

■ cramahebriefs

**SUZY KERNAGHAN TRAIL TO OPEN SOON**

CRAMAHE TOWNSHIP - It's full steam ahead for the Suzy Kernaghan Memorial Trail.

The trail which runs from Rotary Centennial Park south to Colborne Creek subdivision and the Keeler Centre was named in honour of the well-loved and respected teacher who died in a winter traffic accident.

A residents committee applied last year for Trillium funding to bring the trail close to completion. Cramahe's community development officer, Rebecca Goddard-Sarria, reported to Cramahe Council on March 6 that it had received approval for \$14,900, enough to complete brushing, tree removal, signage and other tasks.

It is expected that work will be completed this year.

- Bob Owen

**BUILDING COSTS TO RISE**

CRAMAHE TOWNSHIP - Cramahe Township is set to increase the cost of building a new home.

On March 6, Cramahe Council studied a building permit cost comparison chart which showed the township was lagging behind other municipalities when it came to charging for building.

Currently, builders pay \$.4025 per square foot for permit. The recommendation approved by council on March 20 will up the fee to \$.5 per square foot.

On a house of 1,700 square feet, the increase would cost builders \$166.

The township Building Department was in a deficit position in 2010 and 2011 and had to fall back on reserves from previous years to pay the total deficit of almost \$8,000. The matter was brought before council on March 6, along with comparisons which showed Cramahe's building permit fees are amongst the lowest in the area.

Chief building official Natalie Moroz-Cornell's March 20 report to council showed that, if the new proposed rates had been used in 2010 and 2011 the township would have had a surplus of about \$115, based on 24 new homes being built each year.

The township must now hold a public meeting to allow input into the proposal.

- Bob Owen

■ FIVE-YEAR PLAN: 74 kilometres of hard-topped roads need work

# Cramahe considers \$5-million roads project

CRAMAHE TOWNSHIP - In 2011, Cramahe Township director of operations Dan O'Brien encouraged council to have a detailed study done of township roads.

On March 20, D. M. Wills Associates presented the results of the study. If council moves forward with the recommendations it is going to be expensive.

D. M. Wills transportation manager, Michael Lang told council it must spend \$1 million a year for the next five years if it wishes to avoid seeing its roads falling into disrepair. That's more than double what Cramahe currently spends on maintenance and upgrades.

The Wills study looked at all aspects of the roads but focussed on surface quality and usage. It then rated every road in the municipality. Those with scores of less than five out of 10 were considered inadequate.

The good news is that 90% of Cramahe roads are considered ade-

quate. The bad news: if the roads are left unmaintained, in five years the rating will be 80%. In 10 years only 70% of roads would be considered adequate.

Seventy-four kilometres of the 123 kilometres of hardtopped roads in the Cramahe network will need work in the five-year plan proposed by the consultants. An additional 12 kilometres of gravel roads were identified as areas which could be hardtopped based on current condition and maintenance issued by township staff. These were not included in the \$5-million price tag. A total of 21 kilometres were considered to be critically deficient.

D. M. Wills president Bruce Bonner responded to a suggestion from the public gallery that more gravel roads be treated with hardtop. Bonner warned that is Cramahe took an aggressive approach to hardtopping that its maintenance budget would soar. Gravel roads are "one grade away from being

in good condition," he reminded.

The township can save substantial amounts in road maintenance by conducting a thorough roadside ditching and brushing program. Proper drainage and adequate sunlight helps keep roads dry and extends their lifespans.

Bonner offered two alternatives in his written report: the township could hire a private contractor for \$4,800 to \$6,000 a week to do this work, or it could dedicate a staffer who ditched in the spring and brushed in the winter months. There would be a capital cost of about \$250,000 for equipment if the township took on the work.

In the short term the contracting out option appears to be cheaper, but Bonner's staff costed out the two options and found that, by staying in-house, the weekly cost would be only \$2,400 a week. Numbers were based on 16 weeks of operation.

If council were to adopt the Wills proposals, Morganston Road, Burn-

ham Street, Cedar Street, Park Street, Little Lake Road and the water tower access road would top the repair list and be done in the first year.

But council is some distance from making a decision. There was a great deal to absorb in the Wills report, not the least of which is the cost. Council has yet to pare down the 2012 budget to a level which is acceptable.

Mayor Marc Coombs is on the record as supporting borrowing to pay for some work, but the opinions of his councillors on the matter is not known. One of the loans on the Keeler Centre will be paid off by the end of 2013, and Coombs sees replacing that loan with another as a possible avenue for increasing the amount of money available without raising taxes.

Lang pointed to the company study, telling council that alternative repair solutions had also been offered in the report which would cut township costs.

- Bob Owen

*Notices*

**ALLEN, ROBERT WILLIAM JAMES:** It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Robert Allen on March 16, 2012 suddenly at NHH. Son of the late Herman and Muriel Allen. Brother of Dave and Dawn. Uncle to Candice, Amber and William. Robbie will also be missed by his extended family at Port Hope Taxi. There will be a celebration of Rob's life on **Saturday April 14**, from 2 - 6 pm at the Port Hope Legion. If desired donations can be made to the Canadian Kidney Foundation or to the Port Hope Legion.

**RITCHIE, TERRANCE RICHARD:** Passed away peacefully, with his family by his side, March 26, 2012 at Northumberland Hills Hospital in his 71<sup>st</sup> year after a courageous battle with cancer. Pre-deceased by his wife Mary Geraldine (Keating) and survived by his children Kathleen Allen, Terry Ritchie and his wife Tanya, Deanna Crosty and her husband Bill and Shannon Catherwood and her husband Darren, his eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He will be missed greatly by his many family and friends.

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