

The Chronicle Journal

THE NEWSPAPER OF THE NORTHWEST

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 3, 2009

WWW.CHRONICLEJOURNAL.COM

THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO \$1.00

THE CHRONICLE-JOURNAL Wednesday, June 3, 2009

NEWS A7

New abattoir going up in Emo

BY RONALD WOLF

IT'S been four years in the making and now it's finally here. It's good news for Rainy River District farmers, but bad news for local slaughter cattle. The \$2-million, 3,600-square-foot abattoir (killing facility) will be constructed by Coldbox of Vaughan, Ont. Fortunately (unfortunately for slaughter cattle) this means the animals will miss out on the ride to another abattoir and be killed sooner, resulting in fresher, less stressed meat to be processed into cuts.

The animals (beef, pork, bison, and elk) will be killed and processed at the same place. In the past, the animals were driven to a distant abattoir, slaughtered and then sent to another place to be processed into cuts and back to the market. Less travel time means fresher cuts of meat.

This new abattoir, which will be located at 26 Byng St. in Emo, will not be a big employer. It will require only a manager and two or three part-time employees. Only 20 animals a week are expected for slaughter.

The number of employees and animals could change over time.

The building of the abattoir will begin late this month and is to be completed by year's end.

For years the U.S. border service has been telling the world that the day when we need the proper documents to enter the United States is fast approaching. Zero hour arrived on Monday. But there is some flexibility about who enters the U.S. without proper documents.

Those who do not have proper Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) compliant documents may still be able to enter the country according to information at



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<http://www.cbp.gov>. It does not state just who can enter the country without proper documentation and who does not. There are plenty of rumours floating around. Be informed and visit the website.

An emergency town hall meeting was held in Fort Frances hosted by MP **John Rafferty** concerning the future of AbitibiBowater. More than 40 people attended, but that doesn't mean that only 40-plus people are concerned about the future.

About 7,700 people reside in Fort Frances and, at the time of the meeting, some were on vacation, others were working, some had to take care of their children or parents and others had pressing engagements. This issue is extremely important, and some residents are in distress about the future, to the point that they have sought medical help. People can make their voices heard via email, letters and calls to Parliament Hill about the future of AbitibiBowater.

The next few years in Rainy River District will be lean ones, make no mistake about it. I believe we have great people here and the Canadian government should listen to them, whether their voices come through by emails, letters, phone calls or emergency meetings.

Ron Wolf is a freelance writer in Fort Frances. His column about Rainy River District activities appears every other week.