Since 1977

FARM VIEW

A newspaper with something for everyone | December 2026—January 2027 | Volume 49



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Honouring Excellence in Agriculture
Clearview ROAR update · Corn Performance Explained
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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.

December 1st, 2nd & 10th: Forage Focus Webinar

Forage Focus early winter webinar series will be happening December 1st, 2nd, and 10th this year. There is a fantastic line-up of speakers and topics for the three nightly webinars. Register for one, two, or all three of these free presentations! **Details on page 6 or visit https://onforagenetwork.ca**

December 11th: North Simcoe SCIA AGM

The North Simcoe Soil & Crop Improvement Association will host its AGM on December 11, 2026, at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Elmvale, at 10 a.m.

January 5th & 6th: SouthWest Agricultural Conference

Registration opens November 1st for the 2027 SouthWest Agricultural Conference "Thriving in Turbulence." **Full details in the ad on page 8 and also available at https://www.uoguelph.ca/ridgetown/swac**

January 6th - 11th: Grey Bruce Farmers' Week Conference and Trade Show

Save the dates for the Grey Bruce Farmers' Week Conference and Trade Show! Topics covered are beef, dairy, goat, sheep, and crops day! **More information can be found on pages 15 and 20.**

January 14th: News and Advertising Deadline

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

March 12th: Seed and Feed Fair

The North Simcoe Soil & Crop Improvement Association will host its annual Seed & Feed Fair at the Elmvale Community Centre on March 12th.

NVCA honours Lynn Dollin for 20 years of service as Chair of local source water committee



Celebrating the opening of the Lynn Dollin Boardroom are from left to right: Dave Ritchie, South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Region Source Committee Member, Economic, Kevin Eisses, Councillor, Town of Innisfil, Lynn Dollin, South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Region, former Chair of the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Region, Jennifer Vincent, CAO, NVCA and Jonathan Scott, Chair, NVCA.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) has named the boardroom in the John Hix Administrative Centre the Lynn Dollin Boardroom in recognition of her nearly 20 years of leadership and service on the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Committee.

"Lynn Dollin has devoted much of her life to public service, earning a reputation as one of Ontario's most respected municipal leaders," said Jonathan Scott, Chair of NVCA. "For nearly two decades, she brought that same dedication to protecting the drinking water our communities depend on. Good public service leaves a legacy that lasts well beyond any individual term of office, and Lynn has certainly demonstrated that. Naming this boardroom in her honour is a small but fitting tribute to her remarkable contribution to our region."

In the Nottawasaga Watershed, people rely on water from streams, lakes, rivers and underground aquifers for clean drinking water. Protecting these drinking water sources takes a multibarrier approach.

While the Province of Ontario sets the rules for protecting source water through the Clean Water Act, Source Protection Committees developed plans to protect this invaluable resource at the watershed level.

For the past 20 years, the committee developed Source Protection Plans to help safeguard municipal drinking water for generations to come. The boardroom naming recognizes a legacy of leadership and collaboration that will continue to benefit communities across the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe region.



Feeding the Human Spirit - Celebrating the Legacy of Dr. Tim Henshaw

EastGen is proud to continue honouring the legacy of the late Dr. Tim Henshaw through the annual Feeding the Human Spirit Leadership Award. The 2026 award was presented to Lori Chalmers of Oro-Medonte, Ontario, by EastGen President Rob Bumstead on November 10 during the TD Canadian 4-H Dairy Classic at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto.

Lori Chalmers has made an extraordinary difference in the lives of agricultural youth throughout North Simcoe and beyond. Through her dedication to 4-H, her passion for agriculture, and her genuine care for young people, she has become a trusted mentor, role model, and friend to generations of youth.

As the current President of North Simcoe 4-H, Lori is deeply involved in developing opportunities for young people to learn, grow, and discover their potential. She leads numerous clubs and programs, including Beef, Cow-Calf, Cloverbuds, Gardening, and other creative activities, providing youth with opportunities to develop practical skills, build confidence, and strengthen their connection to agriculture.

Lori's impact is also recognized by the broader agricultural community. In its letter of endorsement, the Flos Agricultural Society praised her enthusiasm and dedication to youth, noting her ability to challenge each 4-H member according to their individual strengths and help them reach their potential. The Society also highlighted the confidence Lori instills in young people, qualities that will help shape them into tomorrow's leaders.

Her impact goes well beyond organizing clubs and activities. Lori takes a personal interest in the young people she mentors, offering encouragement through life's challenges, helping them pursue educational and career opportunities, and finding ways to make their ambitions possible. Her influence is evident in the many former 4-H members who have continued their involvement in agriculture, taken on leadership roles, and returned to the program to support the next generation.



From left: Hugh Hunter & John Drummond, 2025 & 2023 recipients; EastGen CEO Amanda Stokes; Michaela (Chalmers) Stoneman, nominator; Lori Chalmers, 2026 recipient; Jarrett, Jane & Norah Henshaw; Dr. Christena (Henshaw) Rackus; & Rob Bumstead, EastGen President.

One nominator shared how Lori encouraged a group of young 4-H members to develop, plan, and budget for a farm improvement project. Their work resulted in a barn retrofit that their parents agreed to undertake. More importantly, the experience gave the children the confidence to become stronger voices in their family farming operation. Today, those same young people are taking over their family's dairy and beef operations, with Lori continuing to offer her support.

Her mentorship has also inspired others to give back. Former 4-H member Ashley Miller credits Lori with helping her transition from a 4-H participant to a youth leader and, ultimately, a 4-H leader herself. As Ashley shared in her nomination, "Without Lori's guidance, I likely would not be a 4-H leader today."

What makes Lori particularly deserving of this recognition is the selflessness with which she gives her time and support. Whether helping young people navigate difficult circumstances, providing a listening ear, writing letters of recommendation, or stepping in to ensure youth have opportunities to participate, she consistently puts others first. Her nominators describe someone who rarely seeks recognition and whose greatest reward is seeing young people succeed.

Established in 2023, the Feeding the Human Spirit Leadership Award recognizes an exceptional leader or mentor of agricultural youth who reflects the character and values of Dr. Tim Henshaw. An esteemed veterinarian, educator, and communicator, Dr. Henshaw was celebrated for his integrity, mentorship, and unwavering encouragement of young people to challenge themselves. He left a lasting impact on his community through his generosity, service, and spirit of support.

Lori Chalmers embodies these same qualities. Through her generosity, dedication, and genuine commitment to the next generation, she continues to strengthen her agricultural community and inspire young people to find their place and make a difference.

"Sometimes the greatest difference we can make is helping someone see what they're capable of. Lori has done that for generations of young people, giving them the confidence and encouragement to find their place in Canadian agriculture. We're proud to celebrate her and the values she shares with Dr. Henshaw," said EastGen CEO Amanda Stokes.

EastGen congratulates Lori Chalmers on this well-deserved recognition and thanks her for the lasting difference she makes in the lives of agricultural youth.

EastGen offers a complete lineup of dairy, beef, and goat genetics as well as advanced reproductive solutions and products to more than 8,500 farmers in Ontario, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland & Labrador. EastGen is fully Canadian owned and operated and supports the future of Canadian agriculture. We're proud to say EastGen Delivers. To learn more about EastGen visit: www.eastgen.ca



EDITORIAL

Christmas Traditions, New Beginnings & 50 Years of Farm View!



Roslyn Watkins
Publisher/Editor
Farm View Newspaper
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As Christmas approaches, I find myself thinking about the little traditions that make this season special. Decorating the tree, baking favourite treats and spending time with family and friends create memories that stay with us long after the holidays.

One tradition I've been thinking about lately is Christmas ornaments. My mom was wonderfully crafty and handcrafted all kinds of ornaments. Each year, she also made special ones with our names on them. Those decorations became treasured keepsakes and reminders of the love she put into making them.

Janis' article on page 16 features star ornaments and inspired me to try making a few of my own. I'll be starting small, as I'm not exactly gifted when it comes to crafting, but maybe one day, the ornaments I make will find a place on my children's Christmas trees.

Another Christmas tradition that never changes is listening to my favourite carol, "Mary's Boy Child" by Boney M. I always start out singing along, but somewhere around the halfway point, the emotions take over and I find myself in tears. There is something about that song that fills me with such an overwhelming sense of hope, joy and faith. I think we could all use a little more of those things these days. I hope you have a favourite Christmas carol that brings you the same feelings and reminds you of the magic of the season!

A Change to Our Publishing Schedule

You will notice a change to Farm View's publishing schedule. I've decided to move from 12 issues a year to 11. Previously, the January edition was due at the printers on December 19. That deadline often meant rushing through the holidays, with little time left for family and friends, baking or making gifts.

I love producing Farm View, but making room for people and traditions matters, too. I believe this adjustment will give me a more manageable holiday season while allowing me to continue putting care into each issue. I would genuinely like to hear what you think. Nothing is set in stone, and I value feedback from readers and advertisers.

Celebrating 50 Years of Farm View!

This issue is especially exciting, as it marks the start of Farm View's 50th anniversary year, beginning in 2027!

When my Dad, John Beischer, announced his plan to retire and sell the paper, my husband Shawn said, "You should buy the paper. You'd be great at it."

I was terrified. I had no computer experience, knew nothing about the programs needed to produce a newspaper and was extremely shy. It hardly seemed the recipe for a newspaper publisher! With support and a few crash courses, however, here we are, six years later. (I'm still shy!)

Thank you to my family for encouraging me, to Don and Lizz for teaching me, and to my Dad for answering my many follow-up questions. Thank you to our readers and advertisers. Your emails, letters and kind notes mean so much. On beautiful days when it's tempting to step away from the computer, Your kind words and encouragement go a long way in reminding me why I do what I do.

As we celebrate five decades of Farm View, I invite readers and advertisers to share special memories, stories or photographs from the past 50 years. Please visit page 13 for a look at how Farm View began, along with reflections from contributors who help fill these pages.

Through this issue you'll also find seasonal greetings from advertisers and contributors, information about upcoming winter webinars and seminars, and articles recognizing members of our agricultural community.

Through every change, Farm View has remained a place to share local stories, celebrate agriculture and keep farming communities connected across our region.

Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping keep an independently owned agricultural publication going strong. From my family to yours, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

Ag Snapshot



Tis the season for community spirit, twinkling lights, and holiday shopping! With so many wonderful Christmas markets and church bazaars popping up across the region right now, we were thrilled to kick off the festive season at Niemi's Christmas Market in East Gwillimbury. It was a wonderful outing filled with holiday cheer and plenty of great local finds for everyone on our gift lists! From left to right are Diana Robichaud, *Farm View* publisher, Roslyn Watkins and Tara Weiss McGhie.

DEADLINE for the February Farm View is January 14th.

Farm View is available at the following agricultural businesses

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SOBEY'S in Angus and Bradford
STEER ENTERPRISES
STEWART'S EQUIPMENT in Cookstown and Stayner
THE UPS STORE in the Barrie Cedar Pointe plaza

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

If you would like to have 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.

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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49th Anniversary FARM VIEW



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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1/2 Page	$525./month
1/3 Page	$395./month
1/4 Page	$310./month
1/6 Page	$205./month
1/8 Page	$150./month
1/16 Page	$100./month
Business Card	$88./month
Ag. Business Directory	$700./year

Please visit 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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STIHL HONDA

Cutting into Corn Performance

By Taylor Legge, CCA-ON, Holmes Agro, 705-428-4444

The time of year where we harvest our corn and purchase our corn seed for next year often overlap in the months of November and December. Data from the University of Illinois suggests that choosing the "right" hybrid for your farm can equate to a 50 bushel/acre yield advantage, which means you are leaving yield on the table if you aren't putting thought into which corn hybrids you will grow in 2027. There are a few things I look at that help me decide which hybrids will perform best on individual farms.

At Holmes Agro in Stayner we sell Pioneer seed, but paying attention to hybrid characteristics is a skill that translates across all seed brands. We are demanding more from corn breeders every year, and it's always nice to see hybrids we love paired with new products and new characteristics. The first thing I always pay attention to is the product maturity in relation to the flowering date. If the flowering date is earlier than the product maturity (example- 90 day corn with an 88 day flower), this means you can expect this corn to have higher test weight, lower moisture, and work in more conservative environments where late planting or early frost are an issue. Conversely, breeders will often create corn hybrids that have a later flowering date than their relative maturity to "trick" them into yielding more. While there are a lot of excellent products with this attribute, they can sometimes hold moisture as they move north of maturity zone. A lot of corn breeding coming out of the US will have a late flowering date because they are not as concerned with test weight and it's the easiest way to breed for yield.

The second thing I look at pertains to corn yield data, and that is always the soil type. I appreciate seed companies that offer data on soil type responses outside of drought tolerance and stress emergence. Drought tolerance can indicate performance on sand and stress emergence can indicate performance on clay, but soil type and fertility play a bigger part in hybrid performance than we realize.

The last thing I want to address is the terms we often use to classify corn hybrids: racehorse versus workhorse or offensive versus defensive. Both camps are well-suited to specific farms, and I like to see operations use a little bit of each in order to spread risk. A racehorse or offensive corn has fantastic yield potential and will perform very well in environments with good weather, good fertility and appropriate seed population. If one of these criteria isn't met, yield can suffer. A defensive or workhorse hybrid can offer some consistency in these lower-yielding environments, but often fails to rally to higher yields in better environments.

How do you decide what kind of corn hybrid works best on your farm? Look at soil tests, previous yield goals, and the ideal time you'd like to be planting and combining. What works best for your neighbours might not work best for you, and dialing in on your individual farm goals remains paramount to agronomy.

Forage Focus Webinar Series December 1st, 2nd and 10th

From Acre to Animal: Maximizing Livestock Nutrition Through Strategic Crop Rotations

You asked, we answered! How can you maximize nutrient production for your livestock? OMAFA's Laura Scott takes us through typical crop rotations to show how much energy, protein, and digestible fibre can be grown per acre. Alternative crop rotations will be presented to grow as much of these nutrients as is realistically possible while optimizing field management – and some of these are really out-of-the-box!

Drones & Forage Management

Using drones to apply seed and fertilizer has great known potential for forage fields in Ontario, but what other value can drones provide to forage growers? Field health analysis, stand counts and inventory management will all be discussed as tools and their value add to farms.

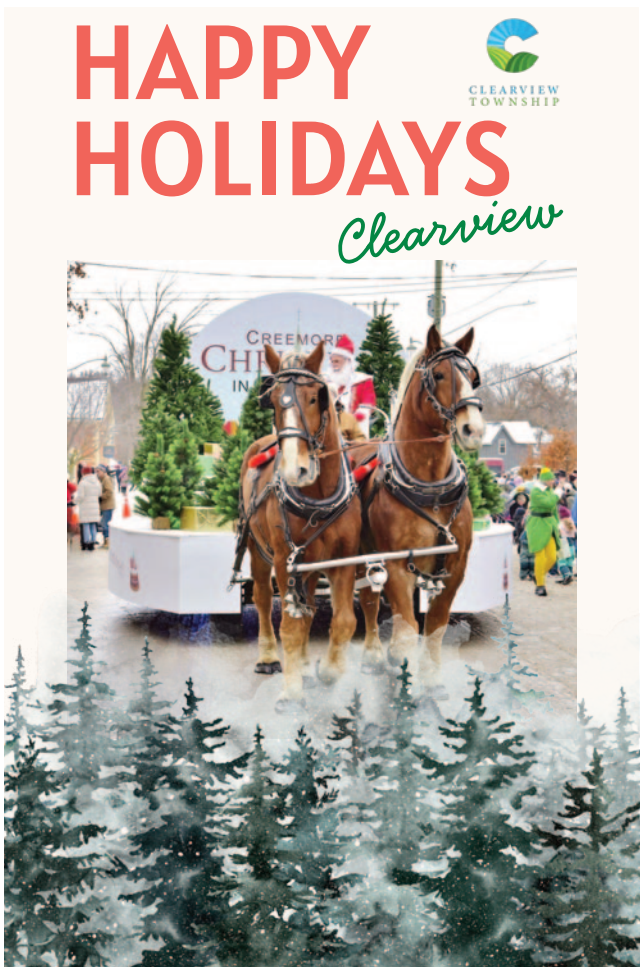
Your Forage Analysis Speaks To You, Are You Listening?

Every forage analysis tells a story about forage quality. In this webinar, we will explore how to interpret key forage analysis results and translate numbers into practical feeding decisions that can enhance milk production and farm profitability. Learn how to unlock the full value of your homegrown forages by listening to what your analysis is telling you.

More information can be found at https://onforagenetwork.ca/events/









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The Future of Farming Depends on Protecting Agricultural Land

By Leah Emms, Member Services Representative, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

As another year comes to a close, there is much to reflect on in agriculture across Ontario. Our communities continue to grow, infrastructure needs are changing, and land is increasingly in demand. For farmers, these changes can bring both opportunities and difficult decisions. At the same time, the steady conversion of agricultural land to other uses raises important questions about how we plan for growth and recognize the long-term value of agriculture.

One issue that continues to concern me across our region is the amount of farmland we are losing. Between municipal annexations, airport expansion, federal defence projects, transportation projects and energy infrastructure, there is growing pressure on the land farmers depend on to make a living.

We recognize that infrastructure is necessary. Communities grow, transportation networks need improvements, and energy projects move forward. But we need to ask how agricultural land is being considered in these decisions. Are governments placing enough value on the land that supports food production, rural economies, agricultural businesses and jobs?

Farmland is more than vacant land waiting for another use. It is a finite resource, and once productive agricultural land is paved over or converted to another purpose, it is rarely coming back. Governments at all levels need to look beyond the immediate needs of a project and consider the long-term consequences of permanently removing land from agricultural production. Protecting farmland needs to carry real weight in planning and infrastructure decisions.

One project that deserves particular attention is Hydro One's proposed Sudbury-Barrie Transmission Line. The proposal includes a new single-circuit 500-kilovolt transmission line stretching approximately 300 kilometres between the Hanmer Transformer Station near Sudbury and the Essa Transformer Station near Barrie. The project is expected to be in service by 2032.

We are concerned that many farmers and rural property owners within the study area may not yet be aware of the project or what it could mean for their properties. A final route has not been selected, and a preferred route is anticipated in 2027. There is also future consideration of a second transmission line, although that proposal remains at an early stage. These developments are a reminder of why it is important to stay informed and participate while projects are still being planned.

When infrastructure projects cannot avoid agricultural land, the conversation needs to turn to how impacts on the farm business can be minimized. The effects can extend well beyond the acreage required for a project. Field access, equipment movement, tile drainage, soil quality, field fragmentation and construction timing can all affect a farm's productivity and day-to-day operations.

An Agricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) is an important tool in identifying these potential impacts. It looks beyond the immediate project footprint to consider how a proposed development could affect agricultural land and surrounding farm operations. When completed early enough to influence planning decisions, an AIA can help identify alternatives and measures to avoid or minimize disruption. Agricultural impacts should be understood before decisions are finalized, not addressed after the fact.

Project proponents need to work with farmers early in the process, understand how their operations function and consider practical ways to reduce disruption. Compensation is important, but it should not replace efforts to avoid impacts in the first place.

Local federations of agriculture and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture continue to raise concerns about farmland loss and advocate for farmers in discussions about development and infrastructure. This work is important, but the voice of the farming community as a whole matters too.

We cannot afford to be quiet observers as these decisions are made. Farmers can make a difference by participating in public consultations, contacting elected representatives, attending municipal council meetings and explaining how proposed projects affect their land and businesses. The cumulative loss of farmland deserves attention, not just the impact of one project or one municipality.

As we look ahead to 2027, we need governments and project proponents to recognize the value of agricultural land and give it meaningful consideration when planning for growth. We are not saying infrastructure should never be built. We are asking that alternatives be properly considered, productive farmland be protected wherever possible, and the impacts on farm businesses be minimized when projects proceed.

Wishing you and your families a happy holiday season and a healthy, prosperous New Year.

Resources

• OFA – When an Infrastructure Project Comes to Your Farm

• Hydro One – Sudbury-Barrie Transmission Line Project

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Many hands make light work

"Love of community" is getting expressed in a delicious new way in Essa Township and surrounding area.

Developed by the Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park and energized by the volunteer talents of folks from all walks of life, the community kitchen at Utopia Hall is bringing people together to turn a shared love of food and community spirit into something soup-er meaningful.

With contributions from local farmers and gardeners, experienced home cooks, food enthusiasts and those eager to learn new skills, volunteers gather at the Hall to prepare batches of delicious, nourishing homemade soups. Once prepared, the soups are made available to community members at no cost at three designated locations: the Angus Branch of the Essa Township Library, the Angus Food Bank and Matthews House in Alliston, extending a little warmth, comfort and neighbourly care to those who need it.



Farmer and Soil Health expert, Eric Jelinski, drops off a generous donation of delicious potatoes at the Utopia Hall to help with the creation of soup-erb food for community sharing.

And while the soup is being served up for those in need, the initiative is also nourishing something deeper within the community. It is about sharing skills, exchanging knowledge, building new friendships and creating meaningful opportunities for people of all ages to contribute. Local seniors, in particular, are adding that "extra special sauce" to the effort, bringing a wealth of experience, treasured family recipes and practical know-how that help flavour the program's success.

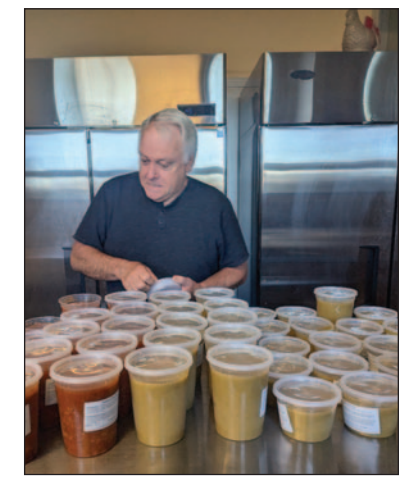


Ready! Set! Chop! Members of the Chop! Chop! Choppers prepare locally grown fresh produce donations to create delicious soups for sharing with the community.

"Our Seniors are among the greatest treasures of our communities," said Sandie Macdonald, Mayor of Essa Township and contributor to this initiative. "Their willingness to share their time and talents speaks volumes about their love for their neighbours and their commitment to making our communities stronger. Through their involvement, they are sharing far more than practical skills – they are passing along traditions, creating connections and demonstrating that the desire to give, contribute and care for others never grows old. Their hands help prepare the soup, but it is their hearts that truly make this program special."

A heartfelt cheer and best wishes to everyone involved in this wonderful example of neighbours helping neighbours! It is a beautiful reminder that "many hands make light work" and that sometimes the simplest ingredients – good food, willing hands and caring hearts – can make the biggest difference.

This community initiative is being made possible in part through the support of the Government of Canada's Local Food Infrastructure Fund and New Horizons for Seniors Program. These funding contributions are helping the Friends of the Utopia Mill & Park strengthen local food initiatives while creating meaningful opportunities for seniors to share their skills, experience and talents, build connections and play an active role in their community.



Putting finishing label touches to the "Happy Hens of Utopia" soups, Mark Bookhout has been busy cooking up soup-er meals for community sharing.

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Thank you to our sponsors and attendees for making the 2026 Dufferin Farm Tour a great success!

THANK YOU to our amazing host farms, sponsors, volunteers and almost 1500 attendees! Together we raised over $14 300 in total cash value for our local food banks.
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Royal Honours Beloved Local Goat Farmer

Story and photo by Cathy Hamill-Hill

"I loved Cam," was the immediate response from longtime dairy goat exhibitor Murray Matchett of Peterborough, who showed dairy goats alongside Cam for many years.

Uxbridge-area goat farmer Cam Stewart was remembered with a special "Cam Stewart Spirit of the Show Award" at this year's Royal Winter Fair Dairy Goat Show.

Cam was truly a legend of kindness. He rarely spoke about himself, preferring to listen to others, and always made time for everyone. Along with his wife, Alice, of Goodwood, he showed dairy goats under the Craigaleen prefix at fairs throughout southern Ontario, beginning with Brooklin Fair in June and wrapping up at the Royal in November. Over the years, Cam built many lasting friendships within the goat show community and was always among the first to lend a helping hand. Whether it was stepping into the show ring, helping someone with their goats or backing up a trailer, Cam was there whenever he was needed. His kindness, generosity and willingness to help others are what so many will remember most.

It was nothing unusual to see Cam near a child, listening intently to a child's story at a Fair, arena or at his home. He was a busy man with his small farm, serving as President of the Uxbridge Bruins Junior C Hockey team, Chairman of the Goodwood Cemetery Board, helping the Uxbridge Fair Board, and active in his local Church while working in his second career with his own consulting company for drivers and forklift training, all at an age when most are retired. Cam enjoyed being busy and he enjoyed people, his wife and family first and everyone else second. He enjoyed the showmanship days that Alice put together that took place on their farm to encourage youth to enjoy showing dairy goats.

Cam's childhood was a time he never fully got past. He never forgot about finding boxes of food and supplies on the porch from neighbours knowing his family needed some help. The neighbour's silent and understanding kindness affected Cam for his entire life. "Cam was always helping others, seeing others needs, he was quick to lend a helping hand as well as giving cash to homeless people or any person he thought that needed help that crossed his path," Alice remembers.



Left to right are: Cam's daughter, Colleen, Cam's grandson Finn, the winner of the award this year, Jonathan Dugdale, and Cam's wife, Alice.

Alice and Cam were at Brooklin Fair with their goats and as usual, Cam had spent the day happily talking/listening to other goat people and helping others including backing up a goat trailer. That evening, Cam was rushed to the hospital. He passed away on June 4, 2024 in his 78th year. He and Alice had been married 55 years.

"I had been thinking a long time about how to remember Cam," Alice explains,"I came up with this idea to remember him for being the person he really was. He was a friend to everyone. I am happy the Royal agreed to my idea and we could get this Spirit of Cam Stewart Award in place."

At the Best in show final class, the announcer asked everyone to stay in the ring for a "new extra special award".

Alice and her daughter, Colleen and her grandson, Finn, both from Fort McMurray, Alberta, waited patiently by the ringside all day while the Junior Youth Dairy Goat Show and the Dairy Goat Show took place. The family was there for over eight hours waiting to give out this award.

"Cam Stewart was a Royal volunteer, an exhibitor in our dairy show for years, he was a friend to everyone. We feel one person this year especially shows us the spirit of Cam and this person is a judge and a great helper to many in the goat show community. We are pleased to award this honour to Jonathan Dugdale."

Jonathan looked as startled as a deer in headlights when he heard his name being announced. The first thing he did was to walk over to Alice and give her a big hug.

Jonathan met goats for the first time when he was eight months old. His Mom was single and she worked irregular shifts. At one fair, she sought out Joanne Battersby of Smithville, who was showing goats and was also a well-known local babysitter. Joanne agreed to look after eight-month-old Jonathan and, when it was time to head to the barn for her goat chores, simply tucked the baby into a knapsack and carried him on her back. Years passed and Jonathan became so much a part of the family, Joanne remembers, "Our son would say to me, "Does Jonathan REALLY have to go home?" Joanne shows goats under the Frankie's Goats prefix and Jonathan would happily go to goat shows with her. He began 4-H at 10 years old and did the entire program to the huge accomplishment of winning the Grand Champion Showperson title in 2016 at the Junior Goat Show. "Jonathan became part my child too," Joanne says, tears in her eyes as he was given the Cam Stewart Spirit award.

Now standing almost a foot taller than Joanne, Jonathan is a full time high school math teacher and a highly respected member of the dairy goat world. He has his own herd of dairy goats under the prefix OIFO-Acres sharing the barn with Joanne. He had his goats penned right across from Joanne's pens at the Royal and was the first one to carry her hay or water buckets. The two lifelong friends shared a space for meeting and meals.

Alice adds, "Jonathan helps everybody. When something needs to be done, he is doing it without even being asked. He is so much like our Cam that is remembered by everyone with love."

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The Royal Winter Fair Celebrates the Best of Canadian Agriculture

Story and photos by Cathy Hamill-Hill

The 104th edition of the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair brought together the best of Canadian agriculture, food and equestrian sport for ten days of entertainment, education and friendly competition, November 6–15, 2026, at Toronto's Exhibition Place. Visitors enjoyed an impressive lineup of activities and demonstrations, including sheep-shearing demonstrations, animal encounters, dairy education exhibits, horse breed showcases and sheep-herding performances. From hands-on agricultural learning and local food discoveries to world-class horse competitions, there was something to capture the interest of visitors of all ages.



Above is JD Power of Whitby showing Saanen yearling Kampfire Velocity's Hannah at the sanctioned Dairy Goat Show held at the Royal Winter Fair. JD is showing the doe on behalf of his friends, Barry VanCamp and Steven Backs of Port Perry, who own her. Homebred Hannah went on to be crowned Best Junior Doe at the Bobcaygeon show. Hannah and others from their herd were also part of Education at the Royal. A talented show ring decorator in years past, the 2026 Royal marked Barry's 46th year working at the event.



In the above photo, Steven Backs, Ring Steward for the Royal Winter Fair's Dairy Goat Show, presents Luella Cail of Pontypool with her trophy and plate for being named Champion Premier Exhibitor of the 2026 Dairy Goat Show. Exhibiting the largest number of goats under her herd prefix, Peacock Meadows, Luella specializes in Oberhasli dairy goats.

To the right is Julie Martin from Smokey Hollow Farm in Hillsburg near Erin, Ontario spinning at the Royal Winter Fair. Julie works with Angora fibre, which comes from Angora rabbits. The fibre can be dyed in a variety of colours and transformed into incredibly soft, colourful creations.



Meet Lemon, a purebred Highland cow owned by Catie Rolica of Blossom Ridge Highlands in Kerwood, Ontario. Purebred Highlands are registered in a carefully maintained herdbook, allowing their Scottish lineage to be traced. Well suited to Canada's climate, these hardy cattle live outdoors year-round without requiring a barn. Blossom Ridge is a family farm operated alongside Hawthorn Brae Highlands, owned by Catie's mother, Roberta.











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Merry Christmas

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a season of cheer,
and health and happiness
throughout the new year!

From everyone at the
Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture
It has been a pleasure serving you in 2026!

SIMCOE COUNTY FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE



As the season of giving draws near, we're grateful for the hard-working farmers who keep our fields and communities thriving. Just like you, we're here to dig deep, lay strong foundations, and prepare for the future.

A HOLIDAY WISH FOR YOU

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Elmvale, Ontario

Farm View
1977 - 2027

The History and Evolution of Farm View

February 1977: John Beischer, General Manager of the Barrie Banner, met with Tom Smith of Utopia, President of the Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture, to discuss the possibility of creating an annual agricultural publication.

April 1977: Farm Review and Forecast was launched as a 12-page broadsheet newspaper featuring advertisements, local agricultural news and reports from various county organizations.

Original Distribution: Approximately 2,700 copies were mailed to Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture members. The Federation supplied the mailing list, while the Barrie Banner provided advertising sales and publishing expertise.

1980s: The successful partnership continued for more than a decade.

1989: Farm Review transitioned from an annual publication to a monthly newspaper to better serve the needs of local farmers and agricultural businesses.

Regional Expansion: In the years that followed, Farm Review expanded its coverage into York, Peel, Dufferin and Muskoka.

1994: John and Jill Beischer acquired full ownership of Farm Review.

2011: The publication changed its name from Farm Review to Farm View to better reflect its evolving direction and readership.

2020: John Beischer sold Farm View to his daughter, Roslyn Watkins, continuing the family publishing tradition into its next chapter.

In 2027: 50 Years Strong! Today, Farm View serves Simcoe and Dufferin Counties and the Regions of York, Peel and Muskoka, with expanded distribution into agricultural communities throughout Grey, Bruce, Victoria, Durham, Wellington and Haliburton Counties.

Memories, Milestones & Reflections

JOHN BEISCHER, Publisher & Editor 1977 - 2020

50 years is an incredible milestone for any business.

It is an incredible achievement for a newspaper, whether daily, weekly or monthly.

Farm Review and eventually *Farm View* was a monthly publication that survived while hundreds of print publications failed to maintain a foothold when social media and the internet took over the dissemination of news and information. The reason was simple. *Farm View* had, and still has, a target audience: farmers and rural landowners who value the printed message they receive in their mailbox every month, or pick up at a reliable agricultural or food outlet in their community.

After my wife died suddenly in 2019, I was unsure how to proceed with the publication of *Farm View*. Fortunately, my daughter bought the newspaper and continued to nurture it to this point, where she is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its beginning in 1977. Thank you, Roslyn.

When publisher Roslyn asked me to submit an article for inclusion in this 50th anniversary tribute, a great many ideas and stories came to mind, but one memory has always stayed with me as I learned to live without my publishing partner.

While *Farm View* began as a partnership between three friends, it soon evolved into a one-person endeavour to continue as a sole proprietorship, with all the capital expenses required of a new business. Mortgages on the family home necessitated a great commitment for me and Jill. The start-up costs were incredible. Before a single dollar of ad revenue flowed, printing and production costs seemed insurmountable. Jill stepped up, as she did so often in those early difficult days: she took a second job as a security guard with Knight Security and began a new career at an automotive plant in Tottenham, a small community between Barrie and Toronto.

This may seem insignificant, but to me, it is a vivid and beautiful memory. When production day grew close, I would take 20 or 24 pages of the next *Farm View* issue to her plant in Tottenham, and together we would proofread all the printed pages. I would take the corrections home before the sun came up. She would follow later, and together we made the necessary corrections. And then it was off to the then printer in Bracebridge.

I cherish every moment I spent in the publishing industry, and I cherish every moment that Jill was at my side while I tried to derive an income from this difficult business.

I am now 77 years old. I have travelled extensively in the USA since my retirement, and at this writing, I am in the Berkshires in the Appalachian Mountain region of Massachusetts.

DON BEAULIEU, Contributing Writer

My first connection with *Farm Review* (as it was originally named) was through *The Barrie Banner* newspaper. I took a job with the paper as their darkroom technician in the early 1980s. *The Barrie Banner* was a family-owned independent newspaper in the city of Barrie. Ron Tyler was the owner; an old-school fellow who knew business and people, but with a mostly serious demeanor. I learned a lot from him. Tyler's advertising sales manager was John Beischer. This is the Beischer that became *Farm Review*'s famed publisher.

In the years following, after *Farm Review* became a monthly publication under Beischer's command, it allowed me to use my innate "I need to write" gene and my photographic skills for a decent purpose.

After some time, we realized the paper had changed, and the name *Farm Review*, though very recognized and respected, was less of a "review" than a reflection of what was happening currently and it looked toward the future of agriculture. New methods, new products et. al.

Hence, the current moniker *Farm View*. Lotsa folk still call it *Farm Review* and that just shows how ingrained the publication became and its legacy continues. I was charged with coming up with the new logo, which continues to adorn the front page.

Farm View has always been a newspaper exhibiting traditional professional design. Beischer has a knack for good page design (and advertising design in particular) and that has been maintained with our current publisher Roslyn Watkins. When Watkins took over the paper, she explained in a video interview that she "inherited" me. I thought that was cute. I am very proud to be associated so closely with *Farm View*.

The opportunity to be associated with the agricultural industry and its people is incredible. From local farmers to those in charge of federations and associations, local, provincial and national, I thrive on being in such company when I attend events. These are some of the most decent folk I have met. I've seen businesses go from ideas to successful entities. I've seen history in the making. I feel very connected to my food sources and the agricultural community. I'm looking forward to continuing to contribute to the paper in 2027.

CATHY HAMILL-HILL, Columnist

When the world was scared with COVID-19, I was rejoicing behind my mask with my new writing home with *Farm View* in March 2020.

As a farmer who likes writing, farm journalism is close to Heaven for me on this side of the sky. I can now be honest about the sheep, goats and rabbits that I care for twice every day.

I've interviewed so many people in my day and thought I could never be totally surprised ever again- I learned at the Severn Bridge Fair 2026 that was not true. I met a man who was 99 years old and sure didn't look his age. I asked him what kept him so healthy. He looked at me directly and said seriously, "It is all the good whiskey I drink and all the good s@# I have." The look of pure shock of his words that showed on my face sent the 99 year old into gales of laughter. "That was sure good for a laugh, I have no idea how I got to this age but I sure like it," he said.

The most impressive thing about *Farm View* reaching this 50 year milestone is the fact it stayed true to its roots. Today, with AI technology and so much online information, *Farm View* is still working with live people with camera in hand. *Farm View* is put together not by a robot or a team in a big high condo in a far-off city but instead by Roslyn, a Simcoe County girl at her desk top in her home and often a purring cat on her desk beside her. *Farm View*, like farming, uses technology but it is not the heart, the heart is a real person.

I'm grateful for my farm writing home and congratulate John and Roslyn on their incredible achievement.

DENNIS GANNON, Columnist

50 Years! What an Achievement!

Keeping a family publication in circulation for half a century is truly something to celebrate. Congratulations on this remarkable milestone!

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to contribute fire and safety messages for your readers. I hope that, in some small way, these articles help raise awareness, encourage safer practices and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who read them.

Here's to celebrating 50 years of success and to many more years of keeping readers informed, connected and engaged. Wishing you continued success and a future filled with good news!

LARRY CULHAM, Columnist

It was my privilege to share in the growth of *Farm View* after my years of association with John and Jill Beischer. I first met them while working in community newspapers in Simcoe County and was introduced to *Farm View* (then *Farm Review*).

I was raising four kids, a few dozen hens, a rabid skunk and a mangy raccoon while trying to consider whether hobby farming could be viable. 20 years later it's still under consideration.

My chronicles of rural living formed a monthly column called "Lots of Concessions" and documented my reality as a PF – pretend farmer. The compilation of columns has been independently published but never quite become an international best seller. People still comment to me about their memories of that writing and I appreciate it.

If you need proof that I was a long way from a PF, consider the day I asked Egbert sheep farmer and OFA member services representative Don Stephenson about his herd. He was bemused, everyone around us roared and I – sheepishly – looked for a rock to crawl under.

Nevertheless, it is the hours spent collating, editing and compiling the contributed pieces and stories of Simcoe County's courageous, inspiring and dedicated farmers and farm organizations that I remember most. The monthly deadline push for page layout was often a late-night challenge and John and Jill would patiently wait for my work to be completed.

As the office was then home-based, there were often two charming teenage girls passing through. It truly was a joy to see one of them, Roslyn, become active in the enterprise – a rich harvest for John.

It is said, "A farmer measures time not simply in years, but in springs of promise, summers of labour, and autumns of harvest."

My congratulations to Roz, John and the supporters of *Farm View* on this 50th anniversary. May there be many more measures of time and bountiful harvests.

ANDREW HIND, Columnist

Farm View was one of my first writing jobs when I decided to quit my full-time job as a home and garden centre manager and become a full-time freelance writer. Publisher John Beischer allowed me to explore my passion for the histories of rural communities and gave me an important first stepping stone. When we met for the first time I was still living with my parents. John passed by to drop off a ham for Christmas - a very kind gesture - and mistook my father for me, understandably assuming the author of the Village Stories column was a middle-aged man with an interest in history. When he finally saw me John was understandably somewhat surprised at how young I was. My father and I still laugh about the stunned look on John's face to this day. Now, twenty-odd years later, I am indeed the middle-aged man with an interest in history.

Women's Institute News and Updates

By Donna Jebb, President Simcoe Area Women's Institute

Our Simcoe Area Women's Institute celebrated its centenary this year.

The celebrations began last April, 2026, at Women's Day, when everyone in attendance added their name to a piece of material that eventually became part of a commemorative quilt.

We also organized a bus trip through South Simcoe, which included a visit to Museum in the Boyne, featuring very informative displays about our very first Simcoe Area secretary, Kate Aitken, a famous female broadcaster and author of many cookbooks. Our next stop was the Banting Homestead, where we enjoyed lunch and learned about the Banting family home. Our final stop was Creemore Springs.

It was a wonderful day, and everyone enjoyed the bus ride, visiting the different locations, and meeting and making new friends.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being President of the Simcoe Area Women's Institute and meeting so many wonderful women, both current WI members and those who are considering joining our active group of ladies.





In the above photos WI members celebrate the unveiling of their commemorative centennial quilt at the Simcoe County Museum earlier this fall.

Soul Sisters Celebrations

The Quiet Turning: Finding Light in the Deepest Dark

Out in the country, we don't need a calendar to tell us when the season is shifting. We feel it in the early dusk settling over the fields by four in the afternoon, in the sharp stillness of a frosty morning, and in the way the wind sweeps across open land with nothing to slow it down. By the time December rolls into January, the world outside has stripped itself down to bare branches, frozen earth, and long, quiet nights.

For centuries, people who lived close to the land paid close attention to the winter solstice, the shortest day and longest night of the year. Before electric lights and digital screens pulled us out of nature's rhythm, our ancestors understood that the solstice wasn't just a date; it was a threshold. It marked the exact moment when the darkness reached its fullest depth and quietly began to yield, returning the light to us a few seconds at a time.

In our modern rush, especially through the noise and obligations of the holiday season it is easy to treat winter as something to simply endure until spring. We push ourselves to keep moving at a summer pace when every instinct in the natural world is telling us to slow down. Yet, if we pause long enough to match our step to the season, this transition from dark to light offers a profound invitation to tend to our own spiritual well-being.

Darkness, in nature, is never wasted. Beneath the snow and hard ground, roots are resting, gathering strength, and preparing for growth that won't be visible for months. Our inner lives require that same quiet dormancy. Spiritual health isn't built solely in moments of high energy, celebration, or clarity; it is rooted in the willingness to sit still in the quiet, to let go of what has run its course over the past year, and to take honest stock of what truly sustains us.

As December gives way to January, we stand in a rare doorway between what has been and what is yet to come. You don't need grand resolutions or a complete overhaul of your life to honor this turning. Spiritual renewal often begins with small, deliberate acts of attention: stepping outside at dusk to watch the stars emerge over the tree line, sharing a unhurried cup of coffee with a neighbor who might be carrying a heavy winter load, or simply allowing yourself an evening of real silence without the hum of a television or phone.

Notice where your energy goes as the days begin to lengthen. Just as the returning sunlight doesn't thaw the earth overnight, our own clarity and hope often return gradually—a quiet warmth spreading from the inside out.

This winter, give yourself permission to honor the dark as much as the light. Rest where you are weary, release what no longer serves your spirit, and trust that even in the coldest, stillest stretch of the year, something good is already beginning to turn toward the sun.

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

SOUL SISTERS CELEBRATIONS





The Story of the Christmas Wreath

Village stories
by Andrew Hind

It wouldn't be Christmas without a vibrant green wreath hanging from the front door. However, few realize its deep spiritual meaning.

The story of the Christmas wreaths dates to antiquity, with cultural traditions woven together very much like how wreaths are made from woven evergreen sprigs.

In ancient Greece and Rome, wreaths were awarded to athletes, emperors, conquering heroes, and others who had accomplished great feats. They might also be hung by lovers on their partners' doors as a sign of their eternal affection. Holly was particularly revered in Rome as it was considered sacred to Saturn, the God of Agriculture, and therefore played an important role in this deity's holy day, Saturnalia. Revelers gave one another holly wreaths, decorated images of Saturn with holly boughs, and carried holly during their festive processions.

Meanwhile, in Scandinavia, Germany, and Celtic Britain evergreen plants were revered for their ability to remain vibrant through the long, cold winters. These peoples considered evergreens to be imbued with magical powers and made them an integral part of many holy ceremonies, particularly the winter solstice festival. Wreaths were hung from the roof or put on the table as a symbol of good fortune during the long, harsh winters in these parts of the world.



When the Christian Church became the primary religion in the Roman Empire it initially tried to stamp out pagan traditions. While successful on many counts, reverence for evergreen was too deeply rooted to be easily expunged and so church officials decided to assimilate them into their own religious beliefs. Now, the wreath's circular shape stood for God's eternity, the immortality of the soul, and Jesus' crown of thorns. Evergreens, as before, meant eternal life.

It was during the medieval period that wreaths began to be hung on doors, though at the time most were made from holly. It was believed that the leaves' prickly thorns provided a ward against evil spirits entering the home.

In the 16th century the word wreath (from the Old English "writha", meaning "that which is wound around") began to refer specifically to the decorative wreaths used during the holidays.

As with so many of our Christmas traditions, the wreath in the form we know it today was popularized in the Victorian period. For them, wreaths were simply décor; any religious or spiritual meaning took a back seat. By this time, wreaths were increasingly made of evergreen, though they frequently had sprigs of holly woven into them. Wreaths were also decorated with fruit, pinecones, and birds (often English robins which, legend says, got its red breast from its own blood while trying to remove Jesus' crown of thorns while he languished on the cross.

The rest, as they say, its history.

Supporting Simcoe North Agriculture: Looking Ahead to 2027

Message From MPP Jill Dunlop

As another year draws to a close, I want to recognize the hardworking farmers, producers and agricultural families who contribute so much to Simcoe North. Agriculture is more than an industry in our region; it is a way of life, built on generations of dedication, resilience and pride.

Our farmers face changing markets, rising operating costs and unpredictable weather, yet continue to demonstrate remarkable determination and innovation. Supporting their success remains an important priority for Ontario.

Recently, our government, in partnership with the federal government, announced nearly $22 million through the Market Diversification and Trade Resiliency Initiative. This investment will support more than 130 Ontario agri-food businesses, helping expand into new markets, strengthen competitiveness and support the creation of approximately 925 jobs.

Ontario is also investing $2 million through the Food Safety and Growth Initiative to help smaller agri-food businesses modernize equipment, improve food safety and expand operations. Eligible businesses can receive up to $75,000, with applications being accepted until March 1, 2027, or until funding is fully committed.

Equally important is preparing the next generation of agricultural leaders. Ontario's $2.3 million investment in 4-H Ontario over three years will support hands-on learning, leadership development and opportunities for young people to discover the many rewarding careers within agriculture.

As we celebrate the holidays, I encourage everyone to support our local farmers, markets and producers. Choosing Ontario-grown products for our holiday tables is a meaningful way to thank those who work year-round to feed our families and strengthen our communities.

I also invite families to join me for our Free Ice Skate Across Simcoe North on December 30th, with times in Penetanguishene, Midland, Tay and Coldwater. I hope to see many familiar faces!

To our agricultural community, thank you for your hard work, perseverance and contributions throughout 2026.

From my family to yours, I wish you a very Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year. May 2027 bring favourable growing conditions, new opportunities and continued success to our farming families.

JANUARY 6–9, 11

BEEF DAY January 6
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QUILTING

A Little Christmas Magic, One Stitch at a Time

By Janis Hamilton

As I write this column, I've just emptied the last of my flower containers, the birds were waiting for the bird bath to be refreshed and I brought in a dozen or so yellow pear tomatoes. Yes, the rest have been cleaned out but the ones by my house foundation are my last hope at fresh, juicy tomatoes. So, I feel I'm rushing it to even suggest we are aiming for Christmas projects. But the reality on the calendar tells me it's wishful thinking this wonderful weather might continue.

Last year I suggested giving homemade gifts from the heart. Well in a year, my thoughts haven't changed. Advent calendars I made for my friend's children are still being enjoyed. They don't always have to have candies. Why not leave a coupon or a note suggesting that something is hidden (a Christmas hide-and-seek game without someone hiding under the bed)? Stickers, finger puppets, Christmas pencils, Christmas books, or even the next clue for that mischievous elf could be hidden. Oh, the fun families have with him or her. So, consider the advent calendar if you have wee folks in the family. Now a chocolate a day might keep adults in the spirit of Christmas…that does sound tempting. Look for advent calendars with a simple fold so pockets don't have to be cut out and then stitched on. Northcott fabrics produce easy to sew calendars and they are the only ones I use. Add backing, batting, a dowel with eye screws and fishing line to make sure it hangs right. Ok. One project down.



Next, could you make a small quilt for a neighbour or grandchild's doll bed? This can be as simple as just small blocks sewn together or even better do you have a youngster who might like to learn to sew? What a gift that would be for both of you! This could be done on the weekend in a morning or afternoon. Consider having the fabric chosen ahead of time as this I find takes the longest. Project 2 off the list.

If you are sharing baking with friends and neighbours consider making a Christmas hot pad or even a quick Christmas mug rug to go with it and maybe a box of tea as well. Check it out at www.nationalquilterscircle.com If you are looking for a bit more of a challenge and time permits try a quilted ornament of a Styrofoam ball (the whole tutorial is on the site listed above.)



Project 3. Ornaments for the tree and those extra hostess gifts. I know you will go through withdrawal, but no sewing is involved with these and they are quick. https://woolwrenstudio.com/how-to-make-no-sew-scandanavian-star-ornaments/ is your source for lots of quick projects, but here are the requirements from the web site for Swedish Star Quilted ornaments.

You will need:

- 4 strips of fabric that are 3" x 12" (start with two of one color and two of another color)
- Iron and ironing board or mat
- Wonderclips or small clothespins
- fabric glue
- string, embroidery floss, or yarn for hanging
- a large-eyed hand sewing needle to attach the string

Now you are ready to sit with your laptop or computer and start your stars. It takes very little time, and you'll have enough to share in no time. If you are online, just click on the link above.

By now you can see the theme for this column is quick and easy. I know you must have lots of wrapping and baking to do, so let's have a great time in the sewing room and still look like we were sweating it out there. www.diaryofaquilter.com has a collection of ideas from many sources with lots of PDF downloadable files. One cute idea was the Christmas pillow section (type that into their search button). Using scraps, you can quickly transform any room into a winter wonderland. Appliqued snowflakes, star block pillow, a troll or gnome pillow, a bench Santa pillow, a Christmas village pillow will use up lots of scraps and what about your favourite greens to make a Christmas tree pillow.

Some families get new pajamas for the arrival of Christmas. What about new pillowcases for the whole family. Their favourite sports, hobby or just sparkle up with the shades of Christmas. The Burrito Pillowcase method is an easy finished pillowcase that will not fray even if washed a hundred times. www.seasonedhomemaker.com On this site are the directions, but for those of you not familiar with this method, you end up with a pillowcase that has a cuff and a simple flange strip. It won't take long to use up scraps that are widths of fabric.

So Merry Christmas and Happy Sewing in the New Year. May the Fairy Elves always keep your fabric stash filled. Of course, you can't be on the "naughty" list for that to happen.



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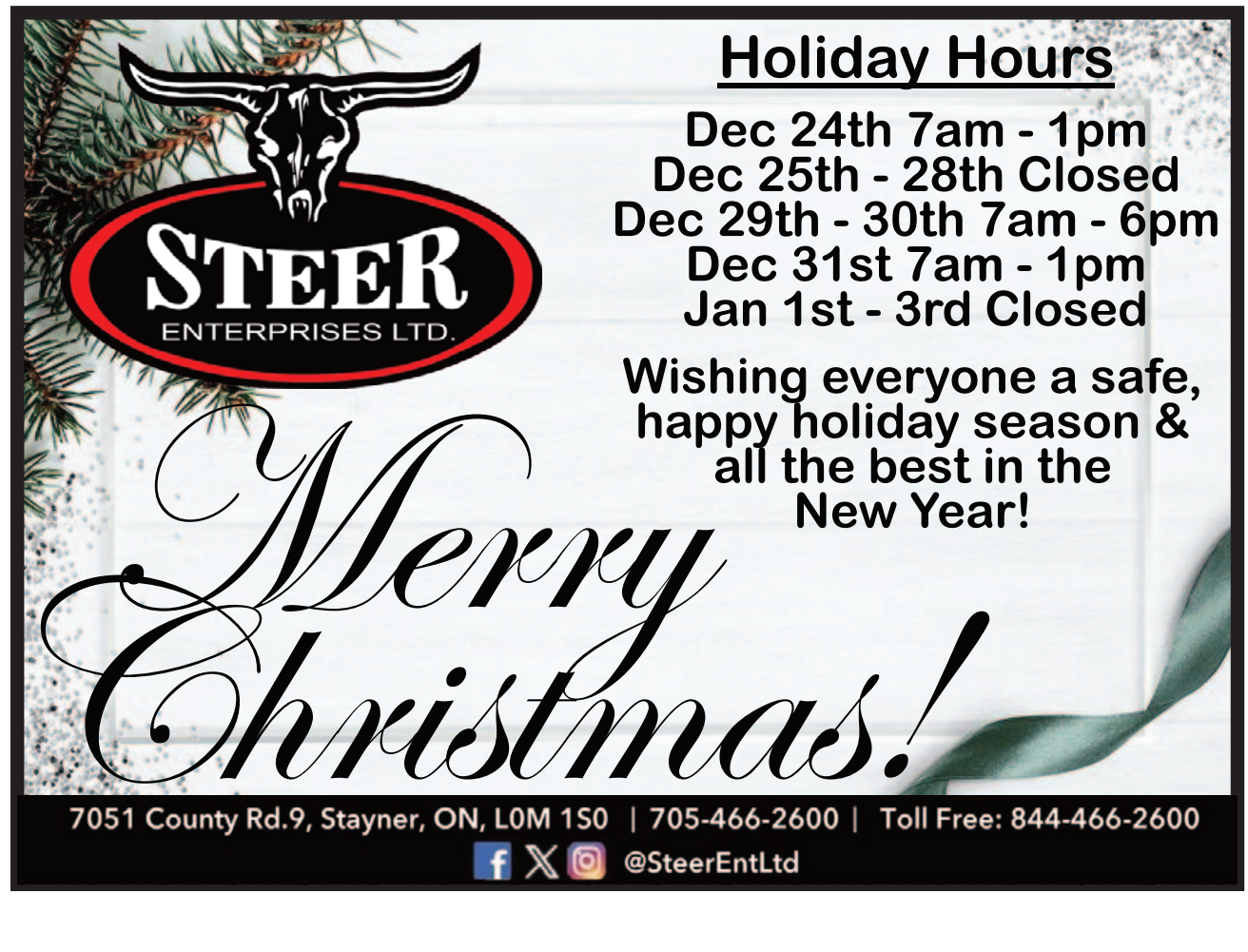

Sharing the Heart of the Women's Institute

Story and photo provided by Senora Baldry



Senora Baldry (left)and Liz Moore display one of the beautiful quilts made by the Quilting Corners Guild.

On November 3rd, 2026 the Quilting Corners Guild had the opportunity to learn about our local Woman's Institute from President Liz Moore. This active and important group provides support through their membership to schools, seniors and first responders. QCG is proud to create receiving blankets and small quilts for the first responder's program: Books, Bears and Blankets. These kits of comfort are given to children during crisis and emergency situations by first responders. Thank you to Liz for sharing the work of the WI with us.

Comfort Through Quilting

Story and photos provided by Senora Baldry

Another busy, but impressive, evening of sharing and enjoying the 28 Quilts of Valour presented to our Regional Rep, Elizabeth. Quilting Corners Guild members together with patrons of Country Concessions Quilt Shop piece, longarm, bind and label kits created by Elizabeth and Senora. The array of completed QoV was heart warming to view. These quilts will provide hugs for local military recipients as always. However, some of them will be sent west to support the community of Wainwright with quilted hugs, warm thoughts and prayers. Thank you to the many hearts and hands involved in this outpouring of creativity.

The photos below showcase a few samples of the beautiful quilts.





After The Chores: Away Time

By Cathy Hamill-Hill



We got some vacation time last month.

When a Fairboard is counting on you on one hand and someone you really care for passes on, it is quite the feeling of being pulled in two places at the same time. I got through the Fair week but my mind in its overloaded state went blank on a workday between shows.

I was to open the building using the keypad that has been the same numbers for over 20 years. My mind hit a total blank as to what the four digits were that I have used for over 20 years. I could remember two digits but the other two just were not there. I rushed to a computer that had a new password that I couldn't get right so that froze me out next. I called a co-worker who didn't know what to do likely because I didn't tell her what I needed, a panicked mind doesn't explain good either. I called the alarm company who demanded to know the exact address where I was at, a street name didn't work and then disconnected. My cell phone wouldn't turn on as it needed charging. By the time I got this all sorted out, I knew I had to get a break out of life.

On Thanksgiving Saturday evening, the last chores before the big (to us) vacation, I decided to go get the sheep from the pasture which is usually Sweetie's job as I get the grain in the feeders in the barn. It was dusk and the sheep were at the fence. I was going through the vacation checklist, dog at kennel, feed bought, etc when I got to the gate at the pasture. Sheep, with their excellent hearing, did not recognize my steps this time of day. My sheep ran away to the far end of the pasture as fast as they could.

I called the sheep in my most convincing voice- and two came forward and dashed out of the gate. The others stayed in the field, now milling back and forth feeling scared as they heard their flockmates run for home.The sun had dropped to bed and the sheep hit the panic button, they felt lost. A lost sheep is a non-reasoning sheep. I had to go into the field and start talking again. We did a few rounds of the pasture while the dusk deepened. The sheep and I both were going into panic mode at this point.

The one standard in moving sheep is the fact that sheep follow each other- every single time. If I could get one close enough to the wide open gate, the rest would follow I decided. The gate should prompt the memory of going home to the barn. The key here was not letting the freaked out sheep that I was freaking out. Finally my sheep logic found the sheep and there were sheep racing for the barn and I was standing alone in a dark field.

Our vacation was to Saskatchewan. We arrived in Saskatoon at 11:00 am which I forgot was really 1:00 pm. I'm no experienced traveler though Sweetie being the sweet natured person he is still lets me plan vacations. I planned the whole day and evening. I had bought tickets to a documentary film I found online, in an historic old theatre in downtown that evening as there were no chores. By the time we got our way back to the hotel that evening, it was nearly midnight leaving us awake for 22 hours straight.

Saskatchewan has all the services and stores we are use to being spoiled south Ontarians except for one. Thanksgiving Monday I had decided we would find a Swiss Chalet for Thanksgiving- and we looked and looked and looked online hoping they were not all reserved. There are no Swiss Chalet restaurants in Saskatchewan we now know. With evenings free, we did all kinds of activities that we would never do at home with chores, we went riding a trolley at sunset in Moose Jaw to going to a movie at Famous Players at 10 at night in Saskatoon. People that are on the streets at midnight made me very glad to normally spend my evenings in the barn and in front of CTV News at night. The vacation evenings were entertaining but I didn't get that warm nice feeling of "job done" that I get after chores.

I'm grateful to have been here at Farm View for another eventful year. This year has seen more Fairs, more events and how much fun it has been. I appreciate all of you that I met through the year. Thank you for taking the time to read this column about my little life here. Farm View publisher/owner good natured Roslyn has moved my deadlines many times this year getting everything fit in. As farmers, we are incredibly blessed that Roslyn believes in our way of life and keeps this newspaper thriving so we can have our farming story shared.

I wish all of you a blessed Christmas and pleasant storm-free 2027.....Sincerely, Cathy

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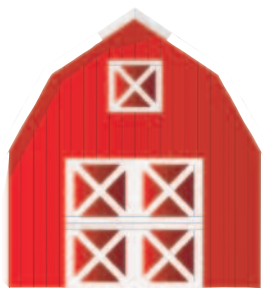
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Keep the Holidays Bright and Fire-Safe

By Dennis Gannon

Tis the Season for Holiday Cooking and Decorating… The Fire-Safe Way.

December is a special time of year when families and friends gather to celebrate the holiday season. Homes are decorated, kitchens are busy preparing favourite meals, and the warmth of lights, laughter and good company fills the air.

Unfortunately, it is also a time when festive celebrations can quickly turn into tragedy. In December more people on average die or are injured from fire related causes. Cooking and heating-related incidents are among the leading contributors.

A few simple precautions can help ensure that you and your family enjoy a safe and happy holiday season.

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms are essential to protecting your family. Check the expiration dates on your alarms and replace units as required. Install fresh batteries where applicable and test your alarms monthly. Smoke alarms are required on every level of your home, and installing one inside each bedroom provides additional protection. Ensure CO alarms are installed outside sleeping areas and on every level of your home.

Alcohol and Fire Don't Mix

Alcohol and fire can be a dangerous combination. If someone in your household is cooking or smoking after consuming alcohol, be aware of the increased risk. Impaired judgment and slower reaction times can have serious consequences. Keep an eye on anyone who may be drinking and ensure that someone responsible is looking after the cooking. Remember, there's more to responsible drinking than simply arranging a safe ride home.

Cooking Safety

Careless cooking is a leading cause of residential fires in Ontario. Many kitchen fires begin when pots and pans are left unattended on the stove. If you must leave the kitchen while cooking, turn off the stove.

Keep a large pot lid nearby whenever you are cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, carefully slide the lid over it, turn off the heat and leave the lid in place until everything has cooled. Never attempt to extinguish a grease fire with water, and never move a burning pan.

Fireplaces and Candles

There's nothing quite like a blazing fireplace on a cold winter's night or the warm glow of candles adding to the holiday atmosphere. However, open flames can quickly become an invitation to disaster.

Never leave a fireplace unattended and always use a properly fitted fireplace screen. Don't burn wrapping paper, ribbons or other holiday packaging in your fireplace. These materials can ignite suddenly and cause a flash fire.

Candles should always be placed in sturdy, non-combustible holders on stable surfaces, well away from decorations, curtains and other combustible materials. Keep them out of the reach of children and never leave burning candles unattended. Consider using battery-operated candles as a safer alternative.

Christmas Trees and Decorations

If you enjoy a real Christmas tree, purchase one that is freshly cut and keep the stand filled with water at all times. A dry Christmas tree can become an extremely serious fire hazard.

Before decorating, inspect all lights and electrical cords. Discard any that are frayed, damaged or have loose connections. Avoid overloading electrical outlets and use only lights approved for their intended indoor or outdoor use.

Never place lit candles on or near a Christmas tree. When the tree begins dropping large amounts of needles and becomes dry, it is time to remove it from your home.

Heating Equipment

Heating equipment is another significant cause of residential fires. Ensure that woodstoves, fireplaces and fireplace inserts are installed by qualified professionals and operated according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Allow ashes from woodstoves and fireplaces to cool completely before placing them in a metal container with a tight-fitting lid. Store the container outside, well away from your home. Never place hot ashes in a garage, shed or other enclosed space.

Have your heating system, vents and chimneys inspected and cleaned annually by qualified professionals. Make sure outdoor heating vents remain clear of snow, ice and other obstructions.

Be Prepared: Know Your Escape Plan

Finally, take a few minutes to review and practise your family's home fire escape plan. Everyone should know at least two ways out of each room, where to meet outside and how to call 9-1-1. Make sure everyone knows their home address and understands that once outside, they must never re-enter a burning building.

The holiday season should be a time for making memories, enjoying good food and spending time with the people who matter most. A little extra attention to fire safety can prevent an enjoyable celebration from becoming a devastating experience.

From our home to yours, enjoy a safe, healthy and happy holiday season!

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All The Difference Receives 2026 DLF Sheep Pasture Award

Beatrice (Bea) Chan and Pablo Pineda Willis of All the Difference in Lakefield are the recipients of the 2026 DLF Sheep Pasture Award. The award, sponsored by DLF, the Ontario Forage Council, and Ontario Sheep Farmers was presented today at the Ontario Sheep Farmers Annual General Meeting and Lamb Banquet in Cambridge. For their exceptional pasture management they received a cash award of $250 and a bag of forage seed from DLF.



Bea and Pablo do not come from a farming background. Both began working on farms in high school. Bea first got introduced to sheep through Bob and Gail Irvine. The desire to be a sheep farmer lead her to start with three sheep and an acre and a half of land at her parents' home. All the Difference grew from there.

Finding land to rent and grow the operation, All the Difference grew from 3 ewes to 75, focused on being 100% pasture-based systems. The flock lambs on grass and is on pasture all winter long, with an ATV used to unroll bales for winter feed. Intensive rotational grazing using the RAPPA 4-strand unwinder and electric nets, with one or two daily moves, is just the beginning of the pasture management practices.

All the Difference focuses on the fundamentals of any pasture system: soil microbial life, water management, and plant health. They sample soils for microbial biomass and apply compost as necessary. They've also implemented keyline design, a technique used to capture water on the landscape and spread it out for even moisture and retention, helping to make the pasture more resilient. A mobile shelter moves with the sheep to provide them shade in the summer and protection in the winter. The shelters have wi-fi and cameras to allow them to keep an eye on the flock when she's not there.

While Bea is responsible for the on-the-ground operations of the farm, her brother Pablo is the business systems guy behind it all, ensuring the operation keeps running smoothly. The two sell their lamb and wool products direct-to customer through their website allthedifference.ca.

The farm is signing new leases for next season to increase to 200 acres, turning cash crop land and unmanaged lands into productive pastures.

When asked what's one thing she's really proud of in her operation, Bea says there's not just one thing. It's the attention to the whole system that makes the difference.

"It is exciting to see new producers coming together to forge their path in the industry. Driven by perseverance, ingenuity, and determination to overcome land and other limitations, All the Difference is an admirable example of how a shared vision and resourcefulness can encourage meaningful growth and innovation in the livestock sector," said Patricia Ellingwood, General Manager of the Ontario Forage Council.

SIMCOE COUNTY HOLSTEIN CLUB

Call for Directors

If you or someone you know is interested in becoming a director with the Simcoe County Holstein Club, please reach out to any of our current directors, or come out to our AGM and express your interest in joining. We are always looking for new members to bring fresh ideas to our wonderful events.

Upcoming Dates

- December 4th-5th Dairy Futures Summit, Kitchener
- December 8th, 7 p.m. Simcoe County Holstein Club AGM at HQ Taphouse, 85 Highland Drive, Shanty Bay
- February 23rd-24th Holstein Ontario Convention & AGM, Jordan Station

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Grey Bruce Farmers' Week Heads to The Carriage House Centre in Hanover for 2027

Grey Bruce Farmers' Week (GBFW) is entering an exciting new chapter January 6-9 & 11, 2027 with a move to the Carriage House Events Centre in Hanover, Ontario.

The 2027 program features 5 commodity days: Beef (Jan 6th), Dairy (Jan 7th), Goat (Jan 8th), Sheep (Jan 9th) and Crops (Jan 11th). The conference continues its long tradition of bringing producers, agribusiness professionals, researchers, and industry leaders together for practical agricultural education, networking, and innovation.

Following many memorable and successful years in Elmwood, Grey Bruce Farmers' Week will make the move to the Carriage House Events Centre in Hanover for 2027. The move has already received positive feedback from exhibitors. More than 95 exhibitors from across Ontario are expected to participate in the tradeshow during the week, creating valuable opportunities for producers to connect with leading agricultural businesses, organizations, and service providers. Attendees can also look forward to expert speakers, producer panels, and interactive discussions focused on the opportunities and challenges facing agriculture today.

Each day is packed with practical and engaging topics:

• Beef Day: A year-round approach to feeding cattle with eCollars, common causes of itchy cattle, a BFO Update, grass-fed vs. grain-fed beef, and a panel on cattle marketing

• Dairy Day: Data-driven decision making from the founder of CATTLElytics, heat stress management, a DFO update, supporting optimal lifespans, quota transfer policies for succession planning, and a panel on applying AI on dairy farms

• Goat Day: Planning a dairy goat barn, interpreting somatic cell counts, an update from Dairy Goat Farmers of Ontario, biosecurity management, an Ontario goat update, and a panel on raising kids

• Sheep Day: Adopting solar infrastructure, maximizing the value of wool, an OSF update, feeding ewes for optimal production, clostridial disease control and prevention, & a panel on confinement and pasture-based handling systems

• Crops Day: Sulphur testing & nitrogen management, a 2027 market outlook, cover crops & Living Labs research, the annual agronomy update from Peter Johnson, & a panel exploring drone applications on the farm

For those unable to attend in person, livestreaming options will once again be available, with all registered participants receiving 30 days of access to conference recordings following the event.

Tickets may be purchased online on December 1st at www.GBFW.ca, with in-person attendees also able to purchase tickets at the door using cash, debit, credit, or cheque.

GBFW is organized by Grey Ag Services in partnership with commodity groups from Grey and Bruce Counties. Grey Bruce Farmers' Week is one of Ontario's premier agricultural conferences, connecting producers with the latest research, innovations, and management strategies across multiple sectors of agriculture.

For agenda & speaker details, registration information, or exhibitor schedules, and sponsors, visit www.GBFW.ca or contact info@greyagservices.ca.

Media Contact: Elora Tarlo Grey County Agricultural Services 519-986-3756 Elora@greyagservices.ca

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Clearview ROAR Update

On November 3, Terri and Rachel held the first monthly meeting with DND A-OTHR project manager Irv Marucelj and 2 other members of his team.

They plan to meet with DND each month to get project updates and bring residents' questions and concerns directly to the project team. There may at times be no updates, but having this regular contact is a means to keep the communication lines open.

Here's what the project team shared about the preliminary A-OTHR receive site at 15/16 Sideroad and Concession 7 Sunnidale. (This is the parcel of land they purchased in the Spring of 2025.)

* Environmental studies are nearly complete, with other studies and some sign-offs still outstanding. The antenna layout should be finalized in the spring.

* The plans are to keep the antenna array as far back from the Minesing Wetlands as possible and expects less grading than originally anticipated. Roadside trees along 15/16 Sideroad may be retained, while many along Concession 7 are expected to be removed.

* Construction fencing has and will continue to be erected by the contractor, but earthmoving is off the table for this fall. Work is expected to begin in March or April 2027.

* Stormwater will be managed on site.

* Monitoring of residential wells in the immediate vicinity of the preliminary site was proposed.

Terri and Rachel again raised concerns about property values and residents' ability (or challenge) to sell their homes with this project looming. DND asked for data on property value impacts, and they will follow up. If you have news or an expert opinion on this, please connect with Terri or Rachel.

DND says they are still considering locations for the two permanent receive sites. They will inform Terri and Rachel when that decision has been finalized.

If you have questions or concerns you would like us to raise on your behalf in the next meeting, please reach out to the Facebook group https://www.facebook.com/groups/clearviewroar

Thank you for your ongoing support.



Sheep With Jobs, and a Farmer With Plenty to Keep Her Busy!

Story and photos by Cathy Hamill-Hill



This is Taylor Van Schaik of Woodville shearing a sheep from her family's flock at Sheepfest, part of the Farmfest Farm tours in Kawartha Lakes. Taylor made the job of shearing look easy but it is a skill requiring precision balancing of the sheep while careful motion with the shearing equipment is being done. There were about 300 people that came to Sheepfest to learn about sheep and witness sheep shearing up close.



This is the flock having an afternoon rest at home in the field at Schwain Farms.

Taylor Van Schaik of Woodville has two off-farm jobs and is building up a third business. The busy mom of three children also has a flock of busy sheep with jobs of their own!

Taylor and her husband, Nick, own Schwain Farms, which was part of the 2026 Farmfest tour. Close to 300 people visited the farm for Sheepfest.

About 150 North County Cheviot based ewes make up the flock here at the farm near Woodville. There are also some Rideau, Dorset and Suffolk influence in this flock. Today, the flock is home and enjoying a warm day sleeping under the trees in a pasture during the afternoon. The guardian donkeys and guardian dogs are having an easier day than most as the sheep are right next to the family's farm house.

The sheep will be going out to their "job" again. They are property maintenance at local large solar farms. The solar farm decided to hire sheep to eliminate the need for equipment mowing and the use of herbicides. Grazing sheep is good for the land, as it doesn't damage pollinator habitat. Grazing allows the land to be used to make protein-rich meat, renewable fibre while the solar panels produce energy.

"I have 400 acres to maintain. I work with other producers as I don't have enough sheep to cover all those acres," Taylor explained adding, "I graze two locations. I make small sections using portable fence and move the fence every five days. Sheep are prone to internal parasites so I move the sheep to new pasture to keep the pasture clean for them."

There are both guardian donkeys and guardian dogs that are transferred with the sheep to the new pasture. Predators for sheep are kept out with the guardians.

Taylor's newest venture is building a business as a custom shearer. "I can only shear up to 50 sheep a day," she explains, adding that this makes her a small-flock shearer. She learned how to shear with practice on her own sheep and guidance from professional shearer Jacob Heffernan who she credits as being a great educator. Now, that she shears herself, she has all her sheep sheared before July. She began custom shearing in 2025. Anyone interested in hiring Taylor can reach her through Facebook and Instagram.

She told visitors that sheep fleece "holds moisture and it will compost all on its own. Fleece makes a good mulch."

Sledding Word Search

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D	E	S	O	D	Z	U	O	G	L	I	S	L	C	I	K	M	H	L	T
U	E	E	O	V	H	A	A	C	H	I	L	L	R	E	E	T	S	C	H
L	L	I	A	R	T	L	Z	C	Z	O	O	M	R	K	C	L	S	N	R

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

BLADES
BUMPS
BUNDLE
CHILL
CLIMB
COASTING
DOWNHILL
FAST
FRIENDS
HILL
LAUGHTER
MOMENTUM
MOUNTAIN
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SLED
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South Simcoe 4-H Members Shine at the Royal Winter Fair

Reports and photos submitted by Simcoe County 4-H

South Simcoe 4-H Cookstown Beef Club

The South Simcoe 4-H Cookstown Beef Club had members compete at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in early November. Members competed in the Masterfeeds National Junior Beef Heifer Show (showmanship and confirmation). Thank you Masterfeeds for a great show. They also competed in the National Shorthorn Show and Hereford Show.





South Simcoe Go For The Gold Club

By Isabella Cullen

The South Simcoe 4-H Go for the Gold Team represented Region 4 at the Provincial Go For The Gold Competition at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair 2026 in Toronto on November 7th. The team consisted of Anna Kamminga, Brooklynn and Krysta Downey, Isabella and Madeleine Cullen. The team demonstrated knowledge of all the manuals, great teamwork and good sportsmanship all throughout the day. The team went undefeated for all 5 games and it was announced that South Simcoe would be in the finals versus Huron County. It was a really close game and came down to the final questions when Huron took the lead. Naming the South Simcoe 4-H Go For The Gold Team as Reserve Champions.

Thank you to Ontario Mutuals for sponsoring this amazing opportunity and helping shape 4-H! Thank you to our coaches and leadership team for all your support and effort throughout the year - Sam Kamminga, Kimberly West-Kolb, Trish Downey and Tamara Fisher-Cullen.

If you like knowledge and trivia games Go For The Gold 4-H project is for you!





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hours 1321, year 2012, 4wd, cab & heat, 540/1000rpm, 2 remotes, buddy seat, rear wheel weights, c/w Horst wing plow,Serial#A GH1242-19-1208-2789, In Erin. ***$58,700***



Kubota BX23S
hours showing: 793, 4wd, diesel, 64 PTO Hp, cab/heat/air, Nokian Tires, 360/70r20 fronts, 440/80r30 rears, radio, Kubota M37 Loader, Mechanical SS coupler, In Erin. ***$21,800***



Kubota M6-131
hours showing:2488.0, diesel, 4wd, cab/heat/air, 540 rpm, 2 remotes, front fenders, front weights, 420/ 70r24 fronts, 520/70r38 rears, rear wheel weights, horst la4200w1016, Unit is in Erin. ***$77,800***



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Kubota B2620HSD
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John Deere 6110M
hours showing: 1251.6, 4wd, diesel, cab/heat/air, 24x24 transmission, f&r hyd shuttle, 2 remotes, 540 rpm, buddy seat, loader ready, , horst lasb4203wef21016 blade with edge flex, In Erin. ***$86,900***



Caterpillar IT14G
8761.7 hours ua, 2006, cab/heat/air, 17.5r25 tires, auxilliary hydraulics, bucket with cat it24 quick attach, Forks & snow blade, Unit is located at Stewart's Equipment in Erin. ***$63,900***



Volvo L110H
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New Holland L218
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