

SPECIAL COMPETITIONS 2011 WINNERS



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BEST ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING

Class 3011
Circulation up to 9,999

Judge: Dale Bass

FIRST PLACE

THE YARMOUTH COUNTY VANGUARD
August 24, 2010 The Voice of Southwestern Nova Scotia since 1966 • www.NovaNewsNow.com • 1.25 • Vol. 44, No. 48

Water woes drag on
By Michael Gorman
The issue of what's happening in the water in the Carleton area and farther up into Digby County is one of great debate. And although in the last several years studies have been performed in an attempt to identify the problem, there seem to remain more questions than answers.

COMING THROUGH
Thomas Saville of the #14 Mariners leaps through players on the opposing Cogen team to get to the ball first during the championship game of the Yarmouth Clippers Soccer Club U14 house league closing tournament on Aug. 18. The score was tied 1-1 at halftime but the Mariners got a goal in the second half for a 4-2 win. The soccer club's house league seasons have now wrapped up for the year, but players will be back on the field next June. (The Compass photo)

Michael Gorman And Tina Comeau
The Vanguard
Yarmouth, NS

SECOND PLACE

Treaty rights to extinction
Genesee Keevil

Genesee Keevil
Yukon News
Whitehorse, YT

THIRD PLACE

No such thing as 'junk' at Eddie's pit
Martha Perkins

Martha Perkins
Bowen Island Undercurrent
Bowen Island, BC

In first place, Michael Gorman and Tina Comeau from Yarmouth County Vanguard. A strong package of imminently readable material about something we all tend to take for granted much too often. The story choices provide a balanced coverage, something that is so necessary when there are two – and sometimes more - sides to the story. And, although the stories are long, they are not ponderous but rather easy to read and are written so that you must finish them.

Genesee Keevil from the Yukon News comes in second place. This is a subject that could have easily been ignored, other than following it through the court system, but Keevil takes a thorough look at the issue and provides the reader with an impressive review.

Third place: Bowen Island Undercurrent – Martha Perkins. There is more to environmental reporting than identifying the big issues, the science behind them and then trying to make it accessible to the reader. Sometimes it's about what one person can do to make the world a better place – and this story about one man does that. It's readable, it's fun and it's refreshing.

BEST ENVIRONMENTAL WRITING

Class 3012
Circulation 10,000 and over

Judge: Stu Salkeld

FIRST PLACE

LYIVING HERE | 20 THE OBSERVER | Saturday, September 18, 2010

Your car gets a new life after its last ride

Every year, millions of gleaming new cars roll off assembly lines and out of dealer lots, to be polished, photographed, gloated over and perhaps named. Every year, millions more are totalled in accidents or decay past the point of repair and are hauled away to scrap yards.

Scrap yards aren't just automotive garbage dumps, where cars rust into oblivion. Some 75 per cent of the average car's content, by weight, can be recycled. And recycled they are – more than newspapers, more than glass bottles, more than any other consumer product on the planet.

How much of each vehicle is recycled depends on the model, age and condition of the vehicle and what sort of wrecker it goes to. Auto recyclers – like Hank's Auto Wreckers in St. Clements and Paleshi Motors in Elmira – pull usable parts off the vehicle and resell them, while scrap metal dealers sell the cars to shredders for metal recovery. About 500 cars roll into the dismantling bays at Hank's Auto Wreckers every year.

Most of the parts are sold to yards and repair shops. Everything Hank's has in inventory is listed on a popular used parts website and they've sold parts to every continent except Antarctica – including, once, a taillight to the Vatican.

The scrapping industry is driven by demand for used parts, but it follows the same technological road as the auto manufacturing industry, just eight or 10 years behind.

Cars rolling off the assembly line today are immensely more complicated than they were 40 or 50 years ago, packing more options into a smaller space. Things like air bags, anti-lock brakes and air conditioning didn't exist then but are standard today.

"Years ago, it was 12 to 20 pieces you'd inventory," said Mike Nissen.

New parts were so cheap that no one would bother trying to track down a used one unless it was something major, like a transmission. Hank's Auto Wreckers didn't need a computerized inventory system because Hank could keep track of where everything was in his head.

With 100,000 parts on the lot, that's just not possible anymore. Not only do they remove more parts from each vehicle, but there's more variation between makes and model years. And cars just last longer, with manufacturers offering 10-year, 300,000-kilometer warranties, they have to keep parts in stock longer than they used to.

Recyclers like Hank's and Paleshi Motors tend to deal in newer vehicles. If your four-year-old Corolla gets crunched in a collision, there are lots of other four-year-old Corollas still on the road that can use the parts. If you drive your jalopy until it's a rolling rust wagon, it's more likely to go straight to a crusher, because there's little demand for parts that old.

Scrap dealers can offer higher prices for old cars than recyclers can; they don't have the expenses involved in dismantling and draining cars before sending them to the crusher. Cars that are crushed without being de-polluted can leach those fluids back into the environment.

"Eight now, our estimates are that less than half of vehicles are de-polluted before going to a crushing state," said Steve Fletcher, president of the Ontario Automotive Recyclers Association.

That's where the Retire Your Ride program comes in. Owners of 1990 and older vehicles that are still running can turn them in for \$300 cash or a rebate on a newer vehicle. The idea is to get older, high-polluting cars off the road.

It's no coincidence that Retire Your Ride originated with recyclers. It stems partly from honest concern for the environment, but it's also good for business. To receive cars through Retire Your Ride, wreckers have to follow a national code of practice to ensure that hazardous materials are dealt with properly. That means salvage is directed away from scrap dealers and toward recyclers, who are set up for dismantling and de-polluting cars.

"It makes it economically viable for us to handle them. We would never buy some of these vehicles coming through [without Retire Your Ride]," explained Derek Nissen.

TAKING STOCK
The recycling process starts when a car is totalled in the lot. First all of the usable parts are inventoried using a laptop and computerized inventory system. When all the parts – usually between 100 and 150 – have been inventoried, the list is uploaded to the company's server.

A DAY'S WORK
It takes about a day and a half to dismantle a car properly. The average car has 15 litres of fluids that have to be drained and stored properly, starting with the fuel in the gas tank.

SECOND LIFE
Oil, antifreeze, refrigerants and washer fluid are all drained and sent to regulated processors, and the batteries are removed and reused or recycled.

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Article and photos by **Joni Miltenburg**

FAMILY BUSINESS is Hank in 1985. Left, the scrap pile.

Joni Miltenburg
Observer
Elmira-Woolwich, ON

SECOND PLACE

Dead fish in Pigeon Lake 'normal': biologist

Thousands of dead fish are floating in the lake.

It's more of a nuisance for the public when you are driving with thousands of dead fish along the shore.

Wetaskiwin men charged in double stabbing

No swimming advisory lifted at Ma-Me-O

Jerold LaBlanc
Times Advertiser
Wetaskiwin, AB

First place is earned by Elmira-Woolwich Observer reporter Joni Miltenburg. Her story about a family-owned wrecking yard in the era of "green practices" was excellent, and better than every other entry in this category. The story was factual, funny, included solid quoting, had an intensely local focus but global appeal at the same time, attractive lay-out and photography and was eye-catching on a two-page spread. The article had no obvious weaknesses, but perhaps could have benefitted from a bit more reflection on how non-recycled auto parts have harmed the environment in the past, especially if there was a good local anecdote. Also, the spread should have been in color.

Second place in the same category went to Wetaskiwin Times-Observer editor Jerold LaBlanc's story. The article had lots of factual source material and a generous amount of quotation from scientists, residents and health officials. The lengthy closure of the beach, virtually the entire summer, was a serious issue that got good coverage in this community paper. The August 18 cover photo was striking, and illustrated graphically the environmental impact this algae bloom had. Perhaps more of the photos could have been printed in colour, and the lay-out of the articles did seem a bit "crammed in."

Third place was earned by the South Delta Leader's reporter Kristine Salzmann, along with brilliant photography by Tyler Garnham. Salzmann's story told an interesting and compelling profile of Carole Vignale, an average local woman whose dedication to a zero environmental footprint on her community. The story showed such a zero footprint lifestyle is actually a lot cheaper and easier than many people think. The front page photo was dazzling, while inside color photos accompanying the story were good, but should have been bigger. The article was heavily narrated by the reporter; that is, more quotations, especially in Vignale's own words, would have made the story better and explained why it is so important to this lady to live in such a manner.

THIRD PLACE

Living the green life

Two women in resident shows for a zero waste lifestyle

Abbeyfield Houses

It's easy choosing green.

Food Gardens for a Small Planet

Vancity

Kristine Salzmann
South Delta Leader
South Delta, BC

EXCELLENCE IN RURAL REPORTING

Class 3021
Circulation open

Judge: Melissa Lampman

FIRST PLACE

Monday, March 16, 2015 The World-Spectator - Moosomin, Sask. 5

Wind power: Separating the facts from the hot air

By Kevin Woodmark

The RM of Moosomin is trying to decide whether it should approve a development permit for the Red Lily Wind Farm, which would be built in the Red Lily area. The RM of Moosomin would have already approved development of two turbines which would be on its jurisdiction.

The project has been in the planning stages for years, and has passed all of the environmental reviews. In recent weeks, however, some local residents have been raising concerns about potential health effects.

Some claims of harm to health effects have been made by anti-wind farm activist Carmen Krugh in Moosomin recently. These claims have been repeated, and we have been trying to secure evidence for these claims.

Krugh has not provided any studies that back up her claims, and in light of that, we have tried to measure the claims being made about wind farms against the facts as we can determine them.

Claim: "People who live too near a wind turbine may experience high blood pressure," and other symptoms.

Fact: We have asked the press to send this claim to Moosomin, Carmen Krugh, to provide a copy of any study that shows this. She has failed to do so.

We sent a World Health Organization news release from 2001 to attempt to back up her claims. The news release states: "There is no scientific evidence that noise from wind turbines causes any health effects in people. Noise is likely to be an annoyance when people are trying to fall asleep and awaken. Recent studies show that aircraft noise is the only annoyance in the most harmful as measured by the heart rate."

The document does not mention wind turbines. It mentions aircraft noise in the range of 115 decibels as potentially harmful. The same news release indicates that noise levels of 4 decibels are safe. None of the evidence backs up Krugh's claim in any way.

Claim: The sound from wind turbines can have some health effects.

Fact: There is no evidence that the sound from wind turbines causes any physical health effects. Some studies have shown that a small percentage of people who live near wind turbines report some symptoms. Some reviews have concluded "annoyance" is a health effect, others have not, none of it is not a measurable physical effect, and whether a person is annoyed at wind turbines or not depends on part on the subject's personality.

Reviews of all published scientific literature available on the subject of the health effects of wind turbines were completed in Vancouver by Dr. David Colby, M.D., Robert D'Arcy, M.D., Geoff Lovell, Ph.D., David M. Lapanowich, Ph.D., Richard McCann, M.D., Michael E. Suter, Ph.D., and Dr. S. D. Stuckard, M.D. which has concluded that there are no published, scientific, peer-reviewed studies that show any health effects of wind turbines on humans.

The panel undertook a literature review, analysis, and discussion of the large body of peer-reviewed literature on wind and health effects in general, and on wind produced by wind turbines. Each panel member established expertise in such things as acoustics, or having direct correspondence in environmental medicine, or public health. With a diversity of perspectives represented, the panel assessed the plausible biological effects of exposure to wind turbine noise.

Following review, analysis, and discussion of current knowledge, the panel reached a consensus on the following conclusions:

- There is no evidence that the audible or sub-audible sounds emitted by wind turbines have any direct adverse physical effects.
- The perceived annoyance related to wind turbines are not likely to be affected by or to affect humans.
- The sounds emitted by wind turbines are not unique. There is no reason to believe, based on the levels and frequencies of the sounds and the panel's experience with wind exposure in airports and settings, that the sounds from wind turbines could plausibly have direct adverse health consequences.
- An analysis of this survey has been published by anti-wind farm activists. The study lists as an editor Carmen Krugh. She and the other editor of the "analysis" have completed a graduate degree.
- The "analysis" argues that the study made the wrong conclusions: "There is no medical doubt that audible noise such as emitted by an aircraft engine and sub-audible wind turbines affect us to human residences causes significant adverse health effects."
- The evidence for this claim? The anti-wind farm activists cite:
 - A 1991 World Health Organization news release on noise levels for Europe that suggest a level of 40 decibels is perfectly safe, that suggests some harm might arise in an extremely loud aircraft noise and that doesn't mention wind turbines or sub-audible wind turbines.
 - A Health Canada webpage about noise that doesn't mention the words wind turbine or wind farm.
 - A 1996 news web page purportedly about a call for further studies on wind farms, and
 - An unpublished, unreviewed "study" completed by an anti-wind farm activist in Maine.

The "analysis" does not cite a single published, peer-reviewed article that shows physical health effects from living near wind turbines.

Claim: The lack of evidence of health effects means the science is unsettled.

Fact: This is what anti-wind farm activist Carmen Krugh and her co-bloggers write in their "analysis" about the lack of evidence of health effects from wind turbines: "The absence of scientific studies does not imply that health effects from exposure to low frequency sound from wind turbines do not occur—it implies scientific uncertainty and the requirement for a third party independent health studies."

Fact: Any researcher or professor will tell you the lack of evidence of health effects does not imply uncertainty. Conducting studies would imply uncertainty. The lack of evidence for harm does not.

Those who understand logic also understand the logical flaw in this argument. To say "The lack of evidence of health effects from wind turbines implies scientific uncertainty and the need for studies" is the same as saying that "The lack of evidence that people will die of pain implies that there is scientific uncertainty and the need for further study."

Of course, the absence of evidence that chewing gum, wind turbines or anything else is dangerous implies that it is not dangerous, it does not imply uncertainty.

In the case of wind turbines, if a third party study hasn't been completed, it's just that they haven't done any evidence of physical health effects. If there were valid scientific studies with conflicting results, it would imply there is scientific disagreement and the need for more studies. The fact that all the studies that have been done show no evidence of physical health effects does not imply any uncertainty.

Claim: The infrasound from wind turbines can have health effects.

Fact: There is no evidence in this claim, including an engineer who reviewed all the peer-reviewed studies that have been done on the subject.

Infrasound is sound waves that are longer than those in the audible spectrum. Like infrasound (audible sound waves in the 20,000 Hz range), infrasound (audible sound waves in the 20 Hz range) also has a medical use. Infrasound is the 16 Hz range has been approved for use in therapeutic massage in the United States by the Food and Drug Administration.

Infrasound is produced by wind in mountains or hillsides or blowing over the ocean, by ocean waves, the motion of lights, machinery, cars, trains and even living creatures. Some animals can hear infrasound, and scientists believe elephants use it to communicate over long distances. It is present in the natural ocean environment.

Engineer Dean Howe of HCC Engineering conducted a review of scientific studies on infrasound and concluded: "Based on Canadian and international studies, infrasound generated by wind turbines should not be considered a concern to the health of nearby residents."

He points out that "infrasound levels created by wind turbines are often similar to the ambient levels (present in the natural environment due to wind), typically 0.02 to 0.1 Hz, and these are not evidence of adverse health effects caused by this infrasound. Infrasound near modern wind turbines is generally not perceptible to humans, either through auditory or non-auditory mechanisms."

Claim: Statements by people who live close by the nearest wind farms in our area, at St. Leon, Man., can't be trusted because they are under a "gag order."

Fact: Both Algonquin and the farmers at St. Leon say this is untrue. There is no gag order in St. Leon, and the "order" of this nature would be illegal and unenforceable, and would be ignored if it existed. No one can legally restrict an individual's freedom of speech on a subject of public concern. The farmers at St. Leon said Monday they were shocked when it did this in the story being spread by some people in the Moosomin area. Because they feel it attacks their credibility.

That is what Algonquin's April Meyer has to say about the claim:

"I can state absolutely and definitively that we have no legal or gentleman's agreements in place with anyone in the St. Leon project area preventing them from speaking openly and honestly about their experience related to living near the project."

"I find this frustrating because how do you prove that you don't have a legal agreement in place, especially when that agreement seems to exist if undertaken by the parties would be published in an advertisement in the paper? It's a very difficult position for us and eventually unenforceable with a judge's great. The best I can provide is the following:

"(1) Our word that we don't have any such agreements in place.

"(2) The simple opinion of the innocent one: we have Right of Way Agreements with the landowners at St. Leon, similar to the Surface Easement Agreements we have at Red Lily, but because the parties to of the agreements is to access the land for the wind project we don't have agreements with the town residents. Unlike Red Lily Moosomin, the St. Leon project needs the town of St. Leon itself so if there were health effects suffered by the population it would likely be felt by the town population and they have no control interest in the project to speak up.

"(3) The simple human nature of the innocent if we did have gag orders in place my experience is that such an agreement would obligate the party to violence in the sense that wouldn't be able to be easily suppressed. The farmer visitors hear when they talk to the population are genuine people who are supportive of the project but they don't like to be publicly associated with the wrong ways people have of indirectly expressing discontent with a subject—example—"No comment." I'm not at liberty to say, "I can't discuss that." They wouldn't vocally and demonstrate support of the project.

"I'm not sure how to more fully respond to this accusation that it is essentially an attack on our company's reputation and my personal integrity.

"This being said, I know that people are reviewing the land agreements we have executed and interpreting the contents of these agreements with a bias to support their position. I can only continue to state that we have no "gag agreements" in place and nothing in our existing agreements was ever intended to be a gag order. These confidentiality clauses in our agreements to protect our confidential information from our competitors and for the protection of our company interests. If the claims were true, and the only reason we're not hearing anything negative is from St. Leon is because of a "gag order," it would be hard to explain why the RM of Leon and local landowners at St. Leon would be enthusiastically promoting an expansion to the St. Leon wind farm."

Claim: People can't sell their homes near wind farms, or they reduce property values.

Fact: Besides the fact that the people at St. Leon say this certainly isn't true in their area, a thorough study was undertaken over three years involving 7,500 properties that showed wind farms do not adversely affect property values. Wind farms have absolutely no measurable effect on nearby property values, according to the U.S. government report released in December 2013: "Research from the U.S. Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Lab report says that three years examining nearly 7,500 sales of homes in 10 communities near two dozen wind farms in nine states.

"No matter how we looked at the data, the same result kept coming back—no evidence of neighborhood impacts," said study co-author Ben Hoen in a statement.

Claim: A study undertaken at Moss Hill shows there are health effects from wind turbines.

Fact: This uncompleted, unpublished "study" has been discussed by researchers who say it has no validity. It was first released as a study of people with no control groups, and has never been released with a control group. Most researchers contacted by the World-Spectator for their opinion of the study point out that the newly added control group reports low levels of stress, anxiety, or anger, which is quite remarkable for a human being, especially when:

- Dr. Christopher Olson, Ph.D. had this to say about the study: "The data provided in the table is taken primarily from (1) Monique McKay's Moss Hill Wind Farm Project Health Effects—Preliminary Findings that was released in the spring of 2010. It is not familiar with Dr. Norman Bauer's work. It's data it represents self-reported annoyance health related information of less than 20 people living in the vicinity of a wind turbine. This table also appears to include a control group of individuals that live further from the turbines. In my opinion this work does not fulfill the fundamental scientific practices of a robust study. It provides no scientific evidence that the individuals self-reported health effects are attributable to the wind turbines."
- Dr. Norman Bauer, vice-president of project development with Algonquin Power, noted that there is a federal program called Tax Exemption which provides grants for wind farm development, but Algonquin will not apply for a grant for the Red Lily Wind Farm, because it will instead receive accelerated depreciation on the capital investment for tax purposes. (This makes it ineligible for the Tax Exemption grant.)

What is peer review?

Normally the media doesn't publish claims regarding science or health without these claims being published in a peer-reviewed journal. Peer review is a process by which scientific papers are subjected to review by the author's peers in his or her profession, and published in a scientific journal or other experts in the field to review, replicate, and if necessary challenge.

An article in the New England Journal of Medicine on, for example, a comparison of the effectiveness of 17 medicines versus a placebo for the treatment of stroke, is a peer-reviewed article.

A news release from the World Health Organization on recommended noise levels in a U.S. news release from the World Health Organization has been listed as evidence of health effects of wind turbines by anti-wind farm activists.

The news release does not mention wind turbines, but refers to night sleep disturbance in an airplane setting noise in the U.S. context.

Many local residents have expressed concern based on information from anti-wind farm activists. What these activists do not have are any published, peer-reviewed studies to back up their claims.

Monique McKay and Kevin Woodmark
World-Spectator
Moosomin, SK

SECOND PLACE

The United Wildlife took an appreciation at the opening ceremony of the Moose Hill Environmental Sanctuary in Enfield, Sept. 20, 2012. The birds have nested throughout the sanctuary. Photo by Kevin Woodmark. For the full story and photos, see page 10. (Click photo.)

Spring East Herts and surrounding communities for more than 20 years

THE WEEKLY PRESS

Volume 10, Issue 10, November 2014

Rural mosaics: How a Romanian immigrant is helping an Italian family settle a Nova Scotia farm

By Angele Cano

Will Cottage Country blend in?

WEATHER REPORT MEET YOUR NEW GARDEN HELPER

Angele Cano
The Weekly Press
Enfield, NS

THIRD PLACE

Wednesday, Nov. 27, 2013 Ryan Price

ATV riders weigh in on regulation debate

"The majority of our members are responsible riders. I've never ripped the landscape."

ATV riders weigh in on regulation debate. Photo by Ryan Price.

Housing non-profit robbed

John Thompson
Yukon News
Whitehorse, YT

Monique McKay and Kevin Weedmark put together a fantastic package rife with information and detail on a global topic that was well written and well researched. McKay presents a compelling narrative, offering an insider's glimpse into the struggles of a community facing the prospect of wind turbines. Weedmark took the time to gather and research claims, developing an in-depth look at wind turbines that dispels industry and anti-activist group jargon. These stories, in addition to following the issue through to the end, made for a winning entry.

Angele Cano draws the reader in with a beautiful prose that eloquently describes the struggles of a young immigrant family trying to make it as farmers in rural Nova Scotia. Not only are the challenges of being in a new country explained, so are the trials of living in a small agriculturally driven community. A very special piece of writing.

John Thompson's series on ATVs' impact on the local environment showcases his solid writing and reporting skills when tackling an obviously divisive and contentious issue. Thompson offers insight to both sides of the issue, as well as a first-hand perspective that cannot be found from an office. Excellent reporter initiative.

BEST BUSINESS WRITING

Class 3031
Circulation up to 9,999

Judge: Lee Berthiaume

FIRST PLACE



Martha Wickett
Salmon Arm Observer
Salmon Arm, BC

SECOND PLACE



Guy Quenneville
Yellowknifer
Yellowknife, NT

THIRD PLACE



Journal newsroom
Humboldt Journal
Humboldt, SK

First place: Salmon Arm Observer

Great main article. Good feature lede gets readers right in the Peterson's kitchen, followed by a strong, clean nutgraf that explains why this story is important. This is a key question many should be ready to answer: Why is the story they're writing important? Also, this piece has good sidebars. More interviews would have helped, as would including the minister in the main story instead of a sidebar. However, this was a great read and a great way of highlighting an important issue for the community while at the same time giving it a human face.

Second place: Yellowknifer

Good localization of a wider trend. Great cross-section of sources and detailed research, taking numerous factors into account while still keeping the writing clean and enjoyable to read. Great factboxes, photos and stats. The only thing missing is what happens to the employees who are being laid off, the business owner, those who relied on the stores to feed them and their families.

Third place: Humboldt Journal

A good cross-section of interviews and a great way to take an event, in this case the three-week closure of a highway due to flooding, and go a little further by finding the impact on businesses. Try a feature lede, taking us inside one of the businesses, showing the owner's frustration, his irritation, his worry, then explaining the survey. Then go from business-to-business, painting the picture of what it's like in each. Try to watch the repetitive wording. Great idea, just take it to the next level.

BEST BUSINESS WRITING

Class 3032
Circulation 10,000 and over

Judge: Jessica Peters

FIRST PLACE



Sandra Thomas
The Vancouver Courier
Vancouver, BC

SECOND PLACE



Mario Bartel
News Leader
New Westminster, BC

THIRD PLACE



Cory Hare
St. Albert Gazette
St. Albert, AB

Business affects the average reader. But engaging that average reader in a business story is no easy task. Each of the winners here went beyond the numbers, conveying passion and reasoning through their storytelling.

First place went to the Vancouver Courier for its compassionate and comprehensive look at the business of death, and how we can mitigate our eco-footprint. This potentially morbid topic was handled with humour, grace and plenty of usable information. I feel better prepared to make a decision myself, because of the story, and it was interesting enough to bring up in conversations in the weeks after reading the story. Well done, Sandra!

Second place was given to the News Leader for answering the question: Why do businesses fail? By juxtaposing two business — one at its end and one starting up — the reader gets a compelling and clear look at the risks, guts, preparation and education involved in succeeding in small business.

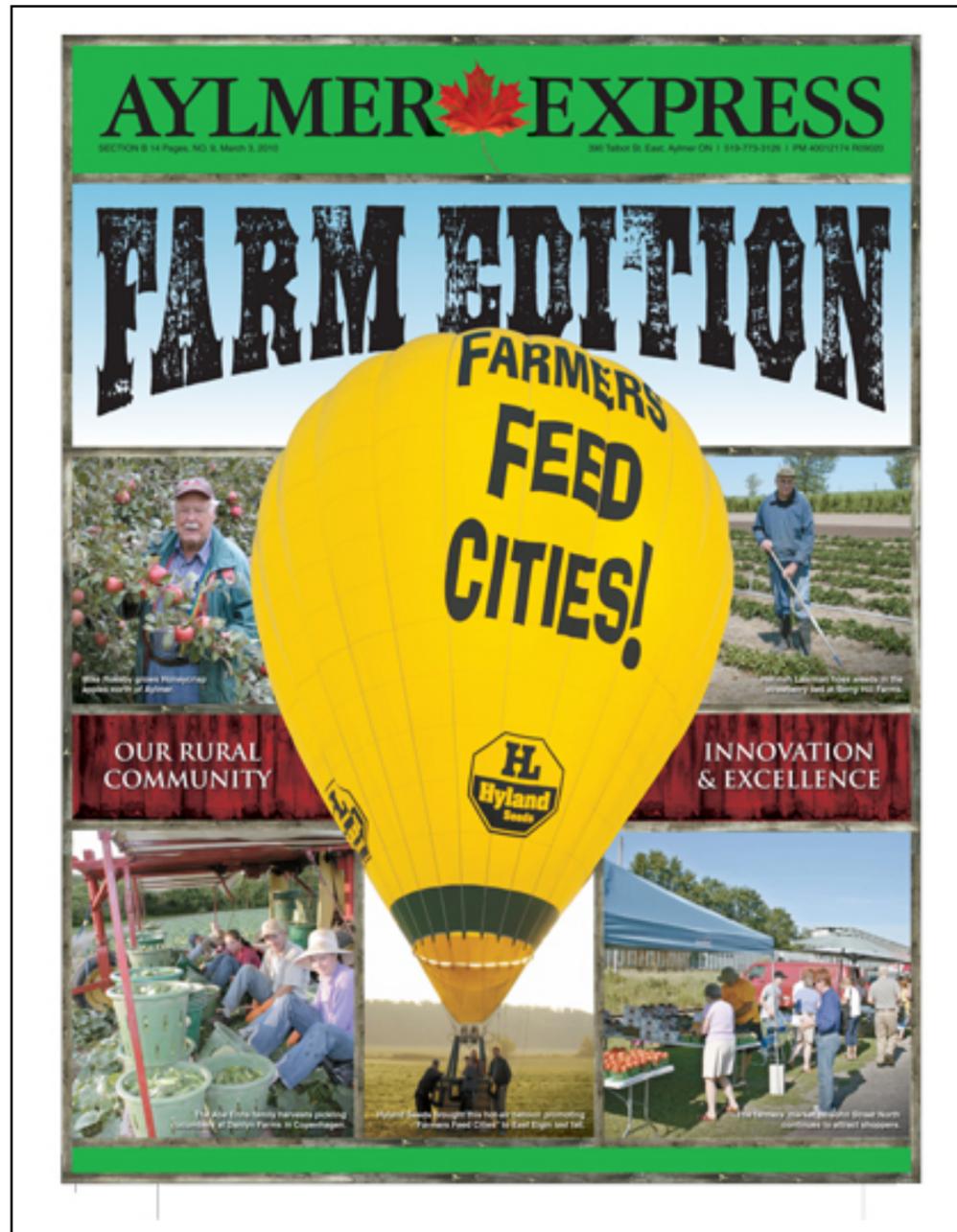
Third place goes to the St. Albert Gazette. The story of a family's legacy is told through solid history and strong quotes. The reader knows that this is a make-it or break-it time for the business involved.

BEST AGRICULTURAL EDITION

Class 3041
Circulation up to 9,999

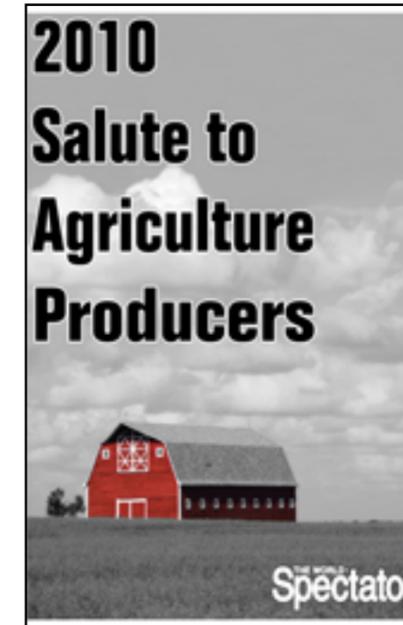
Judge: Andrea Rondeau

FIRST PLACE



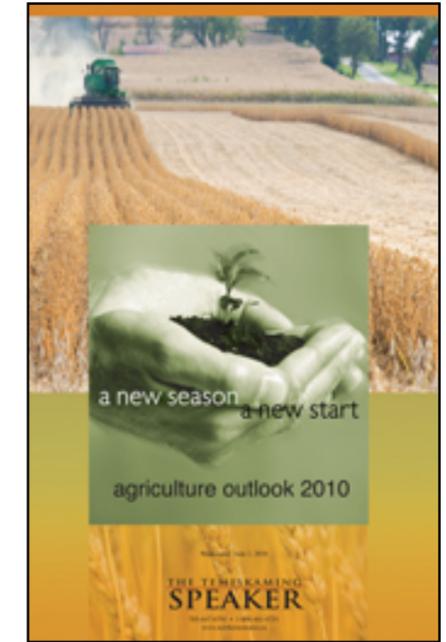
Aylmer Express
Aylmer, ON

SECOND PLACE



World-Spectator
Moosomin, SK

THIRD PLACE



Temiskaming Speaker
New Liskeard, ON

There were a lot of quality entries in this category, with the staff of many of the papers having obviously done a lot of work to put together editions that really delved into farming in their local areas.

That said, on the whole not enough attention was paid to getting local, quality photographs to accompany the editions and break up some very text-heavy pages. Note to editors: extra-wide columns are painful to read and only make pages look more text-heavy. Also, take the time and effort to take photos of people. Readers love those local faces. (Of course, animals can have a lot of personality, too.) Also beware of canned copy. I read material on safety by Theresa Whalen in a considerable number of entries.

The top two in this category were extremely close. Both had great local content, good use of photos, and overall attractive layouts.

The Aylmer Express came out on top due to the sheer number and scope of local agriculture stories included in their edition. There was not a scrap of canned copy, and the writers got out into the community and talked to a huge number of people. The cover of this edition was eye-catching and excellent.

The World-Spectator out of Moosomin was a close second, with some of the best writing in the competition. Local photos were also top-notch. The decision between first and second place came down to the inclusion in this edition of some canned copy.

Third place was also a tight race, with The Temiskaming Speaker coming out on top. Highlights were an attractive cover, lots of local copy and good local photos of local people.

BEST AGRICULTURAL EDITION

Class 3042
Circulation 10,000 and over

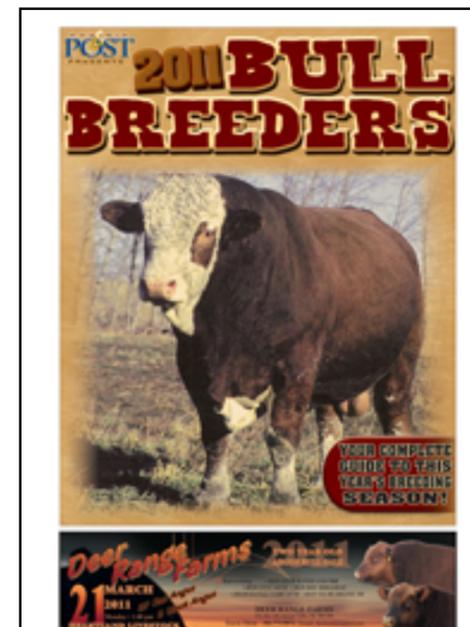
Judge: Rob Learn

FIRST PLACE



Cowichan Valley Citizen
Duncan, BC

SECOND PLACE



Prairie Post
Swift Current, AB

THIRD PLACE



Lloydminster Source
Lloydminster, SK

Agriculture is one of those subjects that put fear into an editor's wary glare as they imagine their readers' eyes glazing over at the mere mention of the word. Columns on moisture content, soil pH, crop rotation, quota systems and marketing boards aren't what editors obsessed with engaging their readers drool over. But in rural Canada, it's something they need to get over.

The Cowichan Valley Citizen did more than get over it. From the front cover to the diverse yet focused local articles that seamlessly wound their way throughout the edition, their Annual Agricultural Edition sets the standard for community newspapers getting their fingernails dirty. Nearly every story is accompanied by strong art and the planning and thought that went into each article is very evident.

Second place winner the Prairie Post's Bull Breeders special section had the potential to walk away with the category but heavy use of outsourced articles that are hard to read and full of jargon held back its potential. Better art direction would also help what is otherwise a very strong product that must be a source of pride.

Third place Lloydminster Source's Agricultural Safety Week is a sharp looking product with many well written articles and strong art direction. More focus on localizing content would be of help. The Hill Times and Embassy from Ottawa both had strong entries and would have placed with better ads and art support. Many entries suffered in this category from being agriculturalish and not focused on the topic at hand.

BEST AGRICULTURAL STORY

Class 3051
Circulation open

Judge: Karen Miceli

FIRST PLACE

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Too close for comfort

Are protective planning policies and urban encroachment driving farmers to abandon operations? A study of Ontario's Greenbelt points to these factors having a negative impact on farms north of the GTA. Could it happen here?



Doug Coxson
Independent staff

A University of Guelph study exploring the impact of Ontario's Greenbelt legislation on farms immediately north of the Greater Toronto Area has shown a dramatic decrease in the number of livestock operations there.

Called "A Profile of the Agricultural Economy in Ontario's Greenbelt," the study released in December and sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, claims that despite its design to protect 1.8-million acres of woods, wetlands and prime farmland from developers, the greenbelt is leading dozens of farmers to abandon their operations.

With similar pending legislation in Waterloo Region's new Official Plan, the question on some minds is: could it happen here?

Lead researcher on the study, Prof. Harry Cummings, from the School of Rural Planning and Development at the University of Guelph, believes it could.

His study of the greenbelt revealed traditional livestock operations such as dairy, beef and hogs have been in decline across the province since 2001.

Research revealed the trend is more dramatic in the greenbelt than anywhere else in Ontario.

The study did not compare the data to a non-greenbelt area surrounding a large urban centre.

But researchers did compare agricultural census data from farms and farm parcels within the greenbelt, drawn from a database developed by Statistics Canada, over a five-year period ending in 2006.

The study's findings show the number of dairy farms decreased by 28 per cent in the greenbelt, compared to 23 per cent province-wide.

Greenbelt beef farm numbers declined by 24 per cent, compared to 13 per cent across Ontario. And hog farms, which fell by 11 per cent provincially, experienced a 27-per-cent reduction in the greenbelt.

Overall, the number of farms in the greenbelt dropped by seven per cent between 2001 and 2006 — three per cent higher than the provincial decline.

The researchers also discovered the greenbelt failed to attract niche operations such as sheep and goat farms which grew 34 per cent in Ontario, but declined by eight per cent in the greenbelt. Poultry and egg farms grew five per cent across the province during that time, but fell by 19 per cent in the greenbelt.

The study does not attempt to pinpoint causes for the declines.

Cummings says farm consolidations and retirements accounted for some of the decreasing farm numbers. But in focus groups that were part of the study, farmers said they were "generally unhappy with the lack of planning policy around the greenbelt."

One of the main issues Cummings believes comes into play in the greenbelt involves the accepted practice of carving up farm properties to get them away from wetlands. This obviously makes it more difficult for farmers to work the land.

Cummings adds the difficulty of raising a good, commercial agriculture operation in a near-urban environment is a problem experienced throughout the province but is more apparent around cities where municipal councils are increasingly dominated by urban residents and where environmental conservation efforts trump agricultural practices.

He believes part of it stems from the Walkerton tainted water tragedy.

Urban areas want the water that's abundant in the rural environment surrounding large cities, so there's a fear that normal agricultural practices are having an impact on those water supplies.

Industrial agriculture is adding to the growing antagonism between conservationists and farmers, Cummings says.

He believes policies like the Greenbelt have helped generate what he says is "a more negative perspective on agriculture than we've ever had."

"With generational change taking place, sons and daughters are increasingly leery of starting out in the face of agriculture as they once were," he says.

Cummings hopes to explore and compare his findings in the GTA to other near-urban environments including rural areas surrounding Waterloo Region and London where he expects the migration away from agriculture would be the same.

He says the issues impacting farmers in the greenbelt won't go away without some help.

Cummings says solutions exist in legislative approaches, including those in Waterloo Region's Protected Countryside policy, which allow for a greater range of activities on farms that give farmers leeway to operate in a more permissive manner.

Other ways to stem the migration of farmers from near-urban situations is to allow more intensive agricultural operations on smaller parcels of land. Farmers could then rent land to follow nutrient management protocols and their proximity to urban centres would help strengthen local food systems, he says.

There are also ways to promote the role of farmers as environmental stewards.

Cummings points to the Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) concept adopted in Norfolk County as an effective way of establishing greater respect for farmers among urbanites and conservationists.

ALUS utilizes an incentive-based concept in which farmers are paid a fair price for the environmental benefits produced on their farms, Cummings says the thinking behind ALUS is that efforts to conserve and restore the land farmers own will benefit everyone in the community.

Projects determined to produce environmental benefits on a farm include the planting of native vegetation cover, the creation and enhancement of wetlands,

increasing habitat for pollinator species, reforestation and more.

Cummings says Europe is well ahead of North America in figuring out how agriculture and urban environments can better co-exist.

There, he says, government plays a stronger hand.

Although the Protected Countryside Policy in Waterloo Region's new Official Plan was being deferred by regional council pending further review from the province, manager of strategic policy planning with the region Kevin Curtis, doesn't believe the same situation could develop here.

"You've got a very different dynamic in the GTA," Curtis says.

That dynamic includes farmland where rampant speculation and weak planning legislation had some farmers believing their land would one day be worth many times its agricultural value. Although prices for their land did rise, the greenbelt legislation prevented its sale to developers. Some farmers left anyway as development leapt over the greenbelt. The other issue is the Oak Ridges Moraine, which became a political touchstone for the province's renewed conservation efforts at the beginning of the last decade.

"With generational change taking place, sons and daughters are increasingly leery of starting out in the face of agriculture as they once were."

— Prof. Harry Cummings
University of Guelph

In Waterloo Region, land speculation is virtually nonexistent because of existing planning legislation at the municipal level.

In Wilmet Township, none of the prime agricultural land abutting the city was ever slated for residential, commercial or industrial development and that hasn't changed. The Protected Countryside reinforces that stance.

The Environmentally Sensitive Landscape established by the region in 2005 protects an area of ecologically important forests and non-prime farmland northwest of Waterloo and now included in the Protected Countryside.

Continued on next page

Doug Coxson
New Hamburg Independent
New Hamburg, ON

SECOND PLACE



HUMBOLDT JOURNAL
Drowning farmland
Rising lake waters impacting farmers around St. Brains, Lemon Lake

SWIA dealing with impact of culvert closure

Pat Peckover
Humboldt Journal
Humboldt, SK

THIRD PLACE



CLOSE UP
From open flumes to high-tech water treatment

NO GST! NO PEST!
ON MATTRESS SETS
Starting at \$699 a set
Sleepy's

Judie Steeves
Capital News
Kelowna, BC

I can say without exception the 58 entries in this class deluded into pressing agricultural issues. But about a quarter rose above the rest due to their impact, quality of writing and depth. It was a challenge to choose three among the front-runners, and then decide the positions of the top three.

However, the cream of the crop (no pun intended) is the well-researched entry by the New Hamburg Independent's Doug Coxson. The story calls into question the effects of protective planning policies and urban encroachment on farmers. Great work.

A close second is Pat Peckover's indepth story on rising lake water's impact on farmers.

Judie Steeves' piece for Kelowna Capital News deserves third spot for her extensive reporting on the end of an era for irrigation districts.

Honorable mention to Sarah Simpson of the Cowichan Valley Citizen for her piece on local beekeepers' concerns about the lift of a ban on importation, due to possible disease and fungus.

Honorable mention to Paul J. Henderson of the Chilliwack Times for his story on the decline of rural life. It was part of a three-part series. I wish I could have read all of it.

OUTSTANDING CAMPUS NEWSPAPER

Class 4011
Circulation open

Judge: Louise Sproule

FIRST PLACE

MAKING WAVES Blue swimmers dominate at dual meet **10**

LIFE AFTER GRADUATION How to protect your integrity and your rights in the job market **4**

FRINGE SCIENCE Demystifying near-death experiences **8**

the VARSITY
Thursday, January 14, 2010 University of Toronto's Student Newspaper Since 1827 Vol. CXXX, No. 31

'Hot Chocolate for Heroes' benefits military families
Canadian Hero Fund hopes to award scholarships

IGNATEIEFF HITS UTM
Liberal leader takes questions, gets sweatshirt

Campus flasher on the loose

South Asian Studies reduced to a minor
Several joint specialist programs scrapped

Hot Chocolate for Heroes' benefits military families
Canadian Hero Fund hopes to award scholarships

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Several joint specialist programs scrapped

The Varsity
University of Toronto

SECOND PLACE

THE CORD
The on-line and print Wilfrid Laurier University news outlet

Back to the drawing board

Hawks look to rebound from historic 45-1 season opening loss to rivals, the Western Mustangs

Holland Brown hired as new dean of students

The Cord
Wilfrid Laurier University

THIRD PLACE

ALGONQUIN TIMES
ALGONQUIN COLLEGE'S NEWS OUTLET

Algonquin U-passes on plan
College elects to wait a year before making decision on mandatory student fee plan

EAT YOUR RE LIGHTS

Algonquin Times
Algonquin College

The seven entries in this category show great initiative and striving to represent on-campus news and in some cases, news that reaches off-campus, which is great to see. The University of Toronto's "The Varsity" emerged as the best: clear and engaging writing, a front page that truly gets one's attention, good photography, interesting design and effective use of colour come together to nudge "The Varsity" into first place. There is a surprising range of stories presented here. Good editing and beyond-the-campus perspective make this paper a pleasure to read. It is interesting to see that there is still a lot of "black ink", or reading material here, which seems to go against the trend of presenting more news items that are shorter in length.

"The Cord" is next with a close second-place ranking. Here is another campus publication that contains top-notch writing, has great design elements, great photos and obviously has a staff that is taking a broader view in its approach to news coverage for the campus. A very light and clean design which is a nice balance to the serious issues being tackled by the staff writers. The ragged-right news text makes it more appealing to read the longer stories.

"Algonquin Times" is a really close third. Good content, good design, good writing and good ad content all make for a first-rate publication. The paper's design could use an update. While the stories were informative, sometimes leading edge, the traditional fonts in the too-large headlines took away from what could have been a more innovative look to match the content. Adding some graphic elements to highlight specific elements of some stories would refresh this publication.

BEST CAMPUS NEWS STORY

Class 4021
Circulation open

Judge: Roszan Holmen

FIRST PLACE



Alexandria Eldridge
The Gateway
University of Alberta

SECOND PLACE



Kayla Cabral
Niagara News
Niagara College

Alexandria Eldridge did a great job uncovering shocking allegations against the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity. Eldridge also backed up her anonymous sources with video and documentation of hazing rituals, contrary to university and fraternity policy. The article's greatest strength was its tangible impact, spurring coverage by national media and contributing to the fraternity's suspension. Clear writing rounded out this winning article, however, a lengthy definition of hazing in the third paragraph slows its momentum.

Taking second place, Kayla Cabral localizes a provincial issue of considerable interest to students, dealing with how tuition dollars can be spent. With strong writing, Cabral zeros in on the relevance to the college of potential new rules forbidding public spending on private lobbyists. Many points of view balance the article, and it was great to read commentary from the students themselves. The article could be improved by clarifying the "proposed legislation." Proposed and supported by who?

Third place goes to Dylan Robertson for delving into the possibility of donor influence on academics. As cash-stretched universities rely more heavily on corporate donations, the issue of independent research is of grave concern to students. Finding faculty willing to raise concerns publicly about a \$35 million donation provides a strong basis for the article, but more voices (such as those from the students' union or the Academic Board of Governing Council) would improve the discussion. Also, who are the professors leading the charge and what is their interest?

THIRD PLACE



Dylan Robertson
The Varsity
University of Toronto

BEST CAMPUS PHOTOGRAPHY

Class 4041
Circulation open

Judge: Cody Storm Cooper

FIRST PLACE



Nick Lachance
The Cord
Wilfrid Laurier University

SECOND PLACE



James MacKenzie
The Weal
Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

THIRD PLACE



Andrew Rusk
The Varsity
University of Toronto

First place: The Cord, Wilfrid Laurier University

The winning photo in this class is one of celebrating Canadians, the photographer took the initiative to head out into the streets to capture the event as it was unfolding on the campus. With a creative angle that allowed him to show more people, he captured the cheer and excitement on the faces of his fellow students as they celebrated Canada's gold medals in Men's Hockey at the Olympics.

Second place: The Weal, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

Both second and third place photos were great shots, however the photo taken by James MacKenzie of the firefighter battling the blaze, drew you into the image and ask what happened next. The fact that the fire was a staged event diminishes its value slightly compared to an actual spot news event.

Third place: The Varsity, University of Toronto

With the third place foto of the Dalai Lama by Andrew Rusk, it was an interesting portrait that probably could have been better. I would have liked to have seen him interacting with someone.