

Since 1977

# FARM VIEW

A newspaper with something for everyone | June 2026 | Volume 49 #06



A moment of pure joy was captured at the 2026 Youth Forum Beef Show as Josie Crawford reacted after being named among the top winners in her class with her heifer, "Crawfdawn Lucy 06N." The pair went on to earn Reserve Best Jackpot Heifer honours and were also named Champion Shorthorn Heifer.

Complimentary copy for the FARM household

**Inside this issue: Ontario Forage Network; Bale Grazing and Cover Crop Grazing · Farm Equipment Safety on Rural Roads · Youth Forum Beef Show · Update from Clearview ROAR on the proposed A-OTHR sites · Reports from Simcoe County 4-H Clubs · Inspiration from Spring Quilt Shows**

# 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.

## June 14th: News and Advertising Deadline

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

## June 24th: Program announcement for E.D.G.E.

Elmvale District Garden Enthusiasts' June 24th open Meeting: Photography-Tips and Tricks with Melaine Robitaille-MWORDS. Elmvale Legion at 7 John Street. Lift available as we meet upstairs at 7 pm. Guests always welcome. Lug your mug and bring a friend.

## 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.

## June 27th & 28th: Kawartha Antique Power Show

The 46th Kawartha Antique Power Show is the biggest annual event of the Kawartha Antique Power Club. Taking place Saturday and Sunday June 27th and 28th at Lindsay Exhibition Fair Grounds, 354 Angeline St. S. Lindsay, ON Ticket information and more **details in the ad on page 8**.

## July 6th - 9th: NSSCIA Summer Bus Trip

The 48th Annual NSSCIA Summer Bus Trip to Kingston will take place July 6th to 9th, 2026. Cost is \$800 per person and includes meals and accommodations. To reserve a spot, contact Nicole Cross at nsimcoesoilncrop@gmail.com.

## July 9th: SCFA Annual Summer BBQ

Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture annual summer BBQ will take place on Thursday July 9th at 873 Line 3 South, Oro-Medonte. Ticket information and more **details in the ad on page 6**.

## Stewart L. Page Scholarships Available

The Stewart L. Page Scholarships in Agriculture and Home Economics, contributed primarily by people and organizations in North Simcoe, are offered annually in recognition of the guidance Stewart L. Page provided in the development of agriculture and rural life during his years as Agricultural Representative for North Simcoe from 1925 to 1967.

The scholarship is open to residents of North Simcoe who have lived in the area for at least one year at the time of application, have attained an acceptable Grade 12 standing as required by their selected college or university, and wish to enrol in an approved agriculture, veterinary, or home economics-related degree or diploma program. Eligible programs may be offered at Kemptville, Ridgetown, Alfred, the University of Guelph, or any similar institution with a course approved by the committee.

Applications are available from school guidance departments or by contacting Myrna Jones at myrna.jones48@gmail.com.

## Stayner Kinsmen Duck Races



Photo by Don Beaulieu

This decorated duck entry from Stewart's Equipment joined 2000 rubber ducks and 200 corporate decorated ducks during the Stayner Kinsmen Duck Races at Centennial Park, where families enjoyed live music, food, games and the annual races.

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Check out the Ag Directory on page 18.

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# Ontario Forage Network Presents: Extend Your Grazing Season with Cover Crop Grazing

By Cathy Hamill-Hill

Cover Crop grazing can extend grazing season. With the price of diesel now, feeding livestock pasture is good for the finances on the farm.

Three grazing mentors shared their experiences in a recent seminar in the Extended Grazing series by the Ontario Forage Council.

Joe Dickenson is a cow/calf to finish beef farmer in the Chatham-Kent area. He has been a Feedlot Director of the Beef Farmers of Ontario since 2020 and has been a professor at Lambton College since September of 2021, and at the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus since October of 2022.

He opened his section with an explanation that there are “cool” season plants that grow in the cool seasons of the year and “warm” season plants like sorghum, corn and millet that grow best in the warm time of the year.

Cool season plants grow well in early spring. Red clover planted on a stand of wheat in the spring will be a good cover crop the next spring. “Red clover is an excellent fixer of nitrogen, but one must be really careful of bloat (in livestock),” he stressed adding that producers that plant red clover need a plan to make it work. Fall Rye, according to this farmer, “really likes wet, cold climates that come with early spring,” Dickenson said.

The key point to remember is that cool season cover crops “will give us feed in the

early start of the year. They are here for a good time, not a long time,” he said.

Warm season plants like sorghum and millet mature later and are growing well by mid-summer.

Fall cover crops for grazing is about how to stretch the pasture out “as long as possible”. Dickenson suggested “grazing stubble” meaning the residue after a crop is taken off. Grazing alfalfa fields in the fall means being watchful of the killing frost for protection of the crop for next year. “Move the final cut of alfalfa using machines or livestock to 6 weeks prior to the killing frost. Last three weeks after a cut, the (alfalfa) needs to get regrowth to insulate itself and the final 3 weeks the plant needs to build up its root system to get through the winter.” Fall grazing of sorghum means being “very careful of frost because once this crop has frost, it can cause nitrate poisoning for about a week after. Oats, peas and barley are other fall cover crops and will continue to grow until it is close to 0°C.

Mike Swindersky is from the Melancthon area and manages the Grey Dufferin Community Pasture. Mike and his wife Amber established their farm in 2003 after completing Agricultural programs at the University of Guelph. Mike has spent the past 18 years improving the farm’s land while raising and growing their flock of

sheep supported by Amber who has experience in the animal nutrition industry.

He opened his segment up by shattering the “there is no fence there” standard reason why crop fields are not considered for being grazed. “Solving the perimeter fence issue” can be done with specialized equipment. A hydraulic wire winder is used extensively in western Canada and farmers “are still using that \$50 roll of wire because it rolls it up easy and the wire can be re-used over and over and over,” Swindersky said.

“Range Ward” is a self-contained unit that winds up wire. “This was designed by grazers for grazers,” he explained. Videos can be found on YouTube using equipment that can be pulled behind an ATV or the smallest model, in a wheelbarrow. This “will unwind wire up to 4 wires at a time WHILE you drive.” There is also netting that can be added to a field that will hold in smaller livestock like sheep.

Feed cost is the main cost on livestock farms. “The daily cost of grazing is generally half the actual cost of stored feed,” he stressed.

Birgit Martin farms with her husband, Jim, and two sons, Nick and Alex, on western Manitoulin Island. “The farm operation has a cow-calf through-to-finish system where we produce both grain-finished and grass-finished beef for our brand, Pure Island Beef.

We also custom graze 300–400 steers each summer. Grazing is critical to the entire operation,” Martin explained.

“Cool season plant growth season is at odds with livestock demand,” she said adding that “lower growth rate is later when livestock is bigger, bigger calves, bigger stockers and less feed,” she said.

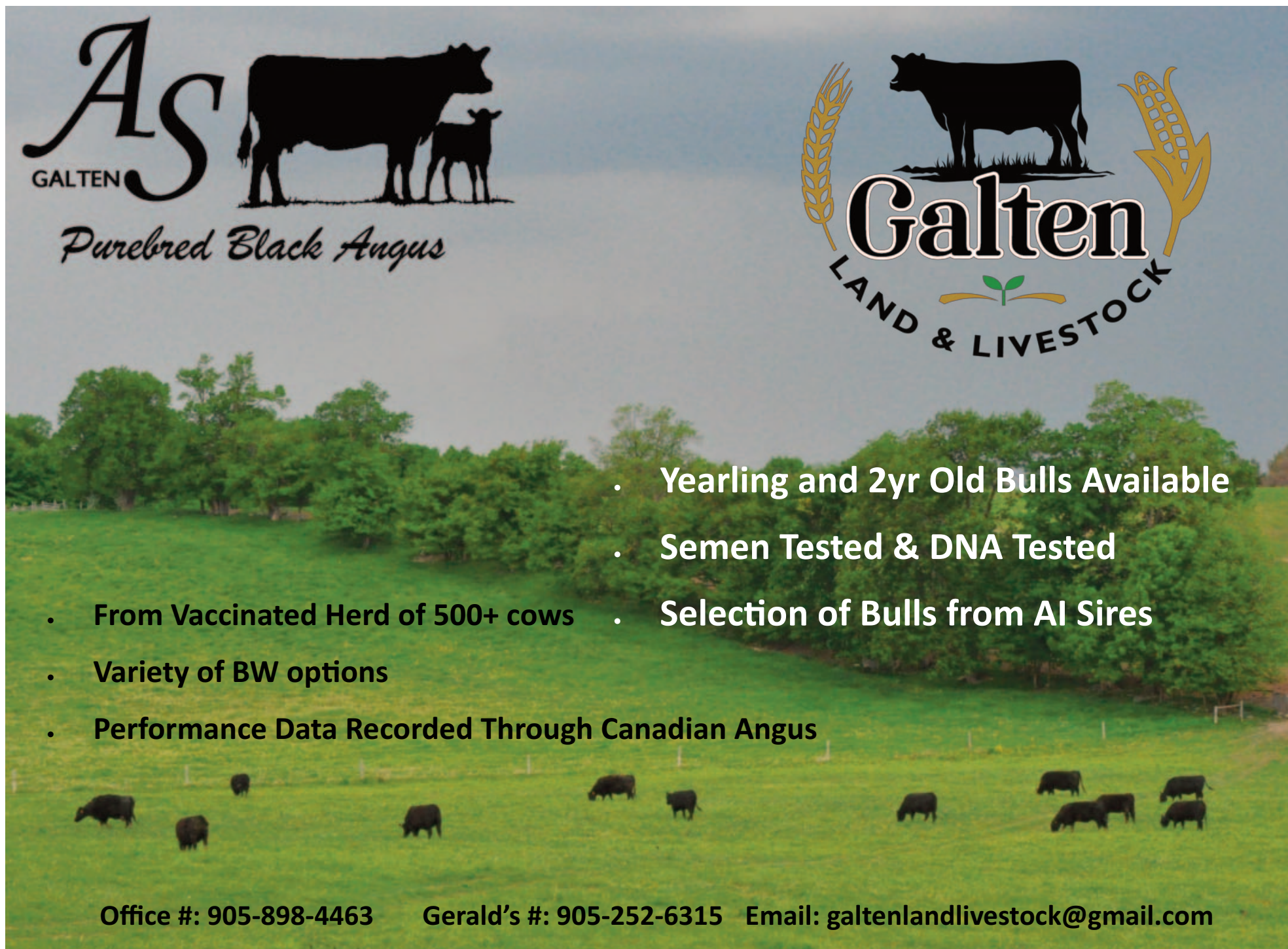
To make up for this less feed on pastures, Martin says her farm adds in hay acres “we bring hay fields in our grazing rotation.” This allows for full regrowth of pasture acres and allows for stockpiles of extra pasture for late fall or early spring.

Clover fields is one of the farm’s most used cover crops, however, strict management protocols keep the cattle safe. Grazing clover is a leading cause of bloat in cattle. “We put cattle into alfalfa or red clover fields and have no bloat concerns because we put the cattle into these pastures when the pasture is dry- not in the morning. We wait until the dew is off. We only put the cattle in when they are full and not hungry,” she explained.

“Crude protein and energy levels are higher with grazing than with stored feed,” Martin said citing studies being done.

Cover crop grazing is for sure another option for livestock owners to extend the grazing season.

Read about Bale Grazing from the Ontario Forage Network on page 11.



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## Turning a Negative into a Positive

By Paul Bootsma - Policy Advisor for Christian Farmers Federation Of Ontario

In 1972, the federal government expropriated 18,600 acres of land, much of it being prime farmland in North Pickering for a second Toronto airport, that was never built, sparking over 50 years of resistance. Following long-term advocacy, the Government declared in 2025 that an airport will not be built. Transport Canada became the new owners of this massive chunk of land, since they were the airport planners.

On January 27, 2025, the Federal Government officially cancelled all plans for the Pickering Airport and is instead looking at transferring some of the remaining lands to the Rouge National Urban Park

The impact of this expropriation on numerous families has led to significant uncertainty, particularly for those who have established businesses and communities on these lands. Additionally, the management of these prime agricultural soils has not been optimized to maintain their quality. Several past instances of Government land expropriation have been inadequately handled, raising concerns about the preparedness for the reasons behind such actions. This prompts a crucial inquiry into the extent of acreage the Government has acquired using taxpayer funds without achieving successful outcomes.

There was great opposition from the public to the idea of another airport in this area, and subsequently decisions on what to do with some of the land changed plans. 9900 acres were transferred to Parks Canada to become part of the Rouge National Urban Park. The fact is that the Federal Government's plan failed for whatever reason, including poor planning and foresight. Just because the original plan failed does not give the Federal Government the okay to just do something differently with the land. It should go back to previous owners (relatives) and stay in agriculture.

Recently the CFFO sent a letter to

the Minister of Transportation Canada, stating that the land should remain in agriculture. Not only that, but it should go into private ownership for long-term profitability. This is a great opportunity for the Federal Government to show support for the agri-food industry by developing a program for new farmers.

The Federal Government clearly needs to devise a plan for the land in question, especially considering the substantial public investment that has yet to yield tangible results. Recently, in January, the Government concluded no further considerations for an airport at this site and is instead exploring options that would substantially reduce agricultural land. While some of these areas have been designated as Park Land, adding to the Rouge National Urban Park which is commendable a considerable portion is also earmarked for residential development.

This presents an excellent opportunity for both Federal and Provincial Governments to demonstrate their commitment to agriculture and food production. Given that this land has historically been used for agricultural purposes, it is essential that it continues to serve that function. The agri-food industry is in need of new young individuals to be able to establish farm businesses within this industry. There are many who have a strong interest in agriculture but do not have an entry point.

To address this need, we should implement a new program targeting aspiring farmers not only those from farming families but also those interested in entering the agricultural sector who may not yet be directly involved. Farm Credit Canada (FCC), the Federal Government's lending institution, can provide financing to these new entrepreneurs through a structured ten-year plan. Initially, they would receive credit and incur rental charges. If they maintain sound financial management over the decade, they would then be eligible for a loan to purchase the property,

which would be bundled with the financial package. FCC has the expertise necessary to establish a program that facilitates applications from new farmers and assess the progress of each emerging farm business.

Furthermore, it is crucial for the provincial government to advocate for this type of initiative with their federal counterparts. Additionally, our Provincial Agriculture Minister must take an active role in ensuring that these lands remain dedicated to agricultural use. What an opportunity to invest in agriculture, bring in some new 'sweat' and ideas, and ensure that this industry will carry on for generations to come.

### Welcome to the first annual AgriTourism Survey!

As a partnership, Tourism HR Canada, the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council and Food Processing Skills Canada will be diving into the issues affecting those who offer agritourism along side their agriculture or food and beverage processing operations.

By responding to the survey, your voice is being heard. This research will identify the challenges facing this ever growing sector of our industry and provide opportunity for collaboration, program development and policy recommendations.

Your time and responses are very valuable to us. Thank you in advance for participating. Find the survey here <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/8804339/AgriTourism-EN>

Tourism HR Canada

Cover photo by Cathy Hamill-Hill

Ad/News DEADLINE for the July Farm View is June 14th.

### Farm View is available at the following agricultural businesses

ALLIANCE AGRI-TURF in Ivy, Bolton, Fenelon Falls, Baxter and Lindsay  
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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.

If you would prefer to have The Farm View mailed directly to your home, one-year subscriptions are available for \$45. For more information or to subscribe, contact Roslyn at 705-722-0138, by mail at 8 Luella Blvd., Minesing, ON L9X 0W7, or by email at [farmview@on.aibn.com](mailto:farmview@on.aibn.com).

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

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### In memory of Jill Beischer

Farm View attempts to present a forum for varying points of view from the agricultural community. Editorial opinions are freely expressed by individual authors.

"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*

### 2026 ADVERTISING RATES

Full Page.	\$995./month
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1/16 Page	\$100./month
Business Card	\$88./month
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Please visit [www.farmviewonline.com](http://www.farmviewonline.com) or call Roslyn at 705-722-0138 for rate reductions based on frequency.

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

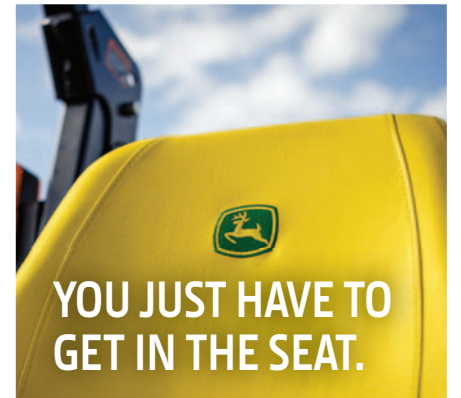


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## Farm Equipment Safety on Rural Roads



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As spring planting gets underway, motorists can expect to see more farm equipment on rural roads, a trend that continues through summer wheat harvest and fall harvest activities. Tractors, combines, sprayers, and wagons are essential tools of agriculture, but they also create unique challenges for motorists who may not be familiar with sharing the road with large, slow-moving equipment. Road safety is a shared responsibility, and both farmers and drivers play an important role in preventing accidents.

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) continues to remind motorists that the orange Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) sign displayed on farm equipment means the vehicle is travelling at 40 kilometres per hour or less. While it can be frustrating to be delayed behind farm machinery, patience and caution are critical. The gap between a vehicle and farm

equipment closes much faster than many drivers expect, especially on rural roads where speed limits are higher.

Slow moving vehicles are significantly more likely to be involved in fatal collisions per kilometre travelled than other motor vehicles. Many of these incidents occur when motorists attempt unsafe passing maneuvers or when farm equipment is entering, exiting, or crossing roadways.

Farm equipment operators also have a responsibility to ensure their machinery is road ready. OFA recommends that farmers conduct daily safety inspections, ensure lights and signals are functioning properly, and keep SMV signs clean and visible. Proper lighting and reflective markings are especially important during low light conditions and busy harvest periods.

One common misconception is that farm equipment should drive on the shoulder to allow traffic to pass. However, shoulders are often unstable and may not safely support heavy machinery. In many cases, it is safer for farm equipment to remain on the travelled portion of the roadway while motorists wait for a safe opportunity to pass.

Motorists should also remember that farm machinery may need extra room to make wide turns into farm lanes or fields. Passing a tractor or combine that is preparing to turn can have devastating consequences. Maintaining a safe following distance and watching for turn signals can help prevent collisions.

Ontario's farmers rely on rural roads to grow and transport the food, fuel, fibre, and flowers we all depend on. Whether behind the wheel of a tractor or a passenger vehicle, everyone shares the same goal, arriving home safely.

For additional road safety information and transportation resources, visit [www.ofa.on.ca](http://www.ofa.on.ca)

## Stewart's Equipment Welcomes Visitors to Cookstown Open House

Story and photos by Andrej Baca

Despite rainy weather and muddy fields, visitors still turned out for the Stewart's Equipment Cookstown Open House to enjoy food and refreshments, inspect the latest equipment, kick a few tires, and perhaps even make a purchase.

With locations in Stayner, Erin, and Cookstown, Stewart's Equipment has the depth of experience and resources to help customers find the equipment best suited to their needs. Backed by three generations and more than 71 years in the agricultural, construction, snow removal, landscaping, and estate property equipment industries, the team is prepared to support customers looking for both new and pre-owned machinery.

The business traces its roots back to Thanksgiving weekend in 1955, when Jeff Stewart and Ed Stewart took over a single-bay garage in Osprunge, Erin, Ontario. What began as a repair shop and feed supply business serving local farmers has grown into a trusted equipment provider known for knowledgeable sales staff, dependable parts support, timely service, and rental options.

Today, Stewart's Equipment continues to supply Kubota, New Holland, and a wide range of other farm and construction equipment, all just a phone call or visit away.



Jeff Stewart, president of Stewart's Equipment, at left, welcomes Jim Melo of Melo's Landscaping during the Stewart's Equipment Open House in Cookstown, where visitors gathered to view equipment, enjoy refreshments, and connect with industry professionals.



Greeting visitors at the Stewart's Equipment Open House are Karin (left), comptroller, and Julie from administration, welcoming guests as they arrived to enjoy the day's events in Cookstown.



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## Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture Summer BBQ

### When Emergencies Happen: Be Prepared

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# Youth Forum Showcases Passion, Leadership and the Future of the Beef Industry

Story and photos by Cathy Hamill-Hill

The 2026 Youth Forum Beef Show in Lindsay once again highlighted the dedication, enthusiasm and passion of young cattle exhibitors from across Ontario and beyond. Throughout the event, exhibitors demonstrated not only their skills in the show ring, but also the strong connections they share with their animals. The event also emphasized the importance of encouraging the next generation of agricultural leaders. With experienced judges and exhibitors from a variety of backgrounds in attendance, Youth Forum continues to serve as an important event for developing knowledge, leadership and a passion for the cattle industry among young people.



These were the top winners in the Showmanship classes at the 2026 Youth Forum Beef Show for the 8 years and under class. From left to right are Logan Leahy from Lakefield, Tyson Sutcliffe from Pontypool, Jase Lasby from Shelburne, Jayden Lasby from Shelburne and Kinsley Driscoll from McNab/ Braeside Township. Beside the young show people is the Showmanship and Conformation Judge, Heather Welper from Valley View, Texas, USA. The judge, along with her husband, raise and sell registered show cattle specializing in Herefords and raised the 2026 Fort Worth Stock Show Grand Champion Hereford Steer.



Pictured above is Paige Doyle from Coldwater showing her flashy Angus/Charolais heifer named "Peggy Sue" in the Jackpot Heifer class at the Youth Forum Beef show held in Lindsay.



Shelby Crawford is pictured above with her Simmental heifer, "Holt MS Sonora 508N," competing in the Jackpot Heifer Class. She later went on to win Reserve Champion Simmental Heifer.



In the photo at left is Rebecca Hoskin, on the right, who came to the Youth Forum show to support her sister, Emily Honey from Warkworth. Emily is pictured here holding her Angus heifer, Merit Flora 5013 N.



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# Fun Farm Science looks at turning the tide on drought: Australian farmers grow food with desalinated seawater

Report by our curious reporter Don Beaulieu

Farming vegetables in the desert with seawater is a bad idea. Usually. But not if you're Sundrop Farms in Australia. This indoor facility was born in 2014 when researchers wanted to create a farm that could produce crops without resources that might get scarcer in the future. These included soil, fresh water, and an over-reliance on the grid for electricity.

As a world-first, the gigantic greenhouse was built in the South Australian desert. The plants grow in coconut husks and soak up plenty of sunlight and seawater. This might sound harmful, but thanks to a desalination process that happens on-site, the seawater is fresh and safe for the crops. The plants are also pampered with nutrients and sustainably sourced carbon dioxide. Solar panels produce most of the power, but a backup system connect-

ed to the grid ensures the well-being of the plants.

Sundrop Farms' original pilot facility desalinated seawater but did not return waste brine to Spencer Gulf. The brine was collected in ponds from which salt could be harvested. The company's brine management plan changed with its 20 hectare expansion in 2014. Sundrop Farms sought and received approval from the South Australian Environment Protection Authority to discharge waste brine into Spencer Gulf at a salinity of 60 parts per thousand. The expanded facility discharges its brine into the cooling water outflow channel previously used by the coal-fired Port Augusta power stations.

Environmental approval from the Commonwealth Government via referral under the EPBC Act (Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999) was not required of or sought by Sundrop Farms for this project. Sundrop Farms continues to investigate commercially viable solutions for the recovery of minerals from brine at a large scale.

When considering how to establish the operation they set out to rethink and repurpose how farming works, with the aim to lower environmental impact by replacing fossil fuel

usage. They use concentrated solar power to control the atmosphere within the greenhouse for heating and cooling. The farm has a heavily computerized system to manage the climate and lighting. Concentrated solar power replaces the majority of the conventional heating system.

The result? Sundrop Farms produces up to 18,739 tons (17,000 metric tonnes) of tomatoes every year. They grow and supply all the truss tomatoes to Coles (major food store chain) in Australia.



The Sundrop Farms greenhouses turn seawater and sunlight into energy and fresh water. No need for soil; produce is grown on land in arid areas too barren for traditional agriculture.



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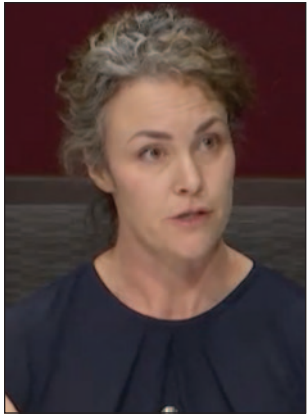
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# Senators Hear Concerns Over Loss of Farmland and Rural Voice

By Roslyn Watkins



Rachel Brooks, Clearview Township grain and sheep farmer, addressed the Senate, saying: "Today's world demands that agriculture do more with less, while the land base we work with continues to shrink."

Clearview Township farmer and rural advocate Rachel Brooks delivered a passionate warning to the Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, urging senators to recognize the growing threat that housing, infrastructure, energy and National Defence pose to Canada's limited supply of productive farmland.

Appearing before the committee during its May 7 hearing, Brooks introduced herself as a farmer, rural resident and advocate for agricultural land preservation in Ontario. Speaking from personal experience, she described operating a family farm in Clearview Township, an area known for its productive farmland and strong agricultural community.

Brooks explained that farming is not simply an occupation for her family, but a long-term commitment tied to food production, environmental stewardship and the economic stability of rural Ontario.

"In our community the pressure is eminently real," Brooks told senators. "Thousands of acres of highly productive farmland are at risk of disappearing due to the Department of National Defence Arctic Over-the-Horizon (A-OTH) Radar Project."

Brooks said her own family is among many directly impacted by the proposed project.

"As only one of the dozens of impacted parties, my family farms 1,500 acres," she said. "Of those acres, in one block we grow grain crops and raise over 600 lambs per year. One of the sectors we contribute to is working to increase domestic supply from an existing 35 per cent to 50 per cent by 2040. That growth, of course, depends on farmland which is a finite resource that is disappearing at an alarming rate."

Throughout her testimony, Brooks emphasized the importance of preserving farmland as Canada faces increasing pressures from industrial-scale infrastructure and energy projects. She warned senators that once prime agricultural land is lost, it cannot be replaced.

"Food-producing land is a finite resource," Brooks said, arguing that national food security must remain a priority as governments pursue major infrastructure expansion and climate-related initiatives.

"Only four per cent of Canada's land mass is arable land," Brooks said. "Twenty-five per cent of that is in Ontario and that land is disappearing at about 300 acres a day."

Brooks told senators her concerns intensified with the proposed Arctic Over-the-Horizon Radar Project in Clearview. This project would permanently alter the landscape, disrupt drainage systems and fragment farmland that has supported generations of farmers.

The discussion focused heavily on the impact of the A-OTH radar project in Clearview Township. Brooks said prime agricultural land, particularly high-quality Class 1 to 3 farmland, should be protected from permanent conversion.

She also raised concerns about potential environmental impacts, including effects on drainage systems and the nearby Minesing Wetlands. Brooks argued that altering natural water flow and removing farmland from production would have long-term consequences for both agriculture and surrounding ecosystems.

Throughout her remarks, Brooks stressed that opposition to the project is not rooted in resistance to National Defence, but rather concerns over what she described as inappropriate siting on valuable farmland. "If Clearview Township loses 4000 acres to the Department of National Defence (DND) it would mean losing approx. \$4.1 million dollars of its local GDP and 80 jobs."

A recurring theme during the hearing was frustration with consultation processes. She argued that communities like Clearview are being asked to shoulder major land-use changes without adequate local input or meaningful consultation. Brooks said many residents believe municipalities have little influence over final decisions despite being directly affected by the projects. At the time of this hearing, Clearview Township community and council members had requested a meeting with DND many times and have heard not received a meeting as of yet.

Senators questioned how governments can balance climate objectives, infrastructure expansion and farmland preservation. Brooks urged the committee to consider the broader implications for Canada's food security and rural sustainability.

She called for stronger agricultural impact assessments, clearer farmland protection policies and more meaningful consultation before projects are approved on productive agricultural land.

The Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry continues its study of issues affecting Canada's agricultural sector and rural communities.

"The issue is not whether development happens," Brooks told the committee in substance. "It is where it happens, how it happens and whether rural communities are truly being heard."

You can watch the hearing in its entirety at <https://senparl.vu.parl.gc.ca/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/Power-BrowserV2/20260504/-1/15254>

Follow Clearview ROAR (Resident Owners Against Radar) on Facebook for updates and to show your support.

## A-OTH Radar Sites: Clarification and Update

By Terri Jackman

Many of you may have seen, or heard about, a recent Canadian Press article, Federal government dismisses calls for radar sites to remain as farmland by Kyle Duggan, carried in news outlets such as CTV and the Toronto Star, stating that the federal government is rejecting calls to relocate the proposed A-OTH radar installations in Southern Ontario.

We want to point out that this article refers only to land that has already been purchased by the federal government for the Preliminary Receive Site in Clearview Township and the transmitter site in Kawartha Lakes. It does not mention that all potentially affected lands in Clearview have been finalized, acquired, or removed from consideration.

Unfortunately, there appear to be some reports circulating suggesting that "all 4,000 acres are lost" or that the fight is over. That is simply not accurate based on the Canadian Press article.

Clearview ROAR and many concerned residents, farmers, and supporters continue to actively oppose the building of this project on prime agricultural land and ecologically connected lands surrounding the Minesing Wetlands. We remain deeply concerned about the long-term impacts on:

- Prime farmland and food security
- Hydrology and groundwater systems
- Ecologically sensitive lands connected to the Minesing Wetlands

The future viability of family farms and rural communities

Our efforts with elected officials, legal advisors, environmental organizations, media, and public awareness initiatives are ongoing. We continue to advocate strongly that Clearview Township is the wrong location for additional A-OTH Receive Sites and that alternatives must still be seriously considered.

While the article may sound discouraging at first glance, it does not change the fact that many important questions remain unanswered and many processes are still unfolding.

Please continue sharing accurate information, supporting one another, and staying engaged. Your voices continue to matter.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment and support.

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## ICAW Celebrated in Utopia with 2026 “Taste-to-Grow” Garden Season Launch Event

Story and photos by Roslyn Watkins

International Compost Awareness Week (ICAW) is the largest global education initiative for the organics recycling industry. It highlights the importance of turning organic waste into nutrient-rich soil and raising awareness about sustainable waste management practices.



Volunteer Hailey helps Ethan Trebble of Essa Township dig into the soil at the community event as he plants a pumpkin seed, learning firsthand how healthy soil and composting help grow food he can take home and enjoy.

The event is celebrated annually during the first full week of May and brings attention to the environmental benefits of composting. It focuses on reducing methane emissions from landfills and promoting more sustainable agricultural systems through the recycling of organic materials.

ICAW serves as an important platform for educating communities, businesses, and policymakers about the value of composting and its role in building healthier soils and more resilient food systems.

In support of this initiative, Utopia Hall celebrated the 2026 veggie-growing garden season launch with the “Taste-to-Grow” Free Community Celebration on Sunday, May 3, 2026, at Utopia Hall, 8396 6th Line, Utopia, Essa Township. The event ran from 1:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. and invited the community to sample garden-inspired foods ranging from soups and salads to mains and desserts, showing how a thriving garden can support a full plate.

The celebration emphasized that every great garden begins with healthy soil. Participants learned about composting, soil health, and practical gardening techniques while gathering ideas and inspiration for the upcoming growing season. The event also encouraged families and children to get involved in gardening, highlighting how backyard harvests can support fresh, seasonal meals and sustainable living through the summer and beyond.

For more information on composting visit <https://www.compost.org>



Essa Deputy Mayor, Michael Smith, stopped in at the event to show his support of International Compost Awareness Week and chat with friend and volunteer Robert, at right.



Volunteers Donald and Lori had a great time manning the information booth.



Kim Keckes, owner of Moon-dance Gardens, was on hand at the event answering questions and encouraging attendees, stating, “We need more people growing more food!”

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## Ontario Forage Network Presents: Extend Your Grazing Season with Bale Grazing

By Cathy Hamill-Hill

Bale Grazing is placing bales on the ground in a field where livestock can access them. Livestock access is often controlled by electric fence to portions of the fields where the bales are set out. Bale grazing is a hot topic with some farmers believing it has real positives and some farmers believing it is not a good plan.

Chris Moore is a sheep farmer with a 200-producing-ewe operation near the Ottawa Valley who considers his experiences with bale grazing “a cautionary tale.”

Moore decided to use bale grazing for ewe lambs in 2017. He later realized that the hay he had chosen was “too coarse” for sheep. “It was a disaster!” he summarized of his first experience. The problems started because the lambs were not trained to electric fencing, and they also did not do well on the offered hay. The experience left the sheep in low body condition, which impacted their conception rates. Further, the hay was “more refused” than usual, leaving a large amount of waste. The wasted hay eventually killed the grass beneath it, leaving only weeds.

While Bale Grazing itself didn’t work the first time, it did lead to “lessons learned”. Moore advised that bales should be unrolled and then there is “more bunk space” meaning the sheep can spread out and they will consume more hay. This “rolling out” keeps the wasted hay to a minimum and prevents weed growth.

“We tip bales into woods in a sheltered area,” in the spring with mature sheep he says explaining his new way of Bale Grazing. In the woods, the sheep can keep their feet dry and standing in mud is avoided.

Dean Cober of Owen Sound in Grey County is pro-Bale Grazing. He and his family have a maternal Red Angus cow/calf herd. “Bale grazing keeps the cows off the barnyard,” he says adding its ideal for improving part of his operation that he says is described as “scrubby land”.

This “scrubby land” had its last hay crop in 1994. It has gone back to the wild with

“scrub brush growing up to 8 to 10 feet high”. With a brush mulcher, some of the property has been cleared to put down hay bales for grazing. “A nearby property has one cut of hay that is delayed because of (being grassland habitat for nesting) birds. The hay is good quality and has more seed quantity.”

When the hay comes in from the field, Cober takes off all the strings of the bales. He positions electric fence to give the cattle a “pasture paddock” of bales each day.

“We move the paddocks on foot. It is too wet for the 4-wheeler. We put out enough bales so cattle are not competing too much. We got big, bossy cows. The cows will move the bales around,” he said. Adding they usually bale graze in the fall.

Once the bale is eaten, the cows can go back and use any residue as a lie-down space. “This adds in dry matter and manure distribution to the field,” he added. He stressed again bale grazing keeps the cows out of the barnyard where he has to then clean it out adding to his workload.

At the end of the season, the grass cover is improved from bale grazing and that area is clear of the brush, both wins he says for his operation.

A question in the chat was about not using any controls to livestock getting access to the full bale. “Livestock will fill up on the “cotton candy” (best parts of the bales) and forget about the “Potatoes” (average part of the bale) and go through the whole thing in no time,” Moore warned.

Cober added, “they (cattle) will make a mess if they get to a full bale.”

Ontario Ministry of Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) Grazing Specialist Christine O’Reilly hosted the meeting. She stressed that in years when there is no extra hay, “it is not a good year to do bale grazing.”

To learn more about the Ontario Forage Network and watch the webinar series, visit [www.onforagenetwork.ca](http://www.onforagenetwork.ca)

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## Simcoe County 4-H is in full swing for 2026!

Reports and photos submitted by Simcoe County 4-H

### South Simcoe 4-H Hiking Club

By Parker Beaudry

On March 28th, the South Simcoe 4-H Hiking Club met for the first time for a hike in Midhurst. The group met at the Midhurst trail head located at the Simcoe County District School Board office. When we were all gathered, we said the 4-H pledge and started hiking. The trail was mostly covered by trees but at some points there were clearings where we had to regroup and pick a path on which to go forward. At one point in the hike, we arrived at a clearing that had a train trestle bridge over the trail. Suddenly a train came by and we waved to the conductor who waved back at us. In this area we did our election of officers for the club. In some sections the trail was steep so we had to hold onto ropes to help us navigate the trail. On the hike we saw birds and other wildlife that live in this area including the chickadee and the common crow. At the end of the meeting we talked about the land acknowledgment and closed the meeting with the 4-H motto.

Hike for hospice, a great community event! On May 3rd, the South Simcoe 4-H Hiking club participated in the Hike for Hospice event at the Sheldon Creek Farm. This hike supports the Matthew's House Hospice Foundation. There were a variety of activities to do including live music, a barbecue

### South Simcoe 4-H Cooking Club

By Anna Kamminga

The 2026 season has begun for the South Simcoe 4-H Cooking Club, this year we are focusing on cooking with Canadian Dairy. We have begun to cook up some amazing dishes including tea biscuits, yogurt, mac and cheese, ranch dressing, quiches, and cheese cake. We have been focusing on recipes using Canadian Dairy to support our local farmers. We have also learned lots of different techniques in cooking like folding our tea biscuits, otherwise known as laminating, we also learned how to make delicious whip cream, balancing our flavors, and improving our knife skills. Another important technique we are learning is adapting flavours and textures to suit the preferences of our family, this ensures that our meals are eaten and limiting food waste.



Some of the club favourites have been mac and cheese. Also, a lot of us loved the cheese cake, choosing many different toppings.

Our next meeting we will be touring Sheldon Creek where we get to learn about the business/entrepreneurial side of the Dairy Industry as well as processing on a larger scale. We are so excited to see what we cook up next.



4-H Hiking Club

lunch and children's activities. The South Simcoe 4-H community Involvement club was also at this event volunteering to run some of the activities. The hiking part of this event had 3 distances, an accessible route, a 1.5 kilometer route and a 2.8 kilometer route. After the hike we had lunch which was a choice of a hotdog, hamburger, veggie burger or a sausage on a bun with chili. Overall it was a great day for a hike and all our members really enjoyed it. This event raised over \$184,000 for Matthew's House Hospice Foundation. We hope to see lots of 4-H members at this event next year!

### 4-H South Simcoe Poultry Club

By Catherine Reid

At the first meeting of the South Simcoe 4-H poultry club, we had so much fun. We did a roll call-get-to-know-you game with a parachute. We also played some other really fun games with the parachute! Then we did elections. Afterwards, we talked about what to do, and how to get your chickens. We discussed the upcoming Fur and Feather events. Then, sadly the meeting was coming to an end, but we still had a little more time, so we played another super fun game, human knot. It was getting late, so we had a delicious snack and adjourned the meeting. It was great!



At the second meeting of the South Simcoe 4-H poultry club, we got to see a variety of different animals and lots of poultry at Brampton Fairgrounds Fur and Feather! We met at 9:00am. We looked around at all the animals and talked to the vendors for a while. Some members went home with new animals! We also went around and promoted our upcoming event - Fur & Feather B/S/T at the GNE fairgrounds - June 27 2026. It was so cool to see all the animals!

Continued on page 13

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Simcoe County 4-H reports continued from page 12.

### Beeton-Bradford 4-H Dairy Club

By Brooklynn Downey

On April 19, 2026 we had our first Beeton-Bradford dairy club meeting. Trish Downey hosted it at her house, and our leaders are Trish Downey, Kathleen Aylard-Arseneau, and Brian Fieldhouse. We started off the meeting with a roll call of saying our name then our favorite dairy product. We then moved on to a game of icebreakers. The game we played was we got a word taped to our back and we got hints about this word and we had to try and guess it. After we finished the icebreakers game we moved on to jeopardy. We learned different facts about dairy breeds, herd management, anatomy, and more! We then did elections where Krysta as President, Alexis as Vice President, Anna as Secretary, and Brooklynn as News Reporter. We then did a name the body part on the cow sheet to help familiarize the cows body parts. After we took the sheet up, we talked about what we would like to learn this year. Some things that were said were clipping, judging your calf, and how to make ice cream. We said the pledge and motto. Finally we finished the meeting off with cookies and juice, and we adjourned our very first dairy meeting of the 2026 year.

### North Simcoe 4-H Crops Club

By Olivia Livingston

The first North Simcoe Crops club meeting was held at Steve's shop on Sunday April 19. Our meeting began with a fun game of bingo where we walked around to get to know each other and check off one of our squares with something we learned about them! We then had guest speakers Wayne Simpson and Joel Bagg from quality seeds come and talk to us about different hay seeds and forages you can plant as well as when and what some of those plants require to live. Following that we moved across the shop and looked at some hay samples. We talked about how to judge hay then took a chance to look at the samples and pick through them a bit. Thank you to Steve Jones for hosting and to Wayne Simpson and Joel Bagg for coming out to speak to us!

### South Simcoe Cookstown 4-H Beef Club

By Karly Worobec

On May 13th at 7:07 pm, the Cookstown 4-H Beef Club had their second meeting. The meeting was joined by guest speaker Brian Llewelly from Grand Valley Fortifiers. We covered popular Beef breeds in Canada. We discussed some factors about cross breeding and important characteristics for Beef. Had a brief discussion of what and how much to feed our show cows. We did a mock judging using showsticks. We discussed the day for the next meeting and who was attending the Schomberg Fair. The meeting was closed at 9:00 pm.

### 4-H Book Club

By Brooklynn Downey

On April 30th we had our very first book club meeting. To start we played some icebreakers games. Then we chatted about our theme this year: Canadian Authors. We decided on Gordon Korman as our Canadian author and we are going to read his book, I want to go home. We then played a game of charades of book characters like Garfield, Draco Malfoy, and Jameson Hawthorne. We finished with book jeopardy. Soon we closed off the meeting with elections and snacks. Congrats to Anna as our president, Victoria as our Vice President, Krysta as our secretary, and Brooklynn as our News Reporter. We can't wait for our next meeting!

### South Simcoe 4-H Veterinarian Club

By Olivia Livingston

The South Simcoe Vet Club had the chance to go to Seneca college to talk about parasites in large animals. Sue Gourley, who is an RVT at Seneca college, walked us around the barns and the examination rooms where we saw many interesting and new things Vet students work on. The vet club was later invited back two weeks later where we then talked about small animals parasites. Seneca college had prepared for us to do some fecal egg counts of either your own sample or one that was provided. It was really cool to see how it works and what to look for. Huge thank you to Sue Gourley for her time and Seneca college for having us!



### North Simcoe 4-H Sheep Club

By Olivia Livingston

The North Simcoe Sheep Club had their first meeting Thursday April 30th at ODAS Park. We started with roll call which was "what is your favorite sheep breed?" The club chatted about ways to fundraise. Elections were held, then we soon got into an activity Ashley organized for the group. We played games to identify sheep breeds, parts of a sheep, and a basic sheep knowledge quiz.

### South Simcoe 4-H Sheep Club

By Olivia Livingston

The South Simcoe Sheep Club held their second meeting of the year on April 29th. The meeting started by blindly picking a type of barn to build a miniature model of as a team as well as to make personal floor plans for how we would like them to look if we had that type of structure. The different barns included a coverall, bank barn, and a pasture shed. It was an amazing team bonding experience and very fun to think about how we would design our own layout. Thank you to Chris and Leo Atkinson for hosting!



### South Simcoe 4-H Fishing Club

By Olivia Livingston

The first two meetings for the South Simcoe Fishing club took place in late March - early April. The first meeting took place at Bass Pro shops/Cabelas. As a group we moved to the back of the store in the fishing section where we talked to Mike and Christy about different kinds of fish and what certain fish like. We then went to look at and discuss rods, lures, bait, and line. A huge thank you to Mike, Christy, and Holly from Cabelas! The second meeting we met at leader, Jackie's, place where Ryan taught us how to tie flies and we talked about different fish and facts about them. Thank you to Ryan for helping us, Jackie for hosting and Lynn McCallum for snacks!





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# After The Chores: Vehicles

By Cathy Hamill-Hill



We had to do the “new to us vehicle” replacement this past month. The one advantage of going through not-great experiences is the lessons we learn from them.

My first vehicle came with my first off-farm job. My sweet Dad knew I was longing for my own car. Dad also was a very difficult person to share a car with. He actually would get down on his knees and scrub hubcaps with a brush and foamy “Tide”. He drove around mud puddles like they were bombs and avoided sideroads because that made the car dirty again. The idea of me using his car to drive the few kilometres once per week in the evening for this tiny first job was just too much. I found a low priced many years from new Ford car ad in the newspaper. The seller immediately came out with the car and seemed a trustworthy kindly older man. The Ford was sky blue and it was a two door, it was love at first sight for me.

This old Ford had just over 100,000 miles on it- but the tattered seats were so low that it was an effort to crawl out of them. Dad bought the car that I wanted so much and declared, once I officially got this job, he “didn’t want it”. We each had paid for half of it. Dad then gave his half to me - that was how Dad operated, he was just the nicest guy except to share vehicles with. That old Ford didn’t seem to have much energy and we found out why later. The 100,000 miles on it was true, but the unknown was whether this was the second or third or fourth time around. The seller got in serious legal trouble from others for “backing up” mileage

counters in his business. Whenever I see a sky blue car with two big doors, I can remember that “first car” feeling of total independence.

I showed dairy goats and using my Dad’s truck meant I had to have that truck literally spotless within 12 hours of the goats leaving it. That truck is now owned by my brother and he still- decades later- has people wanting to purchase it. I had to sweep it out, then hose it out with water and then wash it out with foamy “Tide” with a brush and then rinse it out. And Dad checked- carefully after each use. If I missed a spot, I would be back out there with a bucket of water and a brush, fixing it. I decided I REALLY needed my own truck to show goats.

Through someone I knew, I got to buy a GMC Sierra truck from its original owner that had the same mindset as my Dad. This truck shone to the point it sparkled in the sunshine. It was midnight black with shiny chrome everywhere and it was a showpiece even in its 10th year. The seats were immaculate and it looked like the truck was never touched. I was beyond proud of it and parked it in the front field and dressed it up inside with show ribbons. I often went to visit the truck just to admire it sparkling in the sunshine. Dad told me to drive it but instead I continued to drive my old car.

The first goat show that spring was a buck show held at ODAS Park in Orillia. I decided this was going to be my “new” truck’s maiden voyage. My Dad and both my brothers had to help me push my one entry to show, in the truck. I had a 3 year old Sannen buck named Nazareth that was huge. Once his hoof touched the back of the truck, he froze in place, refusing to move. It took four of us to get him finally boarded. I was beyond happy and proud to leave home that day in my very own new decade old truck.

At ODAS Park, my (still to this day) dear friend Doris and another person had to help me haul Nazareth out of the truck as he again refused to move. Once on the ground, he

walked like an obedient dog despite being massive. That day, Nazareth went down in my history book as being one of the few times that I ever won a best in show title. I was walking on clouds, when Doris and I and the other person were huffing and puffing getting Nazareth finally back on my truck. We had to put a rope around his collar and with two pushing and one pulling, we managed to haul him in. With the big best in show trophy beside me, I could hardly wait to get home to share my incredible news.

I was almost out of ODAS Park, when I touched the brake for the exit- and no response. NO BRAKES was my realization and I did not know what to do. Nazareth, albeit a best in show winner, was not coming off that truck with just me involved. And if I could get him off the truck, who wants to transport and oversized buck goat in the backseat of a car? This was before cell phones. No choice I could see but go home.

I can tell you that it is not advisable to be driving 30 km/h top speed on Highway 12 on a weekend. When I get nervous driving, I slow down and this drive I was absolutely terrified. I expect all the words from the open mouths of drivers passing me, were not compliments. I kept the radio on high on a country music station so could hear nobody. The upright lone finger and the fist shaking at me did not make me feel any braver. My family was freaking out by the time I finally pulled my “new” truck in at home. After I got the bill paid for brake line replacements, my Dad gently explained this was why I needed to drive it, not just look at it, after I first got it.

We found a new-to-us vehicle finally last month. Its maiden distance voyage was a show, a Rabbit show in this decade of my life. I lined the back with blankets and asked the rabbits to please not share their fur.

As I drove past the ODAS Park intersection in the new-to-us vehicle, I thanked God I had brakes.

## Agricultural Anecdotes from Farmer Tim

There’s a funny thing that happens as you get older... the very things that used to drive you crazy about your parents start happening to you.

Today’s example: I set a box of grease fittings on the fender of the tractor. You can probably see where this story is going. I drove off... and about thirty seconds later I heard that unmistakable crunch.

Sure enough, I had run them over. Grease fittings everywhere.

Scattered across the lane like some kind of tiny metal confetti, while I wandered around picking them up and shaking my head at myself.

And while I was doing that, it hit me that this is also the same stage of life where you set something down somewhere and then spend the next fifteen minutes wandering around the barn, the shop, and the tractor cab trying to remember where in the world you put it.

You open drawers. You check your pockets. You retrace your steps.

Eventually, you find it sitting in the most obvious place possible — exactly where you put it.

And standing there today picking fit-

tings out of the gravel, I couldn’t help but laugh because I remember getting annoyed when my dad did things like that. Or when he’d say, “Hold the flashlight over here so I can see better,” while working on something in the barn.

I’d stand there thinking, How can he not see that?

Well, the funny thing is that these days I catch myself saying the exact same words to my own kids. “Can you hold the flashlight here a minute?”

Turns out the years have a way of sneaking up on you.

But the older I get, the more I realize those little moments were never really about the dropped tools, the lost parts, or the flashlight. They were about time spent together. Quiet moments in the barn. Learning by watching. Helping even when the job was small.

So maybe the moral of today’s story is this:

One day you’ll find yourself standing in the driveway picking grease fittings out of the gravel and doing the very things you swore you’d never do.

And if you’re lucky, there will be a kid nearby holding the flashlight for you.

**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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## Dew, Determination & a Harvest of Hope

They say of the weather “if you wet your feet with dew in the morning, you may keep them dry for the rest of the day.” We certainly needed our rubber boots for the dew last year because the water wasn’t falling as rain! In fact, the dew was what kept some of our crops alive during the driest parts of our growing season. After the amazing 2024 growing season we were met with one of the driest years we have seen in 2025 for the North Simcoe GRAIN project, a group of local farmers who grow crops to help alleviate poverty around the world through the Canadian Food-grains Bank.

In spite of the weather, we celebrated our 25th year of crop production in 2025! Our local farmers and industries came together to grow 83 acres of soybeans.

The Spence family planted and sprayed the beans. The soybean seed was provided by DeKalb and the weed control was from Bayer with the fertilizer coming from Homes Agro. The Spring family and Matt Ververs harvested the soybeans with their combines, while the Hummelinks used grain buggies to transport the crop alongside the Langmans.

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In its 25 years the North Simcoe GRAIN Project has raised \$1,756,703 and with a 4:1 match by the government this number means that \$8,783,515 has gone to increase food security around the world. Please contact us if you would like to contribute.

Galatians 6:9 “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

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# From Markham to Muskoka: Thomas Hamill and the Founding of Hamill’s Hotel

## Village Stories

by Andrew Hind

Markham-born Thomas Lyman Hamill entered the world in 1818, the eldest son of Irish immigrants Thomas and Margaret. He grew up on a farm and likely assumed that’s all he would ever do, all he would ever know. As a youngster growing up north of ‘Muddy York’, he

couldn’t have known that he would one day found a beloved cottage country resort.

In 1856, the 38-year-old Thomas married 19-year-old Annie Neal. The couple first settled on a small farm in Middlesex County and began a family. Over the next fifteen years the number of mouths to feed swelled to seven, stretching resources. When Thomas learned of free land in Muskoka he jumped at the opportunity. The family arrived on the shores of wild and rugged Lake Joseph in 1871, where three more children would join the family.

Thomas came north as modest settler content to work his land but, as it was for so many of Muskoka’s homesteaders, gains from farming were meager at best. The land simply wasn’t as arable as people had been led to believe. Seeking an additional source of revenue, he and his eldest son, Thomas Jr. (born 1857) began to earn money guiding sportsmen to the best fishing and hunting spots in the area and by renting boats for their use. It was far more lucrative than pinning one’s hopes on the bounty of the soil, and besides, at age 53 Thomas Sr. knew his best sod-busting days were behind him.

Recognizing that guiding sportsmen and hosting vacationers was easier than the backbreaking toil of tilling fields, the Hamills decided to go all in. They expanded the family home to accommodate twenty-five guests – not just hunters and anglers, but vacationing families as well – and by 1890 was advertised Hamill’s Hotel in Toronto newspapers. In addition to ready access to prime fishing and hunting locales, the hotel also boasted hearty home-cooked meals and complete serenity in a secluded bay. The public loved it. Thomas and Annie had rolled the financial dice and emerged a winner.

The 1890s saw a rush of lakeside inns opening in Muskoka, kicking off what many consider the golden age of the summer resort industry. Hamill’s Hotel was at the forefront of the hospitality bandwagon and profited by being relatively early out of the gate.

The resort would grow and thrive over the decades that followed. By 1909 the resort welcomed as many as 100

guests at a time with amenities including lawn bowling and croquet greens, tennis courts, a dance hall, and children’s daily ‘recreation and amusements’ – an early kids’ club of sorts. It was considered a top tier resort.

Known variously as Hamill’s Point Hotel, Highland Inn, and Lantern Inn as it changed hands over the years, the resort endured until 1949. It was then transformed into a cottage property. The main hotel was torn down, but some outbuildings remain to this day. Sadly, as the years pass fewer people remember Hamill’s Hotel.

To preserve its memory, I included Hamill’s Hotel in my new book, *Timeless Hospitality: Historic Resort of Muskoka* (Dundurn Press). Many of Muskoka’s resorts were founded under similar circumstances as Hamill’s Hotel – homesteaders realizing a better life could be had by hosting wealthy vacationers.

The Muskoka of today owes its prosperity and reputation to these early settlers who founded the vacation industry out of necessity.

Andrew Hind has published a new book titled *Timeless Hospitality — Historic Resorts of Muskoka*. The book explores nearly two dozen former resorts across Muskoka, highlighting their rise and decline while tracing the region’s early development as a tourism destination. You can find Mr. Hind’s new book on Amazon.

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## Spring Stitching and Quilt Show Inspirations

By Janis Hamilton

Is spring really on the horizon, or is just an illusion. With spring comes Quilt Shows and there are a few listed as well as Shop Hops that we all enjoy and say as we walk in the stores, “we don’t need a thing!” and of course end up finding the perfect tool or amazing new line of fabric that can quietly be placed in our stash before anyone notices. Is that how all those extra tools end up in the workshop? I guess it’s only fair either way.

Orillia had their Sunshine Quilt show May 8-9th at ODAS Park just on the outskirts of town. We arrived as the show opened and one Retirement home from Orillia residents were just ahead of us in the line up to pay. You don’t have to still be quilting up a storm to still want to see what is new and what is still awe inspiring. This show certainly didn’t disappoint. There were vendors there who showed us the latest, a guild quilt store with prices that I know quilters wondered how the price could be so low, but perhaps they just love sewing and sharing their projects so we can all enjoy them and then we were given a ballot for voting on our favourite wall hanging and full-sized quilt.

One quilt was what they refer to as a “whole quilt”. It is sewn on one fabric with no piecing and the outstanding work is the stitching. The quilt was from an estate and the quilter (Joyce Hird) did the work by hand and it was all hand quilted. What a labour of love!

Another wall hanging was a block of the month. “Block of the month”, you pay monthly for instructions on how to complete the block and with this one all the embellishments came and then you made the block with the wool and did

exquisite embroidery on it to put the final touches on this outstanding quilt. Donna Thompson made the insects on each block feel as though you could touch them. Although the blocks were outstanding, Rose Bell of Fancyfeathers.ca did the quilting around all the insects and certainly moved the wow factor way up the scale. Hope you can see the details in the photo to the right..

There was a great selection of modern, applique, Sachiko stitching threads and patterns, Japanese fabric, sewing machines, kits just ready to be made up by those attending and of course demonstrations by dedicated guild members all weekend long.

There were a few samples of miniature quilts as well. They are defined as small versions of full-sized quilts and range in size between 12-24 inches square. Depending on the pattern the pieces can be ¼”.

So if you get a chance to visit the show in Feversham on May 29th and 30th from 10-4 each day. It is called “A Story of Stitches” quilt exhibit and it will be another stunning event. Lunch can be purchased. It is at Osprey Community Arena 494196 Grey Road 2, Feversham. Accessible Facility and free parking and only \$10 admission. Happy quilting and road tripping.



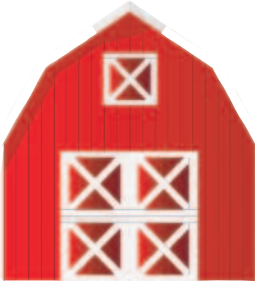
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# East Lake Simcoe Quilt Show Transforms Cannington Church into Fabric Art Gallery

Story by Cathy Hamill-Hill



In 2011 my husband found a 1969 Oliver 2150 tractor in the states. His Dad and cousin drove down and picked it up. Since then the tractor has done a little bit of farm work but it is mainly used as a pulling tractor at our local fairs. My husband has a love for Oliver tractors. He asked me if I could make him and his cousin a quilt with Oliver tractor fabric. It was not easy to find but I did manage to find some and of course I bought it all! I made them each the same quilt.

—Description and photo by Laura Campsall

The Trinity United Church in Cannington on April 24th and 25th was transformed into what looked like paintings done on fabric for the East Lake Simcoe Quilt Show. There were quilts displayed draped over pews, over the balcony, and others on giant stands, and some were placed on a wall. There were massive king-sized quilts and ones small enough to attach to a bulletin board. The quilts themselves were eye-popping, and the attached cards with the stories behind the quilts were a gift to the Show visitors. One quilt was made from random scraps, another was made to honour the quilt maker's husband's love of a specific type of tractor, and another with Monarch butterflies was designed for a friend's 60th birthday. Quilts, it seems from this show, is about a story in the life of the quilt creator.

There were 126 magnificent quilts at the Show, and all were made by the host, members of the East Lake Simcoe Quilters Guild (ESQG). President of the ESQG Carole Ditomaso explains, "Our 30 members made these 126 quilts. This is our first Show since before COVID-19. We meet at 1:00 on the last Monday of the month because a lot of us don't like driving at night now. We are happy so many people chose to come to our Show."



Every organization needs a leader, and the East Lake Simcoe Quilters Guild is led by Carole Ditomaso. Carole is also a quilter, and several of her quilts were featured at the Show.

—Photo by Cathy Hamill-Hill

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# Local Producers and Artisans Shine at Sunderland Maple Syrup Festival

Story and photos by Cathy Hamill-Hill

The Sunderland Maple Syrup Festival (SMSF) welcomed about 10,000 visitors to Sunderland on April 11 and 12. There are no official numbers yet but SMSF Treasurer Donna Beattie estimates, “about 8,000 people came on Saturday as it was perfect weather”. Saturday had sunshine all day and people came from across the province. “SMSF has people come from London (Ontario) to Kingston and all in between,” she reported adding this is a “free family festival” and if people brought their own picnic lunches, they could enjoy it with no cost involved.



The Sunderland Maple Syrup Festival featured a variety of artists and artisans, including the Lavlee Creations vendor booth. The booth showcased handmade candles made from 100% pure soy, created by Lave and Alice Izgorean of Manilla, pictured above. With more than 80 scents available, popular spring favourites included Lily of the Valley and Lilac.

The Sunderland Maple Syrup Festival (SMSF) is a spring event like no other. A massive outdoor market closes portions of Sunderland’s main street and several side streets, creating a unique experience in itself. The streets are reopened at a specific time each day, meaning

the market must be completely dismantled at the end of each day so traffic can resume. Visitors could be seen on Saturday carrying large bags of shopping, often filled with locally produced maple syrup.

Close to 400 people purchased low priced tickets for a bus ride to the Harder Family’s maple syrup operation. Visitors were invited to walk out to the sugar bush and see the maple syrup being made in the sugar house using the newest technology. The Harder Family has been part of the SMSF from its very first planning discussion with its founder, Susan Wright of Sunderland.

SMSF has three key objectives, Beattie explains. The first is to give local maple syrup producers a place to promote and sell their products. The second is to promote local artisans and artists and give them a place to sell their works. The third objective is to promote the community of Sunderland and offer youth volunteer opportunities. “Students get their volunteer hours (needed for graduation) at the Festival, this year we had about 50 students,” she reported.

Stay tuned and save the date as next year is the big 30th Anniversary for the SMSF.



Local maple syrup producers were a major part of the Sunderland Maple Syrup Festival, including Trevor Barr, pictured above, and his brother Cameron of Droptine Maple Syrup. Their display had sold about 150 bottles of maple syrup by late Saturday afternoon during the busy festival weekend.

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# Tick Season is here. Protect yourself and your pets.

By Dennis Gannon

As warmer weather returns to Ontario, so does an unwelcome seasonal hazard: ticks. Once considered primarily a concern in limited regions, blacklegged ticks, also known as deer ticks, are now established across much of the province. With them comes an increased risk of tick-borne illnesses, including Lyme disease, making prevention more important than ever for both humans and pets.

Ticks are small, most often not larger than a sesame seed, and their bites are typically painless. That means many people don't realize they've been bitten. In Ontario, blacklegged ticks can carry bacteria, viruses, and parasites that cause diseases such as Lyme disease, anaplasmosis, and Powassan virus.

Health officials note that ticks are most active from spring through late fall, but they can be present anytime when the temperature rises above freezing. With many of us enjoying outdoor activities such as hiking, gardening and walking pets, the potential for exposure has dramatically increased.

Where do we find ticks? Ticks live in wooded areas, tall grasses, shrubs, and leaf litter. They do not jump or fly but instead wait on vegetation and attach themselves to passing humans or animals. This includes

parks and backyards that can pose a risk if conditions are favourable.

Dogs running through grass and brush are easy targets for ticks and bring them into the home, which can increase the risk for humans.

So how do we protect ourselves and our pets? The most effective way to prevent tick-borne illness is to avoid tick bites altogether. There are a few key ways.

First when heading outdoors, wear long sleeves, long pants, and closed-toe shoes. Tucking pant legs into socks creates a barrier that makes it harder for ticks to reach the skin. Light-coloured clothing can also help make ticks easier to spot.

Insect repellents are another useful line of defence. Products containing DEET or icaridin are recommended and considered safe when used as directed. Applying repellent to both skin and clothing can significantly reduce the likelihood of ticks attaching. Staying on marked trails and avoiding brushing against tall grass or shrubs can further reduce exposure.

Even with taking precautions, ticks can still find their way onto the body. Anytime you or your pet has spent time outdoors a

tick check should be taken.

It is recommended that you carefully inspect the entire body, paying close attention to areas such as behind the knees, underarms, scalp, groin, and around the waist. Showering shortly after coming indoors can help wash off unattached ticks. Placing clothes in a dryer on high heat for at least 10 minutes can kill any ticks that may be hiding in fabric.

Our pets require similar care. Dogs and outdoor cats are especially vulnerable, as ticks often attach to their fur and skin. It is recommended that daily tick checks for pets, particularly after walks in wooded or grassy areas happen. Common hiding spots include around the ears, neck, under the collar, and between toes. Preventive treatments such as tick collars, topical medications, or oral prescriptions are highly effective and can be prescribed by your veterinarian. Also keeping the lawn trimmed, removing leaf litter, and creating barriers such as gravel or woodchips around yards can also reduce tick habitats near the home.

What should you do if you find a tick? Prompt removal reduces the risk of disease transmission. It is reported that a tick must be attached for at least 24 hours to transmit

Lyme disease bacteria. To remove a tick, use fine-tipped tweezers, grasp it as close to the skin as possible, and pull straight out without twisting. There are tick removal tools available particularly for dogs. The area should then be cleaned with soap and water or disinfectant. It is important to watch for symptoms such as fever, fatigue, joint pain, or a characteristic "bull's-eye" rash. Look for these signs in the days and weeks following a bite. Check with your health care professional as early treatment is recommended with antibiotics and is generally effective if Lyme disease is detected promptly.

The presence of ticks in Ontario is unlikely to disappear and the risks they pose can be managed with awareness and simple precautions. Health officials stress that enjoying the outdoors remains both safe and beneficial and following these steps, individuals can take steps to protect themselves and their pets.

As tick populations continue to expand across the province, there is one clear message: prevention is the most powerful tool we have in reducing the impact of tick-borne disease. For more information on ticks and human contact, check with your local health unit.

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