

# Goodbye and thanks, Pieter

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Cramahe Township is losing one of its most ardent supporters. Early in July, Pieter and Anne Wyminga will leave Colborne, heading to Guelph to be closer to their family.

Whenever anyone leaves, we are all the less for it. When that person is making a significant contribution to the welfare of the community, the loss affects us all.

For close to 20 years, the Wymingas have lived in Cramahe. Pieter's apple orchard was the focus of much of his energy in the early years as he built his business and promoted Cramahe through his participation in the Apple Route.

In the past few years, his profile in the community became much larger as he took on the leadership of the Cramahe Ratepayers Association.

The group met, at first, so members could voice their concerns about the actions of Cramahe Council. Their frustration turned to action and, for the past two years, the organization has presented proactive positive alternatives to some of the decisions made by council.

Under Pieter's leadership, the ratepayers have worked with the township to reduce the tax burden. They are looking for better answers for Cramahe.

Those who work with him acknowledge he can be frustrating to work with at times — but for all the right reasons.

As is the case with many with long-life experience, Pieter seldom acts without thinking of the ramifications. Every word, every letter to council or the *Chronicle*, every decision is considered, mulled over, and tossed to others for consideration, before Pieter is willing to advance his concerns.

His thoughtfulness tempers the actions of those around him; it is a moderating voice that reflects a deep and abiding respect for all — even those he feels have acted irresponsibly and immorally.

Having grown up in Holland under the oppression of Nazi Germany, Pieter has a much deeper understanding of the importance and fragility of our democratic institutions, and of the value of human life.

While it has pained him to observe some of the actions and decisions of some Cramahe council members, he has always, invariably, sought to find solutions which allow all to save face.

We will miss this kind Dutchman who chose Canada as his home and, by doing so, made all of our lives better. We will miss his gentility, his warm and welcoming smile, and his overriding desire to make the lives of those around him better.

Farewell, Pieter. And thank you.

## Pieter Wyminga

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This time our efforts frustrated the mayor. At the opening of an in camera meeting he is alleged to have said, "Who is running this town, the newspaper or the Cramahe ratepayers Association? No No." he answered. "It is the council and nobody else." And that is when more objections about such meetings were reported on in the paper.

The affair with Ken Wood has dominated the news lately. The organization of responsibilities between staff (the Chief Administrator), Cramahe personnel and council members is a blurry mess. It needs to be addressed. And in the absence of proper management, some council members will always abuse their freedom. People want power and will use it for the wrong reasons whenever they can. Abuse of power can be found at all levels of government.

Monitoring this will be a major task for the ratepayers association. If roles are clearly defined and staff respected for their abilities, staff production will increase and initiative will grow.

In that respect, I am so happy that Ferne Dobson declared herself a candidate for the next council. I understand there are one or two others of high moral and intellectual standards who intend to run. Such people will turn our township around.

A second concern I have is about the environment. People from large urban areas are looking for future homes in Northumberland County. Ensure that the environment will always receive the respect of those in office.

Thanks again. I wish the Cramahe Ratepayers Association and the Township of Cramahe all the very best.