

Foresters Falls woman talks about her injuries and the kindness of many people in the community

By Valerie McLaughlin
Staff Writer

Seat belts can be annoying to wear but they can save lives. Ask Betty Black and her daughter, Kaitlin.

"If it wasn't for the seat belts and my airbag, we would have been dead. There is no question," said Mrs. Black.

The car accident she and her daughter were involved in happened on July 31 at 5:10 p.m., near their home. The two were returning from Cobden.

Mrs. Black was travelling through an intersection on the Kerr Line when a van didn't obey a stop sign and rammed into her vehicle.

There were people at the scene of the accident right away, including members of the Ross Township Fire Department. Mrs. Black's husband, Dale, is the chief of the fire department.

"It was quite ironic because some of the firefighters had just been on a training course in what to do in case of a car accident," said Mrs. Black.

"So they got to use it (their training) right away. Dale never expected they would be using it on his wife."

The driver in the other van was charged with careless driving.

"He (the other driver) was playing with his radio. He was bent over and helping his stepson fine-tune the radio. He admitted that right off the bat," said Mrs. Black.

Since the accident, Mrs. Black's life and the lives of her family haven't been the same.

"I spent 33 days in the Ottawa General Hospital after four hours of surgery on my foot," she said.

While Kaitlin suffered from whiplash, bruises and a burn from her seat belt, Mrs. Black's right foot was in such terrible shape from the accident, doctors didn't know if it could be saved.

"I broke the outside bone of my ankle and the inside bone of my ankle," said Mrs. Black.

"I cracked my heel bone in half and I had massive soft tissue damage. I severed the right tendon in my leg that goes down into the foot."

Mrs. Black's foot was on the gas peddle when her van was hit. Everything buckled and was pushed over towards her side of the van, injuring her foot in the process.

The driver who was charged in the accident and his stepson received only minor injuries. Kaitlin is still receiving treatment for her sore back and the whiplash.

"After they did the surgery, they told me the next day that I was very lucky that I had a foot," Mrs. Black recalled. "When I first arrived there, they didn't know whether they would be able to save my foot. It was basically dangling off the end of my leg and all open."



Betty Black is all smiles after spending 33 days in the Ottawa General Hospital. Mrs. Black and her daughter were in a car accident in July.

Mrs. Black gets around the house in a wheel chair. She is just starting to walk again with the help of a large walker with wheels and an air cast. The air cast looks like a ski boot and she wears it for support.

"I'm not actually walking, I'm going through the motions of moving one foot in front of the other but I'm not putting much weight on my (right) foot," explained Mrs. Black.

"When I push it down hard, it really hurts. I can hardly bend my ankle."

Mrs. Black's goal is to walk without the air cast by Christmas and the doctors believe she will have stiffness in the ankle and eventually arthritis will set in. Her second goal is to be back to work at the North Renfrew Telephone Company in the new year.

Mrs. Black and her family has learned many lessons since the accident.

"As far as Derek is concern, it has taught him one thing about wearing his seat belt," she said.

Derek is the Black's oldest son. She said he wasn't too fond of wearing a seat belt and family members had to ask him to buckle up whenever the family was trav-

When Mrs. Black was in hospital, she received a lot of phone calls, visitors and always had fresh flowers in her room. And she even had an unexpected visitor — the man who was charged with causing the accident, and his family.

"It was quite emotional when they came to see me. They brought me flowers and fresh fruit. They were quite willing to help out if my family needed a place to stay," said Mrs. Black.

Mr. Black stayed with his sister in Ottawa while Mrs. Black was in the hospital mending.

Mrs. Black thanks her friends and family for their help and caring contributions while she was in the hospital and, of course, members of the community.

"The whole community has been absolutely wonderful."

She said the amount of food neighbours have brought has been formidable.

"My kids are never short of cookies for their lunches. For the first two weeks, I think, Dale cooked a meal once when I was home and we still have stuff in the freezer to cook."

Top honours in cattle judging for Falls farmer

Foresters Falls area farmer Keith Black won top honours in dairy cattle judging and finished fourth overall in a field of an estimated 90 contestants from all over Ontario, who took part in activities sponsored by the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto last week.

Mr. Black, primarily a beef farmer, said he was taken completely by surprise when he was awarded a silver tray and a medalion for his efforts on Friday. But he maintains that winning prizes was probably the last thing on his mind when he decided to go on the five-day tour of 18 dairy, beef, sheep and swine operations spread over a four-county area.

"Even if I hadn't won, I would still like to go on that tour again," he said. "It was as much of a learning experience as it was anything else."

He said the purpose of the tour was to familiarize farmers with different

methods of operations in other areas. While on tour, the 90-man contingent was asked to "pick holes" in those farm set-ups—if they could.

Each person taking the tour was expected to judge eight different types of operations, and was rated on a pre-determined point

system. A team of government experts followed the tour, giving each judge some pointers on what to look for in a successful farm set up.

The classes of judging included dairy heifer selection; placing a class of dairy cows; and reasons for the choice; sire selection, cow evaluation and reasons; beef cow selection and

reasons; beef heifer selection; sheep shopping (with total points awarded on reasons given); in the swine category was the placing of a class of market barrows; and guilt selection and reasons.



Foresters Falls area farmer Keith Black received top marks in dairy cattle judging



Green Gables characters

The 52-person cast of Anne of Green Gables, presented last week by the youth wing of the Pembroke Little Theatre, had many members from Cobden-Westmeath and area, some of whom are in this photo. Front row, from left: slepdancers Brianne Metzger, Jennifer Reiche, and Hilary Reiche of Pembroke and Jessica Laronde of Cobden. Seated: Chris Reiche (Matthew) of Pembroke. Back row: Amber Agnew of Pine Valley, Justin Pinkerton (Mr. Phillips) of Forester's Falls; Jessica Leach (Ruby Gillis) of Micksburg; Kelsey Agnew (Anne) of Pine Valley, Nick Coleman (the minister) of Forester's Falls, Robin Pinkerton, band member, of Forester's Falls, and Samara Bilmer (Marilla) of Westmeath.

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