience as a Farmerette, and how it remained the

best summer of her life. Bonnie and Shirleyan would go on to co-author the book *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz: Memories of Ontario Farmerettes* in 2019.

"We wanted to capture the story of how the Farmerettes helped win the Second World War by volunteering to aid farmers with food production," says Bonnie. "Most of these girls had never seen a farm. They came from all over Ontario as volunteers. They weren't conscripted. They chose to roll up their sleeves and do their part for Canada, and their efforts have largely been forgotten".

Director Colin Field first met Bonnie in 2019 and was inspired by her research and desire to bring this forgotten Canadian story to life. He proposed a documentary film, and Bonnie agreed to fundraise to bring the project alive. Colin interviewed 20 Farmerettes - now in their 90s - for the documentary, and after two years of work, and with the help of sponsors and generous donors, *We Lend a Hand: The Forgotten Story of Ontario Farmerettes* is finally complete.

"It has been a privilege to travel throughout the province and hear the stories of these surviving Farmerettes," Field said. "If it wasn't for these girls, the soldiers wouldn't have had food to eat and the economy would have

ground to a halt".

After the screening there will be a Q&A with the filmmakers and a chance to acquire autographed copies of *Onion Skins and Peach Fuzz: Memories of Ontario Farmerettes*, Shirleyan English and Bonnie Sitter's amazing book.

Tickets for the May 22nd, screening at the Elmvale Community Hall can be purchased through the link below.

https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/we-lend-a-hand-the-forgotten-story-of-ontario-farmerettes-elmvale-tickets-1982972811058?aff=oddtcreator&keep_tld=true

Watch the trailer here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ImJcqxZg>

This event is brought to you by the Springwater Township Public Library, Flos Agricultural Association, Elmvale Community Recreation Association, Centre Flos Women's Institute, Friends of the Springwater Township Public Library, and the Simcoe Federation of Agriculture.

For more information please visit welendahand.ca

Colin Field
Producer/Director, Albireo Films
519-619-7940 albireofilms@gmail.com
Bonnie Sitter
Historical Producer, 519-235-1909
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“Keep Kids Safe” workshop Presented by Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture

Story and photos by Roslyn Watkins

At this year’s Keep Kids Safe workshop, held on April 25th at Huron Tractor in Stayner, 102 children took part in a morning filled with hands-on learning and important safety lessons. The event featured seven interactive safety stations designed to keep kids engaged while teaching practical skills they can use in everyday life.

While the workshop has strong roots in farm safety, the information shared reached far beyond rural living. Each station offered valuable advice that applies not only to children growing up on farms, but also to those in more urban environments, ensuring every participant walked away with relevant and useful knowledge.

Organized by the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture, the event continues to evolve year after year. Organizers work diligently to introduce new topics and expand on existing ones, keeping the content fresh and meaningful for returning families. This commitment to growth and education makes the Keep Kids Safe workshop a worthwhile experience to attend more than once.

Action First Aid

Sierra Filiault and Cathy Houser of Action First Aid delivered an engaging, hands-on session focused on what to do in the event of a choking emergency. Their interactive approach helped children clearly understand both the risks and the life-saving actions they can take if they or someone nearby begins to choke.



Sierra Filiault demonstrated the abdominal thrust on young participant Maybel Smart.

To demonstrate choking hazards, the instructors used a simple but effective activity involving a toilet paper tube. Houser presented a basket of common household items, and each child took turns testing whether the objects could fit through the cardboard roll. This visual exercise helped reinforce which small items could pose a serious choking risk.

The session then moved into practical life-saving techniques. The children were taught how to respond if someone is choking, beginning with positioning themselves slightly to the side and behind the person. They learned to call 911, deliver five firm back blows, and, if the blockage persists, proceed with abdominal thrusts.

Filiault and Houser also addressed what to do if a person is alone and choking. In that situation, children were instructed to call 911, move to a visible location, preferably outside where someone can see them, and use the back of a chair to perform abdominal thrusts on themselves.

To build confidence and reinforce learning, the children were given time to practice the techniques with one another under supervision. The session left participants better prepared to recognize choking hazards and respond quickly and effectively in an emergency.



Amanda (far left), Malcolm (middle), and Hunter (far right) represented the War Amps. They explained to the children that lawn mower and farm equipment accidents are the leading cause of limb loss, and demonstrated how their prosthetic limbs work using a variety of specialized attachments.



Lesley Gutknecht of Hydro One presented electrical safety in and around the home, demonstrating potential hazards involving overhead and downed power lines. She shared important tips, including staying inside a vehicle if wires are down, avoiding placing pools beneath overhead lines, and understanding how equipment like delivery trucks can accidentally make contact with wires. Gutknecht also explained that while the large green electrical boxes are safe to touch, they should never be climbed on or tampered with.

Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention Officer Kent McDonald led an engaging and educational fire safety demonstration for the children, emphasizing the importance of sharing life-saving knowledge with family members. He encouraged the kids to pass along what they learned not only to their parents, but also to grandparents—“Nana and Pop”—helping extend fire safety awareness beyond the classroom.

McDonald began by explaining the three essential elements required to start a fire: oxygen, fuel, and heat at a sufficiently high temperature. Removing any one of these elements can stop a fire, he noted. For example, water is commonly used because it cools the fire by taking away heat, ultimately extinguishing it.



Fire Prevention Officer Kent McDonald and young participant Vivian demonstrate proper fire extinguisher use during a hands-on fire safety session, where children learned essential techniques like the PASS method and how to share life-saving knowledge with their families.

To help the children understand how to respond in emergencies, McDonald introduced the acronym PASS, a simple method for using a fire extinguisher. PASS stands for: Pull the pin, Aim the extinguisher at the base of the fire, Squeeze the nozzle, and Sweep the extinguisher back and forth across the flames. This step-by-step approach helps ensure extinguishers are used safely and effectively.

He also discussed the differences between types of

fire extinguishers. A dry chemical extinguisher works by forming a crust over the fire, cutting off its oxygen supply and preventing it from spreading. In contrast, a water extinguisher absorbs heat, cools the burning material, and also helps remove oxygen from the fire.

The highlight of the demonstration came when each child had the opportunity to practice using a fire extinguisher. This hands-on experience not only reinforced what they had learned, but also gave them confidence in how to respond in a real-life situation.

Trail Safety

Representing the Ontario Federation of All Terrain Vehicle Clubs (OFTAV), Beth Wink, Brent Fox, and Shane Garcia were on hand to share their expertise and promote safe ATV practices among young participants. Garcia, the District 8 Director, led an informative session focused on staying safe while riding on trails, using his own side-by-side vehicle as a hands-on teaching tool.

Speaking to groups of attentive children, Garcia stressed the importance of proper protective gear every time they ride. He highlighted the need to always wear a helmet, seatbelt, and safety glasses, reinforcing that safety should never be overlooked, no matter how short the trip.

Garcia also provided practical advice on what riders should bring along on a trail ride in case of emergencies. Essential items included water and snacks, a cell phone with a backup battery charger, and a well-equipped tool kit for unexpected repairs. He recommended carrying a whistle to signal for help, as well as an axe or saw to clear blocked paths. First aid kits and tow straps were also emphasized as important safety gear, along with wearing reflective clothing and sturdy boots to ensure visibility and protection.

In addition to personal safety, Garcia reminded participants of their responsibility to protect the environment. He explained the importance of thoroughly washing their ATV before returning home to prevent the spread of invasive species from trails to farms or other properties.

Beth Wink also encouraged the children to continue their learning beyond the event by exploring “Ready to RideON,” Ontario’s first online ATV training course for youth. The program offers interactive safety modules designed to reinforce safe riding habits and build confidence in young riders.



Gillian Findlay and Jessica Fraser of Huron Tractor lead a hands-on tractor and equipment safety lesson. Emphasizing that only one rider should ever be on a machine since there is just one seat and seatbelt. In this photo, Fraser demonstrates how quickly lawn mower blades spin using a ruler drop activity. Findlay led students through an interactive safety activity, using red sticky circles to help them identify hazardous areas on a tractor. The hands-on game encouraged kids to think critically about potential dangers, such as moving parts, pinch points, and blind spots.



Shane Garcia of the Ontario Federation of ATV Clubs spoke to the children about ATV safety, proper gear, and responsible trail riding during an educational demonstration.

Why Farmers Should Make Time for the 2026 Census of Agriculture

By Leah Emms, OFA Member Services Rep.

Farmers know better than anyone that May is one of the busiest times of the year. With planting season underway, the days are long and the to-do list never seems to get any shorter. That's exactly why we're asking you to take a few minutes to complete the 2026 Census of Agriculture when it arrives this May. We know the timing isn't ideal, but your response really does matter — and it helps make sure the realities of farming today are properly understood not only by the public, but also by decision-makers at all levels of government.

The Census of Agriculture is conducted every five years, and it's one of the main ways the agricultural sector gets counted. The information farmers provide adds to a body of reliable data about what's happening on farms across the country — what's being grown, how land is being used, what kind of equipment is being run, and what challenges farmers are dealing with. When farmers take the time to fill it out, the results help make sure decisions affecting agriculture are based on real numbers, not assumptions.

A lot can change in five years. Markets shift, input costs go up, technology keeps advancing, and weather never seems to get any more predictable. The 2026 Census helps capture those changes. The information collected is used to guide farm programs, research, rural infrastructure, and other decisions that affect farmers and their communities. Census data is also one of the most trusted sources we have when we're engaging with governments, stakeholders, and the public. When farm organizations advocate on behalf of farmers, we rely on Census numbers because they carry credibility and are widely respected. Strong participation means better data, and better data makes for stronger arguments and better support for agriculture.

Every farm counts, no matter the size or type of operation. Whether you run a large grain farm, a mixed operation, a livestock farm, or a small specialty business, your answers help show the full range of agriculture today. When some farms don't respond, it makes it harder to tell the real story of the sector.

We also know farmers take privacy seriously. All Census of Agriculture information is kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes, and individual responses are never shared. Your participation in this survey is required under the authority of the Statistics Act, and all results are only published as combined totals.

The Census of Agriculture is one of the few ways we can show the full strength and diversity of farming across the country. Every response adds to the credibility of the data we use when talking about the needs of farmers and rural communities. Taking a few minutes to complete it helps make sure agriculture continues to be recognized for the role it plays in our economy and our communities.

Fun Farm Science: Nemo's Garden off Italy's coast

Submitted by curious reporter Don Beaulieu

Just off the coast of Noli, farming takes a decidedly unusual turn; downward.

Beneath the waves of the Mediterranean Sea, Italian entrepreneur and diver Sergio Gamberini has been growing crops not in soil, but in submerged glass bubbles anchored to the seabed.

The project is called Nemo's Garden. It looks a bit as if someone dropped a cluster of futuristic snow globes onto the ocean floor; except that inside them are strawberries, basil, and lettuce quietly getting on with their lives.

Each transparent dome is filled with air and sealed from the surrounding seawater. Sunlight filters through the water above, while plants grow hydroponically inside,

no soil required. As the plants transpire, water evaporates inside the dome and condenses on the cooler walls, effectively creating a natural freshwater cycle. In other words; it rains inside the sea.

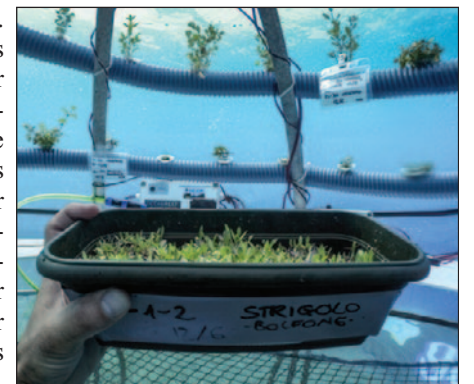
The surrounding ocean acts like a giant climate-control system, keeping temperatures remarkably stable day and night. Divers visit the domes to tend and harvest the crops, turning farming into something that looks halfway between gardening and deep-sea exploration.

The idea isn't just whim-

sical, it's experimental agriculture with serious intent. By removing dependence on freshwater irrigation and using the ocean as a stabilizing force, the system explores how food might be grown in drought-prone or coastal regions in the future.

And the results have been intriguing. Early trials suggest some plants—particularly basil—may even develop stronger aromas and higher essential oil content when grown in this underwater environment.

So while most farms worry about rain, pests, and soil quality, this one has a simpler summary: Sunlight in, seawater around, scuba gear required.



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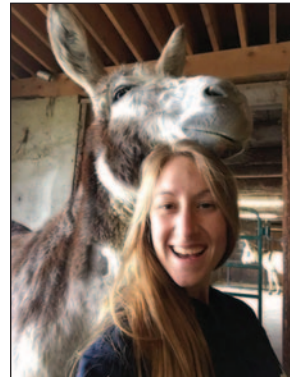
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Our team is thrilled to have her on board and we look forward to the expertise and care she will bring our patients.



Dr. Carleigh has been working in a mixed animal practice in southern Ontario and has decided to move to "God's Country".

Dr. Carleigh graduated with a Bachelor of Science, Animal Biology in 2016 and then the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine in 2021 from the University of Guelph.

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WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO SAMPLE?

There is no right time to sample. However, it is important to pay attention to the conditions when the sample was taken, as seasonal considerations can impact how results are interpreted. Soil health samples are most ideal in early summer when soil moisture conditions are most likely to be suitable for in-field assessments. However, it may be more convenient to sample at other times of year. It is important to be consistent with the timing of your sample from one year to the next so results can be comparable. Avoid sampling 4-6 weeks after a soil disturbance, like tillage, or the application of fertilizer or manure. Also, avoid extreme conditions.

HOW TO SAMPLE?

Collect 15-20 core samples to a 6-inch depth with a soil probe from within a 3 m radius. A shovel can also be used by slicing a V then remove a sliver from one side - always trying to get 6" deep. Place soil into clean

pail. REMOVE surface debris and extract cores. PLACE cores into a clean pail. Gently break and mix the cores. TRANSFER ~500 ml (2 cups) of soil into bag(s). Put bags into containers. Label. Store in cool place until you ship/deliver.

WHERE TO SAMPLE?

Find a relatively small and uniform area based on:

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Inconsistent yields: often from moisture fluctuations

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Average yields: broadly representative

High yields: may represent best potential of similar soils in the field; can be compared against low- or average-yielding areas

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Upper: generally drier areas; knolls and shoulder slopes likely eroded and at high risk tillage erosion

Data: good yield index maps, soil property maps, or reliable management zones can help you select an area

Email your name, # of fields you'd like to sample, and your county to soils@uoguelph.ca.

By Dennis Gannon

We see them everywhere. It doesn't matter if you are in the country or the city. On a highway, county road or a municipal street. They are operated by kids as young as 3 and adults in their 80's. Invented in 1817 they like most things have evolved but the principle has remained the same. A great sense of balance is required to operate one and once you learn how, you will never forget. What are we talking about, while we all know them as the ever present bicycle.

Bicycles have changed over the years from the penny farthing to mountain bikes, bmx and now the very popular e-bike. Bicyclists and vehicle drivers are responsible for their actions while operating their conveyance and must follow the rules established by local municipalities and the province. Regrettably many cyclists are involved in incidents with motor vehicles and tragically many end up in fatalities. Knowing the rules on cycling and driving are important and here are a few.

All bicycles require a working bell, horn or sounding device. They must be equipped with a white front light or reflector and a red light or reflector if they are ridden 1/2 hour before or after sunrise or sunset. White and red reflective tape on the front or rear forks may be substituted for the reflectors or lights.

All cyclists under the age of 18 are required to wear a helmet. If a helmet has been in a collision or shows wear or damage it should be replaced. Proper fit requires that the chin strap fits snugly to allow one finger between the strap and your chin, they fit flat against your face and that the V from the straps meet just below your ears. Most helmets are adjustable by using the dial to permit a good fit.

Checking the equipment on your bicycle is recommended before heading out. Are the tires properly inflated? Stamped on the tire is the recommended inflation pressure. Check that the bolts and/or quick release levers on the seat, seatpost, handlebar stem and axles are tight. Are the brake pads tight and properly aligned? Does the derailleur shift properly?

How about the shift lever? A quick check is all that it takes to avoid problems as you hit the road.

Do you know that a bicycle is considered a vehicle under the Highway Traffic Act and the rules of the act must be followed? Using hand signals to indicate turns is required. It is illegal to drive through a stop sign and failing to stop at a red light can be costly. Riding under the influence of alcohol or drugs have the same consequences as if you were driving a car. Drivers of vehicles are required to provide a minimum distance of one metre between the most protruding portion of bicycle and the right side of the vehicle.

E-bikes have become extremely popular particularly for those who find themselves still wanting to enjoy cycling but find it more challenging to ride a more conventional bicycle. Most of the rules are the same with one very significant exception. That is a power assisted device, e-bike or scooter, can only be ridden by those 16 years or older. E-bikes do not require insurance or be licensed and it is recommended that you check with your insurance provider to ensure that you have liability protection in the event of an accident. The rider of an e-bike is required to wear a helmet.

E-bike riders do need to think about additional factors. E-bikes are typically heavier than a conventional bicycle. They have more power than a conventional bicycle and can accelerate very quickly, requiring the rider to be aware of their surroundings and the activity around them. It is recommended that you don't use the front brake alone and be careful when braking with sharp turns or when the road is wet. The motor on an e-bike can continue to provide power momentarily after letting off of the throttle, requiring riders' attention. Consider being very visible by wearing bright, reflective clothing and having flashing lights turned on both on the front and rear of the bike.

Cycling is fun and a great way to get around while getting exercise. Keeping safe and enjoying the freedom cycling can give you.



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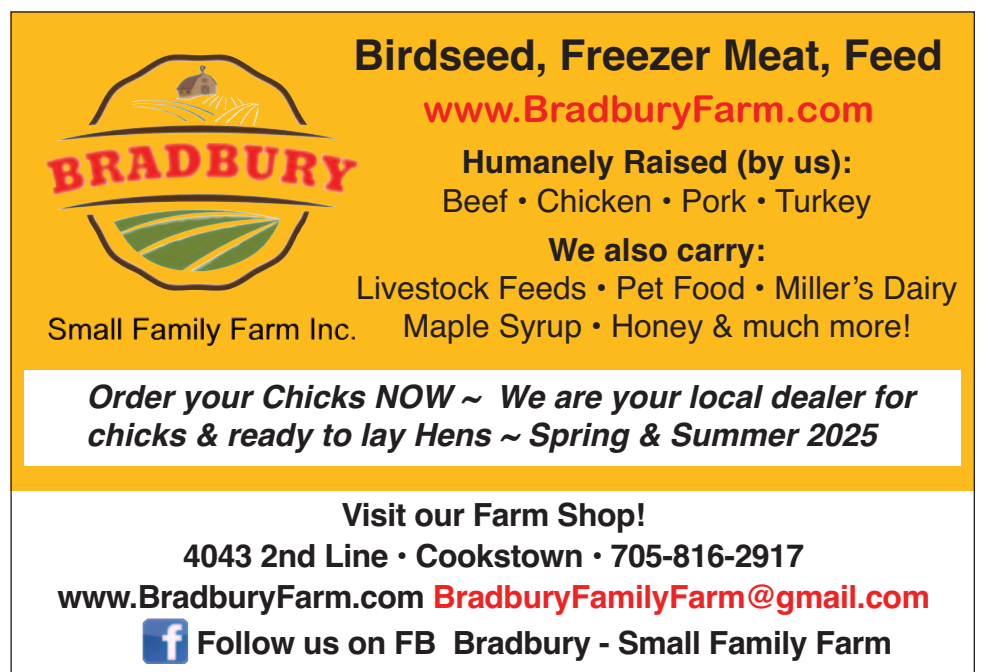
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Legacy Golf Classic announces enhanced "pro-tour" experience for 2026 community fundraiser Caledon Agricultural Society is the Major Grant Recipient from this year's event

Following a record-breaking inaugural year that raised \$110,200 net for the Caledon community, the Legacy Golf Classic is returning on Wednesday, September 2, 2026, with an expanded format and enhanced guest experiences. This year's tournament moves to the championship North and Hoot courses at TPC Toronto at Osprey Valley, providing golfers with a premier, "bucket-list" experience featuring professional-grade hospitality and high-impact philanthropy.

"This event is built on a shared commitment to the future of our community," says Allan Thompson, event co-founder. "By expanding our capacity this year we are able to significantly increase our support for vital projects, including the Caledon Agricultural Society's efforts to build a new community and recreational hub."

Early interest has been exceptionally strong. Stand-alone foursome registrations have already reached capacity and a waiting list is now active. Sponsorship opportunities remain the primary avenue for businesses or organizations looking to align with this premier event, invest in Caledon's long-

term sustainability and secure guaranteed golfing participation.

"The interest we're seeing is due in no small part to people wanting to experience these spectacular facilities right here in our own community," says Anne Thompson, event co-founder. "The Humeniuk family and their entire team are just as committed to Caledon's success as we are. They are exceptional partners and we are fortunate to have both this facility and their team as part of our community."

As the backbone of the rural economy, farm input suppliers and businesses have already shown strong leadership. "The industry's commitment to this project is a testament to the strength of our agricultural family," adds Anne. "We are deeply grateful to everyone who has come on board to help us reach our goal."

For companies looking to elevate their client relations, the tournament offers an experience second to none. "With Canada's only TPC facility as our backdrop, it's the best way to treat your top clients to a day of excellence without

leaving the region," says Allan. "We are thrilled to welcome partners who recognize that supporting this cause is also a strategic investment in their own business relationships."

The Legacy Golf Classic is presented by the Allan and Anne Thompson Community Fund, operating under a unique sustainable model: 75% of proceeds are distributed as immediate grants, while 25% is directed into a permanent endowment. Professionally managed by the Brampton and Caledon Community Foundation, this model ensures a lasting stream of support for generations to come.

For full event details and remaining sponsorship opportunities, please visit [legacygolfclassic.ca].

"The incredible work of the Anne and Allan Thompson Community Fund has been a catalyst for change. Through the Legacy Golf Tournament they are helping us build more than just a community centre—they are securing a legacy of generational betterment for the Caledon Agricultural Society."

~ Ed Taccone, President, Caledon Agricultural Society

The South Simcoe 4-H Community Involvement Club News Report

By Charlie Leal



At the first meeting we did team building and we had elections. Our president, Catherine Reid, Vice President, Wyatt Edward, Secretary, Evangline Leal and last but not least the news reporter, myself, Charlie Leal.

We discussed what we wanted to do as our events and services. Our first active service is Hike for Hospice on May 3rd. We're going to support Matthews House Hospice at Sheldon Creek Dairy. Please come and support your community too.

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A Licence to Thrill

Bond-inspired gala fuels the future of Collingwood's young musicians

As the Collingwood Music Festival (CMF) busily finalizes their outstanding 200+ artist lineup for their 2026 summer festival season, they invite supporters far and near to join them in their first event of the year: Their popular annual spring fundraiser featuring the evocative and masterful sextet TCO6, comprised of members of the Toronto Concert Orchestra.

On the evening of Saturday May 30th, the Osler Bluff Ski Club will be transformed into a James Bond-inspired movie set filled with mysterious music, martinis, a delectable gourmet dinner created by The Road Runner Food Company, starlit dancing, live auction, games, laughter, and that rare mountain-chalet magic only experienced at sunset on the Niagara Escarpment.

All are encouraged to dress to thrill; channeling their inner 007 in tuxedos, cocktail gowns and spy gadgetry. Prizes will be awarded to the best-dressed guests. This unique fusion of spy intrigue and symphonic artistry is not to be missed: A perfect match for a night of fundraising with a touch of 007 glamour and big cinematic energy.

Collingwood Music Festival's Artistic Director, Daniel Vnukowski emphasizes: "Most of all, the tickets purchased help to support young, local musicians in CMF's Youth Academy this summer, giving them the mentorship and opportunities that can truly change lives. The Bond event will be a night to savour and remember, and a cause to feel proud of..."

Tickets are selling quickly so should be secured now ... before they vanish! Details below.

TCO6 performs

The Toronto Concert Orchestra (TCO), under the artistic direction of Sharon Lee, a dynamic and accomplished violinist and conductor, will bring an electrifying blend of classical elegance and cinematic Bond flair to the CMF James Bond Fundraiser.

Performing as TCO6, their intimate sextet will reinterpret iconic James Bond themes alongside classical gems, offering a sophisticated and thrilling musical journey. Sharon Lee, who has led the TCO since 2014 and is also Music Director of the Korean Canadian Symphony Orchestra, ensures each performance is both technically precise and emotionally resonant.

The Collingwood Music Festival expresses its gratitude to Engel & Völkers, and The Rydlo Family Fund, as well as Edwards Insurance, Osler Bluff Ski Club, Spy Cidery, and Nicholas Pearce Wine for making this important fundraising event possible.



Sharon Lee, conductor

The details:

James Bond Fundraiser

When: Saturday May 30, 2026, 5:30 p.m.–10:00 p.m.

Where:

Osler Bluff Ski Club, 795534 The Blue Mountains Clearview Townline, The Blue Mountains

Tickets: \$250 per guest (with \$150 tax receipt); \$2000 table of 8.

Purchase at: <https://collingwoodfestival.com/event/james-bond-fundraiser/> or (705) 416-1317



TCO6 will be lead by and feature Sharon Lee.

Delaware's Origins Marked by Controversy and Resilience

Most communities can proudly point to an upstanding figure, or at least a decent hardworking one, as a founding father. Sadly, the farming community of Delaware in Middlesex County cannot.

Delaware's founding father was a true rascal. Ebenezer Allan was not the sort of man one would be proud to claim as their own.

Born in New Jersey in 1752, Allan was a staunch loyalist who remained true to King and Country when the American colonies rebelled and declared independence. Allan took up arms and served with the elite Butler's Rangers throughout the Revolutionary War. So far so good, right?

But it turns out that during this time Allan was a bigamist. He was married to not two women simultaneously but three, including one Native American. All of Allan's wives bore him children.

Like most Loyalists, Allan found himself no longer welcome in his homeland after the Revolution. Thousands of Loyalists fled to Upper Canada (Ontario) as a result. Allan was among this wave of humanity. When he made the move in 1794, he abandoned two wives and at least three children. He never saw them again, never contributed to their welfare.

Allan received from grateful Crown a 2000-acre land grant along the Thames River in Middlesex. There, he cleared land for a farm and built a grist mill. Allan subdivided some of his land around the mill into building lots, and soon enough a village took root in the mill's shadow.

Allan soon got himself into trouble with authorities for some of these land transactions and, apparently, dealing in counterfeit money. The walls were closing in on Allan such that when the War of 1812 broke out, he began agitating on the side of his erstwhile enemy as a means of escaping justice. Allan was a turncoat. His plan didn't work, however. American invasions were repeatedly repulsed and British colonial officials swooped in to arrest him.

Allan was held for over a year but was released in 1813 due to ill-health. The village he founded continued in his absence. Thankfully most of the other settlers, many of them also veterans of the American War of Independence, proved to be more loyal and just as productive.

In 1820, the hamlet received a post office. It took its name from the township, which in turn honors the Delaware First Nations people who fought bravely alongside the British during Revolutionary War and who were driven from the United States after the conflict. They settled on the Thames River.

Delaware burned to the ground a few years later and had to be completely rebuilt in 1832. A decade later and as a reflection of its growing size and prosperity, the village was named the township seat and a fine brick Township Hall was built.

That was really the height of Delaware's fortunes. Avoided by railroads and industry, Delaware stagnated in the later decades of the 19th century and remained an agricultural village. In 1878, besides the still-operating mill, Delaware claimed a few shops and taverns, and little else. The 1878 of Middlesex County Atlas painted an unflattering picture, noting that, "The old and unpainted houses give it an air of dilapidation and decay."

Delaware remained a small farming community through the 20th century and essentially remains so today.

On January 1st, 1998, Delaware Township disappeared when it, Lobo Township and London Township were combined to form Middlesex Centre. Delaware just couldn't catch any breaks.

Village stories

by Andrew Hind



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QUILTING

Spring Hope & Stitching Inspiration: Turn Your Fabric Stash into Beautiful Bags

By Janis Hamilton

We know spring will come, the hellebores are forming their buds, crocuses and snow drops are lifting their heads hoping for warmer weather, so there really is hope. I know my "herd" of squirrels are getting into the action everywhere-they have no shame.

With the milder weather coming maybe a cozy quilt isn't on the project list for you. Have you considered a bag? They are fun to make and can be made using various techniques. Some of you may want to show off your quilting skills with intricate blocks, others may simply want a serviceable bag that will hold your precious belongings. So where to start... well you may need a pattern and check out your stash for fabric you just couldn't bear to cut into. Bags are big so this will be your chance to use up that impressive fabric. Now of course, you will need to visit a quilt store as you will need hardware. I have a list of things I love putting on and in bags.

- A key fob clip that will hold keys
- Feet to keep the bottom of your bag from getting dirty
- Maybe a few zippers
- Flex foam for stable sides or even Pellon timtex which is ultra firm and thinner than foam or if you wish Peltex and fast2fuse are both fusible and saves stitching
- Magnetic snap if required
- Side buckles if required

So far I've found hardware by Emmaline bags is very professional and stands up to lots of wear.

Two local shops that carry many purse items are Cookstown Concessions at 35 King St North (on their website they have many patterns that just came up recently) and Thimbles and Things at 1282 Brodie Drive, Severn (near Orilla Square mall). If you are a quilt guild member mention this at T & T and you will get a discount. At Country Concessions they have a reward card system if you shop frequently.

Now I'm not wanting to put you off shopping but don't buy anything until you've found a pattern you just can't wait to make. Shop around or ask a friend who has made bags to offer you some insight.

I've been making several bags and wallets to match recently (photos of finished bags at right) and to be honest the directions left a bit to be desired. I've made many notes. Some notions on the pattern I never used, so please read the

pattern over to see if you really do want to make a zipper pull or can you use another fabric to accent the pockets inside without spending more money on the fabric. One thing I didn't need on these projects was the fusible interfacing, the foam was more than ample so that saved me money as well. I didn't use the fusible foam and used clips to hold the fabric and foam as I quilted the fabric. The first fabric was dragon flies, so of course I free motioned dragon flies on the fabric. I drew them on by hand on the foam and reversed the colours for sewing. Bobbin was variegated and the top was white to match the foam. I was pleased with the results. Sometimes we need to think outside the quilting box.

The bag can be made from old jeans and some of the patterns below even mention making them from placemats. Well, seems the sky might be the limit and on a budget even.

Crossbody bags are currently in fashion and very practical. A Japanese knot bag is one to make quickly. This site has the Japanese knot bag and so many more free patterns some made in under one hour! <https://happiestcamper.com/free-purse-patterns-to-sew-today/>

I've included more free patterns as well: (a market bag with quilting) <https://sewmodernbags.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Farmers-Market-Everyday-Tote-Bag-pattern.jpg>



loads/2019/12/Farmers-Market-Everyday-Tote-Bag-pattern.jpg

Here is a zippered wallet with a free pattern and video. <https://sewmodernbags.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Devon-Zipper-Pouch-pattern1a.jpg>

Another one on the same site has many free wallet patterns: <https://sewmodernbags.com/free-wallet-sewing-patterns/>

One of my favourite bags to make was Ginger by Sallie Tomato. I've made 3 at least and love them all. This cross-body bag is designed for beginners and the best part is, it also has a free video that you can watch as many times as you need to make sure you get it just right.



Have a quilt show to share? Send the details to farmview@on.aibn.com

Quilting stories and photographs are always welcome!



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Don't miss out on what's coming up next—check out page 19 for a full list of upcoming quilt and craft shows! There's something for every maker to enjoy and explore.

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Addis Grain hosts annual marketing meeting

Synopsis, photographs by Don Beaulieu

The annual spring meeting at Addis Grain in Oro-Medonte at the beginning of April was well-attended, circa 80 attendees came out. Two guest speakers delved into various marketing aspects, a somewhat more-than-usual difficult task given today's political climate.

Before the official presentations got underway, there was time for networking and schmoozing with coffee, donuts and muffins on hand, courtesy of TD Bank.

The first speaker up, introduced by Addis President Kevin Eisses was John Lanthier of Market Smart Inc. out of Tillsonburg, Ontario. Market Smart is an agricultural advisory service providing grain marketing, consulting and procurement services to producers, particularly in the Lake Huron to Barrie region. It focuses on helping farmers set sales goals based on their cost of production.



John Lanthier

In his introduction, Eisses said "John's clients are today's modern farmers seeking knowledge in their field, bringing value to the farm".

Early on Lanthier said we are "swimming in grain" and yet, we are seeing the highest prices for some commodities. The United States had record grain production last year. We have record world wheat production; we currently have more production than usage. World corn supply is hitting a record high, based on 2-billion bushels more supply from the United States. Brazil's soybean production is up. Canada had a 40 million ton wheat crop last year, another record high. These are just some of the first highlights he pointed out, supported by charts.

As with all talks and insights on marketing, the details of interactions of weather and political events becomes very complex. This complexity seems to be something Lanthier enjoys working with and planning around. A number of charts showed major gains and drops related to recent and memorable news events lasting some time. Some late night tweets from the U.S. President resulted in very quick changes in a commodities trajectory.

Screwworms are causing issues in North America again. At the beginning of this century they were essentially eradicated here, but... in 2024 and 2025, the New World screwworm was once again detected in Mexico, leading to renewed efforts to prevent its re-emergence as a threat to agriculture. Meanwhile, the parasitic bowfly whose larvae feeds on living tissue of warm-blooded animals (such

as cattle) is still widespread in tropical and subtropical parts of the Caribbean and South America, so that animals imported from these areas to non-endemic regions must be inspected or treated to prevent the pest's reintroduction.

Lanthier enjoyed a decent question and answer period after his talk; a good sign that the audience was engaged with his presentation.

Scott Hansen

The second speaker of the morning event was Scott Hansen of White Commercial Corporation. Hanson is a merchandising specialist and has been with White Commercial since 1991.

Eisses introduced him by saying Hansen "...has played a key role in helping grain elevators and producers navigate the complexities of grain marketing with a passion for education and practical solutions".

Hansen began his presentation with some truthful but amusing anecdotes showing how farmers here in Ontario have the same issues and perceptions that farmers in his own home state of Iowa have.

He explained that the difference between the good marketers and those who struggle is emotion; the inability to make a decision. A lot has to do with how you respond after a sale. Many people will fret over a sale if the price goes up the next day, he explained.

"There are people in this world who will spend the next six weeks not making another sale because it went up, and the money they lost... It gets very hard to make a decision if you're afraid to be wrong". His remedy if the market goes up is sell some more. He reasons that "Unless this is your last year farming, you're always going to have more to sell".

Hansen spoke to many aspects of corn, soybeans and wheat offering insights from his 48 years in the grain business.

He continued to insert stories or scenarios that brought a commonality to farmers everywhere, keeping his audience engaged with relatable experiences.

In wrapping up his talk, Hansen said "Once you know a price you want for corn or wheat, put in a target. 75% to 80% of the targets put in by you guys are filled when you are sleeping. That's when something happens in the market..." that causes it to jump for a short time.



"Markets are very complex right now because you have the bullish side of things because of energy and war and all of that, and there is the commodity space where our competitors in South America are bringing home a record crop."

—John Lanthier
Market Smart Inc.

Kevin Eisses

When Hansen was finished, Eisses took some time to talk about Addis Grain a bit. The business has enjoyed their current location for seven years now. He took a moment to recognize his team.

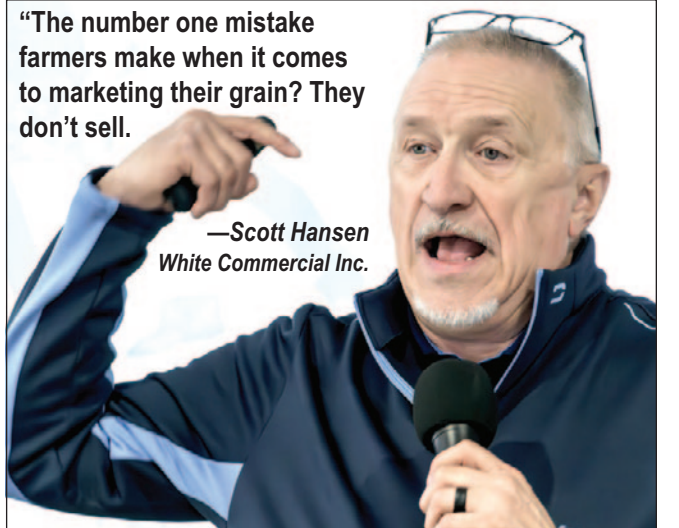
As he does each year, he explained how the company name came about: The name Addis Grain originated from a Food Study Tour sponsored by the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGF) that Kevin participated in that went to Ethiopia during the winter of 2016. "It was a very gratifying trip to visit Ethiopian farmers and confirm the support that CFGF offers to them".

The CFGF is supported largely by projects such as the Loaves and Fishes growing

project that the Eisses family is a part of in South Simcoe. The name *Addis* is part of the capital city in Ethiopia named Addis Ababa. Addis means "new" in the Amharic language which is one of Ethiopia's national languages.

Addis Grain will continue to support CFGF in its goal of "a world without hunger".

The speeches gave way to another excellent pulled-pork lunch provided by Julia and Jason of Sarge's Pit Crew from Barrie. Salads, cookies and soft drinks rounded out the offerings. Networking regained momentum during lunch too.



"The number one mistake farmers make when it comes to marketing their grain? They don't sell."

—Scott Hansen
White Commercial Inc.

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Agricultural Anecdotes from Farmer Tim

Signed Responsibility

Yesterday, the papers were signed. The farms are officially out of my parents' estate and in my name. Like most farmers, I am land rich and cash poor.

It's a moment I imagined for years. It is something I worked toward, waited for, and thought would feel triumphant. Instead, it feels... quiet. A little anticlimactic. There was no celebration, no sense of arrival. Just a deep breath and the weight of what it really means.

These farms don't feel new to me. They're stitched into my life, my memories, my parents' voices and values. They were earned the long way — through a lifetime of sweat equity. Early mornings, late nights, missed weekends, calloused hands, and years of dedication that never

came with guarantees. The kind of work you don't keep track of because it's just what needs to be done. Signing my name today didn't erase that history — it underlined it.

What it brought instead was responsibility and stress. Also, the realization that the decisions, the risks, the sleepless nights now land squarely on my shoulders. Stewardship isn't just about land and buildings, but about honouring the people who built it and the work already poured into it.

Doing this without my parents here is hard in ways I didn't expect. I wish I could call them, tell them it's done, ask one more question, and hear their reassurance. Pride and grief sit side by side today, and neither one cancels the other out.

If this experience has taught me anything, it's how important succession planning really is and how complicated it can be. It's not just paperwork and lawyers. It's emotion, timing, family dynamics, and conversations we often put off because they're uncomfortable. However, avoiding them doesn't make it easier later.

Today, I'm reminding myself that feeling overwhelmed doesn't mean I'm ungrateful. It means I care. And that caring, along with the years of work already invested, is what will carry these farms forward, with respect for the past and responsibility for the future. Here's to generations to come. Thanks for your blood, sweat and tears mom and dad. We will make you proud.

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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Spring Season Begins with Strong Support for Simcoe North Farmers

Message from MPP Dunlop

As spring arrives across Simcoe North, it marks one of the most important and demanding seasons for our local farming community. Fields are being prepared, equipment is rolling, and families are once again focused on the work that sustains not only our region, but our province. I want to take a moment to recognize the dedication and resilience of our farmers, whose efforts ensure Ontario families have access to safe, high-quality, locally produced food.

Through the 2026 provincial budget, Ontario is making targeted investments to strengthen agriculture and agri-food competitiveness. This includes increased funding for risk management programs, expanded research and innovation initiatives, and support for local supply chains through the Buy Ontario Act. Additionally, over \$40 million is being invested into agricultural research and innovation to help farmers adopt new technologies and improve productivity. These initiatives are designed to ensure our agricultural sector remains strong, sustainable, and globally competitive.

Farmers are also encouraged to participate in the upcoming 2026 Census of Agriculture, running from May through July. This important initiative helps provide an accurate picture of the industry and ensures that programs and policies reflect the real needs of farm operations across Ontario.

As we move through this busy season, I also invite you to take a well-deserved break and join me at our Annual Seniors Day on May 20th at Barnfield Point Recreation Centre. This free event will feature vendor booths, informative guest speakers, and lunch, offering a great opportunity to connect with others in the community.

Wishing all of our farmers a safe, productive, and successful spring season

Farmland Health Check-Up

The Farmland Health Check-Up (FHCU) for field crop acres is now available across Ontario.

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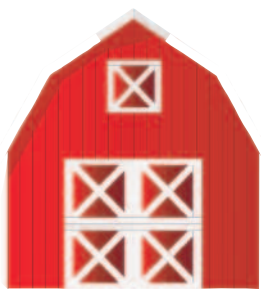
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Nature's Sweet Gift

Story and photos by Andrej Baca

As winter loosens its grip and the rhythm of spring begins to stir, a quiet transformation unfolds in the maple forests of Ontario. Cold nights followed by warmer days create the perfect conditions for one of nature's most remarkable processes: the flow of maple sap. It's a fleeting season, but one that yields a timeless reward—pure maple syrup.

At first glance, sap seems unremarkable. Clear and watery, it carries only the faintest trace of sweetness—so subtle that you might not taste it at all. Yet this humble liquid holds incredible potential. It takes an astonishing 40 litres of sap to produce just one litre of maple syrup, a testament to both the patience and precision required in its creation.



Greg Bray hand-bottles 190-degree maple syrup into 500 ml glass bottles, a careful final step in the traditional production process at Bray's Maple Syrup.

Behind every bottle is the dedication of Greg Bray and his family. With more than 35 years of experience, Greg works alongside his wife, their three daughters, and his stepfather to run the farm. Their operation spans nearly two kilometres of sap lines, along with fittings and a condenser that all require constant attention. It's a true family effort, especially during challenging times—like the aftermath of last spring's ice storm, when weeks of hard work were needed to restore the system.

Unlike many modern operations, the Brays use a wood-fired evaporator. The firewood is sustainably harvested from their own renewable forest, and this traditional method imparts a subtle hint of wood smoke into the syrup, giving it a distinctive and memorable flavour. Each batch is brought to approximately 190 degrees before being carefully hand-bottled by Greg himself into 500 ml glass bottles.

The farm comes alive during March Break and Easter, when Greg welcomes visitors—from school groups and scouts to families eager to experience the magic of maple syrup production firsthand. Outside of these times, the farm operates on a self-serve basis or by special arrangement, offering options like custom and corporate gift orders.

Bray's Maple Syrup is more than just a product; it's a reflection of craftsmanship, resilience, and a deep respect for nature. You can find Maple Heights products in local stores and at Farm Boy, bringing a taste of the forest right into your home.

As the seasons turn, it's worth marking your calendar for the next March Break or Easter weekend open house. Whether on your phone, computer, or kitchen wall, make a note for 2027—it's an experience that promises not just sweetness, but a deeper appreciation for one of nature's finest gifts.

At the heart of this process is Bray's Maple Syrup, where tradition and innovation come together. The sap is carefully collected and filtered using reverse osmosis, a globally recognized method that removes microscopic impurities while preserving the sap's natural flavour. It is then heated to just the right temperature, further refined, and finally transformed into the rich, golden syrup that graces breakfast tables across the country.

Behind every bottle is the dedication of Greg Bray and his family. With more than 35 years of experience, Greg works alongside his wife, their three daughters, and his



Greg Bray (far right) stands with his wife, three daughters, and stepfather at Bray's Maple Syrup, where the family works together to produce traditional wood-fired maple syrup during Ontario's short but busy sugaring season.

After The Chores: The Predator

By Cathy Hamill-Hill



There is truth in that something is often not missed- until it is not there.

I miss chickens. Loud demanding baas from the sheep just aren't mornings, I miss the rooster's crow.

There are exactly 0 chickens in the barn- and not by choice.

Sweetie saw a shadow in the chicken part of the barn- and there it started. The next morning I came to the barn and found a carpet of red and white feathers and chicken bodies. One night, there was a loss of 24.

We called in my family and got all the live traps there and added them to ours. It was like we put up a sign "Come in, we are Open!" as the killing continued, now in the daytime. It was clear we needed help.

Relocating a killer predator was out of the question so the option was to find a trapper with the intent to kill this killer. In this area, Trapper Phil is highly respected so I did a search and tracked down his spouse on social media. It was only a couple of days, when Trapper Phil had a local trapper here with a plan. The trapper had different "options" he said. The first plan was traps to "protect the barn cat" as the one trap would take out anything if they got too close. Trappers can be kind hearted people too and this guy was certainly one of those.

The second plan had a plan that Phil said "would work for sure". It was a trap that was "impossible to get past if was to be set in a certain way" Phil said. More warnings for what would happen to the old barn cat if he even looked in. The old barn cat was far too wise to ever get caught in any trap, we assured this kind hearted trapper. While the worry over the barn cat happened, this predator was taking out more chickens.

In one flock was an elderly white rooster. The rooster had a sunrise coloured bright red comb and white and black feathers. He was very handsome and made the hens swoon all around him. Sadly the handsome rooster was taken out too. And to top it off, I actually saw this predator that took out this nice old rooster. The predator was seen as he trotted around the pen, around the traps.

The predator had a deep brown coat. The predator was a mink.

Sweetie was raising pullets to sell along with his own in one pen. We called the buyers and said the pullets must go NOW. It was a mad scramble at their end to take on 30 pullets with half a day warning in this cold winter- but it was clear this predator was not going to be stopped. The 30 got homed, just in time as the mink moved over to that pen to continue his rampage. We had a loud radio, seven traps and we were in the barn several times a day- and the mink was unstoppable. The last four surviving pullets literally flew over their pen, much like a scene out of Bionic Woman, and I found them under my rabbit cages one morning. It was sad to find the little brown eggs they laid- this was a productive flock that would have made a lot of healthy food. The final four thankfully got rehomed to a safe place with the other 30.

A mink falls under wildlife and therefore, there is "some" compensation available from the Township. I called and immediately had a super nice understanding livestock evaluator here. Farmers seldom get the privilege to work with another farmer as there are so few of us now. This evaluator/farmer was a light in a dark time. She understood this was a hard time for compassion and purpose reasons. It was horrible to see this predator's work. She warned that the Township no longer sets any values of livestock- and it is entirely decided at the provincial level. The Province agricultural division is about 20 years behind the current value of pullets. For the starting-to-lay 24 pullets valued at about \$18 each in the real world, the province valued then at just under \$90- for all of them.

The chicken pens were now silent. And the traps stayed empty. The mink still visited- and he was heard one night at chores under the mower deck for the Kubota stored next to the chicken pen. This mower deck might well have been his secret hidey hole all winter. Sweetie moved the mower deck the next evening out of the barn.

It was a happy day a few days later when Sweetie came to the barn and found the "Phil said would work for sure" trap looking different. After an inspection, it was found the mink predator's reign was finally over.

The plan is to restock chickens in the next few weeks. We are just praying this mink was a bachelor.

Here to help!

My office is here to assist with any federal programs including CRA, Passports, Service Canada, and Immigration.

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SSEA Launches Program Supporting on Farm Stewardship Projects

The Severn Sound Environmental Association (SSEA) is excited to announce the SSEA Agriculture & Nature Initiative, with funding support from the Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) – Marginal Lands Initiative. This project is funded in part by the Governments of Canada and Ontario under the Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP), a five-year, federal-provincial-territorial initiative. The RALP Marginal Lands Initiative is administered by Conservation Ontario in partnership with local organizations to assist farmers undertaking larger environmental projects by offering the support and resources needed to implement meaningful changes. This initiative will improve marginal areas of farmland, fostering environmental benefits while bolstering productivity.

The SSEA will support farmers in creating or enhancing natural features like pollinator habitat, streamside buffers, shelterbelts, tree and shrub plantings, and native grassland. Farmers may be eligible for up to 100% funding to cover project costs, and the SSEA provides site-specific guidance and assistance with projects from start to finish. This program aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sequester carbon, and increase ecosystem goods and services.

“Farmers are stewards of the land and have long been a cornerstone in protecting and improving the Severn Sound watershed” said Julie Cayley, SSEA Executive Director “by working collaboratively, particularly on marginal lands, we can continue to support both environmental health and our agriculture community”.

Matt Ververs, President of the North Simcoe Soil and Crop Improvement Association says “This funding is a great opportunity for farmers in Severn Sound. As farmers, we know our land best and have a long tradition of caring for it. By continuing to work together with the Severn Sound Environmental Association, especially on marginal acres, we can strengthen our farms while also protecting the health of our watershed. It’s a practical way for our farm community to make a lasting difference for both agriculture and the environment.”

SSEA encourages farmers in the Severn Sound watershed area to reach out for more information or to discuss potential project ideas. SSEA staff will conduct a site visit and assist with planning, the application process, and project implementation.

For more information, contact Travis at SSEA (office 705-534-7283, cell 705-528-2322, email Stewardship@severnsound.ca) or visit www.severnsound.ca

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2026 IS GOING TO BE A ROUGH YEAR FOR MORTGAGES BUT ONTARIO-WIDE FINANCIAL CAN HELP LIGHTEN THE LOAD

Tracy Green, Broker at Ontario-Wide Financial says, “close to 60% of Canadians mortgages are going to be coming up for renewal in 2025-2026. This will make it one of the most significant mortgage renewal periods in decades. And this is stressing out a lot of homeowners!”

That works out to approximately 1.15 million Canadian mortgages across the country, with many borrowers facing significantly higher payments after locking in low rates during the pandemic. While specific numbers vary by source, projections from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) point to this large volume of renewals in 2026, impacting a massive number of households.

“Well, we have the first year “2025” under our belt and we’ve worked really hard to help our clients have as much of a soft landing as possible. We’ve been busy consolidating debt and negotiating the best rates possible for renewals, refinances and reverse mortgages,” says Tracy Green 35-year veteran in the mortgage industry, and Owner of Ontario-Wide Financial. “One advantage in 2026 is that rates have gone down from last year although there is no guarantee for how long. AND YES, WE NEGOTIATE RATES FOR OUR CLIENTS!”

I’m not going to sugarcoat it; things are very unpredictable, with tariffs and droughts affecting livestock, making food prices soar, and the uneasiness of the economy resulting in falling property values. So, for clients with upcoming mortgage renewals carrying significant debt, whether it be loans, credit cards, property or income taxes, CERB repayment etc., it’s important to reevaluate the whole picture now to see if there is a better and more affordable way to restructure.

Homeowners thinking about doing upgrades to their homes or securing a credit line for future expenses or just to have as a cushion, now is the time!

Don’t think you’ll qualify or have already been turned down? Here at Ontario-Wide I hear this constantly and while I can’t help in every situation many of my clients have been surprised and happy with the outcome once they did call. I work personally with every single client. It is my job to do my best to help my clients achieve their goals.”

Have questions? Call! Because each client’s situation is unique let’s have a one-on-one discussion to see what options are available to you with no pressure or obligation to move forward.

At Ontario-Wide Tracy works to find solutions for all realms of clients.

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We have programs that accommodate many situations. Including bankruptcy, proposals, tax and mortgage arrears and pensioners with limited to no income.”

Why is it ESPECIALLY important to consolidate debt and mortgages maturing in 2026 for some homeowners?

Consolidating mortgages and loans during renewal in 2026 is important because it lets you combine high-interest debts (like credit cards) with your mortgage, often securing a lower interest rate, simplifying payments into one bill, improving monthly cash flow, and potentially paying off debt faster by lowering overall costs, and because you’re up for renewal you won’t have penalties to do so!

Key Benefits

2026 rates are lower than last year and over all still reasonable so a good time if you’re not planning to sell anytime soon to lock in a longer term at a reasonable rate if your looking for security and peace of mind.

Alternatively variable mortgages are reasonably less and if you’re thinking shorter term or want to take advantage of lower rates to lock in later, now is also a good time as long as you keep a close eye on the movement of current rates.

Lower Interest Rates: Mortgage rates are usually much lower than credit card or personal loan rates, saving you significant money over time.

Simplified Finances: Instead of juggling multiple bills with different due dates, you’ll have just one payment, making budgeting easier.

Improved Cash Flow: Lower overall interest and potentially extended terms can significantly reduce your total monthly payment, freeing up cash.

A good time to prepare for income taxes owed.

Pay off the debt owed from Covid “CERB” (Canada Emergency Response benefit) balances to avoid penalties.

Faster Debt Payoff (Potentially): While you can extend the term, a lower rate can help you pay down principal more effectively, reducing total interest paid.

Review Your Whole Financial Picture: Don’t just accept your bank’s offer; look at all debts, not just the mortgage.

Consult a Professional: Consider talking to Tracy to see if consolidation is right for your specific situation. Tracy at Ontario-Wide Financial will go over your finances together with you to determine what the next step is in the right approach to help reduce financial strain and interest.

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Soul Sisters Celebrations May Flowers

They say that April showers bring May flowers, but in our community, we know that May flowers bring the wedding season! As the landscape transforms into a vibrant tapestry of new growth, it is only natural that our hearts turn toward the thought of couples blooming and flourishing, which is the union of two people in marriage. It is the beginning of a busy season where the external beauty of nature mirrors the internal beauty of a couple committing to a shared future. While the air is currently thick with talk of floral arrangements and venue tours, I find myself reflecting on something deeper about May flowers and wedding season. As a minister, I see the wedding day as the beginning of the beautiful budding flower and the marriage itself is the garden that requires a lifetime of tending.

It is easy to get swept up in the whirlwind of the day. In the rush to choose the perfect linens or manage a complex guest list, many couples find their sense of peace beginning to fray. I often remind those I work with that the most important part of the wedding is the two people standing at the center of it. It is vital to find calm in the journey of planning by keeping the focus on your connection rather than just the expectations of the guests. When we lose sight of the couple, the wedding day can become a performance. However, when we prioritize the couple, the ceremony be-

comes the first intentional act of cultivation for their perfect day. It serves as the very first step in tending that lifelong garden, ensuring the soil of the marriage is rich with purpose before the first seeds are even sown.

I recently worked with a pair who felt overwhelmed by the noise of outside opinions. We sat down together and stripped away the "shoulds" to focus on what actually made them feel seen as a couple. Taking those ideas and concepts and weaving small, quiet threads of their shared history into the service, things that only they truly understood, felt like a blessing as they were thrilled with how their ceremony "felt just like them". Watching them find their calm as they realized the day was truly about their unique bond was a beautiful reminder of why I do this. One of my favorite things to do for couples is to craft a ceremony that speaks directly to them and honors them as a pair. This process ensures that when you look back, you do not just remember the decor, but the specific roots you planted that afternoon.

Think of a relationship as a living altar. In many traditions, we recognize that when two people join, they are not just combining lives but creating a third, spiritual entity. Just as a garden is not sustained by a single rainfall, this bond is nourished by the private and often invisible acts of devotion like the choice to listen when one is tired or the

grace to forgive. This is where true power resides, in the persistent and loving energy that transforms two separate lives into a singular haven.

My role is to find the right words and elements to blend together, capturing the exact vibe a couple is going for while ensuring all legal and spiritual requirements are met with grace. Ceremonies can range from deeply personalized and intricate to beautifully simple, and while some are rich with spiritual components, others may focus more on the human connection, shining light on a couple. Regardless of the style, the energy brought to a wedding ceremony sets the momentum for the life that follows. It is about choosing the right climate for your commitment to grow.

Finally, for those who are guests or loved ones this season, remember that your most sacred role is to be the fence around this new garden, not the storm within it. If you know someone getting married, honor their day by allowing them the grace to choose their own path. True support means stepping back from the pressure of expectation and instead offering a space of peace. Let us allow every couple to breathe, to be still, and to plant their seeds exactly where their spirits lead them. Together, we can create a beginning that is as robust and radiant as the love you intend to carry home.

In Gratitude, The Soul Sisters Reverend Erin Wilson and Reverend Kelly Blakely Soulsisterscelebrations@gmail.com

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Students Dive into Great Lakes Learning at Wasaga Beach

On March 31st, 2026 the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) welcomed 80 students from three local boards to Wasaga Beach for the Lake Huron Student Conference. The event was supported by \$25,000 in funding from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP).

The Great Lakes and their connected watersheds support drinking water, manufacturing, transportation, agriculture, tourism, recreation, and fisheries across Ontario. At the conference, students explored how Lake Huron shapes local communities and gained practical knowledge about how they can contribute to the stewardship of this globally significant freshwater ecosystem.

“Our government is proud to champion the Lake Huron Student Conference—an inspiring initiative that brings the story of the Great Lakes to life for students, highlighting their vital role in our environment, economy, and communities,” said Todd McCarthy,

Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. “Through Ontario’s Great Lakes program, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority and its partners are empowering young people to step forward as stewards of Lake Huron—ensuring these precious freshwater resources are protected and sustained across the Great Lakes Basin for generations to come.”

Students from Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board, Bluewater District School Board, and Simcoe County District School Board examined Lake Huron’s cultural, ecological, social and economic importance along the shoreline and throughout the watershed.

The day began outdoors on the beach. Participants were invited to participate in a smudge ceremony, led by an Indigenous Elder and a Knowledge Keeper. They learned about the landscape and how it was formed, and they were introduced to Indigenous perspectives about the water and land. Scales

Nature Park brought in live turtle and snake species and shared why these animals are species at risk, taking the event into lunchtime, when the representative from the Great Lakes Office gave a keynote address.

Afternoon workshops featured local professionals who shared their diverse, and often lesser-known career pathways in freshwater science, environmental management, and sustainable technology – some careers which students had never heard of before. They also explored local environmental issues and the innovative solutions being used to reduce human impacts on the natural world we all share.

“In partnership with our local school boards, this event was co-designed for youth in secondary school, focusing on Grades 9 Geography classes as well as the Specialist High Skills Major program in Grades 11 and 12,” said Naomi Saunders, Manager of Environmental Education at NVCA. “These students are at a stage when they’re starting

to think seriously about their future. By connecting curriculum topics like physical geography, human-environment interactions, and land use planning to the real-world challenges facing Lake Huron, we’re creating meaningful learning experiences. Today’s program builds knowledge and skills that students will continue to develop through the follow-up stewardship activities in their home communities.”

The Lake Huron Student Conference experience will be shared with additional educators within these participating school boards expanding the impact of this initiative beyond the teachers and their students directly involved. NVCA encourages education leads, teachers, and community partners to further explore the ideas and collaborations for future learning opportunities to inspire the next generation of leaders who will steward Lake Huron and the Great Lakes for decades to come.

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 Free classified word ad's can be mailed, emailed or faxed by the 15th of the month for the next month's issue. Telephone orders are invoiced at \$15 for the first 25 words. Ad's run for one month only and must be re-submitted each month to be repeated. Mailing information is on page 4.

AUCTIONS

Kevin Barker & Greg Snoddon Auctions

Timed online consignment auctions featuring farm and construction equipment, tractors, vehicles, trailers, tools and much more.

The next online sale is the
May Consignment Sale,
May 18th - May 26th, 2026

Visit our website for more information
www.kevinbarkerauctions.com

705-328-1478
3484 Hwy. 35 Lindsay, Ontario

AUCTIONS

Live Auction Sale Equipment Consignment Saturday May 23rd, 9:30am



554447 Mono-Amaranth TLine, Mono, ON Go west through Orangeville on Hwy 9 to County Rd 16 (Veterans Way at Greenwood Cemetery), turn north 5 miles to farm on East side. OR From Shelburne go east on Hwy 89 for 2 miles to Mono-Amaranth Townline, turn south & go 5 miles to farm on East side.

Tractor(s): Kubota MX 5100 4x4 tractor with LA854 loader; open station; hydrostatic; 1 remote, 3pth, pto, F: 9.5x16, R: 13.6x28, 2977hrs; Ford TW20, cab, dual power, 135hp; (2) Ford 5000 tractors, open station 60hp, 8 spd **Truck:** GMC T8500 single axle dump truck, 131Kkm(?), no ownership

Mach/Equip: Recon 2 hay crimper; JD 435 round baler, 4x6, double twine tie only, monitor; MF 124 sq baler & chute; Brillion 10ft grass seeder; Walco 6ft 3pth bushog; 300L sprayer, 3pth, wand only; Turnco 14ft packer & transport; 20ft steel single reach round bale wagon; Case IH 4500 18ft cultivator, man wings; White 251 10ft disc; Overum 4 furrow semi-mount plow; NH 144 hay inverter; Forage King hay basket; Forage King-Meteor 7ft snowblower, hyd chute, 1 auger; 3pth 6ft tiller; 3pth 2 furrow plow; Landpride LR1560 landscape rake, 3pth, 5ft; NH 918H flail mower, 3pth, 4ft; 5ft finishing mower, 3pth; pallet forks, skid steer attach, new; TMC-SLG49 skidsteer rotation log grapple; 5ft scraper blade; wood hay wagon; NH 185 manure spreader for trailer or parts; old steel wheel wagon;
Farm Rel/Shop/Misc: Troybilt rear tine rototiller; Cub Cadet 26" walk behind snowblower; Speedo 35ton, 9hp woodsplitter, with trailer hitch; Champion generator; floor jack; ATV sprayer; bench grinder; LED flood light panel; metal sawhorse; toolbox; Dewalt 30gal air compressor; Rigid table saw; ladders; chainsaws (Husqvarna 460, Echo CS400); 3 wheeled cart; hand tools, garden tools; (1)sliding horse stall door;

****Please contact auctioneer to consign items****

Preview: 1-6pm, Friday May 22nd

Auctioneers: Kevin McArthur (519) 942-0264 Scott Bessey (519) 843-5083
 Email: mcarthurbessey@gmail.com

www.theauctionadvertiser.com/KMcArthur - full listing and photos

FOR SALE

Harley Davidson Golf Cart



Completely gone over, new seats, front axle and new bearing. Rewired, new lights and switch. Excellent shape.

Asking \$5,500.00 or best offer.
 Call 705-741-6097 or 1-800-954-9998.

FARM & AUTO BATTERIES

KAWARTHA BATTERY

AUTO · MARINE · FARM · COMMERCIAL
 GAS · DIESEL · GENERATORS
 TRACTOR CHAINS ALL TYPES

671 Erskine Ave #201, Peterborough, ON 1-800-954-9998

FREE ADS

1963 Mercury Meteor, very rare 2 door post. Stored inside 45 years. Near Coldwater. Please call 705-645-4276.

FREE ADS

For Sale Ram lambs and replacement ewe lambs available. Ile de France X Rideau Arcott. M.V. and Johnes negative flock. Visitors welcome. Call Joel 705-534-7680 9 a.m.

Wanted

International Super W4 farm tractor. 22 x 32 or 22 x 38 Dion Threshing Machine. Please phone in evenings 905-983-9331.

MASONRY SERVICES

Eli Noble Masonry Specialist

905-904-1570
 ednoble2@gmail.com
 Service areas include Barrie, Durham and the GTA

FREE ADS

1956 John Deere 420 U. Last of the 2 cylinder vertical engines (Johnny Popper) All new tires, Pulley 3 point hitch. One owner \$5,600. Please call Ron at 705-322-3967.

2007- F150 Ford Truck for sale. White. 8 foot box. It has a cap and racks that come with it. Approx 49,500 km. Located in Barrie area, Cash only 705-722-7833. Make an offer.

For Sale 2009 Kawasaki Ninja 250 – \$2,000

This is a well-used, reliable bike with approximately 55,000 km. For more photos, videos, or to inquire, please call or text 705-627-6710 or email watkinstrenton1@gmail.com.





Sales - Parts - Service - Rentals

Stewart's Equipment Stayner Location:

6837 ON-26, Stayner, Corner of 26 & Center line Rd
ON, LOM 1S0 **705-428-3132**

Erin Location:

9410 Wellington Rd 124, Erin,
Corner of 124 & 24 ON,
NOB1T0 **519-833-9616**

Cookstown Location:

4321 Line 13, Cookstown,
Corner of 27 & line 13 ON,
LOL1L0 **705-458-0871**

Certified Parts, Sales, & Service

Factory Trained Technicians

"The Stewart's Way" is our commitment to doing business the right way — with accountability, knowledge, and long-term relationships at the centre of every decision. We are here to know more, care more and give more.

Stewart's Equipment Spring Open Houses

Cookstown

Saturday April 25th
9am - 3pm
4321 Line 13,
Cookstown,
LOL 1L0

Erin

Saturday May 2nd
9am - 3pm
9410 Wellington
Road 124, Erin,
NOB 1T0

Stayner

Saturday May 9th
9am - 3pm
6837 Hwy 26 East,
Stayner,
LOM 1S0,

Event Highlights:

- **Meet Factory Reps:** Talk to Kubota factory experts and get all your questions answered.
- **Extra Discounts:** Take advantage of exclusive savings on Kubota equipment during the BIG ORANGE EVENT!
- **Equipment Maintenance Seminars:** Get pro advice on how to properly maintain your gear.
- **Live Demos:** Try out Kubota equipment in our demo areas and find the perfect fit for your needs.
- **Fun for All Ages:** Face painting, toys of all sizes, and fun activities for kids and adults.



BIG SAVINGS AT THE KUBOTA BIG ORANGE EVENT

Don't Wait—Save NOW! Now is the perfect time to save big! With the **Kubota BIG ORANGE EVENT**, you'll get **extra discounts** on Kubota equipment.

STEWARTSEQUIP.COM

Erin 519-833-9616
Cookstown 705-458-0871
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from all of us at Farm View

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Serving the Agricultural communities of Simcoe and Dufferin Counties and the Regions of York, Peel and Muskoka.
As well as farm communities in Grey, Bruce, Victoria, Durham, Wellington and Haliburton Counties.

**Farm View
is proud to
support**



Community
Events



email: farmview@on.aibn.com web: www.farmviewonline.com