

The corn is as high as an elephant's eye'

Guelph's corn maze opens its third season

By ANN KORNUKA

The Roelofs planted five acres of corn on their Wellington farm. For the last three years they have turned their 'maize' into a 'MAiZE' as part of an increasingly popular trend by farmers towards 'agri-entertainment'. This year, Tomke and Albert Roelofs teamed up with Brett Herbst of Cornfieldmaze.com, who is the world's leading designer of corn mazes, to create their T-Rex Dinosaur maze.

"I first heard about corn mazes from a friend who took a trip to Nova Scotia and saw one there. When she came back, she recommended that my family build one," Tomke explained. "My husband and I talked about it for a while and decided to try it. I started researching and called people involved in mazes I found on the Internet." The Roelofs' first maze was in the shape of a map of Wellington County with the concept of having people spend an afternoon walking through Wellington. The second year, they became affiliated with Brett Herbst and went with a butterfly design. "We created the design ourselves the first year. It is possible to do it on your own, but there is a right way to do it and we wanted to improve wherever we could," Tomke said.

The maze design is constructed first on a computer and then is transferred to the

field. The Roelofs spend most of April planting cattle corn to ensure growth to 8-10 feet, perfect height for the maze. When the corn reaches a few feet high, a team comes in and sprays an outline of the maze with Roundup. For the next few months the maze outline is maintained with a mower to keep stray plants and weeds from obscuring the path. Most of the work in the spring and summer is keeping the weeds back and the field clean. "It's fun," Tomke quips. "I really enjoy this and there is nothing else I would rather do."

The MAiZE w is open to visitors July 31st through the end of October. Hours from August to September 6 are Friday to Sunday, 1pm to 6pm. From September 7th to October opening hours are Friday 7pm to 10pm, Saturday 1pm to 10pm, and Sunday 1pm to 6pm with a Flashlight Maze after dusk on Fridays and Saturdays. Field trip hours on weekdays for schools and groups are available by reservation. The MAiZE is located on 5151 Jones Baseline, north of Highway 7 between Guelph and Rockwood. Admission is \$6 for children 4-15, \$8 for ages 16 and up, and children under four are free. For more information or to make reservations, call 519-820-5359 or visit www.thewellingtonmaze.ca or www.cornfieldmaze.com.



Albert and Tomke Roelofs pose outside the ticket booth and gift shop.



PHOTOS BY STEPHEN BAKER

Eight foot corn makes it easy to hide and impossible to cheat when journeying through the maze.

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TRACEY MCGRATH is a Senior Financial Consultant for **Investors Group** and Halton area resident for over 30 years. Each week she will answer your questions about Tax, Estate, and Financial Planning.

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