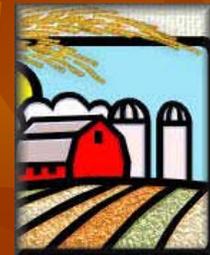




# Rural Ramble

A Veteran Driving Route Event in  
Ontario, Canada



# Rural Ramble

## ■ History of the Tour

- Began as a group of 5 couples under Northumberland Federation of Agriculture
- First tour was in 1999
- Gained official sponsorship from CIBC and local radio stations sponsor admission wristband costs
- Co-ops, Farmers Markets and CIBC provide sales locations for admission packages

# Rural Ramble

- Sponsorship

- In addition to the bank and radio station sponsors, we also get 3 levels of support (Gold, Silver & Bronze) from various agricultural & farm commodity groups, local agri-business, local municipal governments, various small to medium-sized businesses operating in the county, the Regional Economic Development organization (TrenVal) and the occasional individual sponsor.

# Rural Ramble



## ■ Advertising

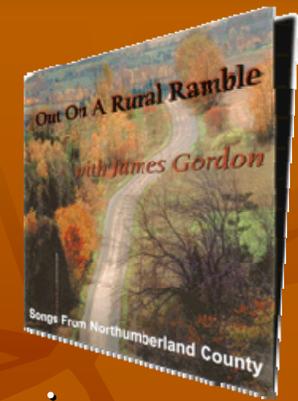
- Radio advertising includes giveaways of admissions to the tour.
- Our Media Day usually includes television
- Print advertising includes newspapers, brochures, admissions packages, and discount coupons in other organizations packages.
- Our web site ([www.ruralramblefarmtour.com](http://www.ruralramblefarmtour.com)) has been in operation for the past six years.

# Rural Ramble

- Admissions Management
  - Admission to the tour is through a purchased package which contains
    - The route map
    - An information brochure about the hosts
    - A listing of sponsors in all 3 levels
    - An identifying wristband for tour participants to wear and show at each “gate”
    - Advertising in our brochure for local businesses and organizations



# Rural Ramble



- Additional Funding Sources
  - Advertising for local businesses and organizations in our brochure is something that brings in a little extra cash to fund our operations.
  - Our souvenir program consists of a CD with songs about the county and Rural Ramble, T-shirts, Hats, Mugs, lapel pin buttons.
  - Some commercial stops are included on the tour, for which a fee is charged to the commercial host.
  - Paid Advertising of local accommodations – B&Bs, hotels, marinas, etc. on our brochure & web site

# Rural Ramble

## ■ Budgeting & Finance

- Advertising is the major cost
- Signage for the route is also a cost & a time investment.
- We have a paid coordinator and a paid assistant.
- Johnny-on-the-spot rentals
- Printing
- Souvenir development
- Web site
- Media Hosting
- 1-800 number
- Prizes & Host Appreciation items
- Host Orientation

# Rural Ramble

- Diversity of mix – local commodity farm hosts
  - Each year we try to add 30 – 50% new hosts
  - Some hosts approach us, in particular new startup initiatives
  - Some we approach through the farm commodity organizations or through individual contacts
  - Committee selects eligible host sites

# Rural Ramble

Keeping it fresh – Contests (Bale Art)





# Rural Ramble

- Keeping it fresh – Contests (Bale Art)
  - Annual contest
  - Not limited to host farms
  - Open to anyone in the county who wishes to participate
  - Is used for promotional purposes and to generate participation by citizens



# Rural Ramble

- Keeping it fresh – Contests (Bale Art)
  - Rules are posted on the web site
  - Partnered with Northumberland Art Gallery to get judges.
  - Local fairs have begun to copy us on this effort.



# Rural Ramble

- Keeping it Fresh – Contests (Photo)
  - Open to amateurs only
  - Rules are posted on the web site, and the contest advertised in the brochure



winning photos are used in promotion of future  
travels.

# Rural Ramble

- Keeping it fresh – Variety (of hosts & committee)
  - Hosts of repeat commodity groups (such as dairy and beef producers, specific crop industries) are rotated, usually through their industry association or group.
  - Heritage or alternative farming hosts usually seek us out now.
  - The committee accepts its membership from those who have an interest in agriculture, tourism and local economic development.
  - We usually add 2-3 new committee members each year

# Rural Ramble

- Keeping it fresh – Partnering (other organizations)
  - Church groups, Women’s Institute
  - Sunday church service at one of the sites
  - 4-H
  - Local artisans and performers

# Rural Ramble

Keeping it fresh – Partnering



# Rural Ramble

- Keeping it fresh – Partnering (other organizations)
  - Local historical and ecological groups and venues
  - Ontario Provincial Police and local police forces are provided with copies of the map in the event that they are needed or asked for visitor assistance.
  - Local media are also provided with a package and a free pass for reporters.



# ural Ramble

- The Driving Route
  - Determined by the venues on the tour
  - Marked out on the map in the admission package
  - Signage is placed all along the route

# Rural Ramble

- The Driving Route
  - County maps are also made available through designated host sites where visitors may purchase them.
  - The official tour map and brochure contain a key that indicates such things as availability at a given venue of evaluation forms, food, souvenirs and commodity sales, toilets, and maps.

# Rural Ramble

- Volunteers
  - Hosts are encouraged to seek volunteer assistance at their venue
  - Ontario high schools have a requirement for 40 hours of community service before a graduation diploma is granted
  - 4-H, Pony Clubs, Guiding & Scouting, service clubs like Rotary, Lions, Women's Institute, church groups, and various neighbours, relatives and friends all get into the act.

# Rural Ramble

## Volunteers



# Rural Ramble

Thank you for your attention –

Your questions and comments are welcome!

