

# Local dog breeder assessing losses

By SCOTT KLINE

A Limehouse dog breeder who lost one dog and had another injured to an yet undetermined point by contaminated food, says dog owners across the province are trying to come to terms with the tragedy.

At least 40 dogs died and as many as 800 others may suffer permanent damage after eating tainted food from Martin's Feed Mill in Elmira.

For a champion dog belonging to Limehouse breeder Debbie Kilmer, two cups of the tainted food led to its death.

"Java ate contaminated kibble which painfully took her life, leaving seven three-week-old puppies behind," Kilmer said in an update for the Labrador Owners Club of Ontario. "This was an unnecessary and bitter end for our special friend."

Java — whose official name was Champion Remlik Kluanne Java — was an eight-year-old chocolate Labrador known as one of the best breeding females in Ontario.

In a letter to Kilmer, fellow breeders Dale and Jim Speck of Harley — west of Brantford — said Java "was one of the three best chocolate bitches I've ever seen."

Java died March 13 after eating a kibble that contained approximately 105 parts per million of monensin — a poultry medication.

The medication was believed to contaminate 1,363 40-pound (18 kilogram) bags of Techni-Cal Growth, lot 0110.

Dr. Doreen Houston, of the small animal clinic at the Ontario Veterinary College, explained the poison "is very damaging to muscles."

She explained that most of the dogs killed — like Java — died as a result of kidney failure caused by the body trying to rid itself of

destroyed muscle tissue.

"To lose a bitch of (Java's) quality is horrendous," the letter from the Specks continued. "But to lose her the way you did is just appalling."

But according to Kilmer, "this goes far beyond one dog being killed."

Aside from the death of Java, four other bitches and at least 13 puppies may suffer from the contaminated food.

Worst hit was Jessie, who spent eight days in intensive care at OVC in a "valiant fight for her life."

While the dog appears healthy, Kilmer said that there is no way of knowing the long term effects of the poisoning.

At one point the dog was close to death and according to Kilmer's update to the Lab Owner Club "she will never be the same dog."

Kilmer said that Martin Foods has provided them with an application for a claim but they are waiting for the final tally on medical bills.

But most dog owners are suspicious of the compensation packages being offered.

The editor of the LOC's newsletter, Joan Sinclair of Bracebridge, said it is important that owners band together in the efforts for compensation.

She said that Martin's offers of "substantial cash settlements" to some owners was simply an attempt to "sweep (the incident) under the carpet, it's the easy way out."

Sinclair added dog owners should not simply settle but use "this opportunity to do something about the quality and regulation of Canadian pet food."

But for Kilmer, "this incident affected our entire group of quality bitches. This was clearly a nightmare."



Dave Page (centre) was re-elected president of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce. Lori Kentner and David Pyke are vice-presidents of the organization, formed in 1988.

## Chamber re-elects president

Dave Page was re-elected president of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce on Wednesday at the annual general meeting.

Brian Dolotwicz ran against him for the position. Lori Kentner and David Pyke were appointed vice-presidents. Doug Penrice has been appointed treasurer, since he is standing in as manager of the Chamber until a new manager is found.

Penrice said Mary-Ann Chapman left the position at the end of April, and he is continuing his work as real estate agent as well as responsibilities as manager.

Four new directors were appointed to the Chamber.

They are Andrea Taylor, Sandra Frazer, Bob Malcolmson and Wes Witford. This means there are now 23 directors.

In his review of the first full year of the Halton Hills Chamber of Commerce, President Dave Page said it was an eventful year with numerous events.

He said Chamber members may want to consider longer terms for directors, as well as limiting the size of the board. As it is, anyone who is nominated and wished to become a director, can take the position.

Walt Elliot, MPP for North Halton, spoke to Chamber members about the provincial government's budget, which was announced last month.



Joy Thompson and Sheri Paterson from the department of Recreational Services, receive a cheque for \$1,000 from Don Smith, president of the Georgetown Optimists. The money will be used to assist low-income families to send their children to summer programs. This is the 9th year the Optimists have made a donation of this nature, but it has doubled from the \$500 donations they made in previous years. Joy Thompson says there is an increasing need for financial help for the children.

## Free entry to Conservation areas Saturday

Halton Region Conservation Authority has waived all entrance fees to its conservation areas this Saturday, May 19.

This special initiative is taking place in conjunction with National Tourism Awareness Week, May 12-21.

Tourism is a multi-million dollar industry in Canada that is economically significant. It also has a positive impact on the quality of life with the provision of recreational, educational and cultural facilities.

The Conservation Authority provides a wide range of recreational and educational opportunities in the Halton area. So much so that over 500,000 people visit the conservation areas every year. And why do they come? It's mainly because of the spectacular natural landscape primarily created by the Niagara Escarpment.

The Niagara Escarpment is a 725 kilometre mosaic of cliffs, woods and scenic farmlands that stretches

diagonally across Ontario from Niagara Falls to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula. This majestic vertebrae of limestone cliffs has been compared in its beauty to Germany's Black Forest. It is also the major recreational corridor in southwestern Ontario and a valuable refuge for a variety of North American wildlife and special interest flora.

The Niagara Escarpment forms an integral part of the Conservation Authority's watershed that stretches from the Town of Dundas in the southwest to the Town of Halton Hills in the northeast. The Authority has over 6,000 acres of land on the Niagara Escarpment including such natural features as waterfalls, potholes, scenic lookouts, sinkhole lakes, massive limestone outliners and an impressive network of forests.

A trail system of 100 km in length, including the Bruce Trail, traverses Niagara Escarpment

lands in the Halton watershed.

On Saturday, May 19, the Authority would like to make more people aware of its areas and the Niagara Escarpment. Besides getting free entry to the Kelso, Mountsberg, Crawford Lake, Hilton Falls and Rattlesnake Point Conservation Areas, visitors will receive a copy of the Niagara Escarpment Explorer which details information on Halton's twelve Niagara Escarpment Parks.

The Conservation Authority is also taking part in the "Rally Round Halton" car rally organized by Halton Tourism. This family treasure hunt is a driving tour that includes stops at Crawford Lake and Kelso (Halton Region Museum) where free entry is permitted to allow participants to answer several fun trivia questions.

In Halton, tourism and conservation go hand-in-hand to improve the quality of life for local residents as well as visitors.

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