

● NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION ●

R.I.G.

(Whitchurch-Stouffville)

This notice is to inform the residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville that the Residents Information Group, R.I.G. (Whitchurch-Stouffville) is being dissolved as a corporate entity and that the Board and R.I.G. supporters agreed at a general meeting held at the Stouffville United Church on January 24, 2001 that any remaining funds of money raised during its time in operation as a non-profit incorporated residents' association (less those needed for administrative action during the dissolution and distribution process) will be donated to charities within Whitchurch-Stouffville.

The surplus Funds have subsequently been distributed to the following charities:

Ballantrae Lions Club	Stouffville Optimists Club
Ballantrae Seniors' Club	Stouffville Rotary Club
CHATS	Whitchurch-Stouffville Food Bank
Child Find	Whitchurch-Stouffville Historical Society
Friends of the W-S Museum	Whitchurch-Stouffville Mobility Transit
Silver Jubilee Club	York-Durham Aphasia Centre
Stouffville Kinsmen	
Stouffville Legion	
Stouffville Lions Club	

*Thank You from the Board,
R.I.G. (Whitchurch-Stouffville)*

Ottawa waking up to farmers' plight

The makers and shakers in Ottawa don't know one end of a cow from the other but they're starting to recognize the sound of a farmer hollering.

Last week farmers across the land, including those from York Region, didn't mince words when they told Ottawa that the \$500-million federal aid package given to the agricultural community was too little too late.

Much of the agricultural community is financially crippled and farmers are dropping like flies.

Survival tactics include not planting crops, finding jobs off the farm, and for those with faith, dropping to their knees.

Canadian farmers told the politicians that the \$500 million was a pittance compared to their American and European counterparts: U.S. farmers got \$2.5 billion more than Canadians in 1999, while European farmers received close to \$5 billion more.

Canadians want parity with the U.S. Nobody listened. Nobody understood. Nobody, except the farmers, seem to care.

But oh what a difference a day or two makes. On Tuesday, federal Agricultural Minister Lyle Vanclief announced an increase in the limit for interest-free loans



Joan Ransberry

to farmers, making \$700 million available to help farmers plant their crops this spring.

It's very good news for the agricultural community and even better news for the rest of us. If the farmers plant the crops, we get to eat.

The new program will enable farmers to apply for interest free loans up to \$50,000. It must be pointed out that last year's limit was \$20,000.

Markham farmer Paul Ramer and Whitchurch-Stouffville farmers John Doner and Ken Toms were very upset last week. Doner suggested farmers needed at least \$900 million to pull the country's agricultural industry out of its mess.

Doner is especially keen to have a national farm policy. He pointed out that while the industry has a \$95-billion impact on

Canada, it's been done without a business plan. Canada is the only G7 country without an agricultural business plan, Doner said. I agree. This is embarrassing.

Toms has been a farmer for 30 years. But, of late, planting crops has become a risky business. He asks: why put \$130,000 into the ground only to get \$150,000 back?

I was taken aback when Toms made this statement: "School teachers don't teach 364 days a year, not earn a penny and end up owing money." He made a simple, sad and very real point. Perhaps we should dwell less on school teachers and more on farmers.

After all, farmers work twice as hard, are twice as valuable and complain half as much as the average school teacher.

Yes, an agricultural policy will do more in the long run than an injection of cash. Long-term problems are not going to be cured by cash alone. People do have to look further ahead. Still, the federal government deserves to be recognized for this extra cash infusion.

It suggests politicians might be catching on to the fact that there's a link between these farmers and the food people eat.

Last week's survey question: If someone proposed to move 16 or more adults with mental illnesses into a home on your residential street, would you be concerned? Yes or no?

Total responses: 52.

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

Yes: 39 (75 per cent), No: 13 (25 per cent).

This week's survey question: Should police background

checks be mandatory for people who work with children? Yes or no?

Go to yrng.com to file your answer and we'll publish the results next Thursday.

(905)

DON'T FORGET TO ADD THE AREA CODE WHEN YOU'RE DIALING OUT. AND DIALING UP.

Local 10-digit dialing in the 905 communities starts April 7, 2001. But don't stop at adding the area code to just your Internet connection. Start dialing 10 digits now and reprogram equipment with speed and auto dialers. Like fax machines and phones. ADD THE CODE Get the low down by downloading more information at www.addthecode.com

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