



A trio of scholars

Three local females have made it to the big time and also, at the same time. Although mother, Pam Sturgess, insists it was never planned, her daughters all graduated with degrees at the same time. Nicola (top), received a law degree from the University of Windsor, Leslie (bottom right) graduated from the University of Toronto with a doctorate in Sociology, and Beverley (bottom left) graduated with a University of Toronto degree in Literature and Psychoanalytic Theory.

Ontario Federation of Agriculture searches for unified voice

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture, (OFA), is asking farmers in Halton Hills and across the province to become part of a general farm organization so that Ontario farmers can better lobby the federal and provincial governments, said Halton Federation of Agriculture (HFA) President, Harry Brander.

The HFA is the local representative for the OFA.

"We (farmers) need a unified voice and we certainly don't have it now," said Mr. Brander.

Currently, farmers either have no lobby representation or are members of one of several different lobby groups.

Government likes this kind of situation, said Mr. Brander. The government ends up with a variety of conflicting opinions on issues allowing it to "throw its hands up in the air and do nothing."

Farmers are currently going up against government in an attempt to seek protection against the Goods and Services Tax and the free trade deal, he said.

Mr. Brander also said the existing lobby system is unfair. According to Census Canada there are 75,000 farmers in Ontario, but

the majority of them are not paying fees to be a member of a lobby group, such as the OFA, he said. That means a minority of farmers are paying the share of the majority, explained Mr. Brander.

Although the details of the new lobby group have yet to be determined, farmers would be required to pay a \$130 registration fee. As part of the registration, a detailed

listing of what each farmer produces and the size of each farm would be stored in a central computer. That would allow the lobby group and the government easy access to important information about the farming community to negotiate suitable policies, explained Mr. Brander.

A farmer would be allowed to leave the group within 30 days of joining.



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