

Great Literacy Race kicks off in Colborne

COLBORNE – Students at Colborne Public School will be joining their peers at other Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board schools in this year's Great Literacy Race.

The initiative, which started in Northumberland County as a partnership between the Northumberland YMCA and Cobourg Honda, has now been extended throughout the board thanks to a Parents Reaching Out grant from the Ministry of Education. The program uses games and activities to bring parents, students and teachers together to help promote literacy among children.

"Research tells us that parent engagement in the home leads to success in school," said Sasha Korper, an early literacy specialist for the YMCA and co-ordinator of the Great Lit-

eracy Race, at a launch event at Colborne Public School on Thursday, Jan. 27.

"We're not asking parents to teach children, we're just saying get involved, give your children the message that what they are doing in school is important. This program really aims to foster family literacy," said Ms. Korper.

The race includes a series of literacy-focused activities for children to bring home and complete with their family, including reading books, cooking recipes and even singing. Participants are grouped together in teams, and collect kilometres for every task they complete. Winners will be awarded with prizes thanks to a sponsorship from Cobourg Honda.

"Literacy is the basis of so much we do

every day, not only in business, but in the sciences, the trades, everywhere really," said Jim Proskos, president of Cobourg Honda.

This is the first year Colborne is participating in the race, after principal Pam Buttery had a great experience with it in her previous position as principal of Spring Valley Public School in Brighton.

"The number of students involved and their enthusiasm for reading was really great to see," Ms. Buttery said of the race. "I thought this was a great opportunity to bring the program here and the teachers were very excited about it and wanted to get involved. When the home and the school are working together on the same thing you see really positive results for the kids."

Annette Leger, whose son Nicholas is in Grade 1 at Colborne Public, says she is excited to participate in the race.

"I love playing games with my children. They think that's extra fun and it makes them more interested in reading. It's also fun to be together with the whole family and be involved, you notice right away that activities like this make a difference."

This year, almost 6,000 students, representing 260 teams from across Northumberland, Clarington and Peterborough, have signed up for the race, which runs through Friday, Feb. 25.

For more information or to track scores visit www.greatliteracyrace.com.

• Moya Dillon

10 AGRICULTURE

2010 was a good year for cattlemen

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ROSENEATH – Things are looking up for the beef industry but more work is needed to help the bottom line of producers, area cattlemen were told Jan. 13 at their annual meeting.

"2010 was a good year for us," Dan Darling, vice-president of the Ontario Cattlemen Association, said in remarks made to about 115 people at the civic centre in Roseneath.

The Cramahe Township cow/calf operator said both beef production and beef exports to the United States increased by one per cent last year. Canada exported 150 million metric tons of meat to the U.S. while importing 107,000 metric tons.

"We're still on the upside of that, so that's fantastic," Mr. Darling told members of the Northumberland Cattlemen's Association.

Country-of-origin labelling remains a challenge for Canadian beef producers shipping product south of the border.

"It still is a trade barrier as far as we're concerned and we continue to argue our case on that as does our government, but it does put us somewhat at a disadvantage," Mr. Darling said.

The OCA is also engaged in developing a strategic plan to deal with the continuing loss of feedlots, cow/calf producers and abattoirs.

"This doesn't make sense," he said, when there's so much market potential in Ontario, the United States and the European Union.

The "bold, new moves" include identifying locally produced meat on store shelves, and setting up value chains in which everybody from the producer to the retailer works together, Mr. Darling said.

He said the different initiatives are intended to show governments

beef producers are trying to solve their problems.

You can't keep crying hard times and asking for money, he said.

Northumberland-Quinte West MP Rick Norlock said the federal government has been in an "aggressive free trade mode the past several years" trying to pry open markets for Canadian red meat, and it's worked.

“The ability of the world to feed itself in the very near future is going to be one of the biggest issues around. Rick Norlock

“After the BSE crisis we had a lot of doors closed,” he said, but trade deals are helping to swing the doors open once again.

“The ability of the world to feed itself in the very near future is going to be one of the biggest issues around,” Mr. Norlock added, but he said Canada's agricultural sector “is capable of producing more food for more countries.”

“We need to protect agriculture. It's now the number one industry in Ontario,” MPP Lou Rinaldi said. “It has surpassed the auto industry.”

Denton Meiklejohn reported the number of cattle sold at the six stocker sales held at the Hoard's Station sale barn last year were up slightly. The average dollar paid per animal, \$775, was close to what it was in 2006 (\$789), but still “quite a bit below” what was paid in 2002, he said.

“So, yes, there has been an improvement but that improvement comes at a time when the expenses are going up also.”

■ FUNDING

St. Paul's receives Trillium Grant

WARKWORTH – “It's no secret,” says Dean Peters, chair of the board of St. Paul's United Church in Warkworth, “that the mainstream churches are struggling to maintain themselves and to continue to serve their communities, let alone expand their services.”

After evaluating its current direction and the potentials for new opportunities, St. Paul's undertook the development of an extensive business plan covering the next five years. It covered all aspects of the church's involvement in the community.

One of the first projects was an energy audit of the banquet

room facilities, which serve as a general meeting place for many organizations within the community.

There were considerable benefits to upgrading the energy efficiency of this area. As a result, plans were put in motion to: replace old windows with energy efficient, low maintenance units; replace the drafty entrance doors; insulate the north wall; install a new energy efficient gas furnace for the meeting room and replace the old water heater with an “on-demand” hot water system. In addition, a new electric range and a commercial refrigerator in the kitchen would improve

the catering facilities and reduce energy usage.

The board of stewards made application to the Ontario Trillium Foundation and received \$38,900.

“The Foundation was very helpful in guiding us through the process and it was a real pleasure working with them,” said Ian McCrea who, as treasurer, had a strong interest in reducing the operating costs of St. Paul's.

“Now we can concentrate our resources on serving the community with such projects as the Food Bank and other new initiatives for Youth and Single Parent Family support,” Peters said.

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