

Agri-Food Venture Centre receives more praise

NORTHUMBERLAND TODAY NOV. 10/16

MARC COOMBS
CRAMAHE COUNCIL CORNER

As anyone who has the occasional beer knows, the craft beer industry in Canada has been booming for the past few years.

Almost every town that one visits now has their own local brewery operating. Most are just a few employees with a passion for brewing their own brand. Right here in Northumberland we can now boast at least four craft breweries. Most people may recognize Church Key Brewing. John Graham started that brewery based in an old church near Campbellford way back in 2000.

I recall attending the Toronto Wine & Cheese Show about 15 years ago with John as part of the Northumberland Tourism booth. He spent most of the day drawing samples of his popular flagship brand "Northumberland Ale" for enthusiastic attendees.

Now Northumberland is also home to Cobourg based Williams Street Brewery & Northumberland Hills Brewery as well as Presqu'île Craft Brewery based in Brighton. Local bars like the Station in Port Hope & The Mill in Cobourg regularly have a good selection of local brew on tap or in the bottle.

If you know your beer you know that the main ingredients besides a great supply of clear clean water, are malt, barley & hops.

Up until recently most brewers in Canada were forced to import hops but that is quickly changing. The Eastern Ontario Hop Growers Association boasts sixteen growers in our area including several here in Northumberland. The Ontario Agri-Food Venture Centre (OAFVC) has become a key compo-



Pictured from left are Cramahe CAO Craig Brooks, Mayor Marc Coombs and Ron Brennan from Old 4th Hop Yard.

nent in helping these hop growers get their product processed. Since most of these growers are fairly small, the cost of capital equip-

ment can be cost prohibitive or, at best, a long term investment that doesn't make sense yet at the volumes they produce.

A typical hop farm will take three to four years to get to where they can harvest enough hops to be commercially viable. The hops are

picked & dried either on site or at a shared facility. Where the OAFVC comes in is by hosting hop pelletizing equipment. This consists of two pieces of machinery. The first is loaded with hops by hand and grinds the hops down to flakes in a plastic 45 gallon drum. This product is then loaded into the hopper of a second piece of machinery that pushes the material through a die into small pellets. These are then vacuum sealed and stored temporarily in the frozen storage at the Colborne facility.

While I was recently visiting the facility I met Ron Brennan of Old 4th Hop Yard, located in Williamstown just east of Cornwall. Ron was enthusiastic in his praise for our facility. He said previously he would have to travel seven hours to get to the nearest facility where he could process his hops. He praised the location of our building just off the 401 corridor as well as its cleanliness and the friendliness and professionalism of Operations Manager Joe Mullin. "He's easy to deal with and has been a great help" Ron commented.

Ron also suggested the quality of the hop pellets using our equipment was better than before which was very important to him as he tries to expand his market. He currently grows four acres of hops and is looking at increasing that to eight acres next year. Currently he sells all he grows to popular Beaus' Brewery, based in Van Kleek Hill, close to Ottawa.

The day after I spoke with Ron, the Bickle Farm-Valley Hops from the Port Hope area were also in the facility, processing their harvest of hops. The OAFVC is proud to be playing a key role in helping these budding entrepreneurs realize their dreams.

Marc Coombs is the mayor of Cramahe Township

SUBMITTED PHOTO

CRAMAHE COUNCIL BRIEFS

Open house

The Cramahe Community Association (CCA) is hosting an open house for citizens of Cramahe Township at the Colborne Public Library from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 21. "This is a great opportunity for all residents to find out what their association has been working on since the CCA was formed on Sept. 1, 2015," Gritt Koehl says. "It is also a great time to bring forward any concerns, questions or suggestions on any matter in the township to the CCA." Refreshments (coffee, tea and cookies) will be served.

Meeting schedule set

Calling all Cramahe Township political wonks. The dates for all 2017 regular council meetings have been set. Usually the council meets twice a month on the first and third Tuesday — except for one meeting in the months of January, February, July and August. Below are the 2017 dates: Jan. 17; Feb. 14 (Happy Valentine's Day!); March 7 and 21; April 4 and 18; May 2 and 16; June 6 and 20; July 11; Aug. 8; Sept. 5 and 19; Oct. 3 and 17; Nov. 7 and 21; and Dec. 5 and 19. - Ashley Maika

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50th Wedding Anniversary
for Ken and Eileen Waite
Best Wishes Only
Masonic Temple, Port Hope
Saturday, November 12th at 7:30 p.m.



BAKER, Hazel Norma - Peacefully at her home with her daughter & son-in-law by her side on Monday November 7th, 2016 in her 90th year. Beloved wife of the late Leslie Baker. Loving mother of Brenda Chapman (David). Dear grandmother of Sarah McMurray (Tom) and Katie Williams (Tim) and great grandmother of Paige, Olivia, Victoria, Ethan and Anderson. Lovingly remembered by her sister Orletta Kernaghan (Doug) and the late Harold Harnden. Fondly remembered by her nieces and nephews. Friends are invited to call at the **MACCOUBREY FUNERAL HOME**, 30 King St., E., Cobourg on Saturday November 19th from 11 am. - 12 noon followed by a memorial service at 12 noon. Cremation with interment in Salem Cemetery. If desired donations may be made to Salem Cemetery or Community Care Colborne. Condolences received at www.MacCoubrey.com.