

The North Halton Compass

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"A RURAL PAPER TO CALL OUR OWN"

JULY 31, 1998

Farm Museum sows a new tomorrow

Seeking more volunteers to enhance educational programming

BY DEBORAH QUAILE
NORTH HALTON COMPASS

The Farm Museum, formerly the Ontario Agricultural Museum, is a living history chronicling agriculture from pioneer to modern days. It's now operated as a not-for-profit organization with programming focused on educational topics which reflect our rich rural Ontario heritage.

Its future growth relies on the support and participation of individuals, organizations and corporations.

"We are focusing on education programs with our diversified volunteer base," stated Barbara Archer, who coordinates volunteers for the museum. "Funding was withdrawn in June 1997, and a Board of Directors manages the site. We've had to rethink how to run The Farm

Museum. It's challenging."

The Farm Museum offers educational programs for students from preschool to OAC that emphasize a hands-on approach to learning about agriculture through interactive displays and exhibits. Through the use of costumed historical interpreters, along with volunteers, the site is brought to life, providing a unique learning experience for students that can't be achieved in the classroom.

There are more than 30 buildings and exhibits, where young people can meet farmers, blacksmiths, weavers, carriage makers and other tradespeople demonstrating crafts using authentic tools and methods. School tours over the past year have been

very successful, with 10,000 visitors enjoying the farm. Summer months are augmented with children's day camps in July and August.

"Once we secure a solid volunteer base, we can look to more programming," Barbara added. "We have great support from the community and from many groups, such as the Women's Institutes. This is one of the best agricultural collections in Canada."

Although not officially open to the public on a regular basis, The Farm Museum does accommodate group tours with a minimum of 14 people. They are fully accessible with paved pathways for stroller and wheelchair use.

The Museum is also open

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PHOTO BY DEBORAH QUAILE

BEAUTIFUL BUILDINGS - The Farm Museum, located on Tremaine Road, Milton is home to many historic buildings from the surrounding area, such as the Puslinch Township Hall, built in 1867.

Charity Casino DQ'd

Provincial decision leaves OJC proposal in the paddock

BY DONNA DANIELLI
CAMPBELLVILLE & AREA

A proposal by the Ontario Jockey Club to install a Charity Casino at Mohawk Raceway has gone off-stride.

On June 26th, the province announced that it will only allow the opening of four pilot casinos, the closest of which will be located in Brantford. Responsibility for these casinos shifts from the provincial government to the Ontario Lottery Corporation.

Teresa DiFalco of the Gaming Secretariat said that slot machines are the next logical step for Mohawk. "Racetracks are long established places of gambling. Slots will assist the horseracing industry and benefit the agricultural sector through job creation and economic development." She stated that in 1999, \$100 million will be guaranteed by the province from pilot casino revenues for Ontario charities. "This is 10 times more money than was generated under the old system of roving Monte Carlos."

Nick Eaves of the OJC, while disappointed at the province's decision on Charity Casinos, is cautiously optimistic about slot machines. "Slots are necessary to keep the industry viable and competitive, not only with other racetracks, but with other Charity Casinos."

Attendance and revenue at Mohawk has declined significantly which means less business for employees and farms supplying the track. "The slot machines would operate on a year-round basis, and not only generate new jobs, but will help preserve 500 existing jobs," said Eaves. "We will do whatever it takes to ensure Mohawk's survival."

Mohawk is building a new 7/8 mile track, has eliminated admission and parking charges and upgraded it's dining facilities. Its races are simulcasted across Canada and into the U.S. The OJC plans on presenting a business case to the OLC formally requesting slot machines.

Local politicians are not as keen on slot machines only. Regional Councillor Barry Lee expressed concern that slot machines represent straight gambling instead of the well-rounded entertainment complex originally proposed. As well, no revenue from the slots are earmarked for the host municipality's charities, but will instead be spread across Ontario. An estimated \$400,000 would have come from the casino directly to Milton's charities. The turn-down of the casino also means the end to plans for a head office for Carnival Hotels and

Casinos and its 300 jobs.

Councillor Cindy Lunau expressed disappointment "with the province's decision to ignore Milton's willingness to consider hosting a gaming casino." She added "it's misleading to suggest that the province is removing itself from gaming when it continues to operate a very lucrative lottery corporation involved in slot machines and the pilot gaming casinos."

While neither totally rejected slots, both Lee and Lunau voiced concerns. If charity gaming is ever implemented at Mohawk, a zoning by-law change and amendments to the official plan are necessary. This could include noise restrictions, hours of operation, plus septic and water requirements. It's unclear if slot machines represent a change of usage and if Milton council has the ability to regulate track operations.

Charity gaming may still happen at Mohawk, but that issue won't be decided until a referendum is held with the next municipal election, more than two years away. It's doubtful it will take that long for slot machines at Mohawk to be approved and installed.

Only then can time reveal the impact of "one armed bandits" on the community.

Inside This Month's Compass

Acton Fall Fair 1998 -

Good news! The 85 year-old Fair will continue for at least one more year at Prospect Park with access to the old Arena.

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Everyday Heroes -

Roger want a chip? Dr. Clare Maine of Rockwood treats every animal to a fighting chance for survival and has some very interesting stories to tell.

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Shoebox Memories -

John Henry, a border collicie purchased for \$2 in 1936 by Charlie Henderson, was a fixture at the Henderson farm, L. 20, C. 6, Nassagaweya.

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Georgetown Fall Fair -

Wayne McEnery's Ford pickup will be one of the top competitors at the truck/tractor pull at Georgetown Fair on September 11th.

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