



PET BLESSING: Pepito and Carmelita with owners John Hurst and Beverly Davison-Hurst attended the Blessing of the Animals' service on Sunday morning at St John's Anglican Church in Rockwood. Reverend Hollis Hiscock blessed the pets individually.
— Denise Paulsen photo

The ROCKWOOD Miller

Wind turbines - a hazzard or environmental boon to energy generation?

By Denise Paulsen

Storm clouds are looming on the horizon according to environmental lawyer Peter Pickfield who alerted Guelph/Eramosa Township Council to "serious emerging potential health and nuisance issues," allegedly caused by "green" wind turbine projects in Wellington County. Changes in 2009 to provincial windmill farm legislation stripped local municipalities of the ability to say "no" to wind powered energy, however they still have authority over alternate sources of energy including solar.

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Arlene King, is not convinced about the potential hazards, going on record in May saying "... scientific evidence does not demonstrate any causal link between wind turbine noise and adverse health effects." The province is being sued by three Bruce County communities (Arran-Elderslie) who claim provincial wind turbine policies contravene The

Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"At the moment, our hands are tied," Mayor Chris White said following receipt of Pickfield's letter. "We are not sure how to proceed in the eventuality that any wind farms are approved in the Township," he said. "We have no skin in this (wind

"Scientific evidence does not demonstrate any causal link between wind turbine noise and adverse health effects."

**-Dr. Arlene King
Ontario Chief Medical
Officer of Health**

turbine) game," White continued, adding the Township isn't a particularly windy area.

Wellington County currently has six wind turbine projects in the development or approval phase, including Mapleton/Woolwich, Mapleton/North Wellington, and Centre Wellington/East Garafraxa. According to Pickfield, the County's

health and quality of life by-laws can control the possibility of sprawling wind energy farms development. Noise and shadow flickers – the sun passing behind a turbine blade and casting a shadow – are considered public nuisances. Woodlands and wildlife damage are also alleged threats.

Pickfield detailed how Council can challenge windmill farm applications using appeals, existing zoning by-laws, and lobbying upper levels of government. Regulatory powers are also available under the Forestry, Ontario Heritage and Clean Water Acts.

Wind power – the province's fastest growing renewable source of energy – increased to 1,100-megawatts of generated power last year, up from 15-megawatts in 2003, and interest in the popular power source is on the rise. With no wind-farm application before it, Township Council received the Garrod Pickfield letter for future consideration.

One millionth tree planted in Wellington

Wellington Green Legacy started in 2004 with the simple idea of planting 150,000 trees in Wellington County that year to help celebrate the County's 150th anniversary.

The anniversary is long gone, but Green Legacy continues to grow and plant trees to become what the County believes is the largest municipal tree planting program in North America. On October 3, it celebrated the planting of its one millionth tree. Green Legacy also received a 2010 Grand River Watershed Award, given by the Grand River Conservation Authority to organizations and individuals that have made an outstanding contribution to conservation through environmental work.

"The Green Legacy program is making a difference by not only planting more than 150,000 trees annually, but also by engaging the hearts and minds of thousands of volunteers," said

Tracey Ryan, supervisor of conservation services at the GRCA. "The County council showed tremendous foresight in developing this program."

Wellington County has 17 per cent forest cover, which is about average for the Grand River watershed. It is heading towards 30 per cent forest cover, which is recommended by Environment Canada for a healthy watershed. Each year Green Legacy plants 1,000 more trees than the initial 150,000 and the tally was up to 156,000 this spring.

The County has operated a tree nursery at Little Tract County Forest in Puslinch Township just east of Cambridge since 2006. This former farm now has four greenhouses, a large walk-in cooler and trees are also grown outside. The trees are a variety of native species and include seedlings as well as saplings. Interestingly, the property was

planted with trees during an earlier reforestation project in the 1940s.

Green Legacy has school programs that fit with the provincial curriculum for students, but goes beyond this to include nature walks and other activities. A total of 6,000 students assisted Green Legacy this year. People need to learn why trees are important first - so they learn that trees provide shade, help clean the air and water, keep soil on the land and help mitigate the challenge of climate change. In fact there are many ways that trees boost the environment, biodiversity and the economy. Research even shows that a visit to a forest can boost a person's immune system.

All the trees are free. Landowners can attend workshops and are also referred to Conservation Services of the GRCA and other conservation authorities if they need advice on where and how to plant trees.

Lucky Lotto Max winner is \$1-million richer

Winning a \$1-million lottery will allow Rockwood resident Paul Phillips to make some investments, pay some bills and "help my kids and grandkids," according to an Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation press release issued on Monday.

Phillips said he was "so amazed" to realize he'd

won that he left work to go home to tell his wife. Phillips, a 64-year-old

businessman, bought a Lotto Max Encore quick pick ticket on the Sep-

tember 24 draw at the Norval Convenience store.

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