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Compass

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MAIN STREET LIGHTING

Volume 6, Issue 1

January, 2003

To spread or not to spread

By DONNA DANIELLI

In the wake of the Walkerton tragedy, rural water quality has come under increasingly vigilant scrutiny. In particular, the practice of nutrient application on farms has come under the provincial government's microscope.

The Nutrient Management Act, a joint initiative between the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Ministry of the Environment, is a key component of the government's clean water strategy.

Nutrients, as defined under the act, include a variety of agricultural sources. Sources directly effected include manure, run-off from yards and storage, and greenhouse and container nursery leachate. Non-agricultural sources such as pulp and paper, and municipal sewage biosolids will also be included in the Act.

The act will be phased in over a five year span beginning in April 2003. Nutrient application standards, involving application rates, setbacks from residences, wells and surface water sources, and bans on spreading over frozen, snow covered or saturated soils, as well as the use of high trajectory guns for biosolids, will be applied to all farms in 2003.

All new or expanding farm operations will require a Nutrient Management Plan, Nutrient

Management Strategy, adequate storage with a three metre permanent buffer in 2003. All existing farm operations will have these requirements phased in over the next four years. Special training and certification will be required for anyone preparing nutrient management plans and strategies, and anyone involved in hauling or applying nutrients.

Despite the relatively short notice Halton farmers received, they were able to rally at both an information session held December 6 and a public consultation forum on December 11 hosted by Toby Barrett, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of the Environment.

"This whole timetable issue of 60 days consultation leading us to early February 2003 training requirements, two months to review 20,000 application maps and other criteria, at a time when a lot of the land will be under snow and cannot be visibly inspected before April 2003 is totally impractical," local farmer Peter Lambrick told the consultation panel.

"The public will be better served with you moving forward with a well thought out, reasoned, costed, targeted, staffed, monitored plan than one that does not fully address all stake-

holder needs - especially agriculture, as it is being most impacted."

Murray Harris, who in 1987 was recognized by Halton region as Conservationist of the Year, applauded the government's initiative in addressing water quality standards, but also expressed his dismay at the proposed timetable.

"The timeframe for the implementation is appalling," Mr. Harris stated. "Not only are the costs open ended, there has been no regard for the social impact, and the human costs that will be involved. This is shameful."

Mr. Harris also pointed out that, like himself, many livestock operators are over the age of 50. With the time he has remaining in the livestock industry it will not be possible to recover the capital investment the act will require.

June Barnes, President of the Halton Region Federation of Agriculture, took the opportunity to present to the panel a list of concerns held by local farmers.

Mrs. Barnes indicated a concern over capital cost increases, as well as the potential loss of small farm operations unable to afford to comply with the regulations. She questioned what effect the regulations will have

(continued on page 3)



Photo by BRENDA MATHIES

Santa Arrives

Santa had two local helpers during this year's Campbellville parade. Sisters, Gabrielle (age 6) and Jessica (age 8) Goldson assisted Santa throughout the route by waving to the crowds that lined the streets and meeting all of the children at the hall afterwards. This year's parade consisted of 34 entries, and despite the chill in the air, it was enjoyed by all participants.

Inside this Month's Compass

COMMUNITY CORNERSTONE

She always strives for balance and wellness in her life. However, for someone as active in the community as Tracey Lamb, Brookville mother of three, one of the hardest things is learning to say "no".

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WINDRUSH FARM

Bonnie Mullen profiles George and Judy Marsh and their circa 1865 stone home purchased by the couple in 1972 where many travelers have enjoyed a stay at the Gothic Revival style farmhouse since 1985, the former home of William Laing.

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SHOEBOX MEMORIES

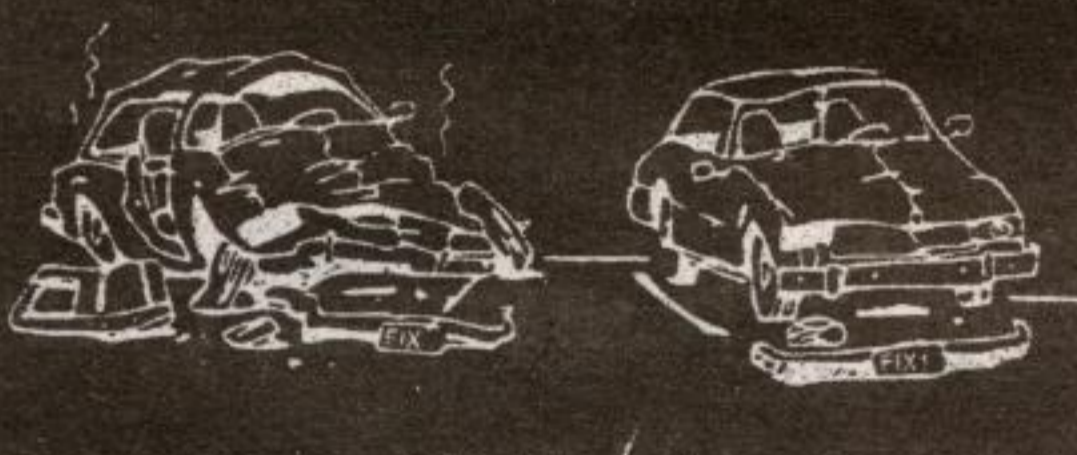

Descendants of Edward Twiss have lived on Twiss Road since 1860 when son George and his wife Barbara Hurd settled on Lot 14, Conc. 2 of the upper part of Nelson Township and raised a large family there.

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