

# Transition Day, a time to put things away for the year

For those working in the farming industry, the four seasons play a big role in the year.

The outside elements can be a force to deal with, working with a sometimes unpredictable Mother Nature scheduling seasonal tasks accordingly.

Having said that, a long time ago my dad and I became fairly proactive, when it came to preparing for the coming seasons.

Shortly after Thanksgiving, we always had a "transition day," a day when we would park all the seasonal equipment in the driving shed and barn, long before Mother Nature caught up with us, and buried us in snow.

I recall it came about that one winter many, many decades ago, when we were struggling to mount the snowblower and tire chains on the tractor - as a blizzard raged outside.

Mother Nature can be a great inspiration to get things done - but also can be relentless as hell, if you ignore her.

After we (finally) mounted the snowblower on the tractor, and the lane was blown out, we returned to the house to warm up.

At that time, Dad and I made a solemn pact that we'd never be caught like that again.

Hence the "transition day" event.

It's actually a really good feeling, parking all that equipment.

Not only does it make the place look tidier, and the equipment is lined up inside, protected from the



**TED BROWN**  
A Ted Bit

weather, but it's also a yearly milestone. It was a time Dad and I knew we had "officially" finished the harvest and outside work was done for the year.

And that always feels pretty darn good.

Dad and I would park the wagons, hay baler, rake, haybine and all sorts of summer equipment in its place - very close together so we didn't waste any space in the shed. Some equipment would be parked as close a couple inches apart. And the snow removal equipment would be moved to the front of the shed, ready for action, whenever that might be.

With two of us working together, one of us would back the equipment in, while the other would direct, stopping inches before they touched.

I know we enjoyed that "transition day" as we had a good feeling when we'd finished. It was kinda like, "Whew, we got through another year ..."

Last week, I listened to the weather forecast - Tuesday would be a great day, but rain was coming.

Tuesday was the day - parking all the equipment

"can" be done by one person, but it takes considerably longer.

To hitch and unhitch each piece of equipment entails climbing on and off the tractors numerous times, which is tough on the old joints.

And backing the equipment into the shed creates lots of neck pain afterwards.

It would be a Tylenol night for sure.

The first thing one has to do is organize the succession of the equipment as it's being parked.

Next spring that equipment will be needed in reverse order, so I make sure I won't have to move three pieces of equipment to gain access to another. They gotta be in order.

Organizing the shed for winter by myself is somewhat bittersweet. I'm usually reminded of things Dad and I did during those transition days in the past.

It's been 14 years since we lost Dad, and every year, as I rearrange the shed for another winter, I'm reminded of that annual task, when we parked away the summer equipment.

The camaraderie and communication between us was something I've always treasured - and now miss.

Although he's been gone for all those years, I'm grateful I have all those memories, as I once again park the equipment safely away from the Mother Nature's elements.

And in doing so, close the barn door for yet another year.

## LOOKING BACK



Photo courtesy of Esquesing Historical Society

As temperatures begin their downward trend, the cooler weather is the perfect opportunity to get out and explore some of the lesser known attractions of nature in Halton Hills. Just north of Georgetown at 8th Line and 27th Sideroad, is Hickory Falls, shown in this 1971 photo.

### LETTER

## Adjustments needed to improve elementary education

The disappointment and frustration of knowing that only half of G6 students across the province were at or above the provincial standard for mathematics should set off red flags immediately.

Math and literacy are critical elements in our education system and are fairly well-used in everyday "applied" applications. Whether you work at Tim Hortons or Microsoft, without these three important skills every student and later adult in the workforce are at risk of being less competitive in job advancement or personal development (higher train-

ing, community interaction, etc.).

Good for literacy, but the math issue has to be addressed and should not take another 10 years (estimated).

I believe the issue HAS to begin at the elementary level. Educators need to go back to the G3 EQAO testing results and develop methods/techniques to turn the tide, particularly in math.

Perhaps it is the provincial curriculum that needs a through review? I see no point after G3 to moving students ahead into G4-5 math module if those who are having difficulty do not

understand the basics concepts of the G3 unit.

Students/schools who are having difficulty at the G3-EQAO testing level need to stop and re-assess what the difficulties are BEFORE students get to be re-tested at the G6 level.

EQAO may be nice to have and isn't the only set of data school boards use, but then how do parents, educators, employers and the community at large measure success?

I believe it starts with the core fundamental elements of education: math and literacy.

Bob Clark

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