



IN THE TRENCHES

March 2007

"Drainage Doesn't Cost - IT PAYS!"

www.drainage.org

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From the President's Desk

Fellow Members:

I am pleased to represent the LICO members as your new President. During my time as President over the next two years, I hope to learn from this great experience and fulfill my duties with dedication and enthusiasm.

I would like to expand on my background for the members who are not familiar with me. I grew up on a dairy farm just outside of Zurich, Ontario. I milked cows on the family farm until the ripe old age of 19. At 19 I began my career with Big O, which is now known as Armtec Limited Partnership. We have lived in several areas over the years including the Ottawa Valley and Woodstock area. Today I live in Everett, Ontario with my lovely wife Rhonda and our children.

Another convention has come and gone, it was good to see everyone again. I truly look forward to this convention every year. It is a time to meet old friends, make new friends, attend the meetings and sessions, learn something new, relax, and enjoy a few laughs.

This year was no exception - another great time was had by all. I would like to thank Franklin Kains for a great job putting together the agenda for the two days, John Johnston for all the work John does to keep the Executive and LICO organized and heading in the right direction, Don Lobb for the tireless work Don does as our Environmental Advocate and the entire LICO Executive for volunteering their time to sit on the Executive and attend the meetings.

This year the Executive will continue to focus on the Clean Water Act, which has been passed into law. Currently regulations are being drawn up and I would encourage everyone to talk to your local politicians to ensure your concerns are heard on this subject. The Oceans and Fisheries Act is currently being reviewed, and no doubt changes will be forth coming. We will continue to focus on Ag in the Classroom. I cannot begin to explain the importance of teaching our young people about farming. These and many other issues will continue to be highlighted at our meetings on behalf of our Membership.

2008 is going to be a very memorable year for LICO. We will be celebrating our 50th anniversary. Currently we are working on very special plans for the upcoming convention and you do not want to miss this convention. Please book your rooms early as they will be going fast! Together lets make this convention a very special occasion. 50 years only comes around once.

Spring is just around the corner. As I am writing this message today, it is eight degrees, the sun is shining and the snow is melting. What a great time of year. Better still for contractors and suppliers alike will be about a month from now, when the plows and the trenchers will be in the ground installing drainage pipe.

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From the President's Desk *(Cont'd. from Page 1)*

There are many positive signs that the drainage industry is going to have a good year in 2007.

I would like to thank all of you for keeping our organization strong. I also wish everyone success in the upcoming year. I look forward to representing LICO as President and if you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to contact your Executive members.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter.

Your President,
Chris J. Groot

Legislation – Our Responses - Don Lobb

During the past several months, with input from the LICO president and secretary, I have prepared comments for several pieces of legislation. They are, or will be available on the LICO website along with the web link so you can compare the response to the document being responded to. They are:

Clean Water Act 2006 – Development of a Regulation on Source Protection Committees
<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/028781ep.htm>

Ontario Species at Risk Act <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/027695ea.htm>

The Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Ecosystem (COA)
<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envregistry/029050ep.htm>

The Fisheries Act 2007 (Federal),
<http://www.parl.gc.ca/LEGISINFO/index.asp?Language=E&query=4901&List=toc>

It is important that we all make the appropriate politicians aware of our concerns – **NOW!**

I Am Thankful – (Ontario Farmer, December 5, 2006)

- For the taxes that I pay because it means that I am employed.
- For the mess to clean after a party because it means I have been surrounded by friends.
- For the clothes that fit a little too snug because it means I have enough to eat.
- For a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning and gutters that need fixing because it means I have a home.
- For all the complaining I hear about the government because it means we have freedom of speech.
- For the spot I find at the far end of the parking lot because it means I am capable of walking.
- For the lady behind me in church who sings off key because it means that I can hear.
- For the piles of laundry and ironing because it means I have clothes to wear.

- For weariness and aching muscles at the end of the day because it means I have been productive.
- For the alarm that goes off in the morning because it means that I am alive
- For getting too much e-mail because it lets me know I have friends who are thinking of me.

If you have articles, events or notes of interest you wish to add to this newsletter, please send your submissions (not more than **225** words) to the following:

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Terms OfYour Trade - Ross Irwin

From time to time “suits” from the government stop in between coffee breaks and ask questions. They have their own “lingo” to impress the unwashed. Those terms that deal with water have certain meanings so we give a brief description of the more commonly used processes dealing with water. This is sort of a glossary of terms.

Precipitation falls from the clouds in various forms – rain, snow, and dew.

Dew evaporates quickly, snow is stored water that evaporates (sublimates) or melts and adds to the surface water regime.

Rainfall is the important factor. In drainage we are concerned with its intensity, duration and spatial variability and total depth.

These can be single event summer storms, or continuous rainfall for extended days.

In design a frequency of occurrence is often calculated. When a meteorologist states it was a **50-year storm**, he means the probability of getting that amount was once in 50 years; however, it is possible the same storm could repeat the next year. It is all chance.

Evaporation is a process where water is converted to a vapour. Rain falling on plant leaves usually evaporates to the atmosphere. Evaporation also includes the drying of the soil surface and ponded waters. Evaporation is important in land drainage. It dries the top soil and permits water from layers below to rise to the surface to be evaporated.

Transpiration is a process through which a plant “breathes” and moves water to its leaves where it transpires and the water is evaporated.

Interception is the process through which rainfall is intercepted by plant and tree branches. The water does not usually reach the ground but is evaporated from the branches and leaves.

NEXT ISSUE – Defining water on and in the soil.

CEI Competitive Enterprise Institute - Biofuels, Food, or Wildlife? The Massive Land Costs of U.S. Ethanol – (Excerpts from Issue Analysis by Dennis Avery, September 21, 2006)

The high price of fossil fuels, environmental concerns, and geopolitical instability in some major oil-producing nations have spurred intense interest in the United States in alternative fuels, especially from renewable energy sources.

While popular with environmental activists, wind and solar power, because of their costs and unreliability, are not expected to grow significantly, even with massive subsidies.

Nuclear power is still viewed with suspicion, even though other countries, including France, supply a majority of their energy needs from nuclear plants.

Crop-based fuel production, especially corn ethanol, has been the main focus of interest, with government subsidies and mandates stimulating demand. Cellulosic ethanol produced from crop wastes has been heralded as the alternative fuel of the future, but it is yet to be produced in other than experimental production facilities.

There are significant trade-offs, however, involved in the massive expansion of the production of corn and other crops for fuel. Chief among these would be a shift of major amounts of the world’s food supply to fuel use when significant elements of the human population remains ill-fed. Even without ethanol, the world is facing a clash between food and forests. Food and feed demands on farmlands will more than double by 2050.

The United States might well have to clear an additional 50 million acres of forest- or more- to produce economically significant amounts of liquid transport fuels.

Economists and Environmentalists Develop Models In Which the Future Puts a Price on Wind, Air and Water - Farming's Natural Capital - (Excerpts from Ontario Farmer, December 26, 2006)

Economists have begun to make a case for environmental stewardship by putting a price tag on farmland's "natural capital" with the intent of saving it.

In the language of economists, the clean air, clean water and the various plants and animals on a section of land become "environmental goods" and the way rivers, fields, forests and swamps affect our environment, scrubbing the air, filtering the water, giving plants and animals a home, and people a place to work and play, become "environmental services."

Currently, in the "array of goods" offered by farmland, "the only 'goods' that are marketable are food and fibre." That's why the Delta Waterfowl Foundation and others are developing and promoting Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) as a way of paying farmers to adopt farm practices that improve "services" such as wildlife habitat.

The first ALUS project in Canada is the Regional Municipality of Blanshard, Manitoba where landowners will receive varying levels of payment from \$5 to \$25 an acre for practices that range from limiting grazing to ceasing cultivation altogether.

The best program of this kind, and the most successful is the Catskills Delaware Watershed project in New York State. New York City was faced with two choices: spend \$6 billion on a water filtration system to treat its drinking water, or spend less than a third of that to clean up the watershed.

The Watershed Agricultural Council (WAC) was formed with the mission "to support the economic viability of agriculture and forestry through the protection of water quality and the promotion of land conservation in the New York City watershed region."

The majority of the funding is through New York City's Department of Environmental Protection. The greatest resources have been initially directed toward implementing structural best management practices on large dairy farms. The program includes a branded, "buy local" campaign that clearly and tightly links the nine million New Yorkers and their agricultural hinterland.

The brand: Pure Catskills includes a tag line "where farmers grow and harvest food in the same pristine mountain region where there's clean drinking water for New York City."

ALUS doesn't offer the market support. ALUS is being promoted in Norfolk County. The demonstration farmers receive payments of \$10 to \$150 an acre for services that range from tree planting and conservation tillage to protecting and restoring wetlands.

In Huron County, the municipal politicians, staff and the Stewardship Council will also be discussing the merits of ALUS in the new year.

The underlying assumption in all this is that if these goods and services are provided for "public benefit" they should be paid for from the public purse.

In the farm of the future, a farmer might be paid for biodiversity credits, for leaving forest and habitat undisturbed; for carbon credits from industry for new plantings; for renewable energy, from wind-powered generators; and for certified sustainable lumber.

The challenge is that "providers need to demonstrate value for money. So how much is one acre of duck habitat worth?"

Currently, the most common form of payment for environmental goods and services is an annual acreage payment based on best agricultural practices.

Buckeye Traction Ditcher

For those interested in the history of the Buckeye Traction Ditcher go to the site listed below for a 6 page book produced by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers - an interesting read!

<http://files.asme.org/ASMEORG/Communities/History/Landmarks/5509.pdf>

Lines from Lambton - Dean Hodgson

The weather continues to dominate conversation here in Lambton County as we near the end of February. After a wet, cold fall, Lambton County experienced very mild weather through much of December and January. Although the milder weather was enjoyable to most, it didn't help to relieve the damage done to most of Lambton's farmland during the wet fall harvest. With the wet, soggy fields now blanketed with snow, the horrendous soil damage of the wet harvest is temporarily out of sight but hopefully, not out of mind. Repairing all this damaged soil is going to be a challenge to both farmers and drain contractors. It will be a time to study and plan before taking drastic measures. Moses said "after 6 years you must let the land rest for the 7th year". Hearing this at church, Allan Jardine suggested this may be a good year to start giving our land a rest while we repair, improve and drain away our problems. (More on this later, we hope.)

As many fretted and fumed about the milder weather, fearing we would have no winter because of "Global Warming", the fall wheat appeared to thrive despite the adverse conditions, turning many fields to a nice greenish tinge in December. Although some fields were described as being "tile run" wheat, with growth only over existing tile drains, it was amazing how many fields kept getting greener as the strange weather persisted into January. The "tile run" wheat fields made many contractors smile as though the tiled strips seemed to say "if a farmer had a tile drain every 10 feet, he could have a bumper crop".

But February finally brought us all back to reality and as true Canadians we have enjoyed the taste of some real winter weather. Some areas north and east of Lambton are still feeling the affects of a real old-time winter with roads blocked, schools closed and many trapped either at or away from home during some of these raging white-outs. Even as February ends the winter storms continue blowing across South Western Ontario. These storms have caused a lot of difficulty for many, especially in our rural areas. However, there are many snowmobilers, skiers, ice fishermen and just plain Canadians, who actually enjoy this winter wonderland created by the February blasts off our Great Lakes. Also there are many tile drain contractors engaging in the snow clearing business to supplement their income. They have both the equipment and the time during their off-season. For a time many feared the slow summer was to be followed by a warm winter. However, these last few weeks the blowing storms have kept everyone busy either pushing snow for profit or just at home, clearing the lanes to the house and shop.

Despite all the weather problems Lambton farmers appear to be optimistic and have been seeking advice from drainage contractors on how best to repair their damaged fields. In spite of all the government's new rules and regulations concerning water protection, the environment and the uncertainty of markets, farmers just keep soldiering on, hoping the future will be better. One thing they know is that improved drainage will help them regardless of government rules, inclement weather and fluctuating prices. First they must repair the damage of their compacted fields. Several local contractors are planning to attend the Agricultural Erosion Course in March so as to be better able to assist their customers with the soil problems next summer. Although compaction is the main problem, drainage, erosion and proper drain sizing will all play a role in solving the soil problems from the fall harvest of 2006. With all the heavy rains last fall, many farmers realized their outlet drains were undersized because of the Hickenbottoms, catch basins and surface inlets installed in recent years.

Cousins Allan Jardine and Wayne Dupuis have finally returned from their family fishing and hunting trip in the southern USA and both were sorry to have missed much of our winter weather. Both are planning to upgrade their skills in soil management. Ken Jaques of Petrolia is also concerned with soil management. Ken has been surprised at the number of big jobs farmers are booking for next year. Higher commodity prices, along with higher yields on the better-tiled land, are making farmers optimistic in spite of the poor soil conditions facing everyone next spring. Ken hopes the weather will be more cooperative in 2007. The Jaques family has been in the farm drainage business in Lambton County for over 50 years but he cannot recall a year like 2006.

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Lines from Lambton *(Cont'd. from Page 5)*

Down in Sombra Township we learned that Gordon Tulloch has been installing some main drains for his neighbours who operate pull-behind plows. Gordon feels the results left a lot to be desired after watching some of the installation practices of these untrained operators. He also wonders why tile salesmen aren't more concerned about the installation of their product. Gordon felt if he didn't install the main drains someone else would have.

I read in the Ontario Farmer that Hans Kendal, a government extension worker in Manitoba, has been observing the benefits of tile drainage during the inclement weather of 2006. At a December crop meeting he told attending farmers how existing tile drainage had saved many crops during the wet periods of 2006. But he also noted the tile drained crops benefited even more during the dry periods because they had developed a deeper root system in the spring, so there were stronger plants during the drought. It is good to see that Manitoba Agriculture is finally promoting tile drainage for their farmers. Seems to me John Wolfe and Ken McCutcheon were spreading the gospel on the benefits of tile drainage to Manitoba and Rainy River farmers several years ago but without much success. But then as far back as the 1970's Norm Hodgins, then of Hodgins & Hayter from Grand Bend, installed some tile drains for Manitoba Agriculture. Would you believe the plan was to promote the benefits of tile drainage but it has taken all these years to work through the system?

Of course, here in Ontario, our ancestors were installing tile drains as far back as the 1840's but there were still farmers who needed convincing of all the benefits of tile drainage even into the last quarter century. Today of course, we have a section of society who believe they could live on fish if only they could flood all the existing improved farmland and return our farms to their natural state of the 18th century. Would you believe that most of these people live in apartment buildings in the cities, far from the environment they promote?

I haven't been able to contact many of the drainage contractors this winter as maybe they were away working or perhaps we are afraid to brave the winter in order to visit on days they might be home. I do notice I don't enjoy the winter weather quite like I once did.

WETLANDS - Don Lobb

Drainage of cropland around significant wetlands is now under attack by some Conservation Authorities.

In 2006, the Regulation for Ontario Conservation Authorities was amended to give them jurisdiction over any (significant) wetland of 2 ha. or more and a 120m (400') buffer around it. Do the math! This gives a CA control over 31 acres where even the smallest significant wetland is involved. Some CAs consider cropland drainage to be a wetland threat and have prohibited the practice.

Under old CA rules a wetland would only be affected if it were directly connected to a water course. Under new rules it is simply assumed that a connection exists even though a connection is not evident.

Aside from problems created for landowners, drainage contractors will need to proceed with caution where wetlands exist.

??? Input Required ???

We would like **your** feedback on the appearance and content of the newsletter.

Also, anyone wishing to receive **an electronic copy instead of a paper copy** is asked to email jjohnston@gto.net and we will take you off the print list and put you on an email list.

If you want the newsletter by email, you can create a mail box in your mail program and put the newsletter in there for future reference. John can help you set this up!!

Species At Risk Bill Comments On Focus On “Willful Intent” – (Excerpts from Ontario Farmer, February 27, 2007)

Despite the antiquity of the 35-year old Endangered Species Act, the current legislation to protect species at risk, changes in the new act could have potential and significant impact on how farm operators conduct their day-to-day activities.

Penned by Don Lobb of Caledon, LICO also highlighted the following among their concerns:

- protection and recovery measures must be identified that demonstrate flexibility and the use of education to encourage stewardship;
- disclosure of SAR locations must be made to property owners at least 60 days in advance of any action against a property owner or any one or any contractor engaged in work on a property;
- the presence of, and the endangered status of, a species must be reviewed at least every three years;
- there must be a clear definition and description of a habitat and evidence that it is in fact habitated;
- there must be a published list and description of SAR, species of special concern and extirpated species, along with protection progress to date and an accounting of cost;
- any species protection action must include a species management plan to control other species that are attracted to similar environment;
- and no one should enter private property without undue process

“This law is counter-productive and will encourage landowners to ‘shoot, shovel and smile’, not protect our wildlife,” said Jim White, a Brampton-based land use consultant.

“I am totally opposed to changing the basis of prosecution from ‘mens rea’ under which the crown must prove intent just like in the criminal code to ‘strict liability’ which means one is automatically guilty until they prove their innocence.” he said.

The submission by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) concurred also recommended retaining “willful” in the act. “Willful requires the Crown to demonstrate that the accused person’s activities were intentional and knowing, rather than unintentional and unformed.”

Need For Compensation Dominates Species At Risk Debate – (Excerpts from Ontario Farmer, February 27, 2007)

Funding has emerged as a key area of concern for the agricultural community with respect to the provincial government’s review of the Species at Risk (SAR) legislation.

The government has suggested a three-pillar approach to SAR protection and recovery, with the first pillar identified as providing incentives for on-the-ground stewardship activities.

OFA is recommending a “suite” of targeted stewardship and incentive programs and is concerned that in the absence of a “binding legislative commitment” to provide adequate resource funding for the stewardship efforts that the stewardship and incentive pillar of the SAR program will collapse.

The Land Improvement Contractors of Ontario (LICO) believe that, if property use will be diminished or value decreased as a result of species protection for the public interest, then the property owner must be fully compensated and that a “reasonable and fair appeal process” must be established for lost property value or income.

CFFO recommends that public money will be offered if the affected landowners participate in the voluntary restoration and management plans of the habitat of the endangered species.

CFFO further recommends that any revenue generated from increased penalties should be directed to economic incentives for private landowners and non-profit organizations who are participating in environmental stewardship initiatives.

Health and Safety Course at the Convention – John Johnston

Those who attended the course received a lot of information from Mr. Conlin, the lawyer who spoke. Some highlights of the slides are as follows:

1. Employer obligations under the Occupational Health and Safety Act are in Sections 25 and 26.
2. Core employer obligations are:
 - Ensuring that prescribed equipment, materials, protective devices are provided, maintained in good condition and used as described.
 - Provide information, instruction, supervision and training to employees
 - Appoint competent supervisors (a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker)
 - Prepare and review annually a written safety policy and maintain a safety program
3. Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.

Examples of charges and fines:

Township of Norwich - \$125,000 for failing to place warning signs to ensure that contract workers driving dump trucks did not come within 3 meters of power lines.

North American Construction - \$220,000 for failure to maintain a crane at the Halton Region Waste Water Treatment Facility.

Cambridge Pro Fab Inc. - \$125,000 for failure to put a guard at the end of a catwalk.

Due diligence is a standard by which a company's steps and its supervisor's steps to protect workers can be judged on an ongoing basis. Knowledge of legal obligations is fundamental for any workplace party attempting to practice due diligence strategies. The Courts expect a system which takes all reasonable steps to determine and assess potential hazards to employees. This involves taking a step back from familiar hazards and looking at "what could go wrong". Utilize all the available information including near-miss instances. The Courts expect that ongoing knowledge of workplace hazards will be used to remedy defects in physical equipment, work areas, protective devices etc. Develop specific safety policies, practices, procedures and rules and follow them.

Do you have a hazard checklist that you go over with the landowner before starting a job? Do you go over that list with the crew before they set foot on the jobsite? Do you stop at the end of the day and review what happened and any new hazards that have been identified and tell the crew the next morning before they start? Should you?

Water Supply Expansion Program - Don Lobb

LICO is proceeding with a project to document potential areas of Southern Ontario where controlled outlet drainage and subsurface irrigation have potential. This would provide opportunities to increase water use efficiency and to improve the quality of drain discharge water. This is an important response to public concern about water issues and to current legislation such as the Clean Water Act 2006.

The project will result in the production of detailed maps, which will be available to LICO contractors and operational manuals for the systems. Some of our contractors will be invited to participate in the project development to ensure that it is accurate and user friendly.

The completion date for the project is end of 2007. Funding is from the Canada-Ontario Water Supply Expansion Program via the Agriculture Adaptation Council. Project participants include LICO, OMAFRA, Agriculture Canada (PFRA) and Hunter and Associates (the project contractor).

LAW OF PROBABILITY:

The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.

Resolution Calls For Compensation – (Excerpts from Ontario Farmer, February 27, 2007)

As farmers face greater expense for land and water protection, government needs to bear some costs.

Legislation such as “The Clean Water Act” and “Species At Risk” will put new demands on farmers and rural property owners with no guarantee of adequate compensation.

The OFA will “explore a policy of government-sponsored payments for ecological goods and services provided by farmers.”

There is an increasing burden on farmers to take steps necessary to protect environmental features that are “in the public good.”

The legislated requirements often result in additional costs or loss of income – or both – for the farm property owner.

Farmer Involvement Critical for Shaping Clean Water Act - (Excerpts from Ontario Farmer, February 20, 2007)

If farmers are apathetic about the process, then urbanites will decide the process and issues.

Get informed; go to the meetings. If the only people who turn up are from the cities, they will define the issues and process.

The Clean Water Act will address two regulatory zones; the areas of municipal wellheads and the intake zones for surface water intake for municipal supply, but although it may sound like it's all said and done, it's far from it.

For the past five years counties have been doing groundwater studies; where the water is, where it flows to and from, and identifying the areas impacted by municipal wells.

These studies hope to define local issues, such as developing a water budget, determining 25 to 50 year estimates for usage and looking for new sources of water. They will also compile an inventory of risks, and threats such as large manure storage, farm input supply storage or fuel storage facilities.

These assessment reports are expected by early 2008.

There are now 19 planning authorities that have been formed from the 37 conservation authorities across the province that will be responsible for overseeing the process of source protection planning. They will be forming planning committees by June or July of 2007.

These committees will come from the community: one-third from the municipalities, one-third from farmers, aggregate producers, and the business community, and one-third from general interest such as environmental groups, cottage associations, and chamber of commerce.

Even if, under law, you don't own water, you do own the land, and if you are being expected to do more than follow normal farm practices to protect water you are providing a service to society. It's only fair that you should receive compensation for that service.

If you have a municipal well on your property, approximately 10 acres around it will be restricted in use.

Ambition

A mother's four-year-old daughter was attending her first performance of the Ice Capades. She was so mesmerized that she wouldn't budge from her seat even during the intermission, watching the activity while the ice was cleaned.

At the end of the show, she exclaimed, “I know what I want to be when I grow up!”

The mother envisioned her on the ice in another 15 years, starring in the Ice Capades.

She was brought back to earth when the daughter continued, “I want to be a zamboni driver!”

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 23 & 24, 2008

LICO Conference

Best Western Lamplighter Inn
591 Wellington Rd., London, Ontario
N6C 4R3



Passings:

LIDLAW, Sally - Passed away, at her residence on Monday, December 25, 2006, at the age of 70. Beloved wife of Donald Laidlaw. Loving mother of Karen Rous (Ed), Barbara Farmer (Jim) and Bruce (Cathy). Dear grandmother of Lindsay, Colin, Adrienne, Ashleigh, Kyla and Jack. She will be missed by her loyal pet Roy. Sally enjoyed her career as a registered nurse and addictions counselor. She was a longtime member and past president of the Kitchener Waterloo Knitters Guild. She was a member of the Rockton United Church and sat on the Board of Directors of St. Leonard's Society, Brant for 25 years. A service to celebrate Sally's life was held in the chapel at Corbett Funeral Home, 95 Dundas Street, Cambridge, on Friday, December 29, 2006, at 2 p.m., with visitation one hour prior. In Sally's memory, donations made to Rockton United Church or the charity of choice would be appreciated by the family.

SHIFFLETT, E.W. (Bill) - Died March 1, 2007, in his 90th year. Bill was a long time drainage engineer, working out of Guelph for Gamsby & Mannerow. Many may also remember his son Mike.

Speaker Compares Clean Water Cost to Those of Notorious Gun Registry -

(Excerpts from Ontario Farmer, March 6, 2007)

"I think we are looking at gun-registry type numbers here," warned Chris Attema.

"We're looking at a whole new level of governance, a whole new level of bureaucracy and a whole new level of costs."

The water quality management plan has huge implications for agriculture in the province. There are up to 1,100 municipal wells across the province which would come under the Clean Water Act. Each would have a well-head and surface water protection zones around them, meaning any farms in those zones would be subject to new rules and regulations which would govern how they use their land.

Under the current proposal there is nothing to prevent a municipality from expropriating the farmer's rights to use the land the way they always used it if this land is within a well-head or surface protection zone.

Making matters worse is that there are no provisions for compensation for this change in land use.

NDP Leader Howard Hampton said the Clean Water Act downloads the responsibility to local authorities and leave the provincial government free of any political fallout.

Attema said it could be three years before legislation starts to impact at the local level.

Words to Live By

Live a good, honorable life. Then when you get older and think back, you'll enjoy it a second time.

Good judgment comes from experience, and a lot of that comes from bad judgment.

Live simply. Love generously. Care deeply. Speak kindly. Leave the rest to God.