



Loose dogs dine on sheep

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer
Halton Hills farmers lose thousands of dollars each year to what dog owners might call the playful nature of their animals.

"In five minutes," Steeles Avenue sheep farmer Peter Branch told the Herald, "a dog can do an awful lot of damage to small animals."

Last year, tax money ended up paying \$4,209 in livestock valuers' fees and farmers' claims for sheep, goats, poultry and the occasional calf killed or injured by dogs.

There was another \$1,219 to the bill, but that was covered by the province for kills by coyotes.

It's not uncommon for the livestock claims account to end up in the red. It was last year with a \$2,290 shortfall.

In the minds of farmers, municipal and ministry of agricultural officials and a town councillor interviewed recently, there is no question that the ultimate villains in this expensive problem are thoughtless dog owners.

According to municipal bylaws and the province's Dog Licensing and Livestock and Poultry Act, dogs must be confined to their owners' properties and they have to be tagged.

"It's my feeling that council hasn't paid enough attention to this problem," Esqueving Coun. Pam Sheldon commented.

While we've encouraged people to license their dogs, we have to go beyond that: we have to make people aware they are responsible for their dogs."

A farmer who discovers a dog marauding his livestock can legally shoot it, under provisions of the Act.

the HERALD Features

Tell-tale tombstones

Just as a snooper through an old suitcase in the attic reveals the dress fashions of olden days, a walk through a graveyard unveils the changing fashion in tombstones over the years.



Thomas Wilson Richardson died Dec. 2, 1916 in his 64th year. His beloved wife Annie Wiley died in 1932. They had a daughter Margaret who died in infancy in 1899. A stone in the Georgetown Cemetery marks the three deaths. Local historian Barry Cannon admires the angel relief on the grave marker.

It may surprise you to know that gravestones are no longer what they used to be: they've actually undergone fashion trends.

Local historian Barry Cannon has walked through many graveyards, wife and children in tow, taking notes as he crouched by the markers.

HISTORICAL
A history teacher at Bramalea Secondary School, Mr. Cannon makes his students aware of the historical value of graveyards.

They not only mark the death of individuals, they also record the history of the time.

Very early grave markers were field stones, Mr. Cannon said. One side was smoothed off, and crudely carved into it was the deceased's name and sometimes birth and death dates.

He told a story of two Scotch Block men which never got along. Ironically, the two men died within a few months of each other.

Spelling was atrocious on a lot of the early stones, with corrections made even on the stone, he said.

In the same graveyard, their two stones remained memorials to lifelong enemies.

Before the stone markers, there were wooden markers. However, those wooden markers have rotted and disappeared with time, Mr. Cannon said.

The first stone said, "Here lies...snug as a bug." The second, with a finger pointing to the first man's grave, said, "Here lies...a hell of a lot snuggier than that other bugger."

Instead, they would have a graveyard at the back of their farm in which several generations may have been buried.

Mr. Cannon hasn't been able to find the stones yet although he's been through the three Presbyterian cemeteries on Third Line.

This was the case until the 1850s when the government's Cemetery Act was passed requiring all burials to be in common graveyards.

RECORD CHANGE
"As farms started to change hands, you started to run into trouble," Mr. Cannon said. "Most churches had already begun the practice of having a graveyard."

To move the remains, a medical officer of health, a minister and an undertaker had to be present.

Sometimes the remains in the family plot wouldn't have a marker until a farmer got around to it 20 years later. By then, a lot of the details were missing.

Many of the markers in the 1850s are of marble. Reasonably cheap, marble was brought to Halton Hills from the United States or other parts of the province. It's an easy surface to carve.

The marble markers had more purpose to them than just marking a grave.

They often had comments on them like "Born in Lanark County, Scotland", or "Late of Trafalgar Township".

VERSES
In the 1850s and 1860s, the sentimentality of the Victorian period left its mark in the graveyards of Halton Hills. You could choose verses from a book the monument maker had.

By the time of a

press, in small claims court, to be reimbursed for claims paid out for damage caused by defendants' dogs.

In addition owners can be charged for allowing their animals to run loose.

Last summer, Halton Hills employed two students to canvass the urban and rural areas, selling dog licenses door-to-door. Those who declined were formally asked in letters to buy licenses.

LICENSE INCREASE
The exercise led to between 500 and 600 more licenses issued, town bylaw enforcement officer Jack Lusty said, adding that the town has been able to trace more damage-causing dogs and claim for reimbursement.

While most people cooperated with the town in the licensing campaign, not everyone was pleased with the idea, Coun. Sheldon said.

"I had some people call and say they were angered at the height of government interference," she said. "But I told them that we pay

taxes to cover those farm losses, that taxpayers are subsidizing people who don't buy dog licenses."

Dog damage frequently occurs on farms near stretches of non-farm residential development. It commonly occurs when livestock are out grazing, during the spring through fall.

Farmers and valuers stress that the dog and coyote kills are readily distinguished.

Coyotes are precise, thorough killers, singling out weak, frail or slow animals, making the kill around the neck and then consuming the carcass.

PACKS
Instinctively, even well-fed dogs will form into packs, like wolves. But being well-fed, their "hunting" is part of the packs' playful behavior.

For sheep raisers especially, frolicsome dog packs pose as much, or more of a problem than the efficient coyotes.

Barking and snapping dogs will scatter a sheep flock, "worrying" pregnant ewes, nipping

and maiming the others and perhaps killing the odd lamb.

While most people cooperated with the town in the licensing campaign, not everyone was pleased with the idea, Coun. Sheldon said.

"I had some people call and say they were angered at the height of government interference," she said. "But I told them that we pay

taxes to cover those farm losses, that taxpayers are subsidizing people who don't buy dog licenses."

Dog damage frequently occurs on farms near stretches of non-farm residential development. It commonly occurs when livestock are out grazing, during the spring through fall.

Farmers and valuers stress that the dog and coyote kills are readily distinguished.

Coyotes are precise, thorough killers, singling out weak, frail or slow animals, making the kill around the neck and then consuming the carcass.

PACKS
Instinctively, even well-fed dogs will form into packs, like wolves. But being well-fed, their "hunting" is part of the packs' playful behavior.

Howling for Spencer

By CHRIS AAGAARD
Herald Staff Writer
Farm families in Halton Hills know Spencer Wilson for his fondness of antique cars and his knack of finding water with such traditional tools as willow switches and iron bars.

But he also has a grimmer, yet important role, to play in the rural community as one of three livestock valuers in Halton Hills.

When a farmer calls to report killed or injured animals as a result of an attack by dogs or coyotes, it's Mr. Wilson's job to go out and investigate the incident.

He's been doing it for 20 years, knows how to "read" a kill and has seen some awesome damage to a farmer's livelihood.

"The first thing you've got to determine is whether the kill has been done by dogs or coyotes," Mr. Wilson told The Herald.

"Then I have to set a price for the claim on the animal or fowl."

They came from Milton, five or six miles away. While the town pays for damages caused by dogs, the province pays for deaths and injuries to livestock caused by wolves and coyotes. Mr. Wilson maintains that the area's coyote population "is getting really thick these days."

"A coyote also tends to single out its prey, disturbing the rest of the flock only briefly."

"A dog," Mr. Wilson said, "chases everything."

"Sheep won't stand much running and dogs tend to worry them to death." Coyotes are really out for the kill."

BAD ATTACK
Several years ago, he spent most of the day wandering through one farmer's field after a particularly bad dog attack.

The final tally was 28 dead sheep, and while it couldn't be proven whose dogs had done the killing, descriptions of the animals indicated

they came from Milton, five or six miles away. While the town pays for damages caused by dogs, the province pays for deaths and injuries to livestock caused by wolves and coyotes. Mr. Wilson maintains that the area's coyote population "is getting really thick these days."

"A dog," Mr. Wilson said, "chases everything."

"Sheep won't stand much running and dogs tend to worry them to death." Coyotes are really out for the kill."

BAD ATTACK
Several years ago, he spent most of the day wandering through one farmer's field after a particularly bad dog attack.

The final tally was 28 dead sheep, and while it couldn't be proven whose dogs had done the killing, descriptions of the animals indicated

they came from Milton, five or six miles away. While the town pays for damages caused by dogs, the province pays for deaths and injuries to livestock caused by wolves and coyotes. Mr. Wilson maintains that the area's coyote population "is getting really thick these days."

"A dog," Mr. Wilson said, "chases everything."

"Sheep won't stand much running and dogs tend to worry them to death." Coyotes are really out for the kill."

BAD ATTACK
Several years ago, he spent most of the day wandering through one farmer's field after a particularly bad dog attack.

History in symbols

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer
No two grave markers are exactly the same, just as the individuals buried under them are unique.

A walk through a graveyard will show the variety of epitaph symbols on the grave markers. Each symbol has a meaning and isn't just there as a decoration. The following explanations are given by local historian Barry Cannon.

Doomsday and resurrection are suggested by trumpets blowing. Trumpeting angels and the deceased rising from the tomb are figures of resurrection.

Continued on page A7

TOWN and COUNTRY Cleaners
DRY CLEANING
SAME DAY DRY CLEANING SERVICE
MONDAY TO FRIDAY
877-0387
HALTON HILLS SHOPPING CENTRE

LEARN TO DRIVE THIS WINTER

4 WEEK EVENING COURSE
Starting Feb. 22/84
Wed. & Thurs. — 6:30 to 9:30 pm

• HIGH INSURANCE DISCOUNTS
• COURSES TAX DEDUCTIBLE
• PRIVATE IN CAR LESSONS
• ROAD TEST INCLUDED

ARE AVAILABLE ONLY THROUGH AUTHORIZED CENTRES OF YOUNG DRIVERS OF CANADA LOCATED COAST TO COAST

877-0751
16 MOUNTAINVIEW RD. S.
GEORGETOWN
OVER 150,000 GRADUATES RECOMMEND
Young Drivers of Canada

JUST FOR HER...

Make "HER" feel SPECIAL

- Sweetheart
- Mother
- Sister
- Grandma
- Daughter
- Wife

She always wanted long nails. Make her dream come true with a gift certificate for lovelier looking hands.

See **DONNA SPITAL**
For • Cuts • Sets • Tints • Hi-lights

Nails by Colombe
(Marg Towler)
THE OLD BANK
78 Main Street
Downtown Georgetown
877-5508

ALL WINTER STOCK

HALF PRICE

- suits
- skirts
- blouses
- slacks
- sweaters
- dresses
- loungewear
- robes
- nightgowns
- knit hats and sets

(a few basic items excluded.)

Lovely, lacy sexy, sophisticated **LINGERIE**

- slips
- nightgowns
- teddies
- camisoles
- nightgowns
- teddies

Pamper her!

MORE GIFT IDEAS:

- jewellery
- scarves
- purses
- hats & more!

Teller's Cage
"The Ladies' Fashion Place in Downtown Georgetown"
90 Main Street South — 877-0822