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## Thank a farmer

As the snow swirls through the streets of Essex and starts to pile higher, there's no better place to be than curled up on the couch with a cup of hot cocoa and a plate of cookies.

It should come as no surprise that food is often associated with comfort. Tea and toast for tummy aches. Ice cream floats and kisses for childhood boo-boos. Soup and crackers for headcolds. The list varies from home

to home, but the idea remains the same. Food not only nourishes us, but also makes us feel better.

### editorial

*laurie brett*

Most of us take food for granted. We stockpile dozens or even hundreds of canned goods and fill our freezers to capacity because we were taught that it's always better to be safe than sorry. Some weeks we don't even bother going to the grocery store because there's nothing we need, other than a loaf of fresh bread and a carton of milk. And few of us can imagine a world in which we couldn't satisfy a sudden craving by popping into a nearby variety store.

We're the lucky ones – the ones who haven't suffered a job loss or a health setback or a sudden marital breakdown.

But not everyone is so fortunate. The plight of the hungry in our community is being recognized by local farmers, who will serve clients of the Downtown Mission on Food Freedom Day – Feb. 6, 2007 – the calendar date on which the average Canadian has earned enough income to pay his or her grocery bill for the entire year.

A farmer's commitment to tilling the soil or tending to the livestock so that thousands of Canadians can eat is surely something for which we should be thankful.

Just as we should be thankful for places like the Downtown Mission that work tirelessly to provide food to those in need.

Closer to home, we know that volunteers at the Essex Area Food Bank understand the plight of the 1,600 hungry people who use their service each month. We also know they work tirelessly to keep the shelves stocked with items that most food banks don't offer – meat, cheese, milk, household products and personal care items.

On the front page of this week's Free Press, we are happy to report that the food bank's successful and unique operation has been recognized by the prestigious Centre for Social Justice at the University of Windsor. Eileen Clifford's unwavering commitment to feeding the hungry by providing a balanced diet will be honoured in February as this year's Social Justice Project of the Year.

Congratulations to the Essex Area Food Bank!  
And thank you to our local farmers!



**D**RIC vs DRTP – if that sounds like a new computer game, it isn't. But it is a contest to decide the future of a new border crossing at Windsor.

Meet DRIC, the Detroit River International Crossing Project. DRIC is a government co-ordinated study body that was created in 2000 to have a new border crossing built by 2008.

DRTP, the Detroit River Tunnel Partnership, is more focused. They want to tunnel from the 401 on rail right-of-way, under the river and hook-up with I-75 on the American side.

DRIC doesn't seem to like tunnels. But the fact is, everyone is for solving cross border problems, so long as they aren't inconvenienced. It's a case of not in my backyard.

DRTP is very well heeled and includes the OMERS pension fund and Canadian Pacific Rail. They have the services of former Mayor Mike Hurst and seem to be in a strong position as people look to a solution that will get

trucks in great numbers off Huron Church Road and underground.



### opinion

*bill gay*

Enter Matty Moroun and the Ambassador Bridge Company. Moroun owns the busiest border crossing between Canada and the U.S., the land on the U.S. side where the current rail tunnel emerges, and the derelict Michigan Central Railway station. He'd like the golden goose to grow some more by twinning the existing 1929 bridge.

Many think a border crossing of this importance should be owned by the public, not by a private company. But Matty has powerful friends, like

Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and U.S. Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick. They'll decide where on the Detroit side the connection will be made. Downriver communities, including Wyandotte, want no part of a bridge in their quiet environs, just as Amherstburg does not on this side.

The Canadian political players also have a big role. Windsor has two cabinet ministers at the provincial level expected to deliver the goods to suit the city, and thus the voters. Many see a bad situation getting worse with a twinned bridge or a surface route through Ojibway. Those who are not structural engineers fail to see the merit of building anything over an area where salt has been mined underground for over 100 years.

The federal government's local point man is MP Jeff Watson. He says his government will get the crossing built, but in what form and when? Stay tuned.



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