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Join the Gordon family for the annual Lantern Walk at 7 p.m. this Saturday at the Warkworth Town Hall Centre for the Arts. Carol in the village and return to the hall for hot cider and old-fashioned cookies. The Victorian era decorations will transport you to a quieter time. Every year, the concert features local talent - songsters, musicians and storytellers.

All are welcome to this free celebration of the festive season. Donations for the Warkworth Food Bank are especially appreciated. For further information, call Linda Zeisner at 705-924-1424 or e-mail zeisner@sympatico.ca.

Critics call for options to spreading of sludge

COLBORNE CHRONICLE DEC. 11 '08

By Bob Owen
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Critics made the case for looking harder at the spreading of sewage sludge and its alternatives at a Dec. 2 public meeting in Colborne.

Much of the sludge-spreading today comes as a result of an international agreement made with the United States in 1996 governing water quality in the Great Lakes, said Maureen Reilly, director of Sludge Watch. Since then, secondary processes used by large municipalities send cleaner water to the lakes and twice as much sludge elsewhere. Some sludge is incinerated, some landfilled and the rest spread on farmland.

Downloading of provincial responsibilities to municipalities by the Harris Tories in the late 1990s left the disposal of sludge as a self-regulatory business, Ms. Reilly said. Even so, major waste-spreader Terratec has incurred 43 guideline infractions.

Provincial biosolid guidelines state sludge can't be spread until it is proven it would do no damage, but Ms. Reilly claims the science was never done.

Representatives from Terratec and the provincial government declined the invitation to attend the Dec. 2 meeting.

Ontario's current Liberal

government is considering making the process of spreading simpler, Ms. Reilly warned. Because the province and municipalities see sludge spreading as a low-cost solution to being rid of their sludge, the checks and balances aren't in place, she maintained.

Cramahe Township council voted Oct. 21 to hold a public meeting to discuss sludge spreading but at its Nov. 18 meeting withdrew from participation, agreeing only to allow the Cramahe residents to use the township meeting room for a discussion.

Cramahe Township resident Kris Rahn was concerned when five million litres of liquid sludge was applied on farmland in five days near her home. The retired microbiologist acknowledged the material is being tested on a limited basis but is upset about human-adapted pathogens found in sludge. There are 17 types of bacteria, 18 viruses, six protozoal parasites, 12 parasitic worms, six pathogenic fungi and the same number of pathogenic yeasts found in sludge, she said, most are not included in testing done before sludge is hauled to farms.

Ms. Rahn wants sustainable alternative testing for pathogens, pre- and post-application testing of wells and wetlands, and heavy metal content monitoring of soil.

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Public teachers, boards at an impasse

By Shelby Parker
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Even with an extended deadline the province's public school boards and the English elementary teachers union could not reach a framework agreement Friday.

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA) had asked talks be extended five days, to Dec. 5, to try to reach a four-year agreement.

Rick Johnson, past president and now spokesperson of the OPSBA, called the outcome "disheartening."

"We tried everything we could," he said yesterday, adding negotiations began in February, the union walked away in May then returned in late-November.

"Then, on Friday afternoon, they dropped a whole bunch on stuff on the table," Mr. Johnson said of the ETFO, adding he believes this was "irresponsible" because it gave the association no time to research the union's

figures or determine their impact on the classroom.

One of the union's items was that students only be taught by ETFO members.

That would not be possible in smaller schools where principals occasionally have to teach a class, Mr. Johnston said.

Another item was that the Charles E. Pascal report on a new kindergarten model not be taken into account in the new agreement.

Although Mr. Johnson said the union's demands had little to do with pay increases, they would have cost \$260 million more than the funding available from the government.

"This would have thrown every other board into a deficit," he said.

Ontario Education Minister Kathleen Wynne stepped in when Friday's deadline came and went without an agreement, stating funding is available to cover 2% salary increases for each of the next two years for the elementary teachers.

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Province offers 2% increase annually with no contract

Gilligans' case adjourned again to Jan. 7

By Joyce Cassin
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Justice Robert Graydon says the June 24 matter of Timothy Gilligan Senior and Tim Gilligan Junior should have already been resolved.

After a request for a remand, he agreed to put the matter over until Jan. 7, 2009 after neither accused nor their counsel attended the Ontario Court of Justice in Brighton Dec. 3.

Counsellor Brad Halls spoke on behalf of Karl Bernhardt, counsel for Mr. Gilligan Sr., requesting the matter be put over. Although he did not have approval to speak on behalf of Mr. Gilligan Jr.'s defence

counsel, Dennis Lowry, both cases will come back before the courts the same day.

The 40-year-old Cramahe Township Councillor, Tim Gilligan Jr., and his 66-year-old father, Colborne publican Tim Gilligan Sr., were charged with assault with a weapon on the evening of June 24.

Northumberland OPP said they were called to a large fight involving baseball bats on King Street West in downtown Colborne and subsequently laid charges.

According to police, a 21-year-old man sustained facial injuries when struck on the side of the head.