

PHEW

'Thank you very much' said the speaker amidst more than polite applause. I was at a Hotel in Stratford last weekend in the middle of a conference of Ontario Community Futures Development Corporations. The speaker had been discussing and answering many questions on the 'greening' activities of groups and individuals throughout Ontario with references to other countries throughout the world.

He had mentioned local electrical generation and had much data on sun panels and wind generation. I was surprised that individuals were using these devices to supply their premises, homes and businesses. He also mentioned ethanol development from corn and other crops and I thought of the plant soon to be completed near Nappanee.

As I prepared to move to the next presentation room a woman from Northumberland looked at my identity tag and asked about the 'battle' in the County. She is a longtime farmer and agricultural expert even though she is now a widow is quite active in the field and still farms over 5,000 acres just outside Port Hope.

So we had a chat and she was somewhat surprised that though I was a 'newbie' to the County I was in favor of Wind Farms even more so because she knew that Milford was within the area being considered for installation.

I like the Stratford area and so does Valerie. On a day tour for spouses of delegates she went to Millbank, visited a Mennonite church and watched a film on the various Amish sects and more importantly had a chance to shop in the local businesses and buy things available only from local craft people. To make it even better the weather was magnificent and we enjoyed the drive, even the monotony of the 401, as the trees are beginning to bud, the snow is gone, the fields were greening and the air is filled with the scent of 'honey' spread on the fields.

Since I usually don't plan ahead what I am going to write about its safe to say I had no intention of writing about wind farms, particularly since you all know my positive feelings about them. In the Star today there was an article about a proposal in Britain to put wind mills in the centre of their version of the 400 series highways - now just imagine how long it would take to get agreement on that.

I haven't said anything about the ATV controversy and don't need to since the approval by Council of a trial year. I will, of course, feel free, as each of you will, to comment on concerns as they may arise during the year trial.

To some extent I have gone through this years ago with the concerns of snow mobiles. I lived with my family in Cheltenham, a small village in Caledon. As the son and daughter grew we eventually owned two snow mobiles and traveled extensively around the area. There, as some of the locals objected to travel on their property, we set up a club,

dealt with local owners and restricted our use to those areas and trails that the local landowners agreed to.

We often took long trips e.g. from Cheltenham to Wasaga Beach, using primarily abandoned rail corridors. In other cases we would trailer the snowmobiles up to Huntsville and travel primarily on local roads to cottages owned by members of the club with no harm every coming to any of us.

Unfortunately, the winters got warmer and me and many others sold their machines. But it was a great time while it lasted. Let's hope that a co-operative approach will lead to everyone being satisfied with the future activities of ATVs -(I have never driven one).

On a completely different topic, I want to mention something that appeared in our local paper some months ago. I chuckled when I read it and felt that the reporter and the editor had their tongues in their cheeks so far that they ran the risk of biting them off. It was a normal reporting of an event but the speaker in question was quoted as saying *irregardless*.

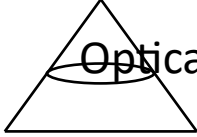
Now I don't know if that is a word you use, but if so you really shouldn't.

Irregardless. Regardless means without regard like replaceable means able to be replaced and adding the ir as irreplaceable means you cannot replace it. So irregardless means 'not without regard' - in fact it mean with regard the exact opposite of what the speaker intended. Phew! I have been waiting to get that out of my system but I don't think it will stop the speaker from using it again.

Great to be back home and the County looks to us to be further ahead in bursting forth into bloom than the Stratford area - well it is the County after all.

- John A Jackson

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