

Ridgemount Quarries Update

Stone production at the Ridgemount Quarries started up for the 2014 season in February and will likely be completed sometime this summer, according to superintendent Mark Harmsworth.

About 200,000 tonnes of inventory is being built up in anticipation of projects for which the stone will be required. This is a typical amount of stone produced each year at the quarry.

The paint shop at Ridgemount has been extremely busy this spring. New equipment for all of Walker Industries comes to the shop to be painted in the company's distinctive blue and yellow colours, and the shop is also contracted by other companies to customize their heavy equipment.

Standard manufacturer's paint colours are painted over in the case of new equipment, while older equipment is sandblasted and given fresh, new coats of paint.



Ridgemount Quarries paint shop.



EMPLOYEE PROFILE

Vic Paré and his wife Leslie on the back patio of their home, with Westies Mac and Annie.

A Furry Family Affair

Each and every day, Victor Paré loads crushed stone from piles in the quarry into trucks to be hauled off to construction sites – as many as 150 truckloads per day. It takes two full buckets to fill each truck with 21 tonnes of rock. But not for a minute does Vic find his job tedious. "I'm too busy to be bored," he says, adding that he chats with the truck drivers on his CB radio while working. "I pretty much know them all."

Vic has been a loader operator at Walker's Ridgemount Quarries for 38 years, generally working weekdays from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. "It's a good job," he says.

In his free time, and when his wife Leslie isn't on shift as an ICU nurse at the Welland site of the Niagara Health System, the husband and wife team can

be found walking their West Highland White Terriers through their Welland neighbourhood.

Three-year-old Mac and 12-year-old Annie "rule the house," Vic says. "They're like our little babies." On summer weekends, these pampered pooches travel with Vic and Leslie to provincial parks across Ontario in the family's 36-foot RV camper, towed behind a three-quarter ton diesel pickup. "It's like a little cottage on wheels," Vic says. "One of the reasons we got the trailer is so we could take the dogs along." The couple do sometimes leave them behind to go for bike rides through the parks. In the evenings, it's time for campfires and socializing with other park visitors. "We really like it," Vic says of his camping excursions. "It's a good way to meet people."

CUSTOMER PROFILE

From the Pavement to the Pasture

After 50 years in business, Economy Paving has ceased operations, and its owner is quite literally headed into greener pastures. The company, which has been a loyal customer of Walker Aggregates since the beginning, provided concrete and asphalt paving services to customers in the Niagara Peninsula and across southern Ontario. Its projects have included the cart paths, roadways and parking lots at the "Legends on the Niagara" golf courses.

"I'm 63 and have other interests I want to pursue," says Economy's owner Glen Finbow. Glen has sold the company's eight acres of land on Townline Road in St. Catharines, as well as its construction equipment. His passion these days is raising alpacas on his 60-acre farm in Ridgeway.

Glen and his wife Lynda have a herd of 100 of the animals, which are sheared every spring for their luxurious fleece. Alpaca yarn is hypoallergenic, much warmer than wool while being as soft as cashmere.

Glen and Lynda decided to get into the alpaca business after attending a Clay Aikin concert nine years ago and picking up a brochure about the animals. They are documented to be the oldest-known



Glen Finbow with his wife Lynda and one-week-old "Splitrock's Marquis."

livestock in the world, yet even today are the least known.

"They are really very gentle," remarks Glen. "Being with them is a wonderful stress reliever." He says each member of the herd has a different personality. "Some will come up and kiss you and some will spit on you." Lynda knows each of the alpacas by name.

Glen's intense interest in the creatures has made him an expert. He is working on the second edition of his industry bible "The Alpaca Breeder's Terminology

Sourcebook," and is a qualified judge at alpaca shows across this continent and Europe. His animals make regular appearances at seniors' homes and in local Santa Claus parades.

"Walker Aggregates very much appreciates the business that Glen has given us over the years through Economy Paving," says Niagara marketing manager Frank Hurkmans. "We wish him and Lynda all the best in this new chapter in their lives."

For more information about Glen's alpaca business, visit www.splitrockfarmsbb.com

Where the Rock Goes



Warren Woods Subdivision

Stone from the Ridgemoor Quarries is being used for the installation of water and sewer services, and for road construction in the Warren Woods subdivision in Niagara Falls, south of McLeod Road between Montrose and Garner Roads.



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