

Rabies 'outbreak' no cause for great concern

Halton Region experienced an outbreak of rabies during a 12-month period ending in March last year, the Ministry of Natural Resources reports.

In a report on the deadly disease the MNR reports Ontario has the highest concentration of rabid animals in North America and most of the animals diagnosed with the disease were found south of the

French and Mattawa Rivers.

Cases of diagnosed rabies jumped from 23 to 33 in Halton last year classifying rabies as an "outbreak," said Halton's Medical Officer of Health Dr. Graham Pollett.

But the term outbreak is misleading because Halton didn't find a high number of rabid animals, just more than expected, he said.

Halton's 33 cases of rabies compared favorably to Peel's 73 cases, Hamilton-Wentworth's 45 cases and Wellington County's 162 cases of rabies reported in the same time period, said Dr. Pollett.

The most common carriers of rabies in Halton are red foxes and skunks, which account for 71 per cent of the diagnosed cases, said Dr. Pollett.

Throughout the province, 1,820 cases of rabies were diagnosed in the 12-month period compared to more than 2,500 in the same time period the previous year, said Dr. Pollett.

However, almost 2,500 people were given rabies vaccine. That's a 39 per cent increase over the previous year. In most cases the vaccine was administered after

contact with cats and dogs.

Halton, Ottawa-Carleton and Peel Regions were all defined as outbreak regions by the MNR in 1987-88.

Up until September of last year, only nine people in Halton had been given the rabies vaccination, down from 60 during the same time period the year before.

Despite the "outbreak" status given to Halton for rabies last year, MNR officials are actually expecting a decrease in the number of rabies cases diagnosed in Halton this year, said Dr. Pollett.

Halton and Peel Regions and Wellington County have less than 25 per cent of a chance of experiencing an outbreak of rabies this year while those regions in the southwest of the province are again expected to experience high incidents of rabies.

Regardless of the expected lower numbers of diagnosed rabid animals this year, Halton residents still have to be on the lookout, said Dr. Pollett. "It should be remembered that rabies is always a threat and constant vigilance is required in order to ensure that its existence is kept at the lowest level possible," he said.

MP shares a few special moments

Last week had a few special moments for me, and I'd like to share them with you.

The best happened Monday morning at Mayfield high school, south of Bolton. The kids there were having a multi-cultural festival, and the kick-off event was a special Citizenship Court.

Maybe it was because this was my first time in that court; maybe it was the scared, happy expressions on the face of 49 new Canadians; maybe it was the reverent way that hundreds of students watched the event - I don't know, but it moved me. I don't think you can be part of something like that without walking away being proud of your country. The feeling sure washed over me.

The school, the staff and the kids there are terrific. I hope they invite me back next year.

The next day found me in Ottawa, in a meeting with the federal finance minister, Mike Wilson. We talked about interest rates and the deficit and tax reform and the coming budget - and I told him straight what you'd told me over the past few weeks in our Town Hall meetings.

People in Burlington, Georgetown and Bolton all sent me back to the Hill with a similar message: It's time for the feds to live within their means. And if that results in less, smaller, leaner government, well, let's get on with it.

Wilson listened, and when we were done, I felt encouraged. The man is obviously committed to the simple goal of fiscal responsibility. We can't ask for a lot more.

Well, the last few days have blurred by. Last Thursday about 100 business people spent a morning learning how they might make the



On The Hill
With
Garth Turner

most of free trade.

Our business seminar in Georgetown starred a half-dozen expert speakers from both government and business, on both sides of the border. They told us about marketing strategies; about how to export and even how to get free government money (that raised a lot of interest).

It was a good, solid session - without the rhetoric or the partisanship that swirled around the free trade issue six months ago. The status quo has changed, and it's time to make the most of that change.

Other seminars are being planned - one on environmental protection, and another on stage two of tax reform, including the proposed national sales tax. I'll keep you posted, or if you'd like to leave your name with me to register for either (free) seminar, just call toll-free: 1-800-668-4322.

Dorothy and I were pleased to be at a special cocktail party last Friday, sponsored by the Albion-Bolton unit of the Cancer Society;

and to join about 400 folks the next night at Innis Lake. That marked the 75th anniversary of the Junior Farmers - a group which has much to be proud of in its past, and its present.

It's back to Ottawa now for a few days, as the opening of the next session in the House of Commons draws closer. After we resume our seats there, the Big Event is going to be Mike Wilson's budget. If you'd like me to have a meeting to analyse and assess it soon afterwards, then let me know.

The new riding of Halton-Peel is tremendous, both in its people and in its size. The months since I entered politics, and started travelling from the QEW in Burlington to Highway 9 outside Orangeville, have been filled with new friends. But I'd be lying if I said they hadn't also been gruelling.

The amount of time spent driving is significant, and sometimes crippling. While Dorothy and I are fortunate to live near the vertical centre of the riding, our farm is tucked in the north-west corner.

It takes me about 30 minutes to drive to our riding office in Georgetown, an hour to reach Mono Mills and 45 minutes to Burlington. The geography is dictating yet more upheaval in my life.

After spending a decade in our home turf of rural Milton (the former township of

Nassagaweya), we've made the tough decision to move.

So the farm was listed for sale last Saturday, and we're shopping for a new home more centrally located within the riding. Depending on what's available and (of course) price, this will likely lead us into Halton Hills.

As you might expect, this comes immediately after we have finally finished renovating the rundown farmhouse we bought several years ago. Dorothy has always told me that right after we got the job done, the house would sell or burn down. I guess she was right.

As with any move, it will be hard to leave our neighbors. But I look forward to having new ones; and staying on to represent the old - they have been true friends.

Life is change. Boy, am I living.

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NOTICE PROPOSED ACTON QUARRY LANDFILL

Reclamation Systems Inc. (RSI) of Milton, Ontario has submitted revised documents on the Proposed Acton Quarry Landfill to the Ministry of the Environment for government review under the Environmental Assessment Act

These documents are available for public viewing at the following locations:

Ministry of the Environment
Environmental Assessment Branch
250 Davisville, 5th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M4V 1P5

The Regional Municipality
of Halton
1151 Bronte Road
Oakville, Ontario L6L 6E1

Ministry of the Environment
Central Region
7 Overlea Boulevard, 4th Floor
Toronto, Ontario M4H 1A8

Acton Public Library
17 River Street
Acton, Ontario
L7J 1C2

Ministry of the Environment
District Office
1235 Trafalgar Road, 4th Floor
Oakville, Ontario
L6H 3P1.

Georgetown Public Library
9 Church Street
Georgetown, Ontario
L7G 2A3

Town of Halton Hills
Administration Building
36 Main Street South
Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4X1

Eco Logic Inc.
143 Dennis Street
Rockwood, Ontario
N0B 2K0

Comments on these documents can be submitted in writing to:

Ms. Jillian Daffern
Public Liaison Officer
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