

# Committee celebrates planting of 500,000th tree in county

By Debbi Christinck  
Special to the Leader

**Golden Lake** -- In abandoned farmland throughout Renfrew County, forests are beginning to grow and will continue to, as last week marked the planting of 500,000 trees through the Forest Stewardship Committee of Renfrew County.

"This is a forestation where we go from a field to a forest," said Steve D'eon, chair of the Forest Stewardship Committee. "If you don't plant trees, you get weeds." The FSC is a subcommittee of the Renfrew County Stewardship Committee and the group began planting private land in Renfrew County a few years ago through the Trees Ontario planting program. This group of vol-

unteers, which includes woodlot owners, forest industry and technical representatives, has worked hard over the last four years to make Renfrew County a big part of this tree planting program in a short time.

"We are the second largest planter in Ontario in terms of trees per year," he said. "We hope to become the largest planter in Ontario."

"We have over 200,000 scheduled for next year and we have 350,000 the following year," he said.

This is incredible growth considering when the program started in 2004, 33,350 trees were planted. Adding the trees in the last few years, the FSC now has planted over 50 properties throughout the county. In 2009, another 60,000 trees are being planted.

The 500,000th tree was planted on the property of Harvey Reckzin outside Golden Lake. He said this has been a wonderful program for his property.

"People ask me how I got involved in this and I tell them to call Dave Gallagher," he said. "There are probably a lot of abandoned farms out there which could use something like this."

Because word of the program is spreading they are receiving more requests, Mr. Gallagher said.

"We've always had just enough in a year," he said. "We are glad to see the trees planted instead of just weeds growing up."

Currently the program is at capacity, he added.

"We can take more, but not next year," he said.

Before a landowner is approved for this program, the site is visited to make sure it is suitable, Mr. Gallagher explained.

"Then we purchase the trees and do the planting," Mr. D'eon said. "We charge the landowner 15 cents a tree and

then after we figure out the costs we reimburse them the difference; last year it was six cents a tree."

For someone to be involved in the program they will need to plant a minimum of 1,500 trees, which would cover 1.7 acres. Another option would be covering five acres or two hectares.

For landowners to participate they pay a portion of the cost of the trees.

"The subsidy is about 60 cents," said Mr. D'eon.

The trees which are planted are small. They vary in size depending on the species, but they are all three years old. The survival rate on his property has been very good, Mr. Reckzin added. On average, the survival rate is 95 per cent.

The trees which were planted on Friday on Mr. Reckzin's farm will take over two decades to mature before they can be harvested. The red pine takes about 25 years and the spruce about 30 years.

The trees are planted using a tree planting machine which is pulled behind a tractor. There is a grove in the ground and the trees are planted evenly apart in orderly rows.

"We have a narrow planting season in the spring," Mr. D'eon said. "Today is a windy day, but the cool wet conditions are the best for tree planting."

Usually the tree planting in Renfrew County takes place from April 20 through May 15.

"We have two planting machines and we are kept busy," he said.

For the ceremonial tree plant, Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski drove the tractor and Ministry of Natural Resources Pembroke District Director Paul Moreau did the planting in the little trailer planter pulled behind the tractor.



500,000th tree is planted

The Forest Stewardship Committee of Renfrew County marked the 500,000th tree planted through the program when the tree was planted at the farm of Harvey and Jeanine Reckzin outside Golden Lake last week. Participating in the event were Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke MPP John Yakabuski, Steve D'eon, chair of the forest stewardship committee; Ministry of Natural Resources Pembroke District Director Paul Moreau; Casey Keller, tree planter, Dave Gallagher, committee member, and Harvey Reckzin, property owner.

## County seeks road funding grants

By Neil Etienne  
Staff Writer

**Pembroke** -- Renfrew County council has made its submission for the second round of Building Canada Fund (BCF) under the community component, as well as the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, just in time for both programs' May 1 deadline.

At a total gross cost estimated at an even \$7 million, four projects were identified to focus on. If approved, the county will be responsible for one-third of the costs, or about \$2.35 million, with the province and the federal government picking up their one-third share as well.

Submitted by the county's finance and administration committee, Chair Mayor Raye-Anne Briscoe recommended the county apply under the BCF for County Road 58 (Round Lake Road), from the Tramore Road intersection to Round Lake Centre at a total cost of \$1.6 million.

She reported the need for this stretch stems from a num-

ber of fatal accidents in recent years. Mayor Briscoe said the road is in bad repair and yet does not need much in the way of widening or realignment. She said she would also like to see some inclusion of a walking or cycling path along the shoulder. The road is also key to access Algonquin and Bonnechere River Provincial Park and is a main route for logging trucks.

Under the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund application, the first recommendation was for Centennial Lake Bridge in Greater Madawaska Township at a total cost of \$3.2 million, the second for County Road 70 (Ruby Road) from Gorman Road to Golden Lake to the tune of \$1.1 million and thirdly, County Road 515 (Palmer Road) from County Road 62 to Palmer Rapids, also at a cost of \$1.1 million.

The recommendations received full approval from county council and it will now await to see if all, or some have been approved by the upper tiers.

By Neil Etienne  
Staff Writer

**Barry's Bay** -- All the world's a stage, but some of it just isn't big enough for the required storage.

As such, the Combermere Karate Club approached Madawaska Valley council Monday night to request permission to make the Combermere Community Hall's stage a bit bigger.

"We'd like to expand the stage area in the centre; totally across the front," explained Anthony Harrison, a representative from the club that uses the centre as its home base.

The existing stage only takes up a portion of a wall, with room on either side for a table, and his hope is to extend it to take up the 30 foot wide wall and raise it from its current height of less than two feet to three feet high, allowing for storage space for chairs and tables underneath.

Mr. Harrison said he'd also like to extend the stage out a bit, from about seven feet now to 10 feet deep. With the larger stage area, the tables and chairs currently stored around the edges of the community hall could find a better home out of the way under the stage, complete with rolling carts, that slide out from under the stage for ease.

The club, using its own funds, would also like to remove the carpet from the stage and replace it with hardwood, while ensuring they worked around any use of the facility and did not hamper usual usage there.

"This would be of no cost to the township," he added,

making the decision to support the idea even easier.

The only concerns came from MV Fire Chief and building inspector Andy Peplinski who, while supporting the idea, said the enlargement of the stage would reduce the seating capacity of the building, and thus potentially affect the fire code allowance for occupancy.

"I don't think there's a performance difference in the building," he said, adding he thought the changes to the stage may drop the occupancy rate by about 30 people, although until he inspected the plans and the building itself, he was unsure. "It's certainly not a big deal, but we would have to look at it just in case."

He added with idea of raising the stage to three feet, there may be a requirement for a railing and a window behind the stage may need to be moved or altered.

"If it's for the betterment of the building, I'd certainly have no problem," Councillor Sylvie Yantha said to his fellow councillors' agreement.

Councillor Shelley Maika asked what the impact to the dance floor area may be, and it was estimated about two feet would be lost with the extension of the stage further out from the wall and the two tables at the sides of the stage would be removed, however, with the chairs and tables having a better storage space, a certain amount of floor room would be recovered as well.

Council agreed to allow the group to proceed, pending Mr. Peplinski's investigation into fire code and occupancy issues.

# Seniors volunteers turn compassion into action



The Sage Age Theatre troupe delighted the audience at the recent Eganville and District Senior Needs Association volunteer appreciation event with numerous fun-filled skits. Troupe members are, from left: Bob Yaremko, Barb Maguire, Mary Playfair, Shirley Orchard, Pat Matheson, and Glenda Jones.

By Terry Fleurie  
Staff Writer

**Eganville** -- The Eganville and District Seniors Needs Association knows the importance of volunteers and while the people who give freely of their time each year seek no recognition, the organization again offered its thanks at its recent Volunteer Appreciation Day.

This year's event focused on the many roles volunteers assume within the organization and how invaluable they are to the success of the overall operation.

EDSNA President Cairine Cybulski said the event was designed to honour the dedicated volunteers to whom the EDSNA owes its very existence.

"We count on your time and energy to assist us in carrying through with our many services," she said. "And now, we call on your time and energy to allow us to thank you with our special afternoon."

Mrs. Cybulski said volunteers bear no common physical characteristics, they can be young or old, male or female, short or tall, yet they all possess one common characteristic.

"You are all caring and have great compassion for your fellow men and women," she said.

In past years, Mrs. Cybulski has compared volunteers to anything from flowers to constellations to Fortune 500 companies while keeping with the theme of the event, which is decided upon by Lorraine Schroeder, Home Support Co-ordinator, at the EDSNA.

"This year, Lorraine has chosen, Compassion to Action as her theme," she noted. "How appropriate, for at the core of the physical side of each of you there is a warm and caring heart and soul which drives you to the action and dedication you bring to the service of those who count on our organization."

She explained she has a frame hanging in her home for several decades which includes points to ponder and thoughts which reflect many of the core values which volunteers possess and live by.

"To get more out of life, give more of yourself - you all certainly give much of yourselves to our great cause," she

noted. "No one is guaranteed happiness. Life just gives us time and space and it's up to us to fill it with joy and meaning - and your contribution is most meaningful to those you help."

"Today, give a stranger one of your smiles, it might be the only sunshine he sees all day - you are the sunshine of many folks' lives around here," she added. "Sometimes the heart sees what is invisible to the eye - I see a room full of people with happy hearts that are very joyful and have such radiance coming from them because of what you do. Thank you!"

Executive Director Carolyn Green and Mrs. Schroeder



EDSNA President Cairine Cybulski said the organization could not operate without the support of its volunteers.

added their kudos to volunteers for a job well done.

Mrs. Schroeder said as she was beginning the planning for this year's event, she came across the phrase, 'Compassion to Action' and it immediately struck a chord with her.

"This statement just seemed to say it all," she explained. "Volunteers are very compassionate people but they don't just feel compassion for others, they take action, going above and beyond the call of duty to help others throughout the community."

Mrs. Green said the association is very fortunate to have so many compassionate people in the community, clearly illustrated by more than 150 volunteers donating over 5,433 hours last year alone.

"This shows a tremendous commitment of time, energy and talent," she noted.

The duo paid thanks to each committee support and activity group, illustrating just some of the services they provide within the community. And, as usual, they had written a song with the assistance of Mrs. Schroeder's sister, Brenda Zohr, which they performed, to the tune of *My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean*, to show their appreciation of the work being done by the volunteers.

"You don't sit at home with your knitting  
Your actions help others in need  
You work hard within your community  
Your compassion is clear to see.

Refrain:  
Compassion to action  
that is what volunteers mean to me  
compassion to action  
for the whole world to see.

Board & Committee  
You come out to many a meeting  
you study, discuss and decide  
you make sure our organization  
will meet seniors needs with pride.

Fundraisers  
You fundraise to support our programs  
you bake and you build and you sell

you organize luncheons and bake sales  
we think all of you are just swell.

Office  
You answer the phones when we're busy  
you reach out and touch someone's life  
you help to arrange a home service  
and reduce their worry and strife.

Drivers  
You drive seniors to their appointments  
you help them to get groceries  
your help lets them visit their friends  
and come to our activities.

Meals on Wheels  
You take hot meals to hungry seniors  
you check that they are ok  
You help them stay healthy with good food  
and your smile brightens their day.

Diners' Club  
You help prepare for Diners Club  
You set out silverware and plates  
Arrange flowers and decorations  
and make this place look really great.

Telephone Assurance  
You make a phone call to a senior  
you are a bright spot in their day  
your chat reduces isolation  
and scatters their blues away.  
Activity Coordinators  
You organize Euchre and Tai chi  
Yoga and singing and more  
You keep seniors active and healthy  
Cause staying at home's just a bore."

The afternoon was highlighted by a performance by the Sage Age Theatre, Canada's First Improvisational Seniors Theatre that provides an exciting, moving production about seniors by seniors.

Created under the auspices of the Lanark, Leeds and Grenville Advisory Council on Aging the troop performed numerous skits that had the volunteers laughing to the point of tears.