

# New hope for Bowstring Bridge in Heritage report

BY FRANCES NIBLOCK

The Rockwood Miller Eramosa Township officials are not sure how much weight the Coast Guard will give to a Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada report that urges that the Bowstring Bridge in Eden Mills be saved, not demolished and replaced.

"When it was determined that the Eramosa River under the bridge was navigable water, the Coast Guard's Environmental Assessment Branch circulated the Township's proposal to replace the aging, heritage structure with a modern, two-lane bridge.

That plan drew opposition from Canadian Heritage Service Coordinator Paul Couture, who said, "I urge that the [Eden Mills] bridge be protected."

In his letter to the Coast Guard, Couture based the his-

toric value of the bridge in four inter-related factors:

- its intrinsic historical value based on its age, design type and rarity;

- bridge removal would have a negative effect on the historical character of Eden Mills;

- the bridge has an important historical value in the view of the community;

- the bridge is a recognized heritage resource of the Grand River watershed.

Couture also warned against a proposal suggested by the Township to make a new bridge look like the old one by giving it what Couture called a "heritage veneer."

"A replacement structure that is in visual harmony with its surroundings is preferable to a large, modern span that is totally out of character with the environment, however,

going with either of these two options means the destruction of the original bridge and the loss of the historical values...preserving and using the present bridge is the preferred option," he wrote.

Eramosa Reeve Rick Hughes predicted no work would be done on the bridge this year because of Coast Guard restrictions on construction timing to protect the cold water fishery. Hughes said they hope to have an answer from the Coast Guard on the environmental requirements in 30 days.

"There are at least five options, everything from a desk review of the bridge replacement plans to a full federal review of the bridge replacement plans, possible," Hughes explained on Thursday, noting that he would be "very concerned" if a full-blown hearing was necessary.

"At that point in time we'd have to involve our lawyer and engineer for days and weeks at a hearing, and you'd have to look at it and say, 'Could we have gone ahead with the condition survey and avoided all this?'"

Friends of Eden Mills spokesman Chris Wilson said their group's offer to pay for half the cost of a condition survey stands.

"We hope that Couture's comments will put a brake on the bridge replacement project, but will just have to await and see what the coast Guard decides will happen."



## ONE BIG DUCK!

Two-year-old Mikayla Plishka took third place in the rubber ducky race at Pioneer Day last Saturday. Presenting Mikayla and her mom Helga with her prize were parade marshal John Root and the duck mascot for the race. First place winner in the race was Dan Jansen, with second place going to Donna Des Roches. (Eve Martin photo)

## Museum trip great!

### WELLINGTON HALL

BY DALLAN CROSSMAN, GRADE 5

Exams are finally over! We had six exams and they were extremely hard. We can now spend more time practicing our tennis. Everyone is learning very fast.

Photography has been the best part of school. We have been trying trick photography and taking pictures of buildings.

This week we will be practicing our songs for Awards Night.

The primary grades went to the Biology and Earth Science Museum at the University of Waterloo. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to see a real dinosaur skeleton and a T-Rex skull. The best part was digging for bones in their excavating area. The students wanted to take the bones home, but they were glued down.

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