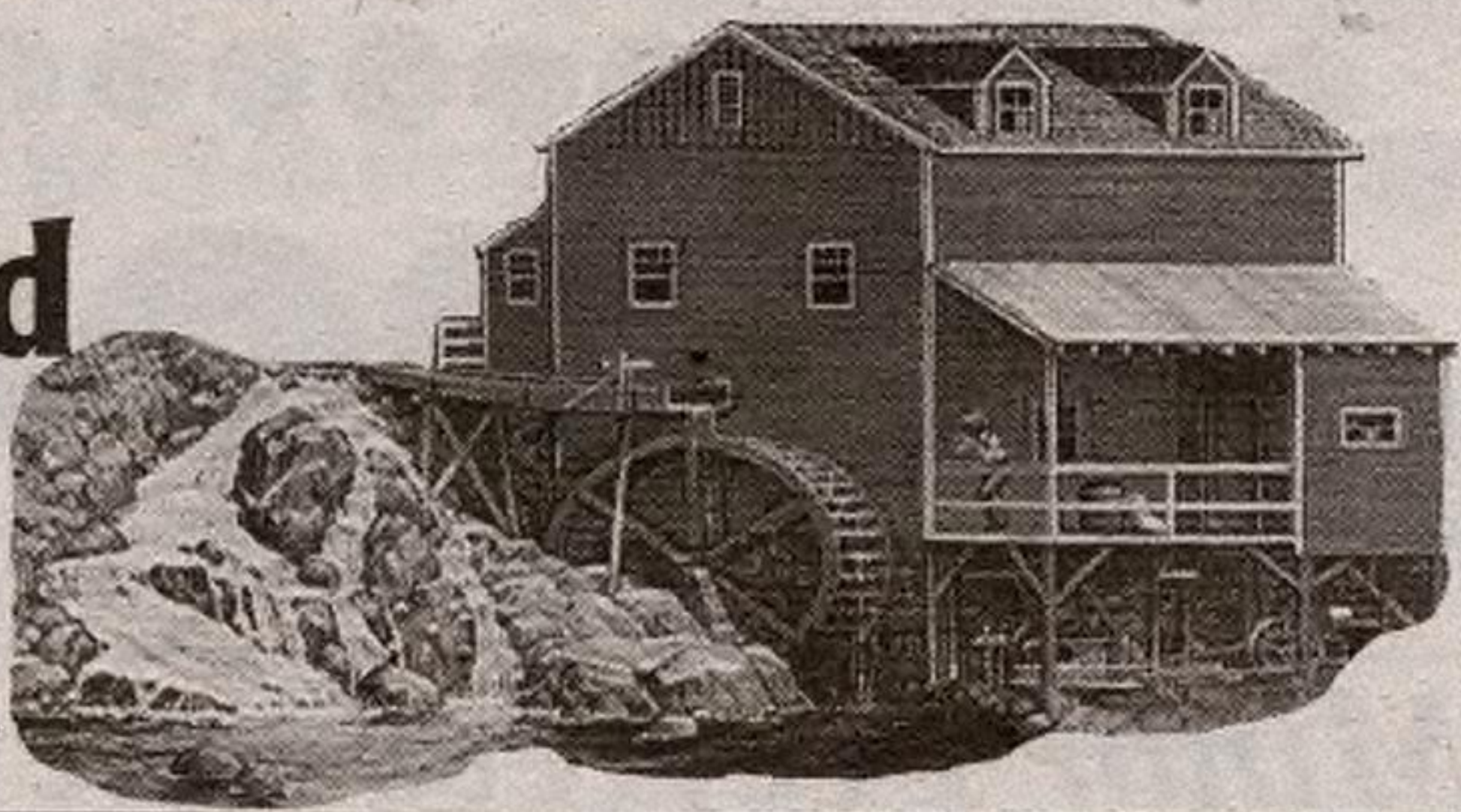


The Rockwood MULLER



Alarming tax, water hikes more important than dogs

To the editor,
A COUNCIL IN CRISIS
For the past month the only news that I have read in The Wellington Advertiser regarding the Township of Guelph Eramosa is "dogs". I cannot believe that this subject merits so much attention both at Council and in the press.

For most residents, the past 6 months has been miserable. Municipal taxes have been increased by an average of 30% and water rates (recently moved to the jurisdiction of the Township) have increased by 129%! Added to this, garbage disposal and recycling is in the midst of change and has resulted in an amazing amount of added bureaucracy, confusion and resident dissatisfaction with the County of Wellington. Furthermore, The Village of Rockwood, which must surely be the largest single tax base within this Township, is in a state of physical decline with funds seemingly only being provided for "rural" infrastructure projects.

Yet our elected members of Council and our paid Township staff are discussing "dogs" rather than addressing those items and problems that are clearly of far greater importance and need to the taxpayers of this Township. That is, how do we provide improved goods and services at a lower cost?

Let me return to the issue of "dogs", clearly a high priority at the Township of Guelph Eramosa!

Having finally decided to hire two companies to perform animal control, at greater expense than previously, now there is the issue of dog tags that has to be discussed and decided. Apparently, records show that dog



tag sales have fallen from 1,099 in 1997 to 743 in 2001. With an increase in population in this area, this clearly indicates that many dog owners are no longer purchasing dog tags. The decline in dog tag sales may simply be attributable to a lack of knowledge by a constantly transient population. Nevertheless, Council is now suggesting that we hire and pay someone to go door to door to collect these funds. Not only this, but they are suggesting eight different rates (average of \$ 25.00) depending on the sexual condition and number of dogs that an owner may have.

The estimated cost of hiring a person on contract is some \$ 4,600, but Human Resources Canada may pay for \$ 980 (which incidentally is also our tax dollars), so it would likely only cost the Township \$ 3,620. On this basis, the Township would need to sell over 145 dog tags just in order to pay for the actual cost of collection (based on the lower estimated "subsidized" cost).

Then there is the issue of physically visiting households when the owner is

available to see them, whether it would be during the day and / or in the evening. Added to this, the Township is also relying on the honesty of owners advising them of the sexual condition of their dog(s) in order to establish the rate.

This is bureaucracy on top of bureaucracy and is surely madness and a recipe for both financial and logistical disaster.

It seems to me (as a mere mortal) that the most effective and immediate means of dealing with this issue is to continue to send out formal notices with each interim tax bill clearly stating the requirement that all dog owners must purchase dog tags (at a single fixed rate) and that failure to purchase a dog tag will result in a fixed penalty fine (of sufficient amount to ensure compliance) - end of story. This system should be self-policing by fellow residents, neighbours and taxpayers.

Alternatively, perhaps the Township should establish how other municipalities handle this issue!

On a much more serious note, we are now informed in

the local press that one of our Councillors was recently convicted of drinking and driving and was sentenced to 14 days in prison with a two year driving ban. Surely, whatever the Municipal rules may be, this Councillor should be honourable and responsible and resign forthwith. His example to others is totally unacceptable in his current position, no matter what his personal circumstances may be. He should not be representing us in any capacity.

If he will not resign, then the Mayor of Guelph/Eramosa Township has a moral obligation to the electorate to dismiss him. Drinking and driving is a criminal offence - period.

Philip V. Hoad,
Rockwood.

Municipal Act not only councillor's concern

To the editor,
Re. Counsellor convicted
Dear Sir,
Regarding Councillor Hindley's assertion that the Municipal Act does not require them to resign. Whether the Act contains this requirement is not the issue.

Is it in the public's interest to be represented by an individual who has no regard for criminal law? Does Hindley have no conscience about whether he should resign whether the Act requires it or not?

What are the implications of his actions on council decisions and reputation of other council representatives?

With respect to Mayor Adsett's comments, would council support Mr. Hindley should he injure someone in

an alcohol-related incident? Just a few questions from a very long list.
Teressa Gibson Smye
Rockwood

Seize \$623,000 in marijuana

Members of a joint task force involving Guelph Police and Wellington OPP seized over \$623,000 in marijuana plants from two residences in Guelph/Eramosa Township on Wednesday, January 30.

Executing a search warrant at a residence on County Road 124, officers found a hydroponic grow in the basement with 306 plants in various stages of growth as well as a large amount of equipment. Street

Continued on Page 12

Professional Tax Preparation

Ron Crawford

Certified General Accountant
856-0815

Free Pickup and Delivery in
Acton and Rockwood

Go on-line for tax tips

www.rec-cga.com/taxtips.html
Discount for Senior Citizens



You've
tried
the
rest...
Now try
the best



CLASSIFIEDS

Where the Deals Are!

PHONE 853-0051



Gibbons

Painting, Decorating

Book Now For
Indoor Painting

Call today for your free no obligation estimate

Rory Gibbons, Acton, Ontario Call (519) 853-2199

FEBRUARY STOREWIDE - HUGE CANDLE BLOWOUT!
50-80% - Everything must go!

Votives as low as 25¢ • All pillars all sizes 1/2 price
All holders 50% off • Tapers 6 for \$1.99

\$5.00 OFF with \$25 purchase
expires Feb 23rd

Hedgehog's Emporium

8175 Winston Churchill Blvd, Norval (north of Steels inside C.M. Greenhouse)
OPEN Friday, Saturday, Sunday Noon to 5. • SALE ENDS Feb 23rd 02