

The North Halton Compass

Reach then a soaring quill,
that I may write
As with a Jacob's staff
to take a height

CLEVELAND

Publisher:
MRK Communications Ltd.
419 Wilson Street, Eden Mills, Ontario N0B 1P0
PHONE 519-856-2424
FAX 519-856-2486
INTERNET ADDRESS mrkennedy@sympatico.ca

Compass Contributors

Editor/Typesetting: Reid Kennedy 519-856-2424	Arts Editor/Rockwood: Deborah Quaile 519-856-2386 email: debquaile@gto.net
Nassagaweya: Cindy Lunau 519-853-3772 Donna Danielli 905-854-2469 Bonnie Mullen 519-837-1300 Paula Gomes 519-856-4889 Sue Henderson 905-87805346	Esquesing: Betty Brownridge 905-878-6730 Stella Bryant 905-451-4668 Tunde Otto 905-702-0026 Glenda Benton 905-877-2101
Eramosa: Dale Hamilton 519-856-9891	Art & Graphics: Joel Pink 519-823-2298 Special Artwork by Janet Wilson

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Contact The Compass
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ADVERTISING

Sheena Butler 905-873-9992
Jenny Kitson 519-856-0591

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The Barnyard Adventures of Nassagaweya Ned & Emmy Esquesing



BRASS TACKS

Editorial

Water, water, everywhere...

You know how it goes - "But not a drop to drink."

Unfortunately, that seems to be the way of our water systems these days. Summer has traditionally brought a raft of water issues, from unsafe swimming areas and the ever present threat of drought, to contaminated wells.

We're supposed to be living in the country for unpolluted air and water, yet the tide has turned on those simpler times. Danger seems to silently lurk in our taps. The Walkerton area is made up of much of the same population base as North Halton - a mix of rural and small town residents. Many of us are related to or have friends from that area, and it brings that painful issue much closer to home.

At the beginning of June, questionable water supplies were found in Eden Mills. To the north, Mount Forest now has forced chlorination, while Fergus and Elora face doubled sewer rates and water increases to ensure the safety of their supply... the list is end-

less. As a relative in Priceville said, "There's not a water testing bottle to be found anywhere across southern Ontario."

Yes, we're running scared. The rest of southern Ontario has heeded the wake-up call and jumped on testing and more testing to safeguard our supply.

For years, we've been thinking about conserving water simply so there's enough to go around, but now we must ensure that we all take proper water practises to heart. Not only should we use as little water as possible at all times, but we must vigilantly watch what may get into it.

In an article featured in the June 2000 issue of Harrowsmith Magazine, writer Nicola Ross states, "As growing rural municipalities throughout Canada are learning, managing their water - supply and disposal - is the key to their successful growth in the new millennium." Even though she was writing about quantity, we can apply the same principles to quality.

It's up to all of us to reduce, reuse and recycle water whenever it's safe to do so. Every individual needs to maintain safe farming principles, especially nutrient management plans that ensure the number of animals on each farm is the correct ratio for the available land, because it looks to be incredibly easy to poison an entire area in a short space of time.

There's no Ontario law specifically designed to safeguard the province's drinking water, says Rick Lindgren, a staff lawyer with the Canadian Environmental Law Association. He believes it's time for the Ontario Government to get tough and protect the people they serve.

Although it's extremely important to find out the true causes of the Walkerton disaster, we also need to stop focussing on laying blame and get on to the solutions.

This time, the tide waits for no one.

Deb Quaile

BLUE SPRINGS SOAPBOX

Compass Correspondence

Bill Gregg remembered

It was wood, really, that introduced us to Bill Gregg. About seven years ago, my husband (a wood carver) and I were thinking about building a log cabin and were told that we simply had to meet this man on the 5th line of Milton. He had an old airplane hangar full of dismantled log cabins. Bill graciously toured us through his hangar, pointing out interesting historical information about the various cabins. For instance, I remember him showing us a hex sign carved deep into the wood of one huge beam, placed there by German pioneers

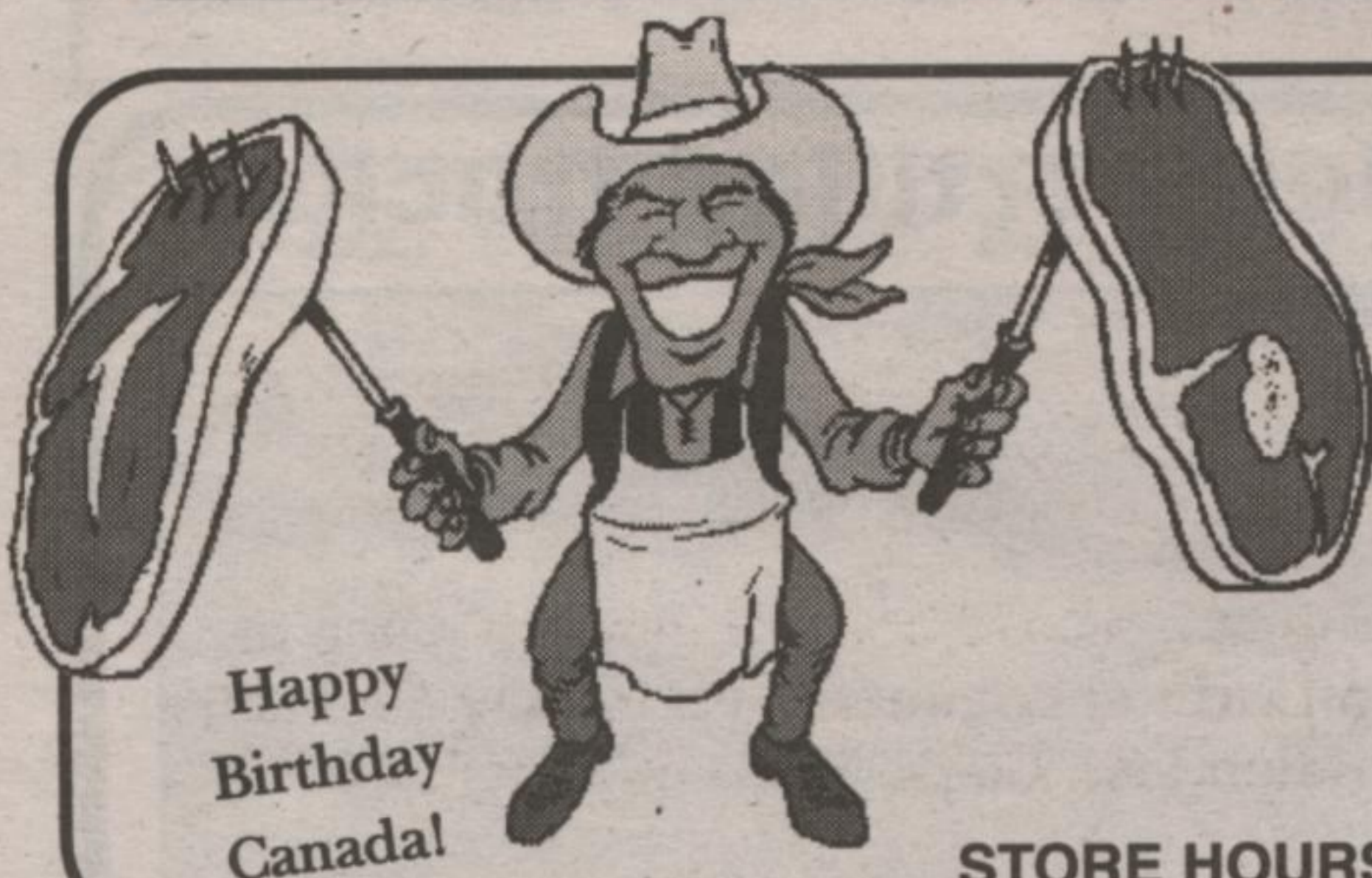
as a sign of good luck. Other people might have only seen a wooden beam, but Bill had a way of zooming in on the interesting stuff of life. And he had a way of drawing stories out of people and making them feel like, at that moment in time, their story is the most fascinating thing he's ever heard. He had a habit of asking the right questions at the right time. I loved talking to him.

As it turned out, we couldn't afford to buy a log cabin from Bill, but he gave us a huge oak beam that, to this day, runs through the very centre of our newly reconstructed century-old home. When I heard of Bill's sudden passing, I looked up at that beam and felt,

in addition to deep sorrow, some sense of comfort, knowing that Bill's beam will be supporting our house for many decades to come and will serve as a solid reminder of the strength of Bill's generosity.

We got to know Bill and Carol better when they invited us to their home for a Christmas party several years ago. Bill told us that we simply had to meet their new neighbours; that he was sure we'd have a lot in common. And he was right. Because of Bill's "match making," my husband and I have established a very significant career connection that has blossomed into a valued

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