

MUSE & NEWS

SUMMER 2006

MANAGER'S MUMBLE:

You Know it's True ... I Read it in the Newspaper!

The recent furor regarding the "regulations" for Farmers' Markets has left me somewhat perturbed. Obviously one would assume that my discomfort is a result of the impending "regulations" and while these will surely be of concern they are not the source of my unease.

Recently the media picked up a story, I would more critically state "created" a story, about restrictive health regulations being proposed for Farmers' Markets throughout Ontario. As my phone began to ring, I was initially at a loss for a response to the tales reportedly found in the southern print media. Talk of excessive restrictions, including the need to have laboratory tests of all home jams, left me stupefied!

At that point I began relating what I suspected had happened (a subsequent release on the Farmers' Markets Ontario website confirms this in more detail). Over a year ago Farmers' Markets Ontario, an umbrella group of member Markets, in conjunction with representatives from Health Boards, created a working group to examine and create regulations specific to Farmers' Markets. The impetus for this activity was related to the difficulties inherent in inspection of market facilities. Health Inspectors coming to a Market only had the regulations pertaining to a commercial restaurant or food production facility for a guide. For a Farmers' Market these regulations when followed to the letter could be extremely restrictive. Furthermore the interpretation of these guidelines were subjectively enforced, depending on the jurisdiction. Our recent experience with a local fire official provides a tangible example of this. Hence the idea was to create standards that met the needs of public safety and recognized the unique atmosphere of Farmers' Markets.

It appears that the media took elements of the study group's working paper and proclaimed them to be the new regulations. None of the extreme proposals witnessed in the media were amongst the proposal released for comment about five months earlier. Two days later the Minister of Health pronounced that more work will be done and the proposals will be postponed until the fall. This is where I become uneasy. When this process started, we, as Market leaders were told that this fall would be the timeframe for releasing of the new guidelines. Curious.

In essence, a story was manufactured, a crisis exaggerated and then some form of ministerial machinations put everything right. Wow. I thought "Yes Minister" was British comedic fiction. One may now understand my unease. If the truth can be blurred with such ease in this instance, what about the other larger issues ... say like a "war" in Afghanistan?

Ignorance ... truly is blissful.

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CALLING:
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The Market, as a Not for Profit entity, wants to help its Not for Profit brethren. All Not for Profit Groups are granted a weekly stall twice a year. **For information or reservation of a stall, contact Tom at 371-3433.**

FARMERS' MARKETS: NO SMALL POTATOES!

How many people, as they walk the vender-lined aisles at the Owen Sound Farmer' Market, realize how ancient the going-to-market tradition is? Probably it began before scribes began recording such events—maybe even before scribes. Certainly the marketplace, known as the “agora” in ancient Grecian cities was known as a social, political and economic centre.

Owen Sound's Farmers' Market might lack the oratory of the agora but every Saturday morning vendors greet each other as old friends do, as they present their displays of produce, fresh eggs direct from the hen, fish from the lake, crafts, baked goods and bread to tempt the visitors. The farmers' market is more than just about sales; it provides direct contact between producer and consumer.

The first farmers' market in Ontario was organized in Kingston in 1780. The number of markets grew for nearly 200 years, then there was a period of decline. Thanks partly to Farmers' Markets Ontario, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Rural Affairs with the help of local community groups, from a low of 60 markets, there are now double that many operating across the province.

The location of the first market in Owen Sound varies, but in 1868 space was provided for a market in the new town hall. Since 1936 the market has occupied the present site: the historic waterworks building.

A vender cooperative, the Owen Sound Farmers' Market continues to provide a reason to get out of bed on a Saturday morning to meet and greet, have a market



breakfast, and most importantly, shop for local produce and products.

According to figures published recently in the Farmers' Markets Ontario newsletter: “sales at farmers' markets total almost \$600 million, leading to an economic impact of an astounding \$1.8 billion.” Locally, the Owen Sound Farmers' Market last year generated \$685,000 in sales with more than 78,000 visitors. Not exactly small potatoes!

Submitted by Merle Gunby

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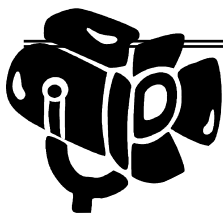
Greening Owen Sound

What does it mean – “Greening Owen Sound”? Those who came to a public meeting in May to discuss what it means to them had plenty of ideas and passion. Over 50 people from the city and surrounding region came to share their concerns and the progress already being made in environmental projects. We sat in a circle – nobody was a “them”; we were all part of “us.”

From specifics like pesticide by-laws and tree-planting to broad policy issues like waste management and transportation and land use planning, we came to the conclusion that we needed to work in partnership with municipalities and that the environment needs to be on the agenda during this year's election campaign.

To this end, the next public meeting on Wednesday, June 14 at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church at 7 p.m. will focus on the environment and the municipal election. The round-table format will allow smaller groups to focus on the major issues raised at the first meeting: Pesticides, Garbage, Energy, Food, Land Use, Water and Transportation.

For more information call Anne Finlay-Stewart at 371-3933 or rhymeswithorange@sympatico.ca, or Barry Randall at 376-7612 brandall@hp.on.ca.



SPOTLIGHT:

Floodscapes Photography

Floodscapes Photography, digitally produced fine-art photographs by Rodger Flood, are displayed at the Owen Sound Farmers' Market every Saturday morning. Rodger's work has been a mainstay at the market and he has been showing and selling for the past 22 months.

Rodger, born in Shallow Lake, says his life has taken many forms including: musician, floral designer, culinary chef, and in the research and development of watercraft. Each endeavour has always had an artistic bent. Rodger says that all his experiences have helped him create his artistic images. And they have been well-received. His work has graced two covers of an Owen Sound tourism magazine; he was a guest artist at the Owen Sound Artists' Co-op; and also, his photographs are on sale at the Grey Roots museum. His recent accomplishment was showing his work along with 23 other photographers at the de Boer Gallery in downtown Owen Sound.

Rodger's photographs are captured while on foot in local forests or drifting in a canoe. Rodger says that he only selects, with his shutter, images put there by our creator.

He has photographed many local scenes and his photographs have travelled to the British Isles, Australia, New York, and Chicago, by the many buyers who appreciate his work.

Rodger is very thankful for the local support shown to him as a photographer. "Photographs are not only for the taking but also for the sharing," he comments.

You can visit Rodger Flood and Floodscapes Photography every Saturday morning at the Owen Sound Farmers' Market. He can also be reached at 519-372-1806 or email: rodgerflood@sympatico.ca.



RECIPE CORNER

Basic Home-Style Bison Burgers

The seasonings in this recipe are just enough to bring out the best in bison. When preparing burgers, only add enough bread crumbs so that the ground meat holds together. Ground bison with any noticeable fat content will require very little or no bread crumbs.

- 1 egg
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ground pepper
- 1/2 cup grated, or very finely chopped onion
- 2 lb ground bison
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup fine dry bread crumbs

Lightly beat egg in a medium-size bowl. Blend in Worcestershire sauce, dry mustard, salt, pepper, and onion. Add and work in bison meat until well combined. Add and blend in just enough bread crumbs so that the meat clumps and holds together easily. Shape meat into patties, three to a pound. Pan-fry or barbecue until well done.

Barbecue Cooking Tip:

To avoid grill sticking, brush some canola oil on the prepared burgers-topside only. Brush a medium hot grill with canola oil as well. Sear the bottom of the burgers for 1 to 2 minutes, flip and do the same for the oiled topside. Continue grilling turning at least twice. Cook until well done.

Lemon Baked Buffalo Steak

- 3 lbs buffalo steak
- 2 tbsp butter or margarine
- 2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1 large lemon, sliced
- 2 onions, sliced
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup water

Brown steak and put in large baking dish or Dutch oven. Rub with butter and seasoning. Cover with lemon and onion slices. Combine ketchup, Worcestershire sauce and water. Pour over steak. Cover tightly. Bake at 350 F for 1 1/2 hours. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Buffalo Kebobs

- 1 lb bison round roast (or kebob meat) cut into 1 inch pieces
- Marinade:
 - 2 tbsp olive oil
 - 2 cloves garlic
 - 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar
 - 2 tsp basil
 - 2 tsp bay leaf
 - 4 tsp black pepper

Combine marinade ingredients in a food processor or blender until smooth. Pour into a glass container and add 1 lb bison round roast cut into 1 inch pieces. Cover with plastic wrap and marinate in the refrigerator 4-8 hours. When done, thread meat onto skewers along with onion, green pepper, mushrooms, potatoes, etc. cut into small 1-2 inch pieces. (Hard vegetable such as potatoes and carrots should be par boiled before adding onto skewers.) Cook filled skewers until meat is medium rare over low grill heat. Baste occasionally with leftover marinade during the cooking process. Serve over rice. Serves 4-5.

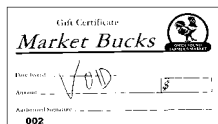
**Courtesy of Stoney Keppel Bison, Hepworth, Ontario.
Tel: 519-935-0950 Email: forevans@sympatico.ca**

MARKET BUCK\$

Market Customers: Purchase Market Bucks as coupons/gift certificates and give them to friends, family, loved ones, associates, enemies, etc. They can be used to buy anything at the market.

Market Vendors: If you receive these coupons treat them as cash and Tom will reimburse you on the stated value of the coupon. (These coupons/gift certificates are used to encourage use of the Market.

Let's get everyone to Market!
See Tom to purchase your coupons!





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