

# The ROCKWOOD Miller

## GRCA hosts 'Amazing Animal Show' to launch summer season

By: Vivien Fleisher

On Canada Day, the Grand River Conservation Authority kicked off their summer programming with the always-popular 'Amazing Animal' show. The previous week's Saturday morning program was cancelled due to high water levels. Program guide Heather Staines and assistant Julia Hohenadel delighted the kids with animals—and the parents with facts—as they introduced four species.

In fact, 'living creatures' more aptly described the critters since first up was a pair of giant Madagascar cockroaches, which are not native to the area, followed to a painted turtle that is. But the star of the show was "Julius Squeezer," a ball python native to sub-Saharan Africa. Most of the kids happily let Heather place him around their neck, while the shyer children simply pet him, especially when Heather informed the kids he had soft, dry rather than slimy skin. The patterns on ball pythons are as individual as fingerprints, and they eat whole mice, although in



Julius's case, staff freeze his and then play with it at feeding time to simulate a live mouse to entice him to eat it, since live mice could bite and harm him. Julius was given to the centre by a University of Guelph professor. He was being used illegally by a dancer in Guelph as part of her act, and was turned over to the university in

order to have him properly cared for. The last animal was Gouda the Norwegian Rat, whose reputation was boosted by a couple of facts: friendly rats make better pets than gerbils and hamsters; and it wasn't rats who spread the black plague during the Middle Ages, it was gerbils.



**CAUGHT THE BIG ONE:** Rockwood resident Matt Bouwmeester and his teammates Bryce Hamilton and Brian Shannon won first prize—\$25,000—at the 25th International Walleye Tournament held in Port Colborne from June 23 to 25. Bouwmeester and his team also won a bonus prize of \$1,000 in the small boat category—under 20 feet. One hundred boats participated in the tournament from both Canada and the United States. - Submitted photo



**THE PRIDE SHOWS:** Rockwood's Remax showed it's true patriot love on Canada Day, a sight that couldn't be missed for people traveling east on Highway 7. - Vivien Fleisher photo

## Remembering Peter Appleyard: a tribute concert in Eden Mills

By: Vivien Fleisher

Eden Mills Community Hall was packed on Sunday, June 25 for a tribute concert in memory of the late, great local jazz musician Peter Appleyard. For those who attended one of his many performances at the old La Vieille Auberge Restaurant in Rockwood—now Heaven on 7—with the backup band he referred to as his "A Team", it was like being transported back in time. Indeed, if you closed your eyes, even without Appleyard's vibraphone, you felt the magic return. As host Linda Sword said before introducing the band, they were the 'A team', not only because they worked with Appleyard for decades, but the way they worked too, doing a lot "on the fly" because Appleyard was so "unpredictable, challenging" and were ultimately "uniquely shaped by his musical vision." Pianist John Sherwood, bassist Dave Young and drummer Terry Clarke definitely brought their A-game Sunday, made all the livelier with a major funding announcement by MP Michael Chong at the outset, Strawberry shortcake, and champagne.

Volunteer and CRC director Linda Sword reminisced about Appleyard's last concert. He had always dreamed of playing in the barn on his Nassagaweya farm, not just for the acoustics but for the beauty of the surroundings. And he did, in what turned out to be his final performance just before he passed away in 2013.

Sunday's concert was also a fundraiser for the Eden Mills Carbon Neutral project. Sword said that Appleyard "contributed a baby grand piano to Eden Mills, and \$17,000 to our capital fund." Adding, "we are especially honoured today to have Peter's wife Elfreda here to celebrate his memory."

Between sets, John Sherwood carried on Appleyard's tradition of storytelling. Appleyard, a recipient of the Order of Canada, played with some major musical icons around the world, but was a down-to-earth guy, weaving funny stories from the height of his career seamlessly in between songs. A vibraphonist, percussionist and composer of British origin who first tried the vibraphone in Canada, he chose the Toronto area as his home and, luckily for us Canadians, never looked back.



Peter Appleyard's 'A Team' played in tribute to the late jazz musician recently in Eden Mills. Terry Clarke (left), John Sherwood, and Dave Young.