

## Preventing Inappropriate Quarries



Gloria in two-fisted drinking, reporter mode at the Twenty Valley Winter WineFest in Jordan Village on Jan. 12. Hard work but somebody has to do it... PHOTO BY MIKE DAVIS.

It can be done. David slew Goliath. Community groups have triumphed over quarry applications. When we heard the news that the Highland quarry application was withdrawn, we counted three recent successes by community groups all along the Niagara Escarpment and asked professional writer Dan O'Reilly to see if there might be any lessons for others. His article on page 30 shares his findings.

It is no easy thing for citizens with busy lives and families to care for, to take on the mammoth task of learning about regulations, legislations and the sciences, not to mention raising the money to pay for lawyers and experts, in order to conduct an effective objection to an economic activity

that will permanently alter their part of Ontario's natural or rural areas. In other words, taxpayers often have to spend money, energy and time from their non-working hours, to oppose professionals representing corporations with large financial objectives. "Ordinary" people have to battle paid professionals who are working full time for financial gain. The former have to sacrifice in order to keep things the same. The latter stand to make significant profits. Which has more motivation and resources? It's not an equal contest. These successes are therefore all the more significant.

Sadly, this has been happening up and down the length of the Escarpment for decades. Every group of

concerned citizens is having to re-invent the wheel and get up to speed. Perhaps Dan O'Reilly's feature can give people some ideas and save them some time, so their chances of protecting the Niagara Escarpment can be greater. I'm sure that everyone wishes that protection of our natural areas and farmlands was stronger and more permanent. Something seems wrong when private citizens have to be so vigilant. Shouldn't that be the job of our government ministries and agencies?

If you take issue with any of this, I invite you to write me. We may publish your views, because we're delighted to be a forum for discussion.

Also in this issue: a new column on private land conservation by Bob Barnett of Escarpment Biosphere

Conservancy and our Winter 2012's Niagara Escarpment Visionary. Ken Haigh returns with a story about Tom Thomson's connections to the Tom Thomson Trail. Tess Bridgewater reports from the 200-year-old front lines of the Battle of Stoney Creek. Helen Powers has us yearning for warm weather with her profile of the kitchen garden at Dundurn Castle and Sean James suggests companion planting as a way to protect our sustainable gardens.

There's much to celebrate this spring, so get out into Nature!

*Gloria*

Gloria

*P.S. Keep wild spaces for wild animals.*

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**Correction:** Guest Matthew Pope will accompany pianist and conductor Ron Greidanus and the Georgetown Bach Chorale at the March 3 concert "Relics of the Romantic Era" at Norval United Church at 8 p.m. An ad for the concert gave an incorrect name for the guest performer. We regret the error.