



90 years young

Friends and relatives of Mildred Wilson congregated at Ebenezer Church on Sunday, September 7 to celebrate her 90th Birthday. Mildred is pictured with Ross Wilson.

SUBMITTED PHOTO

BLUE SPRINGS SOAPBOX - Letters to the Editor

Re: Rural Blue Box/Garbage Collection Program

This has currently become a hot topic, thanks in part to a notice circulated by "Concerned Private Local Haulers" titled "Do You Want a Tax INCREASE?" The word "increase" has been used eight times in this one page notice (including one "significant TAX INCREASE") but no facts or figures are given in support of their position. The vast majority of responses received by Regional Councillors have been to the effect that the respondents are NOT interested in having their waste removed by the Region. This is simply because that is what the notice asked for. There is no provision for any other response. A few informed taxpayers like myself have responded in favour of the proposal. One negative respondent stated, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." That person has obviously not visited one of the disgusting Rural Recycling Depots. They are "broke" and they are going to be fixed by being closed in Feb. '04. That program was doomed to failure from the outset by not providing a facility for household garbage.

Rural blue box collection ALONE without garbage collection would be subject to the same fate. Here are a few facts and figures from the report upon which Milton Council will make its decision to join the program and from which taxpayers can inform themselves.

The tax for garbage collection services in rural Milton is estimated at \$25.39 per year per \$100,000 of assessment. The average rural residential assessment in Milton is \$343,000. The tax on this average assessment would therefore be \$87.09 per year (less than the cost of a weekly trip to the landfill at \$5. plus gas). Local contractors are currently charging in the range of \$250 to \$400 per year for this service. (One is reported to be \$475). Costs under the Region's program would only be equivalent to these charges on homes assessed at \$985,000 to \$1,575,000!

Three methods of taxation were considered: per household, rural assessment only, and municipality-wide assessment. Municipality-wide assessment has been recommended because it represents the cheapest cost to rural taxpayers. The increased cost to existing taxpayers is negligible and less than the savings to rural homes and a single tax rate for all residents (urban and rural) is consistent with the treatment for other services collected on the tax bill.

Finally, it is essential that the Region embark on a comprehensive communication strategy if "reduce, reuse and recycle" is to be effective in achieving maximum waste reduction and diversion.

Gordon E. Galbraith, Campbellville

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