



## GROUNDHOG REPORTS FEBRUARY 2

from WIARTON WILLIE  
*"Without a shadow of a doubt"*

**(519) 534-3907**

**(519) 534-4519**

Canada's official Winter Weather Watcher  
located in Wiarton on Canada's Bruce Peninsula.

**(519) 534-4521**

The white groundhog "Wiarnton Willie" emerges from hibernation every February 2. If Willie sees his shadow, winter will be lengthy. If there is no shadow, there will be an early end to winter.

Groundhog Central in Wiarton--on Canada's Bruce Peninsula--has three phone lines to serve the hundreds of North American media outlets that rely on the groundhog forecast. Each year, more than 300 calls are logged on groundhog day and in the days leading up to Willie's appearance.

The phone numbers for Groundhog Central are listed above. The appearance of the white groundhog usually takes place shortly before 8 am E.S.T.

In mid 1989, affordable housing for Willie was provided on the grounds of the Wiarnton Willie Motel at the southern limits of Wiarton.

When Willie makes his appearance he is greeted by a group dressed in white formal attire. The white tuxedos and gowns recognize the importance of the occasion and avoid the possibility of dark clothing being confused with a shadow-form.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Enclosed postcard of Willie is reprinted from the centrefold photo recently published in "Playburrow"

The Bruce Peninsula Tourist Association will once again provide courtesy accomodation for media representatives at the Wiarnton Willie Motel and will also host a media breakfast just before the morning groundhog greeting.

WIARTON WILLIE, His Mark.





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(519) 534-0461  
(519) 534-1270  
(519) 534-2188



located in Wiarton  
on Canada's  
Bruce Peninsula.

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WIARTON WILLIE: FACT SHEET

**BIOGRAPHY:** Wiarton Willie is a white albino groundhog. He has been forecasting the length of winter for more than thirty years. Willie's rare skill is credited to his birthplace on the 45th parallel--midway between the equator and north pole. The 45th parallel cuts across the Bruce Peninsula field where he was born, just north of Wiarton.

**THE BRUCE PENINSULA NATIONAL PARK,** established in 1987 has made Wiarton Willie an honorary citizen of the park, with all the rights of protection inherent in park residency. Willie, however, maintains his permanent burrow in the town of Wiarton.

**STATISTICS AT THE WIARTON AIRPORT WEATHER STATION** show an accuracy rate of ninety percent in predicting the length of winter. Recent studies suggest that the "leap-year effect" may be responsible for the few years when the prediction is skewed.

**GROUNDHOG GREETERS:** Each year before dawn, February 2, a small group of Bruce Peninsula residents dress in white formal attire and head outside to await the appearance of Willie. The white tuxedos and gowns worn by the greeters, recognize the importance of the occasion and also avoid the possibility of confusing dark clothing with a shadow-form. Wiarton Willie usually makes his appearance between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m.

**GROUNDHOG FESTIVAL WEEKEND,** on the weekend following the groundhog appearance is sponsored each year by the Wiarton Lions Club. A variety of indoor and outdoor winter recreation activities are featured.

**FREE TRADE:** Concern that Canadian and United States groundhog reports would be melded under free trade arrangements have now been discounted. A long time friend of Wiarton Willie points out the the last thing a groundhog wants is a "level playing field" as touted in free trade accords. Groundhog burrows and mounds of earth quickly disrupt level playing fields.



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Phone answering crews at Wiarton, Ontario are again prepared to handle hundreds of calls from media outlets on Groundhog Day, February 2.

The white albino groundhog "Wiarton Willie" is relied on each year to emerge from hibernation to cast an eye on the weather. If Willie sees his shadow winter will extend for six more weeks. If there is no shadow, winter will end before six weeks.

Groundhog Central in Wiarton, on the Bruce Peninsula, has three phone lines. Last year more than 200 phone calls were received from media outlets from all parts of Canada and the northern United States.

The three phone numbers for Groundhog Central are listed at the top of this release and will be available for media queries. The appearance of Wiarton Willie usually takes place shortly before 8 a.m.

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ADVANCE INFORMATION/COMMENTS AVAILABLE AT ABOVE NUMBERS:

John Makela. Groundhog handler and trainer.  
Harold Silk. Groundhog confidant and long-time friend of Willie  
Chuck Robbins. By appointment, veterinarian to Wiarton Willie

WIARTON WILLIE, His Mark:

