

# A little red-haired escape artist with attitude

Score one for the red squirrel in the homstead battle, pens Ted Brown



**TED BROWN**  
Column

I usually write this column on a laptop so I can write almost anywhere I feel so inclined.

I've sat at the kitchen table, in the dining room watching out over the marsh land, and even wrote a couple columns in the barn, while waiting for lambs to be born.

But one of my favourite places I sit to pen my columns is the wicker rocking chair on the verandah.

It's quiet, it's scenic with the trees, lawn and flowerbeds, and I often find it inspirational.

Of course, there are days I sit there and look over the domain thinking "I should fix this, I should paint that..." and so on.

So, coffee mug nearby, I was recently sitting out

there with my laptop, watching the world go by.

Hamish the dog was in his usual place, stretched out on his side at my feet, dosing away in the quiet breeze.

I heard a sound - a quiet scurrying sound, and Hamish perked up his ear. (It wasn't loud enough to warrant lifting up his head, just one perked up ear.) When you're a border collie,

you must pace yourself, on the off chance he needs to bolt out and save some wayward sheep.

Then the chattering started and I realized the source of the sound. Apparently our presence on the verandah was upsetting a squirrel.

It was a red squirrel. I really have a love/hate relationship with red squirrels. They are the tiniest squirrel running around the yard - much smaller than the grey or black squirrels out there.

But man, they have THE most attitude and will not back down from the much larger grey or black varieties. Being so much smaller, they can get into a hole that another larger

squirrel would pass by. And with their added moxie, they are little devils at finding an opening into the basement.

As he sat there scolding us, he approached closer and closer, and as Hamish and I sat perfectly still, he wasn't sure how to react.

He inched closer to the rocking chair/dog combination, and when he was about two feet from the dog, I gave Hamish the 'sic 'em' command, which resulted in an explosion of dog bolting towards the squirrel and the squirrel taking flight off the side of the verandah, airborne for about six feet before launching himself up the nearest tree.

I knew Hamish wouldn't have a chance in hell of catching him, but it was entertaining.

So I figured that was

an isolated entertaining event.

Wrong.

The next day, I heard a sound in the basement.

It was quiet and subtle - a scurrying sound on the top of the furnace ductwork.

I could never catch a glimpse of anything down there, but I heard it.

So I bought a live squirrel trap, and loaded it with peanut butter.

Two days later, I caught a squirrel.

I'd inspected the perimeter of the house and found a couple little chinks in the stone foundation. I also found a small hole at the bottom of the siding.

All sealed up, I decided to show mercy and drove the culprit ten miles away and released him.

That night, another scurrying.

I set the trap, and three days later, another squirrel.

Another disposal (I was truly considering having this squirrel computer-chipped to learn where he got in) but I simply set another trap.

Now the newest development - the trap was sprung, the peanut butter was gone - and no squirrel.

It's happened twice now.

Fortunately, the room where the squirrel gets in is secure enough that he can go no further.

And I will win this war - eventually.

But you know what's the most annoying part?

I just hate losing to the smirking, chattering little critter...

- Ted Brown is a freelance columnist of the IFP. He can be reached at [tedbit@hotmail.com](mailto:tedbit@hotmail.com).

## THE WAY WE WERE

This 1910 photo shows the staff and students of Blue Mountain School, built circa 1871. Serving the communities of Silver Creek and Ballinfad until it was closed in 1962, it's a rare example of a Classic Revival 19th century schoolhouse. Features include a front gable roof, two double stack chimneys, voussoirs, quoins and an entrance archway, plus 9-over-6 double hung windows with stone sills. Now a private residence, this home on Trafalgar Road is listed on the cultural Heritage Register.



Heritage Halton Hills/photo

## OPINION

# School official's abortion comment baffling

RE: Free speech protest outside Acton High School Quoting Superintendent Scott Podrebarac, "... there are limits to free speech and that, when that line is crossed and it hurts another individual, this qualifies as bullying."

I'm guessing Scott Podrebarac would fully support a woman's right to choose, so what he's im-

**● MORE ONLINE**  
See all our published letters to the editor online at [theifp.ca](http://theifp.ca)

plying is that it's perfectly fine for a woman to abort a disabled fetus, but she can't tell anyone in advance.

Baffling.

Ernie Gec

**YOUR AD HERE!**  
To book this space call 905-873-0301

Furnace Air Conditioning Gaslines Boilers Water Heaters Radiant Heating  
**Brooks Heating & Air.ca** 905-877-3100  
Local Experts You Know & Trust  
**NAPOLEON** proud local dealer of Canadian made products

**Speedy Glass**  
We handle all insurance work.  
• Truck Accessories • Upholstery  
• Heavy Equipment Glass  
• Window Tinting  
354 Guelph Street, Georgetown  
905-873-1655