

Community Preparedness Day provides wildfire education



By **Michael Riley**

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A Community Preparedness Day event held at the Limerick Community Centre on May 4 went very well, with about 30 people attending. In addition to being a fundraiser for the Limerick Fire Service with information and the sale of the WASP sprinkler system, attendees learned about the FireSmart program from the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry and how it can help protect their homes from damage and loss due to wildfires. Lunch and refreshments were provided by the Limerick Friends Club. Cindy Fuerth, fire prevention officer with Limerick Township, comments on this event. The Community Preparedness Day at the Limerick Community Centre was on May 4 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., and in addition to being a fundraiser for the Limerick Fire Service, with the WASP sprinkler system on display and for sale, had members of the MNDMNRFP there to explain the FireSmart program, to help mitigate the risk of wildfires to homes and cottages. They also had grab bags for attendees to take home, filled with information on the FireSmart program. The WASP sprinkler system is a low volume, low pressure sprinkler that can be mounted on a home or cottage's gutters, a stake or fence to keep the structure and yard wet and less susceptible to the effects of wildfires. Over 250 fire departments, HOAs and other organizations have participated in the WASP's community program or procured the sprinklers for themselves. With a high risk of forest fire in Limerick this year, in the opinion of Fire Chief Greg Maxwell, these sprinklers could be invaluable in protecting residents' properties from the effects of wildfires. More information on these sprinklers can be found at www.waspwildfire.ca. The FireSmart program, which the team from the MNDMNRFP was educating attendees about, is a national program helping Canadians increase their resilience to wildfire and its deleterious effects. Founded in 1993, FireSmart has practical, effective and science-based programs to provide people with the tools to prepare and protect themselves better if and when a wildfire occurs. More information can be found at www.firesmartcanada.ca. Fuerth told Bancroft This Week that on behalf of Fire Chief Greg Maxwell, herself, and the Limerick firefighters, they were very pleased with the community support on May 4. "Our WASP sprinkler program was a great success. Limerick fire service will be continuing the program throughout the season. The Limerick Friends Club provided a nice brunch for attendees. We always anticipate about 30 people coming and we've had 30 people come through. As always, the MNDMNRFP attended with a crew, grab bag handouts and an informative presentation," she says. "The day went really well."