

Will chickens come home to roost at Scotch Block?

By BRAD REAUME
The Champion

A picture of a cute, fuzzy baby chick perched on piano keys says it all. Chicks brought home after a school project two years ago are family pets. However a Scotch Block man, Bill Shore, will face charges Monday (Oct. 7) of contravening bylaws by using his land for animal husbandry. Neighbourhood kids play with the now full grown chickens and several other birds, which call the Southcott Drive residence home. In fact eight local residents signed a petition saying they have no objection to the birds on the property, a four-acre chunk of a rural estate subdivision just north of town.

Despite local cows, a nearby pig farm and horses which can graze not

30 metres from the Shore's back door, bylaw enforcement officer Bill Bamford says the property is subject to the same bylaws as any urban subdivision.

Both Mr. Shore and his wife Renata have been charged. They not only contend that the two remaining hens, one rooster and two guinea fowl are pets, but wonder why they are being charged twice for the same offence.

"If you go through a red light everyone in the car is not issued a ticket," said Ms. Shore. "There is only one potential violation here."

Mr. Bamford said the extra charges were laid because Ms Shore is the legal owner of the property. The twin charges void a defence that Mr. Shore alone owns the chickens.

The Shores have already been ordered to pay a \$200 fine, \$50 per

charge for a similar bylaw infraction early last year. They were each convicted of changing the use of their land and animal husbandry. They had taken care of about 50 meat chicks for a neighbour for a few months. The couple paid only half of the fine, contending they both could not be charged for the same offence.

The maximum fine payable is \$25,000. Mr. Shore said the first time the chickens were definitely farm animals which he was holding as a favour.

In his favour this time, he feels, is that the previous court judgement indicates the original science project animals are "arguably pets" and considered separately from the meat chickens.

"I would offer to get rid of

them if they would drop the charge," said Mr. Shore, who added the situation has gotten out of hand. He said he is also accused of having five geese, but they are simply local birds which use the 16 Mile Creek valley behind his house.

Mr. Shore, who has had recent heart problems and bypass surgery, claimed town officials did not deal with him fairly. He is so upset he has put his house up for sale.

"We pay tremendous taxes out here and get nothing, no garbage collec-

tion, no water, nothing," Mr. Shore said. "Is this all the town has to do? Is the town that crime free?"

The municipality has hired Gracie Romano of the legal firm Leitch-Stunt. Mr. Shore questioned why the municipality would go to the extra expense of retaining a lawyer.

According to Mr. Bamford when prosecutions are straightforward the bylaw officers will conduct the case. However in this instance there is a potential conflict of interest so the outside legal help was hired.

Concert group likes church

The popularity of Milton Concert Productions' annual concert series has prompted the organization to change locations this year.

Preparing to launch its 11th Nocturne Series, the organization will host concerts at Milton Alliance Church, which provides a larger venue.

"We're very excited about this move," said Blanche Hinton, Milton Concert Productions founder. "This church has a much larger hall with excellent acoustics and we're looking forward to accommodating more people in more comfort."

The season will feature three regular concerts - the first Friday, Oct. 18 - plus a bonus fourth concert. A children's concert is also being planned for sometime in the spring.

"We know there are a lot of people out there who would really enjoy these concerts," Ms Hinton said.

"They are a wonderful opportunity for

the people of Milton and surrounding areas to attend live performances of a very high calibre without having to travel to Toronto or worry about parking."

The opening concert will feature Mozart with a violin concerto and the North York Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maestro Kerry Stratton.

The second concert entitled "Romantic Guitars" will feature a wide range of romantic guitar music on Friday, Nov. 15.

Next will be the "Jazz Bonus," an interesting change of pace that will feature piano, bass and saxophone on Friday, Feb. 28.

The final concert scheduled for Friday, Apr. 25 entitled "The Russians are Coming" will feature the return of the North York Symphony Orchestra conducted by Maestro Kerry Stratton and will include a variety of Russian composers. For information or tickets, call Ms Hinton at 878-4604 or Caroline at 878-4427.

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