

Montreal sportscaster returning home to host Conservation Dinner on April 27

Randy Tieman, who has just been announced as the emcee for the 2006 Conservation Dinner charitable fundraiser of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation and Exeter Lions Club, has worked the last 22 years at CFCF Montreal as a sports broadcaster.

His broadcast career includes six years in radio followed by the last 16 in television.

"Over the years I have covered the Expos, Canadiens, Alouettes of the CFL and just about every international event going that has been in our city," said the Exeter-area native and Montreal-area resident.

"I did play by play on radio for four years of the Montreal Canadiens," he said. "I'll also do sportscasts at six and late on different occasions."

Tieman hosts a weekly Horse Show on CTV. Prior to working in Montreal, he was the sports director at CFGO Radio in Ottawa for seven years and prior to that



Randy Tieman, Montreal sportscaster, is returning to the Ausable Bayfield watershed to emcee the Conservation Dinner on April 27.

worked at CKY in Winnipeg and CHLO in St. Thomas.

He is a graduate of Fanshawe College in London and South Huron District High School and is returning to the area because he feels it is important to give back to his community.

The Conservation Dinner committee has been hard at work compiling an inventory of extraordinary prizes.

With the help of the celebrity emcee, numerous items such as the feature artwork by artist Teresa Marie, will be auctioned off by local auctioneers, who themselves have become a

feature of the annual event. Don't miss your chance to be part of this exhilarating evening.

A collaboration of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation and the Exeter Lions Club, the Conservation Dinner raises funds for development of barrier-free trails, outdoor education programs and many other activities for the benefit of local watershed residents. The proceeds from the 2006 Dinner will continue to assist in the stocking of rainbow trout in the Morrison Dam reservoir, supporting conservation education programs, and the maintenance of six commemorative woods sites and the South Huron Trail System.

Any local businesses and individuals wishing to sponsor art or contribute cash or prizes are invited to contact the ABCA. Tickets are selling out early and can be obtained from committee members or call the ABCA at (519) 235-2610.

This year's dinner takes on special significance as it is the 60th anniversary diamond celebration year for the Conservation Authorities Act of Ontario and beginnings of the ABCA.



Get tickets now to be eligible for Early Bird Prizes

Be sure to get your tickets for the Conservation Dinner of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation and Exeter Lions Club before the March 6 Early Bird Draw!

If you are a ticket holder for the 17th Annual Conservation Dinner, you could be the lucky winner of the Early Bird Prize draw to be held on March 6, 2006 at 4:00pm. One delighted winner will take home a beautiful limited edition print entitled "Feathered Friends" by artist Dawn Lavoie. The Early Bird print is just one of the many fine artworks and collectables being assembled for the gala fundraising event to be held April 27, 2006 at the South Huron Recreation Centre in Exeter. This event also features a deluxe catered meal and the thrill of winning auction bids and raffle prizes. ■



Children enjoy nature through ABCA March Break Day Camps March 14, 16 with new theme days

Are you looking for engaging activities for your children this March Break?

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) is providing parents with an alternative this March Break. Children between the ages of 5 – 10 can register for day camps being held on March 14th and March 16th at the Morrison Dam Education Centre located at the Morrison Dam Conservation Area, 2 km east of Exeter.

The March Break Day Camps provide children with the opportunity to take part in nature through hiking, snowshoeing, crafts, games and much more.

This year, to keep things fresh and exciting for the children, the ABCA is introducing theme days. On March 14th, we will be exploring the world of Winter Animals. On March 16th, we will be having "Snow Much Fun." The events will run from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day and staff will be available from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for drop off and pick up.

"Each day promises to be full of activities. It's our goal to provide educational, exciting and active programs for youth," said Matt Redmond, ABCA Conservation Education Specialist.

The cost of the day camp is

\$27 (lunch not included) for each day and the deadline for registrations is Friday, March 10th at 4:30 p.m.

Registration forms can be picked up at the ABCA office at Morrison Dam Conservation Area during regular business hours or downloaded from the website at www.abca.on.ca/events.php.

"Children are invited to pack a litterless lunch and some snacks and join us for a great adventure," states Redmond.

For more information, please contact Matt Redmond at the ABCA at 519-235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

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Weber elected Chair of ABCA Board of Directors, McLachlan is Vice Chair

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) Board of Directors unanimously elected Bill Weber as Chair at the Annual Meeting held on Thursday, February 16. The board also elected Lawrence McLachlan, of North Middlesex, as Vice Chair at the meeting, held at the administration centre at Morrison Dam Conservation Area, near Exeter.

Weber, who represents Lambton Shores and Warwick Township on the board, previously served as Vice Chair. "Preserving and enhancing water quality is one of the important goals in which the ABCA is a leader," according to Weber, who said he is looking forward to serving as Chair. He will serve as Chair during the ABCA's 60th anniversary year in 2006 when the Authority and municipal, individual and school partners will be undertaking 'Sixty Projects for Sixty Years.'

Weber has been a member of the ABCA Board of Directors since the year 2000.

As well as promoting conservation goals the new ABCA Chair also composts and practices the three 'Rs' (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle). During his years



Lawrence McLachlan is the new Vice Chair of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) Board of Directors and Bill Weber is the new Chair. They were elected at the annual meeting on Feb. 16.

operating a dairy farm near Dashwood he planted many trees and windbreaks.

McLachlan – an avid angler, hunter and trail user – said he hopes "I can help to improve our natural environment" as Vice Chair.

Weber replaces Past Chair Teresa Ondrejicka who was the first woman to serve in the position in the ABCA's 60-year history.

Ondrejicka, a Grand Bend resident and Exeter native who has served on the board since 1996, said she enjoys being active as a board member and Past Chair.

"I want to leave this earth in good shape for my children and grandchildren," she said. "I teach my children to respect the environment ... they have learned to contribute to it, not to take away from it." ■

Conservation Ontario, dignitaries to attend ABCA 60th Anniversary celebration barbecue July 30

Conservation Ontario representatives will be among the provincial, federal and municipal dignitaries joining the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) for events on July 30 recognizing the 60th Anniversary of the former Ausable River Conservation Authority (the first in Ontario) and the diamond celebration of the Conservation Authorities Act of Ontario.

The ABCA is celebrating the hard work and vision of Canadian veterans, farmers and other conservation pioneers who initiated the Conservation Authorities Act in Ontario sixty years ago during events throughout the year.

The events on Sunday, July 30, 2006 include live music and guided walks at Morrison Dam Conservation Area, east of Exeter, from 2 – 4 p.m and a big barbecue at the South Huron Recreation Centre in Exeter from 4-6 p.m.



Tickets are now available for the barbecue. For ticket information phone (519) 235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

The ABCA – in partnership with farmers, individuals, organizations and municipalities – is planning a year's worth of activities including a quest to complete 'Sixty Projects for Sixty Years' in 2006. Schools are taking part in 'Sixty Classes for Sixty Years' and may be eligible for prizes and recognition. Several watershed municipalities are also



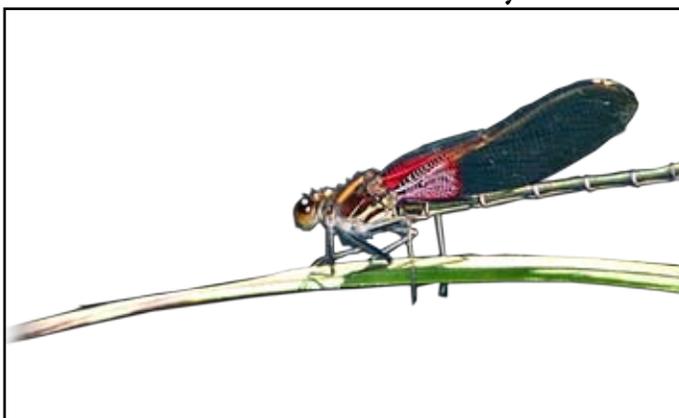
taking part with tree-planting, conservation and restoration projects.

Farmers and other rural landowners are encouraged to consider a conservation project this year as part of this celebration of watershed stewardship.

Suggestions include planting Autumn Blaze trees as 'Watershed Guardians' or planting butternut seedlings to restore that beloved but threatened native species.

For more information on how you can support the ABCA 60th Anniversary and 'Year of Conservation' phone (519) 235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

Nature scenes from Ausable Bayfield watershed



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Nominate watershed Conservationist of the Year

Do you know someone who goes the 'extra mile' for conservation in your community?

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) announced last week that the local conservation agency is looking for the Conservationist of the Year in your community.

Since 1984, the ABCA has annually recognized individuals, families, organizations and corporations who have demonstrated outstanding achievements in improving local water quality, reforestation, environmental education, advocating best management practices and protecting fish and wildlife habitat.

To be eligible for the award, recipients must be located within the jurisdiction of the

Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority. Current ABCA staff and directors are not eligible. Details describing the categories and nomination forms are available at your municipal office, the ABCA office at 235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610 or www.abca.on.ca.

"Previous recipients have taken awareness and turned it into action," said Tom Prout, General Manager of the ABCA. "They demonstrated strong conservation ethics by initiating projects to protect unique environmental features in their community, promoting stewardship of our resources and volunteering in support of conservation-related projects."

Past winners of the Conservationist of the Year Award include Ray Letheren and the Friends of

Bayfield River, Environmentally Concerned Citizens of Lambton Shores, Stephanie Donaldson of Grand Bend, Andy deBoer of Exeter and Paul and Vic Hodgins, of Lucan Biddulph.

Prout said there are other active conservationists in the watershed community and he encourages watershed residents to help the ABCA recognize them by nominating a worthy recipient.

The deadline for submissions is March 3rd and the Conservationist of the Year will be named at a special meeting of the ABCA Board of Directors on March 16th.

So, think of a neighbour, friend or watershed community member who is a conservation leader and nominate them today.



Register now for South Huron Trail Run on August 13

The South Huron Trail Run (shown at the beginning of the eight-kilometre run last year) draws hundreds of local runners as well as runners from the United States and distant parts of Canada. The 2006 South Huron Trail Run takes place on August 13 of this year. Those who register early get a discounted registration rate. The race, part of the Runpiker series, grows each year. For information phone (519) 235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

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Matt Redmond, Conservation Education Specialist with the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, points to dangers around watercourses and urges parents and guardians to ensure children avoid watercourses, especially at this time of year, and also to receive appropriate response training through SWAP (Spring Water Awareness Program).

SWAP educates students about safety near water

Tobogganing, skating and winter walks near the water are some of the activities children have often loved to do during March Break. However, local watercourses can be extremely dangerous this time of year, according to the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA).

Rivers, creeks, streams and ditches currently have open water due to the lack of colder temperatures. Dozens of fatalities occur in Ontario each year in incidents near watercourses.

Matt Redmond, ABCA Conservation Education Specialist,

is presenting the Spring Water Awareness Program (SWAP) from February 1 to March 10 to local schools. This program is offered free to classes from Kindergarten to Grade Eight.

"The program covers a number of spring hazards such as thin ice, flooding, slippery stream banks and hypothermia to list a few," Redmond said.

The program has presentations, demonstrations, games and activity sheets directed towards primary, junior and intermediate students. In the hour-long junior and intermediate programs,

students can expect to learn about making safe decisions in the winter along with some information on floods and flood forecasting. The primary program will see students receive a similar message through a short story and games.

"Education is a key way to keep our children safe and away from dangerous waterways," said Redmond. For more information or to book the Spring Water Awareness Program at no cost to your school, please contact the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority at 519-235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

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ABCA applauds vision of conservation pioneers

**BY TIM CUMMING,
Communications Specialist,
ABCA**

Anyone who has ever experienced the damages wrought by a flood has come face to face with Mother Nature.

It is hard to believe that only sixty years ago (nine years after Thames River floods left 4,000 Southern Ontario residents homeless) this province had not yet created an organized response to flooding on a watershed basis.

We can be proud that local conservation pioneers in the Ausable Bayfield watershed led the way in Ontario, envisioning the need for a strategic response to the threat of flooding.

If we had the benefit of the magic Delorean car from *Back to the Future* we could voyage back in time to March 2, 1946 and a McGillivray Township council meeting (quoted from minutes by local historian Andrew Dixon) that "it is the belief of this council that the ruthless ploughing of flooded grassland together with the uncontrolled cutting of timber is creating a condition which is beyond the power of this and other municipal councils to control therefore this council requests the minister to have a survey made of the Ausable River Watershed to determine the conservation measures necessary to ensure proper land use of this area."



Later, on June 1, that council called for "a meeting for the establishment of a Conservation Authority for the watershed of the Ausable River situated in the Counties of Huron, Lambton and Middlesex."

The new Conservation Authorities Act of 1946 was clear that new Ontario CAs had to grow out of local initiative with municipal leadership, cost sharing and watershed-based planning. Conservation Authorities were to grow from the ground up, not the top down. Watershed municipal leaders, veterans and other partners showed that local initiative on July 30, 1946 when they officially created the Ausable River Conservation Authority, the organizational ancestor of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA).

The first five years of the local Conservation Authority's existence were busy times.

One of the key events was the creation of the 1949 Conservation Report by the Ontario Department of Planning and Development. The mammoth volume is impressive in its scope and even today the report is an important historical

document.

By 1950 the local watershed Conservation Authority had more than 300 acres of conservation lands under its protection.

The devastation witnessed last year in New Orleans and area was a reminder about the power of nature. Although we can never completely protect ourselves from all flooding events it's reassuring to know the pioneers of local conservation forged ahead in the creation of a body with progressive planning, watershed stewardship and a concern for water quality.

When the Second World War ended, our veterans returned home and the courage and hard work they devoted to winning the war they turned to winning the conservation battle.

We celebrate 2006 as a Year of Conservation and today we say thank you to our local conservation pioneers and acknowledge the awesome debt we owe them for looking to the future way back in 1946 and for helping protect our lives and property through flood management and watershed stewardship.

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