

Macduff's on the DL, but only until November

As the days get noticeably shorter, we all know fall is here.

One of the fall jobs at Brown Farm is to sort the breeding ewes into two groups, and put the sire rams in with them for a month or more.

I think of it as 'planting' our lamb crop for next spring.

We have two sire rams - Macduff, a beautiful four-year-old, named after Lord Macduff, the Thane of Fife, a character in William Shakespeare's Macbeth - and the other is three-year-old Fergus, named after the Scottish charm in the town of Fergus.

In the past, the two sire rams have taken on the challenge, and 'planted the crop' quite ably. They are both wonderful animals, and very quiet - a great attribute to have in a ram.

However, this year, we had a spanner in the works, so to speak.

You see, Macduff came down with a bug - he developed bacterial pneumonia.

When you work closely with any type of livestock, you become attuned to fluctuations in their behaviour. Macduff's first sign was a cough - a little cough like he had something tickling his throat.

I kept an eye on him. The cough increased and he started to look tired. The final sign? He didn't lean over the top of the pen for me to scratch behind his ears - a ritual he looks forward to every morning.

I called in our veterinarian from the University of Guelph and she landed in a flash.

Checking him out, she found he had an extreme fever of 40.7 C, and his breathing was rapid.

"He's got pneumonia," she said.

So she loaded him up with antibiotics and other drugs, and he required another visit almost a week later. But the good news is he bounced back to normal.

I was pleased and relieved, but



TED BROWN
A Ted Bit

my vet told me his extreme fever would have an affect on him.

Seems it would affect his fertility.

What? Our leading sire ram wasn't going to be able to, er, ahem, plant his seed?

"It's only temporary," she assured me. "He'll be back to normal in eight weeks or so."

But we need him now.

I now know how the coach of a major league ball team feels when his star pitcher is put on the disabled list, that dreaded DL.

Now with his eight weeks of sitting on the bench, Macduff could still look after the small group of younger ewes in November - but for the main group of ewes?

I had to go to the 'farm team'.

Fergus could probably look after the entire group if needed - there are a total of 42 ewes to breed - but I prefer to have no more than 30 ewes per ram.

And more importantly, some members of Macduff's group are related to Fergus. It's not good to cross him with his daughters or granddaughters.

So I had to find a replacement until Macduff is taken off the DL.

One of my colleagues had a ram he could provide. I had to 'rent-a-ram' so to speak. And by the time you read this, he will already be in the pen with Macduff's group, doing what he's supposed to do.

I do feel sorry for Macduff. He spent the entire summer in his pen, watching his group of ewes come and go past him every day - and now he has to watch as some young upstart is in there, with HIS ewes.

It's gotta be frustrating.

But as his 'coach,' I assure him every morning, as I scratch behind his ears - it's for his own good.

And by November, he'll have those younger girls all to himself.

And that brings a smile to his face.

THEN AND NOW



Photo Esqueing Historical Society/Photo

As the organizer and president of the Toronto Lime Company, Thomas Gowdy is one of Limehouse's most well-known residents. Built around 1858, this photo from 1908 shows the home he shared with his wife Margaret and their large family. Pictured are two young boys, one of which may have been Douglas Gowdy. Situated in what is now the Limehouse Conservation Area, the home fell into disrepair and was taken down in 1967.

LETTERS

IFP carrier overwhelmed by community support

My name is Scott Lord. I am a carrier for the Georgetown Independent and Free Press.

A few weeks ago my cart was damaged in an accident, and not in working condition.

I was sharing this news with a customer. Upon hearing this, she started a GoFundMe page

to help support me with purchasing a new wagon. Believe it or not, I reached my goal within six days.

At this same time, a person who wishes to remain anonymous contacted Lowe's and informed them of the situation. They donated a new wagon and a hat.

With donations that were raised (\$250), the donors have the option to keep their money, or my plan is to donate back to the community. Specifically, I

would like to donate the funds to autism causes and Summit Housing & Outreach programs.

I want to thank Milton Lowe's, Gwen Miron and David Hyduk, my customers and everyone for their donations and kind words.

A shout out goes to Glenn Darling (FM108.ca) and Lee Lakin (Halton Hitz).

Thank you.

Look out for all carriers and take care.

Scott Lord

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