

Farmers say Greenbelt no way to save land

Farmers with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) are voicing concerns about Ontario's potential Greenbelt expansion, as they own close to 100 per cent of Greenbelt land and stand to lose the most.

"Farmers support preserving farmland but steps need to be taken to ensure Greenbelted farmland stays productive so we can continue to provide safe, high quality food in Ontario," says Geri Kamenz, President of the OFA.

A recent study of the first Greenbelt Act of 2005 shows a decrease in Greenbelted farmland value of up to 30 per cent, while farms that border Greenbelt areas but are not included in the zoning have shot up in value, making it difficult for those farmers to expand their operations.

"Lowered value is only one problem farmers face. Recommendations

were put forth by a Government Task Force in 2004 to address wildlife predation of livestock, trespassing, crop damage and ecological goods and services. Farmers are already contributing positively to the environment out of their own pockets, unlike European Union or US farmers who are compensated for these efforts," says Wendy Omvlee, Chair of the OFA Greenbelt Taskforce and Executive Member.

Omvlee owns and operates a dairy goat farm in Haldimand county, one of the areas vulnerable to further Greenbelt expansion. Greenbelt, defined as an area of open land around a city, designated for preservation, has farmers as far away from the GTA as Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin, Niagara, Brant, Northumberland and Simcoe counties worried. These farmers are aware of the impacts of the Greenbelt

and demand studies be done on the benefits, opportunities and farm sustainability impacts.

No benchmark or baseline studies have been done to date other than Richard Vyn's recent Doctoral thesis on Greenbelt's effects on land values.

The OFA is submitting recommendations on the EBR posting to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on the criteria for assessing a municipal request to be added into the Greenbelt. OFA would like to see a comprehensive, province-wide study of transportation infrastructure and needs (public and private) and an assessment of the agricultural capability of our best farmland.

"It would be more beneficial to Greenbelt the more fertile class one farmland than class five for example. Some of Ontario's best farmland is being paved over as we speak," says Omvlee.



PRESIGIOUS AWARD: Ontario State Deputy Nat Gallo of the Knights of Columbus presents the Culture of Life Award to Grand Knight James Raats of St. Joseph Council, Acton, for the pro-life activities and works the Acton Council accomplished in the past year. The presentation took place at the annual Knights of Columbus Ontario State Convention held in Toronto during the Victoria Day long weekend. — submitted photo

Thanks to Samaritan

To the good Samaritans who helped me out on May 9 around 2 pm when I had my nasty fall on the sidewalk..To Helen(I asked her name) who stopped and asked if I needed help and to the young lad Brendan who also stopped and phoned 911 and waited with his girlfriend

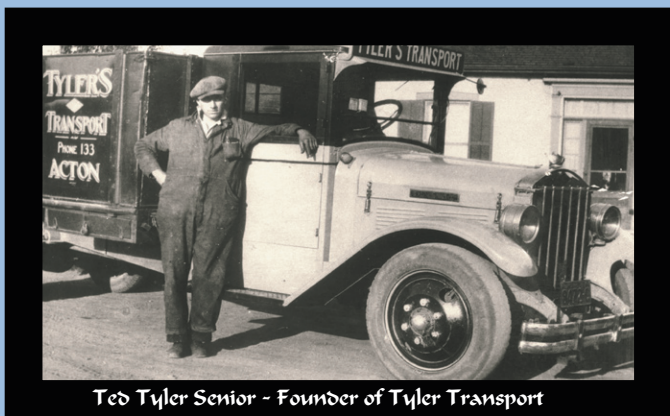
Letters

til the ambulance came....To the ambulance drivers Rory and Dale who took me to Georgetown Hospital and later when released I had no way home....I phoned a friend Dorothy (who is 90) who came and picked me up with no

questions asked and took me back to Acton....but first made a side trip to the library to drop off my books and then took me home.

Thank you all very much for your help...I ended up with a fractured ankle.

Rosemarie Luoma
Kingham Rd, Acton



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May 24th 2008

12 noon - 8:00pm

Prospect Park

free event!

Featuring . . .

- Bands • Local Comedian Jeff McEnery
- Bouncy Castles for all ages • Giant Ball Soccer • Drum Circle
- Clowns & Face Painting • Food & Drinks and much, much more!!!!

A fun-filled event to promote Acton's youth

Rain Location - Acton Community Centre!

Check out... www.chance4change.blogspot.com
and search www.Facebook.com - Acton Youth's Chance for Change

For more information contact Jen:
Tel: 905-703-6338 • chance4change@hotmail.com

This event is sponsored by



Acton Youth's Chance for Change event represents the efforts of youth in Acton. The support for the youth and this event is provided by the Halton Region, Our Kids Network, Recreation and Parks - Town of Halton Hills, Links2care - Off The Wall and Halton Regional Police Service. Additional support is being provided by POSSE, Acton High School, McKenzie-Smith Bennett and St. Joseph's School.