

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1330

Thursday, September 10, 2026

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UPROOTED BY THE WIND

Last Thursday there were numerous sightings of damage from the wind and rain that pounded the region on Wednesday, Sept. 2. At the corner of the St. Pauls Rd and Perth Rd 130, a tree had been completely uprooted.

(JUNE GRANT PHOTO)

Lincolns look to fuse experience with speed, skill in 26-27

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Independent Sports Reporter

As the St. Marys Lincolns kick off their 2026-27 regular season, the lofty aspirations that have defined the squad for more than half a decade remain.

In the eyes of head coach and assistant general manager Jeff Bradley, the Lincolns are starting the year with a strong mix of returning core pieces and fresh faces ready to contribute.

"Having the returning guys we have with the experience and the goals they have, that's certainly exciting," said Bradley. "And then, the new guys that Pat (Powers, Lincs' GM) has brought in seem to fit in very well, so I think it's a mix of old and new, and the new seems to fit in very well. The players we have coming back are intelligent, and they know how to play a style that is successful for us. So, to integrate the new guys into that, and injecting some of that skill into what we have now, I think that's certainly exciting."

The bench boss explained what he sees as the next evolution of the Lincolns in their quest for a Sutherland Cup – playing with more speed.

"I think playing a little bit quicker," Bradley said when asked about how the team plans to evolve this coming season. "Moving pucks quicker, getting back to pucks quicker, trying to get on the attack a little bit quicker, and not allowing the opponent to get set. Having a much better transition game. That's going to be a big one for us."

"We ran into that against Cambridge, but we

CONTINUED TO PAGE 13

Perth South Council members acclaimed for new term

Paul Smith will be newest addition to Council

STEWART GRANT

Publisher

The campaigning has ended early this year for those vying for a spot on Township of Perth South Council.

With the deadline for filing nomination papers passing on Aug. 21, incumbent Mayor Sue Orr was unopposed, while exactly six individuals had filed papers to run for the six Councillor positions.

Current councillors Jeff Bell, Jaime Martin,

Bob Wilhelm, Sam Corriveau, and Jim Van Nes will be returning to Council when the new term gets underway this fall. They will be joined by Paul Smith who will be entering his first term on Perth South Council. Smith will fill the spot of Mark Bell who is not running for re-election.

"It is truly and honour and a privilege to continue serving at the Mayor of Perth South," Orr told the Independent. "Being acclaimed and also seeing very little change around the

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

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COMMUNITY

Perth South Council members acclaimed

CONTINUED FROM FRONT
 Council table is a positive indication that our community has confidence in the direction we are heading and the leadership of Council.”
 “Perth South is focusing on the future and will be looking towards a new Public Works building. We have also been working on improving our space within the Township office and have an incredible staff portfolio at this time. Great things are happening in our area!!”
 Smith, who will be the newest member of Council, says that running for council has been on his bucket list for some time. “I’m a firm believer that we’re on this

earth to serve, in whatever capacity that is. I’ve been interested in this for a very long time.”
 While his earlier focus in life was centered on family, community involvement with minor ball, ringette, and church, along with running his own business, Smith felt like the time was right for him to enter public service in the area where he’s lived all his life.
 “We are in some interesting times, and I think it’s important that we become better educated to what the needs of our community will be.”
 “I think that knowledge can be power to help make educated decisions,” said

Smith. “I hope to have productive input with other members of council. I think there’s a good mix of people and experiences in Perth South council right now and look forward to working with those members.”
 While Perth South Council is decided, area voters will still have their say in the matter of School Board Trustees. Sheila Armstrong-Marshall and Ginny Ralph will be contesting the position with Avon Maitland District School Board (English), while Mary Helen Van Loon and Derek Van De Walle will be running for the trustee position with Huron-Perth Catholic Separate School Board (English).



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)
 Paul Smith will be the newest member of Perth South council.

It’s time for the Kirkton Fall Fair

STEWART GRANT
 Publisher

Continuing a tradition that began way back in 1869, the Kirkton Fall Fair returns this weekend with a packed schedule of fun events for families to enjoy.
 The fair remains focused on agriculture and all things farming. There is plenty to see and do without a midway or carnival games. Inflatables and a strawbale structure are sure to be popular with youngsters, as well as all the various exhibitions and shows. Meanwhile, the exhibit hall is filled with home canning, home-craft items, woodworking, flowers, fruit, vegetable and grain entries and creations from local kids.

The fair kicks off on Friday, Sept. 11 when the gates open at 6:30 p.m. A selection of food trucks will be on hand, and the evening activities include inflatables, the exhibit hall, Farmer Olympics, and fireworks at dusk.
 The Kirkton Fair parade takes place on Saturday, Sept. 12 beginning at 10 a.m. The route goes along Highway 23 between Kirkton and the Community Centre. The parade will feature horses, antique cars and tractors, and floats from various businesses and organizations.
 Saturday is chock-full of activities right up until 4 p.m. The 4-H and Open Dairy Show begins at 10 a.m. and the fair’s Opening Ceremonies will take place at 10:30 a.m. The day’s schedule also in-

cludes the Baby Show at 11 a.m., Mullet Competition at noon, Truck and Tractor Pull at 3 p.m. and Pumpkin Catapult at 3:30 p.m. At different times throughout the day are pig races, an animal music show, live music with Ashley Giles, remote control car and truck races, a tug of war demonstration, and so much more.
 On Sunday, Sept. 13, start your day with a delicious breakfast sandwich hosted by the Kirkton Community Centre. These tasty sandwiches are available for a donation, with all proceeds going to Huron County Food Distribution Centre to help support local families in need. The breakfast runs from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
 A community church service will be held at 10 a.m. Then, at 1 p.m., the classic

car show and the fan-favourite demolition derby will get underway.
 The fair continues to operate thanks to the generosity of local donors. The gate fee is the only cost to fair-goers - it remains a very budget and family-friendly event.
 The Kirkton Fall Fair was also able to give back through its second annual scholarship which went to Clayton Hern this year who is attending university in Alberta this fall.
 Friday admission is by donation, while Saturday and Sunday prices are \$10 each for adults and \$5 each for youths (JK through Grade 12). Preschoolers are free all weekend long. For more information, visit www.kirktonfair.com.

the Hitching Post

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Wednesday Sept-9th Potential storms 27 °C Feels like 35	Thursday Sept-10th Sun & cloud 23 °C Feels like 26	Friday Sept-11th Sunny 23 °C Feels like 25	Saturday Sept-12th Sunny 25 °C Feels like 31	Sunday Sept-13th Mainly sunny 24 °C Feels like 28	Monday Sept-14th Sun & cloud 23 °C Feels like 26	Tuesday Sept-15th Cloudy showers 23 °C Feels like 28
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EDITORIAL

My memories from September 11, 2001



STEWART GRANT
Regional Editor

Long before I was in the newspaper business, I still wrote a lot of things down and kept a journal. Social media was not around yet, but lengthy emails to friends and family were a thing, especially for me living on an island away from home. On Sept.11, 2001, I was a 27-year-old living in Bermuda and working as a Chartered Accountant for Marsh, an insurance company. My wife Laurie and I were hosting her parents Gary and Marg who were visiting us at our island home, and we were relieved that

Hurricane Erin, the first Atlantic hurricane of 2001, had passed by Bermuda on Sept. 9 without incident.

On Sept. 11, 2001, my parents, Murray and June, were back home in St. Marys while my sister Lori was living in Norway where she was working in finance with General Electric.

I wrote them the following email on the evening of Sept. 11 as I reflected on the horrific events. I just wanted to share this email to take you back 25 years to the thoughts of a regular guy in his 20s living through this when it happened. It's amazing how when I re-type this email all these years later how the feelings come flooding back.

September 11, 2001, 8:45 am
Eastern time, 9:45 am Atlantic Time – I was sitting at my desk when Tom White walked by and told me the news – the World Trade Center had been hit by two airplanes. That's where I was when the news came. As my internet was down, I called Laurie at work so I could hear the broadcast from her TV over the phone lines to get more

details on this shocking news. Following our talk, the next amazing wave of news came around – the Pentagon had also been hit. We at Marsh gathered in the meeting room where we watched the unbelievable news come in on ABC and CBS. For the balance of the morning, we silently stood and sat in shock as the pictures came across the screen. Then at about 12:00, there was a gathering in the training room where we prayed for world peace and had a moment of silence for the dead – about six or seven people got up and prayed aloud. This is when I felt saddest, thinking not only of those who died today but also about what this attack may mean on a grander scale.

Like the Challenger explosion in 1986, like the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and like the Kennedy assassination in 1963, this unfortunately will forever be a moment captured in time; a moment where everyone knows where they were when it happened.

Somehow though this is scarier than all the other examples above. This was something out of a mov-

ie, something surreal – the first half of Independence Day comes to mind. Hopefully this is not a sign of things to come. Hopefully the terrorist actions which are now common in places like Jerusalem have not permanently found their way into our lives. Hopefully we do not travel in fear of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Hopefully this doesn't start a chain of events which leads us into World War III.

The amazing thing is, although we are living in Bermuda, Canada, and Norway, we will find that none of us are unaffected by this tragedy.

I probably know people that died today. The Marsh headquarters were in the World Trade Center, floors 95 to 100. Last month I met in person a couple people from the Marsh NY office, including one woman who I've spoken with on 10-15 occasions and gotten to know. I hope she was out of the office today.

The largest companies in the world have offices in the World Trade Center: Marsh, Deloitte & Touche, and Arthur Anderson are just the ones I know for sure. Some

50,000 or so work in the World Trade Center I've been told, so I'm sure we all know someone who knows someone who was there today.

Once we get over the terrible loss of the people that died, we will be left to deal with the consequences – the emotional impact on the survivors, the impact on the national psyche, and the changes in our lives as a result of this. Travel will definitely be impacted, as we will see increased lines at borders, customs, etc. due to increased searches, questioning, etc. People of certain races are going to be the subject of constant scrutiny just because of their skin colour – for them it might be very difficult.

Well, I don't know what else to say... I'm probably not thinking clearly anyway. I just wanted to get in touch with my family today and reflect a bit on what has happened. This is not just another news story that captures our interest for awhile, this is very sadly a day in which we have perhaps seen a significant turning point in world history.

Bravo

Boo

We have no Bravos this week	We have no Boos this week
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*Please note all Boos and Bravos must be signed in order to be considered. Bravos and Boos are submitted by community members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the St. Marys Independent.

Quote of the Week

"Changing the map obviously doesn't change the world. But correcting a representation that distorts it is already an act of truth."

- French Foreign Minister Jean-Noël Barrot said on X following the United Nations General Assembly's vote on Sept. 4, 2026 to endorse a new Equal Earth world map instead of the traditional Mercator map.

Overheard

AT THE COFFEE SHOP

Sponsored by: *Tim Hortons.*

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Teachers... you're it!

Summer is over. Time to remember what day of the week it is.

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others? Either email them to us at info@stmarysindependent.com with the title "Overheard at The Coffee Shop", call 519.284.0041 or drop by the office to let us know!

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

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St. Marys Independent

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Thoughts OF THE WEEK

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Success is the sum of small efforts repeated day in and out.

Education is the most powerful weapon, which can be used to change the world.

Children must be taught how to think, not what to think.

Everyone you meet knows something you don't.

St. James Anglican's 175th anniversary open house featuring concert with barbershop quartet CSQ



(PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY SMITH)

Ivan Facey stands on the steps of St. James Parish Hall, restored as a 175th Anniversary project. Ivan, the church member in charge of property maintenance, will lead tours of this historic building during an Anniversary Open House on Saturday afternoon, September 19.

EMILY STEWART

Independent Reporter

St. James Anglican Church is celebrating 175 years of its congregation with an open house to explore the historic limestone church and a barbershop quartet.

The congregation of St. James Anglican Church began in 1851 with priest Archibald Lampman at a schoolhouse. The church was later built in the late 1850s.

The church's open house will run on Sept. 19 starting at 1 p.m. with a tour of the facility including the sanctuary, the parish hall where the St. Marys Community Closet is set up, stained glass, and a tunnel connecting the two buildings. A concert will follow at 2 p.m. in the sanctuary and will feature St. James Musical director Carol Paulin performing piano and organ pieces, the St. James choir, and barbershop quartet CSQ as the featured performers.

Based in the Kitchener-Waterloo area and featuring David Ryde of St. Marys,

CSQ, which stands for Chord Struck Quartet, meets once a week to rehearse. The quartet will perform an array of songs ranging from the 1910s all the way to the 2000s. The upcoming concert will be the first performance at St. James Anglican Church for CSQ.

"It's an opportunity. It's a concert. It's a tour, come on in and take a look at our church and see some of the history that's here," Ryde said. "We're just looking forward to being able to showcase barbershop singing, four-part harmony singing. There has never been a barbershop chorus, barbershop quartet event in St. Marys so that venue, the barber shopping, will be a little bit new for some people."

The concert is free to attend but free-will donations to support St. James' congregation will be accepted. Refreshments will follow at the event.

For more information about the open house, contact Mary Smith by either calling 519-284-1147 or by sending an email to stjamesinstmarys@gmail.com



(PHOTO COURTESY OF DAVID RYDE)

The CSQ barbershop quartet, associated with the Twin City Harmonizers of Kitchener-Waterloo, will perform at the St. James Anglican Church 175th anniversary open house on Sept. 19.

STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news
from the Town of St. Marys



SCHOOL'S BACK. SLOW DOWN. Road Safety Month Reminder

Children are returning to school, bus stops, and crosswalks. Watch for crossing guards, stop for school buses, and obey the 40 km/h speed limit in Community Safety Zones.

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CHECK YOUR VOTER REGISTRATION

If you've recently moved, changed your name, or aren't sure your voter information is up to date, now is the time to check.

Confirm, update, or add your information to the voters' list by visiting Town Hall (175 Queen Street East), or contacting 519-284-2340 ext. 241 during regular business hours.

FALL BOOK SALE

The Friends of the St. Marys Public Library are hosting their bi-annual book sale. Browse books, puzzles, DVDs and more. Items are for sale by donation. Hours include September 23-25, 10 AM - 6 PM and September 26, 10 AM - 4 PM.

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Senior of the Week



Our senior of the week is Tini (Catharina) Genee.

Our Mom was born on September 14, 1926 in Alkmaar, Holland. She immigrated to Canada on August 15, 1953 and married our dad, Bauke (Bob) the same year. They initially settled in Wallaceburg, Ontario raising 6 children and later moved the family to St. Marys in 1970 to become part of the farming community. Mom loves to garden and when not in the garden she is busy knitting sweaters for overseas orphan children. We will be celebrating her 100th birthday with family and friends from near and far.

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, contact us at 519.284.0041 or info@stmarysindependent.com.

Jean Aitcheson speaks on her work at the Stratford Mission Depot

LAURA GREEN

Contributed Article

Stratford's Jean Aitcheson, a retired Canadian nurse, founder and leader of the Stratford Mission Depot, was a guest speaker at the Reaching Ontario Sharing Education (ROSE) program, co-hosted by Braemar Women's Institute and the Anglican Church Women, Christ Church. Aitcheson was also appointed to the Order of Canada in 2023.

The event was held on September 3, 2026, at 2 p.m. at Christ Church, Huntingford.

Aitcheson's story of the Stratford Mission Depot's beginnings intertwines with her 55-year nursing career and her membership in Rotary International. The first seeds were planted in 1995 when Aitcheson and her local mission group were preparing to embark on a medical trip to Guatemala.

Aitcheson was told by the mission doctor that there were no medical supplies or equipment in the area that they were travelling to, so they would need to bring whatever they could with them. Pleas were sent out to community groups and off they flew with packed bags and suitcases.

Stratford Mission Depot outgrew many storage areas and now their newest home is at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, using the Sunday school rooms.

Without any kind of funding, or even status as a registered charity, the Stratford Mission Depot relies entirely on donated space and the support of a team of roughly a dozen dedicated volunteers to take in, sort, process, package and label donations of second-hand medical supplies, equipment and other items on their wish list and prepare them for travel with locals to some of the poorest regions in the world.

In total, Aitcheson estimates Stratford Mission Depot works with groups and individuals from as many as 16 different organizations and service clubs.

"All of those supplies have already healed our citizens and now they don't need them anymore," Aitcheson



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Jean Aitcheson (left) from the Stratford Mission Depot was surrounded by donations for the depot from members of Braemar Women's Institute (president Anya Donaldson, centre) and Anglican Church Women, Christ Church (president Barbara Bruce). It took more than one car to transport the donations back to the depot and lots of work for the Tuesday crew of volunteers to sort and organize.

said. "That's what we need – their walkers, wheelchairs, crutches, air casts, their medications either personal or over the counter. All manner of medical supplies is what we need to fill our space."

Everything from warm blankets and socks or other humanitarian supplies are accepted and then shipped worldwide to areas in need.

The mission depot is open at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

"It's probably only a small, little, tiny bit of care, but it's what these people need to survive."

Aitcheson can be reached at 519-276-1975 to answer your inquiries.

WEEKEND QUIZ

By Jake Grant

1. Which animal has fingerprints that are so similar to humans they can confuse forensic investigators?
2. Which country consumes the most chocolate per person each year?
3. What is the largest moon in the Solar System?
4. What is the only continent with no active volcanoes?
5. What is the only metal that is liquid at room temperature?
6. Which famous scientist developed the three laws of motion?
7. What does UN stand for?
8. What was Dolly Parton's middle name?
9. Which animal's egg case is often called a "mermaid's purse"?
10. A tax or duty to be paid on a particular class of imports or exports is known as a ____?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27



SCAN & SAVE:
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READY FOR A ROUTINE REST?

As the new school year kicks into high gear across St. Marys, busy days mean your eyes are working overtime. Whether you're concentrating in class at DCVI, competing on the field, or diving into evening homework, standard lenses can leave your eyes feeling tired and dry by dinner time.

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COMMUNITY CARE – IT'S WHAT WE BELIEVE IN.

Stratford police respond to motor-vehicle collision on closed road in Perth South

ST. MARYS INDEPENDENT

Staff Contribution

As many roadways throughout Perth South remain closed due to downed trees and hydro wires after a major storm passed through the area on Sept. 2, the Stratford Police Service (SPS) is reminding drivers to obey all road-closure signs and notices, and to not drive on any closed roadways.

This notice comes after the SPS received a report of a motor vehicle collision at 6:30 a.m. Sept. 3 on Perth Road 113 in an area that was clearly signed as being closed.

Perth Road 113 had been closed between Perth Line 20 and Perth Line 26 at

the time of the collision.

Police say the driver had allegedly driven around the road closure sign at Perth Line 26, after which they collided with a tree that had fallen across the roadway.

There were no injuries to the driver of the vehicle, however the air bags were deployed and the windshield was smashed.

The driver in this incident was charged with Driving on a Closed Roadway under the Highway Traffic Act.

Perth Road 113 remained closed as of the morning of Sept. 3. Police asked drivers to be patient while crews continued to work hard to clean all roadways in our area to ensure that safe travel could resume.

A headline-worthy wedding day!



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

In a beautiful location off the southern shores of Georgian Bay, St. Marys Independent editor Galen Simmons tied the knot on Saturday, Sept. 5 with his bride Julia Paul, who he's been best friends with for over three years. Grant Haven Media friends and colleagues, and I'm sure all readers who enjoy the weekly papers, wish the newlywed couple a happy life together.

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St. Marys marks Overdose Awareness Day with stories of loss, recovery and hope



(STEWART GRANT PHOTO)

Anna Maria Iredale addressed the gathering for Overdose Awareness Day accompanied by Town of St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee.

STEWART GRANT

Publisher

A group gathered outside St. Marys Town Hall Saturday morning to remember loved ones lost to overdose, while also drawing attention to the ongoing impact of addiction and the need for greater support for those struggling with substance use.

Town Council proclaimed recently that Aug. 31, 2026 be recognized as International Overdose Awareness Day in St. Marys, and that the town “joins governments around the world in recognizing this day as a day to remember and mourn the lost due to drug poisoning as well as those struggling in life from the disease of substance use; and that the people of St. Marys can make a difference by starting conversations to reduce stigma, learning how to minimize harm from substance use and supporting those that are wanting help.”

Due to inclement weather on Aug. 31, the flag-raising ceremony was re-scheduled to Saturday, Sept. 5. The master of ceremonies was Anna Maria Iredale, who lost her son, Mathew Keller, to an overdose ten years ago.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of International Overdose Awareness Day, with the theme “25 years on, still needed.” Iredale told those gathered that the anniversary was a reminder that despite increased awareness of the overdose crisis, lives continue to be lost.

“We are here to remember and honour our lost loved ones, share, learn, and also to get information for support if wanted,” she said.

Iredale also spoke about the impact of stigma on people struggling with substance use and their families, and advocated for access to harm-reduction ser-

vices, including naloxone (a medication that can reverse an opioid overdose), as well as safe consumption sites. She also highlighted peer-led support programs available to families dealing with addiction and bereavement.

Much of the ceremony was devoted to personal stories from people who have experienced the loss of loved ones.

Michelle Rooney spoke about her daughter Sam, who died March 25, 2021, at the age of 23. Sam was a young mother of three boys. Rooney said she had spent years believing she should have been able to save her daughter, before learning to let go of the guilt.

“I didn’t cause it. I couldn’t control it, and I couldn’t cure it,” she said, describing the three principles that have helped her cope with her loss.

More than five years after Sam’s death, Rooney said she tries to remember her daughter through happy memories rather than the trauma surrounding her death. She urged those gathered to remember that people who struggle with addiction are much more than their illness. “They were amazing people who walked this earth, not to be forgotten,” she said.

Melanie MacDonald shared the story of her son Christopher, who died in 2022 at the age of 43. She described him as a talented chef, father, brother and friend who was deeply loved by those around him. She said fentanyl has changed the landscape of communities and warned that stigma can be as damaging as the drug itself.

“Substance use disorder is a complex medical battle, not a moral failure,” she

said, calling for responses based on health care and empathy.

Kourtney MacDonald-Webster spoke about losing both her fiancé Garrett, who was 27, and her brother Chris, as well as several friends to the toxic drug supply. Rather than focusing on statistics, she said, overdose awareness should be about remembering the people behind those numbers. “I’m here to talk about love,” she said. “I’m here to talk about empty chairs at the dinner table, unanswered phone calls, and the beautiful people that should still be walking among us.” She stressed how important it is to check on neighbours, friends and family members who may be struggling.

The gathering also heard from Joe Gladding, who spoke from his own experience with addiction and more than 13 years of recovery. He emphasized that recovery is possible, while acknowledging the challenges faced by people seeking help. Gladding said connection and meaningful relationships can play an important role in recovery, and thanked Iredale for creating opportunities for people to share their experiences publicly.

Mayor Al Strathdee closed the ceremony by thanking those who attended the re-scheduled event. “I’ve been very touched by some of the personal stories,” Mayor Strathdee said, adding that hearing them helped him better understand the addiction crisis and what can be done to address it.

For those gathered outside Town Hall, the significance of the morning went well beyond the raising of a flag. It was an opportunity to remember people whose lives were cut short, support those still struggling, and remind the community that behind every overdose statistic is a person who was loved and whose life mattered.



(STEWART GRANT PHOTO)

Deborah Donner and Tina Coutts share an embrace during the ceremonies held on Saturday recognizing International Overdose Awareness Day.



(STEWART GRANT PHOTO)

Joe Gladding, a peer outreach worker with Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Huron Perth, was one of many who shared their personal stories on Saturday during the flag-raising ceremony for International Overdose Awareness Day. Gladding is now in his 13th year of recovery from addiction.

D&S Downham celebrates 65 years in business



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

From left, Steve Hoshel of Kubota Parts, Frank Meconi of Karcher support, D&S Downham Equipment president Mark Downham, Lindy and Colton Downham, and vice president Bob Downham gather beside one of the company's Kubota tractors during its 65th-anniversary celebration recently. Lindy and Colton, Mark's children and Bob's grandchildren, represent the fourth generation of the Downham family showing an interest in the business founded by Cecil Downham in 1961.

GARY WEST

Independent Reporter

Hundreds of customers, friends and family members gathered south of Stratford recently to celebrate the 65th anniversary of D&S Downham Equipment Ltd. and Karcher Professional Wash Systems.

The family-owned business was founded by Cecil Downham in 1961 on Huron Street West in Stratford, where Cozyn's Garden Gallery is located today.

As the business grew and required more space, the company purchased a former

schoolhouse across Harmony Road, or Perth Line 26, from its current location.

D&S Downham began as a Ferguson equipment dealer before becoming a Massey Ferguson dealership. Today, the business offers a full line of Kubota equipment along with Karcher professional wash systems.

Perth South Mayor Sue Orr was among those who attended the anniversary celebration, congratulating Bob and Mark Downham and their family on three generations of hard work, with members of the fourth generation already showing an interest in the family business.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Hundreds gathered at D&S Downham Equipment Ltd. south of Stratford last week to celebrate the family business's 65th anniversary. Guests were treated to a barbecue catered by Chris's BBQ and Country Style Catering.

Orr said businesses like D&S Downham have helped make Perth South a vibrant and caring community by providing local employment and serving farmers and residents throughout the region.

The evening also brought another reason for the Downham family to celebrate.

Stratford and District Chamber of Commerce general manager Aaron Martin announced Bob Downham as the chamber's 2026 Business Leader of the Year award recipient.

According to the chamber, Downham has exemplified business leadership through his vision, innovation, resilience

and commitment to his employees, customers and community. His leadership has helped build a successful multigenerational company while contributing economic and social benefits throughout southwestern Ontario.

Martin said the business leader award recipient is chosen through a three-step secret-ballot process by the chamber's board of directors. After nominations are submitted and a shortlist is created, board members vote through multiple rounds until a recipient is selected.

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Craigmile seeks fourth term on St. Marys council

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

After 12 years on St. Marys council, Coun. Jim Craigmile says he still has the time, health and desire to serve his community and hopes his experience will help provide continuity through what could be a period of significant change around the council table.

Craigmile is seeking re-election to a fourth term in the Oct. 26 municipal election, pointing to his record of making decisions based on what he believes is best for the entire community rather than individual interests.

"This year, we will see significant change on council, and I believe it is important to have change and important to have experience and the history of previous decisions," Craigmile said.

With new faces expected around the table, Craigmile said he hopes to provide mentorship while supporting town staff and the CAO through the transition. He also pointed to relationships he has developed with community members whose expertise can help councillors better understand issues before making decisions.

Among Craigmile's biggest concerns heading into the next term is the province's expansion of strong mayor powers to St. Marys.

"Strong Mayor Power is at the top of my list because the mayor is unknown," he said, adding he believes respecting the democratic process around the council table will be important.

Beyond governance, Craigmile expects affordability and the municipal budget to remain at the centre of many council discussions.

He pointed to provincial downloading, shared services, infrastructure, housing, transportation, heritage buildings and social issues as pressures council will

need to balance against keeping property-tax increases reasonable.

The slowdown in new construction could add to that challenge. Craigmile said new growth has typically reduced the tax levy by approximately 1.5 per cent, but that benefit could shrink as construction slows.

He also expects council will need to consider recently acquired properties at 14 Church St. N., safety improvements related to secondary access from Widder Street and commercial lands at 90 Carling St., while several large municipal debentures are expected to come off the books during the next term.

Craigmile said another comprehensive service review of town departments should also be undertaken to look for efficiencies.

"The difficult part will be reducing services to keep the tax levy at a reasonable increase," he said, noting approximately every additional \$150,000 in spending represents roughly a one-per-cent residential tax increase.

Despite those pressures, Craigmile said the town is in a strong financial position based on reports from its treasurer and believes council should continue pursuing progress while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

His experience includes participation on boards and committees dealing with senior services, the library, planning, environmental issues, minor hockey, the St. Marys Lincolns, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority and other community matters.

Craigmile said his approach over the past 12 years has benefited from the leadership and mentorship of others around the council table, including outgoing Mayor Al Strathdee, experience he now hopes to pass along.

"It has been a great ride," Craigmile said. "I look forward to being your representative on council again."



(JIM CRAIGMILE PHOTO)

Jim Craigmile is running for a fourth term on council in the Oct. 26 St. Marys municipal election.

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Ryan Leaman brings business and municipal experience to council campaign

STEWART GRANT

Publisher

For Ryan Leaman, the decision to run for St. Marys town council grew out of his experience as both a business owner and an active member of the community.

Leaman and his wife Erin founded Broken Rail Brewing which opened in 2020. The experience he says quickly showed him “just how amazing the people in this community are.”

That support prompted Leaman to become more involved in St. Marys, including through the St. Marys Kinsmen Club, where he has taken on roles organizing the Santa Claus Parade and Summerfest. He is particularly proud of helping grow the club back to a healthy membership. He also serves on the board of the St. Marys Curling Club.

Those community experiences, combined with his background working for two different municipalities, have shaped his decision to seek a seat on council.

“I bring a dual perspective: I know how municipalities operate from the inside, and I know how they impact businesses on the outside,” Leaman said.

His municipal experience, he said, taught him that effective local government is about finding a balance, managing budgets and reducing liability rather than simply taking strong positions.

At the same time, running Broken Rail Brewing has given him a firsthand look at the challenges faced by local entrepreneurs.

“Being behind the bar allows me to chat with people from all walks of life about what makes St. Marys great, and what our pain points are,” he said. “Local business owners talk, which gives me a front-row seat to candid, frank conversations about what is actually working and what Town Hall needs to fix.”



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Ryan Leaman is running for a Councillor position in St. Marys in this year's municipal election.

Among the issues Leaman identifies as priorities are childcare, healthcare and economic development.

As a father of two young children, he said the lack of accessible childcare is a serious concern for local families and employers. He would like to see the municipality encourage the development of licensed home daycar-

es through what he calls a “Business Concierge” model, with town staff helping applicants navigate municipal, provincial and Stratford Social Services requirements.

Leaman also wants the municipality to take a more active role in attracting and retaining businesses. He proposes attending trade shows to attract new industry and using Tax Increment Equivalent Grants to incentivize investment.

Downtown vacancies are another concern. Leaman supports establishing a Vacant Building Registry that would require owners of long-term vacant downtown properties to register, pay an annual fee and meet maintenance requirements. He believes revenue from such a program could help fund downtown beautification and local business grants.

“If we don’t retain businesses and well-paying jobs here, we will slowly sink into being a commuter town,” he said.

For Leaman, the role of a councillor ultimately comes down to listening.

He believes councillors should be accessible to residents, whether they have an idea, a frustration or simply need help finding the right person at Town Hall. He also believes council has a responsibility to clearly explain the reasoning behind its decisions.

“When Town Hall is open and transparent, residents have a much better understanding of the issues and why things are done the way they are,” he said.

Leaman says his campaign will focus less on signs, door-knocking and social media and more on personal conversations with residents.

“I truly value personal, one-on-one connections where you can have real, nuanced conversations,” he said.

Residents who want to speak with Leaman can approach him when they see him around town or contact him by email at ryanleaman@outlook.com.

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St. Marys Independent SPORTS

U13 WOBA Red Rockies turn in strong year-end tourney showing

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Independent Sports Reporter

Despite a disappointing and controversial finish to their final game of the year-end tournament, held Aug. 28-30, the U13 WOBA Red St. Marys Rockies have been unanimously credited for a championship-worthy effort to end the year.

Head coach Robin Van de Gevel raved about the mental focus and positivity that radiated throughout the team all weekend.

"Overall, the boys had a 'want it all' mentality," said Van de Gevel. "They were communicating with each other, making great plays in the outfield, and turning the ball quickly in the infield to get the outs. The encouragement within the bench was also fantastic. When you can build a positive and supportive mindset in the dugout, it really translates into the work we see on the field."

Van de Gevel added the tournament saw the team deliver some of their sharpest play behind their pitchers of the entire season.

"Over the course of the weekend, I would say that we saw some of the best defence from the team," noted Van de Gevel. "I was really impressed with how aggressive they were with each at-bat, and when on defence, they didn't let a ball drop in the outfield and were able to turn some double plays in the infield."

The Rockies' first game of the weekend was a 10-8 win over Mitchell Red, highlighted by Sam Richardson catching a fly ball in the second inning and getting the toss to first base for the double play. In the same game, Jacob Hahn took two hit-by-pitches and made them count with some excellent base running, and Nick Simons chipped in a pair of singles.

Although coming up short on the score-sheet, game number two saw Ryder Boemer hit an out-of-the-park, two-run home run to boost the team's morale, while Sheamus Ross delivered some great glove work on second base.

In the third game, the team's strong defensive play continued, punctuated by Luc Richardson running from shortstop to the right-hand side of second to snag a ball and toss the out at first.

The fourth and final round-robin game saw numerous fly-ball catches, including by Hudson Monteith, Luc Richardson, Luke Savile, Cameryn Stokes, and Ryan Zwambag. During the bottom of the second, Sam Richardson turned a double play at third base with a toss to first.

It was during the fourth inning of their semi-final game against Listowel that the controversy that ultimately ended the Rockies' weekend began.

"Going into the semi-final game, we knew it was going to be a very close game, and the boys were working so hard to be

on top of the score sheet," stated Van de Gevel. "James (Van de Gevel) was on the mound for us, and Ryder (Boemer) was behind the plate. We were up 5-2 going into the top of the fourth and had tremendous team effort and support on and off the field. We were feeling good."

During the bottom of the fourth, torrential rain began, and the field had standing water within minutes, causing the Rockies to struggle to field the balls in the very wet conditions. Listowel took advantage of the Rockies' struggles in the heavy rain, rallying for five runs to take a 7-5 lead.

Luke Savile had the first out with a fly ball in left field. The second out was a line drive to Clark Monteith at first base. Listowel scored two runs on a single to take the lead. The next at-bat was a fly ball to Hudson Monteith in centre field, sending the Rockies to pick up the sticks.

"Going into the fifth, our mindset was great," Van de Gevel explained. "There was still 35 minutes of the ballgame left. It was still pouring rain. We were okay; we still had time and just needed a strong at-bat."

Lachlann Thistle started the inning off with a single, with Ryder Boemer next up. Listowel chose to intentionally walk him in his at-bat, clearly concerned about Boemer's ability to hit it out of the park and tie the game, which he had done in a previous game.

The Listowel pitcher then said he couldn't pitch because he couldn't grip the ball in the rain, so umpires called a weather delay with 30 minutes of game time left. The delay lasted an hour, with kids on both teams passing the time by playing X's and O's on a baseball and throwing it to the other team's dugout, as well as players daring one another to race around the bases in the rain.

Then, the convenor called the game, giving no option to complete the inning. The game was simply and abruptly ended after four innings, with the Rockies down two runs and having two runners on base.

"It was a devastating loss, with no real conclusion. I am confident we were coming back in that game, as our defence was very strong and we were outplaying Listowel. The boys were working so hard to not let anything past them."

Although the ending left a bitter taste in everyone's mouths, Van de Gevel had nothing but positive things to say about the way her squad competed throughout the tournament, noting their defence and at-bats were the best they had been all year thanks in large part to their improved understanding of their positions and belief they could put the ball in play when in the batter's box.

"The team has developed true positional awareness," Van de Gevel said. "They were more aware by the end of the season



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The U13 WOBA Red St. Marys Rockies delivered a strong effort at their year-end tournament Aug. 28-30. Pictured in front holding the camera is coach Robin Van de Gevel. Kneeling in front is James Van de Gevel. In the first standing row, from left, are Clark Monteith, Jacob Hahn, Sheamus Ross, Cameryn Stokes, Luc Richardson, Ryan Zwambag, and assistant coach Matt Monteith. In the back row, from left, are Sam Richardson, Lachlann Thistle, Luke Savile, Ryder Boemer, Hudson Monteith, Nick Simons, and assistant coach Jared Stokes.

of where to be for cutoffs and relays, and this really helped us to flip the outs. The team was more confident in themselves and their teammates, and overall we were a stronger and more versatile team with many players able to play anywhere on the diamond."

Van de Gevel added the opportunity to help the group grow as players and people since, for most of the players, their U9 year, makes coaching this team special to her.

"I've been able to watch them grow, not only as baseball players, but also in their confidence, skills, and personalities. They are becoming young men who are respectful, supportive, and incredible teammates both on and off the diamond. Seeing them encourage one another, work through

challenges, and celebrate each other's successes is what makes this team so rewarding to coach. For me, coaching has always been about much more than building a team of future MLB players. It's about helping these boys develop character, confidence, resilience and a strong work ethic.

"I want them to understand the value of being part of a team, working hard for themselves and for the people around them, and learning how to be someone their teammates can count on," Van de Gevel continued. "The wins and losses will eventually become memories, but the lessons they learn, the friendships they build and the young men they become will stay with them long after their baseball careers are over."



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Lincolns look to fuse experience with speed, skill in 26-27

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

also saw it against Stratford. Stratford is a team that, you watch them on video, or you watch them live, and everything they do is fast. They retrieve pucks, and they get back to pucks quickly. As soon as they get it, they're moving; they're looking to go north, and those are things that, if we bring that into our game, I think that could only help us."

One of the running themes of the Lincolns' new additions, Bradley said, is an infusion of skill up and down the lineup card.

"You look at a lot of guys we've brought in, whether it's guys like Mikey (Pope) or Owen (Bruining) up front, and a few guys on defence as well; I think they have a very great skill set offensively. "They have very good hockey IQ. That skill is something that is really nice to add to what we already had."

Up front, the Lincolns have a returning forward group that includes Jack Clarke, Devun Colebrook, Blake Elzinga, Ryan Hodgkinson, Oliver Lacko, Callum McAuley, Chase McDougall, and Ethan Weir. Owen Bruining and Mikey Pope are also pegged to be key contributors to the Lincolns' offence, and twin brothers Hudsyn and Maddux Chaput along with Jack Taylor fill out the forward group as first-year players.

"We have a top six or top eight that is pretty well set at the moment," Bradley explained. "There's a spot on the third line that someone will need to fill, and then having a fourth line with an identity is really important to us. Being hard to play against and playing fast, those are things that we want."

Lincolns' general manager Pat Powers referred to this year's crop of defencemen as the "deepest (the Lincolns) have had in years," with coach Bradley explaining how this year's blueline brings greater offensive prowess.

"If you look at Chris (Mabey), you look at Ronen (MacFarlane), you look at Tyson (Cartier), you look at Cullen (Kerslake), I think there's quite a bit of offensive ability there," Bradley noted. "They are very fast players, and adding quality players to an already quality defence corps is certainly exciting for me. Again, it's about attacking as quickly as you can, so the main theme will be attacking with pace, and when you add guys with skill and speed, that should make it a lot easier."

Ultimately, the team remains laser-focused on finally capturing the GOHL's top prize, and Bradley said it will take growth from every single member of the team to accomplish that objective.

"We got close to achieving a goal last year, and we didn't achieve it," Bradley said. "It's not just one person; everybody's got to take a step forward to accomplish that goal. We want to be the best team, and that means doing everything the right way. It's practicing well, it's playing hard, it's showing up properly, it's being prepared, all that stuff. But this year isn't bigger than last year. The goal is the same every year. Nothing's changed from last year to this year."

The Lincolns begin their regular season schedule Sept. 11 at home in a rematch of the 2026 Western Conference Final against the Stratford Warriors.



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Why aren't tier one and tier two teams selected right after evaluations?

ST. MARYS MINOR SOCCER

Contributed Article

Each September, St. Marys Minor Soccer holds evaluations for select age groups interested in tier one and tier two teams. While evaluations take place in the fall, final team selections are not made until early in the new year.

You may also notice that evaluations are only held for certain age groups. As a smaller association, we regularly combine neighbouring age groups into cohorts when forming teams. This gives us a larger pool of players to work with and helps us create appropriately sized teams at the right competitive levels. Because of this, evaluations are held for the age groups where tier one or tier two teams may be formed, rather than automatically holding evaluations at every individual age level.

We understand that some families may wonder why we wait to select these teams, especially when other soccer associations may make their selections earlier.

For St. Marys, the reason is simple: we want to give as many kids as possible a place to play.

As a smaller soccer association, the number of players available within each age group — and across combined age-

group cohorts — can have a significant impact on how many teams we are able to form and at which levels. Selecting a tier one or tier two team too early, before registration numbers are known, could unintentionally leave another team with too few players to operate, or create a situation where we have too many players for the number of teams available.

By allowing registration to take place before finalizing our tier one and tier two rosters, we can look at the entire player pool together. This helps us determine the best team structure across tier one, tier two, and tier three, while creating opportunities for the greatest number of players.

For example, committing players to a tier one team in September might look straightforward at the time. But if registration later shows that doing so would leave too few players to form a tier two or tier three team, several other children could be left without an appropriate place to play. The same can happen when neighbouring age groups need to be combined to create viable teams. Waiting until we understand the full registration picture gives us the flexibility to make the best decisions for everyone involved.

One of the most important goals of St. Marys Minor Soccer is to provide an

opportunity for every child who wants to play soccer. While registration numbers, team sizes and league requirements mean we can never guarantee a spot for every player, our process is designed to give us the best possible chance of doing so.

We know waiting for team selections can require a little patience, particularly when neighbouring or larger associations announce their teams earlier. However, those associations may have significantly larger player pools and more flexibility when forming teams.

Our approach reflects the realities of being a smaller community association and, most importantly, our commitment to making decisions based on what is best for the entire group of players — not just one team.

Evaluations in September allow our coaches to assess players. Registration allows us to understand the size and makeup of our player pool. Bringing those two pieces together allows us to build the right teams.

Our goal is simple: create competitive teams at the appropriate levels while giving as many St. Marys kids as possible the opportunity to play.

St. Marys Minor Soccer hosting evaluations Sept. 13, 16

St. Marys Minor Soccer will be putting



on player evaluations on Sunday, Sept. 13 and Wednesday, Sept. 16. They will be led by Eddie McKenna and Cassius Pereira. The following are the dates and times for each age group's evaluation.

Sunday, Sept. 13:

Eddie McKenna:

- U10 Girls: 4:00 - 5:15 p.m.
- U13 Boys: 5:20 - 6:35 p.m.
- U18 Girls: 6:45 - 8:00 p.m.

Cassius Pereira:

- U9 Boys: 4:00 - 5:15 p.m.
- U11 Boys: 5:20 - 6:35 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 16:

Eddie McKenna:

- U9 Boys: 5:00 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
- U11 Boys: 6:20 p.m. - 7:35 p.m.

Cassius Pereira:

- U10 Girls: 5:00 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.
- U13 Boys: 6:20 p.m. - 7:35 p.m.
- U18 Girls: 7:45 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

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MINOR SPORTS **SCRAPBOOK**



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Addie Dundas cracks the ball off the bat during a St. Marys Building Centre U9 HPFL Red St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Ryan Pickel makes a toss to first base during a St. Marys Firefighters U11 WOBA Red St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Hudson Monteith dashes around first base after hitting a home run during a Canadian Tire U13 WOBA Red St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Laine Leis reaches up to make a catch at first base during a Dave Hensel U15 HPFL Blue St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Andrew Garvie rockets the ball up the pitch from the wing during a U10 Boys Tier Three St. Marys Storm 'A' game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Connor McKay launches the ball up the field with a long kick during a U11 Boys Tier Two St. Marys Storm game.

MINOR SPORTS

SCRAPBOOK



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Liam Grogan sends the ball flying with a hit during a Social Thirty-One U9 WOBA Blue St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Emmett Henderson makes an infield catch during a Forman Electric U11 HL Blue St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Cooper Sass loads up a throw to home plate during a Gray Ridge Eggs U13 HL Blue St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Odin Puiras puts a shot on target from just outside the box during a U12 Boys Tier Two St. Marys Storm game.



(CHARIS MUHTAR PHOTO)
Rowan Ricketts steps into a big kick up the field during a U12 Boys Tier Three St. Marys Storm game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)
Isiah Omel drills the ball towards the goal with a heavy kick during a U15 Boys Tier Three St. Marys Storm game.

COLUMNS

UKRAINIAN CORNER: Why is flying across Canada expensive?

ALONA VASYLIEVA

Independent Columnist

I knew that flying within Canada was expensive, but the prices still shock me every single time I try to book a flight. Looking at the total cost for a fall trip to Vancouver before winter starts, I had to double-check if I was buying a simple economy ticket or making a down payment on a Boeing 737.

How can a flight within Canada cost more than a trip to Europe or a week at an all-inclusive resort in Mexico? Maybe that explains why cruises are so popular among Canadians.

In Europe, the golden standard is simple: book well in advance and you secure a bargain. I still don't completely understand why that early booking discount rarely works under Canadian market conditions. Even when planning months ahead, prices stay surprisingly high.

Of course, someone might suggest taking the train instead. But switching from a plane to a rail journey doesn't make much sense here. Cross-country train travel isn't very common, mainly because it takes over four full days each way. To make matters worse, a ticket on VIA Rail often costs more than a flight. Paying extra money just to spend 100 hours in a train seat isn't a realistic option for most people.

After seeing the total for planes and trains, I tried calculating a long-distance road trip instead. But let's be honest; driving across a country of this size takes days of fuel, food and hotel stays before you even arrive.

Looking at all these options, it sometimes feels like making travel accessible – whether abroad or at home – isn't an easy task. The popular concept of a “staycation” sounds great in theory, but when travelling within Canada isn't any more affordable than flying overseas, exploring the country becomes a luxury of its own.

So why are domestic flights so expensive? I decided to look into the reasons behind these prices.

First, there is a total lack of competition. Canadian aviation policy prevents foreign airlines from running flights between Canadian cities. This leaves travellers with only a few local airlines to choose from. Without international budget carriers in the market, Canadian airlines have very little reason to lower their base fares.

Second, Canada operates its airports on a “user-pay” system. In many other countries, governments subsidize airports to keep travel costs reasonable. Canada does the opposite. Major airports rent their land from the federal government and pay millions of dollars in rent each year. The airports pass all these expenses directly to the passengers. When you add up Airport Improvement Fees, security costs and air-traffic control fees, about a third of your ticket price goes straight to the airport and the



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALONA VASYLIEVA)

A closer look at why Canadian domestic flights are so expensive, and why staycations aren't any cheaper.

government before the plane even takes off.

Every time I struggle with these prices, I am reminded of how much I miss the simple convenience of direct flights from Kyiv to anywhere in the world. It will be a truly historic moment when the skies open up and I can finally book a flight back to Ukraine; I would even love to be part of the cabin crew on that long-awaited flight.

Unfortunately, that day still feels far away as global aviation faces ongoing security challenges.

In early September 2026, Volodymyr Zelenskyy issued an official warning to international airlines, insurance companies and foreign partners. He stated that due to a major increase in Ukrainian long-range drones, Russian airspace is de facto closed and unsafe for commercial flights. Zelenskyy stressed that Ukraine is a peaceful country and does not target civilian aircraft. The warning was purely humanitarian, meant to keep people safe as drone activity affects major Russian transport hubs like Moscow and Saint Petersburg.

Overall, air travel today comes with its own unique

difficulties everywhere. Around the world, the aviation industry and travellers are navigating closed airspace and complex safety challenges while here in Canada, everyday passengers are simply trying to find a way to make visiting family and exploring this vast nation a little more affordable.

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Straight From The Shelves

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Have a blast at the “Family Concert & Fundraiser for the Community Commons” on October 3 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. at the Pyramid Recreation Centre! Join us for what is sure to be a fun-filled afternoon complete with live music, face painting, balloon figures, and cotton candy. Our special guest, children's performers Sonshine and Broccoli, are sure to get everyone singing and dancing as we come together to support the transformation of 14 Church Street into a community hub for one and all. Tickets are available at the Library by donation to the Community Commons Project.

Up This Week

- Fri., Sept. 11: Open 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - Sat., Sept. 12: Open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 - Mon., Sept. 14: Open 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 - Tues., Sept. 15: Open 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
 - Wed., Sept. 16: EarlyON Play & Read (9:30 – 10:30 a.m.), Mahjong (1-4 p.m.), FOL Management Committee Meeting (6 p.m.), Books & Brews*^ (7 p.m.)
 - Thurs., Sept. 17: Open 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- *Registration Required**
^Held at the Legion (66 Church St. N)

HISTORIC ST. MARYS: The Westover Auction

MARY SMITH

Independent Columnist

Early in the afternoon on Wednesday, September 28, 1938, a large crowd gathered on the grounds of Westover Park in St. Marys. The occasion was the start of the auction of the large, limestone manor and its contents – a three-day event. The sale was conducted by George R. Gardner, an auctioneer from London who had built a sound reputation since establishing his business in 1922. Throughout the Depression years in 1930s, he had handled the dispersal of the contents of many of the London area's finest homes. But Westover Park was not being sold because of financial problems. In fact, it was described as “an island of elegance that seemed untouched by the Depression.” However, its owner, Mina Hutton McKay, had died earlier that year. Through the trust company administering her estate, Westover was to be auctioned and the proceeds divided among her surviving sisters and nieces. Gardner made sure the event was well advertised, circulating a 20-page catalogue to prospective buyers. It described “A Magnificent Country Home, standing in 19½ acres. Seven acres of beautiful lawns, flower gardens, shrubs, and many fine oak, maple, beech and other trees.”

This description was for those coming from out of town. The many St. Marys residents who planned to attend were already familiar with the “Hutton Estate.” After all, it had been there, overlooking the Thames River, for as long as they could remember. It was such a well-known landmark that local stores sold picture postcards showing the house and its wonderful gardens. Local residents may have been drawn more by curiosity than the intention of spending much money. It was a chance to see the treasures that had accumulated during the eight decades of Hutton family history in St. Marys – treasures that had been hidden from general view behind the house's grey limestone walls. It also promised to be an exciting community event – everyone's friends and neighbours were sure to be there. And there was always the possibility of a bargain!

St. Marys people probably believed they knew all about the well-to-do Hutton family, even if they had just looked at the house and grounds through the wrought-iron fence surrounding the property. Older residents remembered William Veal and Joseph Osman Hutton, the two brothers who originally built the house in 1867. They had died three decades earlier, leaving Westover Park to their youngest niece, Mina Hutton, along with an endowment for its upkeep. In 1914, Mina, in her early 50s, had married Dr. William McKay, originally from St. Marys who had moved to New York. From then on, Mina spent only the summer months at Westover. She and her



(PHOTO COURTESY OF R. LORNE EEDY ARCHIVES, ST. MARYS MUSEUM)

Three women pose on the south lawns of Westover Park in 1915. The stately home and many of its unique architectural features can be seen in the background.

husband had a home in New Jersey and could also afford frequent travel abroad.

Mina had two first cousins who were better known in town. Margaret Anne Austin (called Annie) and Frederick Willoughby Hutton were the children of Mina's uncle, Theodore Hutton. Annie's first husband had been a popular banker, Charles Rumsey, who had died in 1904. Her second husband was another doctor from New York, J. C. Bryan, now retired. They lived in a large house on the southeast corner of Jones and Wellington Streets. Annie owned several downtown properties and was often out and about on business. Annie's brother, Fred, was a prosperous merchant with a store on Queen Street that sold everything from groceries to fine china. For the Bryans and for Fred's family, each summer when Mina returned to St. Marys, Westover had been the centre of social functions for the Huttons' circle of friends. Mina's death and the 1938 sale brought this to an end.

Westover was open to the public for two days before the auction. The Gardner catalogue explained that potential buyers could view the property and the contents of the house afternoons and evenings, Monday, September 26, and Tuesday, September 27. The catalogue's introduction summarized the range of items: “Antique and Modern Furniture, Sterling Silver, English Silver Plate, Oriental and Domestic Rugs, Fine China, also Studebaker President Model 5-Passenger Sedan.” The inside pages listed more than 600 items individually – books, pictures, linens, table lamps, clocks – even a porcelain-lined refrigerator and a General Electric kitchen stove.

Because the auction was so large, it was scheduled in six sessions – three

afternoons beginning at 1:30 and three evenings starting at 7:30. When the auction got underway Wednesday, September 28, the St. Marys Journal Argus was there to cover the first afternoon and managed to get the story into that week's newspaper, published on Thursday, September 29. The report captured some of the excitement: “There was a very large crowd at the auction, perhaps over 500, coming from as far afield as Niagara Falls, Buffalo, Detroit, Toronto, Hamilton, London and Windsor.” The newspaper reported that Gardner was satisfied with the sales: “A sizable amount of furniture was sold on that first afternoon,” although there were disappointments. “The tremendous dining-room suite valued at \$1,400, went for \$175, it being, perhaps, too great in size to comply with many buyers' needs.”

Gardner began with the contents of the family rooms on the main floor and, as the three days passed, he moved to the kitchen wing and then upward to the bedrooms. The final evening offered small items, such as bookends, vases, assorted doilies, tablecloths, napkins, towels, curtains, pillowcases and blankets. The St. Marys Museum's archives has an itemized list of the Westover auction sale receipts. On Friday, the first item was the five-passenger Studebaker sedan, a high-end model that had probably cost Mina McKay over \$1,000. The winning bid was a bargain at \$345. The refrigerator sold for a mere \$7.50, but some bidder was willing to pay \$90 for the General Electric stove.

Mina's cousin, Annie Bryan, sat in the front row all three days, constant-

ly bidding. She rescued many Hutton family treasures to add to her already well-furnished home. (Its contents were sold at auction a decade later, following Annie's death.) But although the crowds were large and the bidding lively, people were still feeling the effects of the Depression and were cautious spenders. The grand total at the end of the sale was \$5,420.60. The house itself and the surrounding property did not sell at the 1938 auction. It sat vacant until 1943 when it was purchased by the Scarborough Foreign Mission Society who converted Westover to a retreat for the training of young missionary priests. In 1972, it became a commune, then a guest house, and, finally in 1988, Westover Inn.

For auction lovers in mid-20th century St. Marys, the Westover sale was a landmark event. The town's historian, Curly Wilson, bought a china clock there that he always treasured. Helen Mills Wilson also loved auctions. When she was a young bride furnishing her home, a friend had advised her to look for antique furniture at auctions for better quality and often for bargain prices. From time to time, in her newspaper column, *From Helen's Angle*, she described auctions where the contents of old family homes were dispersed. She enjoyed attending them as occasions to meet friends, to compare notes on auction items, to make their own informed appraisals. She enjoyed the competitive bidding process and the thrill of winning.

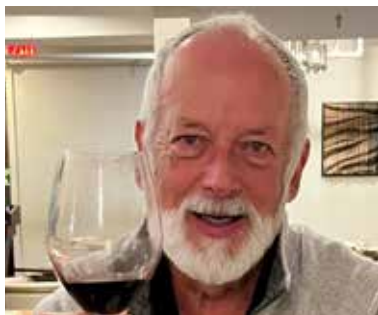
These social aspects helped make old-fashioned auctions popular and exciting events. But today, if a property like Westover were to be auctioned, the event would be entirely on-line. George R. Gardner's two great-grandsons are now in charge of auctions at Gardner Galleries – the family's fourth generation of auctioneers. Their excellent website explains the transition from on-site estate auctions to virtual auction sites. “For buyers, the appeal is simple: convenience. Bidding can take place from a sofa, a desk, or even poolside—any time of day. For sellers, online auctions offer exposure to a significantly larger audience, often resulting in stronger prices. Where a welladvertised live auction once attracted a crowd of 300 people, today's online auctions are viewed by thousands of clients daily through our website.” This may be true but what's lost is the sense of everyone gathering to be part of a milestone event, a passage in the community's history.

PRAYER TO ST. JUDE

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Oh Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us; St. Jude worker of miracles, pray for us; St. Jude helper of the hopeless, pray for us. Say this prayer nine times a day, by the eighth day this prayer will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. A.V.B.

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OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Exploring Rhône River wine country



PAUL KNOWLES

Independent Columnist

Sometimes, it's good to be reminded how little one knows.

Among our circle of friends, I am sometimes seen as something of an expert on wine. That's because I write about wineries, from time to time, and I organize an annual, one-day wine tour in Niagara for a group of about 30 friends. Oh, yes – they know I drink wine on a very regular basis.

Turns out, I am simply a guy who likes wine. But an expert? Not so much.

I quickly realized how little I actually know when we were invited by Viking to take a Rhône River cruise, in the south of France. It was a terrific experience; we visited famous cities like Lyon, Avignon and Arles; we saw impressive examples of Roman civilization; we learned about the area's key role in the French Resistance in World War II.

And to my great delight, our cruise included visits to both the Beaujolais wine region, and to Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Places about which, it turned out, I knew nothing except the names.

There are wonderful wines being produced all over the world, but you have to admit that the

first nation that comes to mind when you talk "wine" is probably France. And wine country along the Rhône is an important contributor to that longstanding reputation. I learned that most of the major vineyards along the Rhône have been there since Roman times. So, they've had a while to get it right.

Wine production became even more important in the 1300's, after the Pope had moved from Rome to Avignon (that's a long and complicated story). What's crucial here is that the Popes liked wine, and encouraged the development of more vineyards.

Today, two of the important wine regions are the two we were able to visit – Beaujolais and Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

And here's where I confess my absolute ignorance. I had no idea that there are actually 12 appellations (sub-districts) in the Beaujolais district, which sits north of Lyon. More embarrassingly, I had always assumed that Châteauneuf-du-Pape was a single, prestigious winery. Nope. This appellation includes 320 vineyards, supplying about 180 independent wineries. It covers 3,200 hectares.

Our cruise sailed from north to south, so the first wine tour we did was in the Beaujolais district, which lies north of Lyon. Here, there are about 200 wineries. We were welcomed at the Château des Ravatys, located in the Côte de Brouilly appellation (roughly in the centre of the Beaujolais district).

We learned that Beaujolais wines are almost exclusively made from Gamay grapes; and that 94% of Beaujolais is red wine (yes, you can make either

red or white from red grapes; it depends on your method).

Probably most importantly, we learned that the Beaujolais we tasted was really, really good.

A side note: sometimes large-group wine tours result in wineries serving their bottom-line wines, for economic reasons. This was certainly not the case during our wine country visits with Viking; the wines were excellent, unfortunately so good at times they were well out of my price range!

The Beaujolais visit was an included feature of our cruise. A few days later, we opted for an optional excursion, which comes at an add-on price. The tour to Châteauneuf-du-Pape was worth it.

This district, south of Lyon, is a direct result of Papal love for wine; in fact the name translates as "The Pope's new castle", and that castle (although hardly new) still stands. Here, we had tours and tastings at two wineries – Château des Fines Roches, part of Domaines Mouset, and Maison Bouachon.

Unlike the Beaujolais wines, which are made from one grape variety, in the Châteauneuf-du-Pape district, 18 varieties of grapes are used in making the wine – not all at once, of course. Most Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines are red, although whites also bear the same appellation.

There are strict rules imposed on the vineyards, including when owners can harvest, minimum alcohol content in the wines (typically rather high, between 13% and 15%), and vineyard management.

There is some good reason behind the strict rules. In the



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The chateau at Château des Ravatys in the Beaujolais district.

1870s, an insect pest known as Grape phylloxera came to Châteauneuf-du-Pape (it ravaged vineyards all over Europe), and destroyed the vineyards. One result was wine fraud – inferior wines were sold, falsely labelled. But root stock was imported from North America, French vines were grafted onto it, and eventually, the vineyards rebounded. By the 1920's, the strict regulations had been imposed, to ensure that wine from Châteauneuf-du-Pape was indeed of the quality the brand name represented.

I was intrigued that one of the Châteauneuf-du-Pape rules is that vineyards must not use irrigation. However, this appellation is part of the much larger Côtes du Rhône region. The

good news for wineries using that label, as opposed to the admittedly more prestigious Châteauneuf-du-Pape brand, is that irrigation is allowed. The good news for wine drinkers (me, for instance), is that Côtes du Rhône wines are both excellent and far less expensive than those bearing that iconic, Pope-inspired label.

I went to the Rhône region knowing less than I thought about wine. I return, probably still in the same boat... but having had a heck of a good time. Wine time, in fact.

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer, and Past-President of the Travel Media Association of Canada. To contact Paul about travel, his books, or speaking engagements, email pknowles@golden.net.



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EAT AT OUR HOUSE: Soft introduction to fall flavours



LAUREN EEDY

Independent Columnist

As we lead into cooler evenings and fall flavours, lets enjoy recipes that gently introduce us to the changing of seasons. I have begun to reduce the amount of salt I add to meals for many months now and that reflects in the phyllo pot pie and snack ideas this week.

Phyllo Chicken Pot Pie

An easier, lower calorie week-

night favourite. It has scrunched up phyllo sheets as a topping versus the work of making or rolling out traditional dough.

Chicken:

3c shredded leftover cooked chicken, turkey, or deli rotisserie chicken

Filling:

2 medium leeks, white and green parts only, sliced. (About 3c)

1c celery, diced

1c carrots, diced

1c frozen peas

1/3c all purpose flour

3/4c white wine (the alcohol will cook out or sub with chicken broth)

1c low sodium chicken broth

1/3c 35% cream (you can also replace cream with a milk of choice but add an extra 1tbsp of flour to roux.)

2/3c goats cheese

3/4tsp kosher salt

1/2 tsp ground black pepper

2tbsp chopped thyme

Phyllo:

10 sheets thawed phyllo dough

1/2c butter, melted

1/4tsp kosher salt

Method:

- Shred chicken

- In a large skillet over med-high, melt butter. Add leeks and sauté until tender, 2m.

- Add celery and carrots, sauté until tender, 3m.

- Sprinkle flour and stir to combined and absorbed.

- Add wine (or sub broth), broth, both creams and goat cheese, stirring well to combine. Season with salt, pepper and thyme.

- Stir in chicken and peas.

Cover and cook 8-10m.

- Preheat oven to 375F. Grease 9x12 rectangular or oval baking dish with butter. Transfer hot stew to baking dish. Set aside to cool slightly.

- Prepare 1/2c butter for phyllo. On a large working space unroll phyllo gently and cover with damp kitchen towel. Working one sheet at a time, lightly brush each with melted butter.

- Scrunch each sheet up into a 4" or 5" ball and place on stew. Finishing covering with remaining sheets, leftover butter and a sprinkle of salt.

- Tent pie loosely with aluminum foil, taking care not to crush phyllo. Bake 15m. Remove foil and bake an additional 15-20m.

- Rest for 10m before serving.

Pumpkin Cookies

One bowl method that makes

soft, sweet vegan pumpkin cookies just in time for pumpkin season.

Makes: 24 cookies

1/2c pumpkin purée

1/2c peanut butter, or nut butter of your choice

3tbsp maple syrup

1tsp vanilla extract

3/4c oat flour (or quick rolled oats for a different texture)

1/2c dark chocolate chips

Method:

- Preheat oven to 360F

- Place all ingredients, excluding chocolate in a mixing bowl.

- Combine until smooth, stir in chocolate chips.

- Spoon dough onto parchment lined baking sheet.

- Bake 12-15m.

- Cool cookies on the baking sheet.

RURAL REFRESH: Falling out of summer



JACLYN TURPIN

Independent Columnist

There seems to be two sides; either you've been consuming all things pumpkin spice since the last week of July, or you're not giving up summer until Sept. 22. I respect both, but the reality is school starts, schedules change, daylight shifts and

structure resumes. In one way or another, most people will experience a shift in their days as the seasons change.

Along with crisp air and cozy sweaters, our mental states can shift too. We've likely just spent the last couple of months in excitement with trips to the beach, camp, dinners with friends, or summer nights around a fire. Not to mention sunshine on our side to brighten the days! With fall approaching, the reduced daylight and contrasting schedules can disrupt our sleep, mood and wellbeing.

These transitions may bring with them some grief as we experience the change of seasons. What many people don't realize is that grief comes with non-

death losses too. After a long-anticipated summer and hyped-up schedule, it can sometimes feel like a letdown as it all fades away into fall. It can also feel like a relief that it is over and the school bell will once again ring. The grief of the summer transitioning to fall can feel like guilt, sadness, gratitude, relief, disappointment, etc. Just as grief with death losses, non-death losses and transitions can bring a variety of emotions too. And yes, of course, two (or more) things can be true at the same time. You can feel gratitude for the summer you had and feel sadness for the weather changing and scheduling shifting. Don't try to fit it into a box or make it all make sense. This is the point; grief is

messy.

Instead of trying to cheer yourself up or focus on the positive, let yourself feel some sadness about the shifts and give yourself compassion for the way you feel. Be honest with yourself and others if you are feeling some sort of way or needing extra support. I can assure you, you are not the only one feeling the transition of the season. Talking about it and offering support can sometimes let others know they are not alone in their feelings too. If you do feel yourself wanting to stay in the positive, be mindful of the activities you did this season or maybe wished you had. Is there something you can plan ahead for next summer, or an activity that you can throw

a sweater on for and schedule in for this fall?

It is important to recognize that our bodies and mind will respond to seasonal changes and transitions. This is normal. However, being mindful of your symptoms and experience may be the best way to acknowledge when it might be time to connect with professional supports. If you are wondering, it is never too early to reach out and build a routine around supporting your mental health. Fall is a good opportunity to get connected and build a schedule for support.

Jaclyn Turpin is a social worker with Rural Refresh, offering counselling for St. Marys and area.

UNDERSTANDING GEN Z: Bye bye bye



MEREDITH A. STOKES

Independent Columnist

By the time this article goes to print, students and teachers everywhere will have begun the never-ceasing 10-month cycle of a new school year. I will have set foot in high school,

and even though it won't be my first time now I'll actually belong there, rather than being on a field trip. It feels necessary to reflect on this major shift in my life, whether to inform or just to make some fellow graduates feel less alone.

I am 14 years old and haven't yet hit five feet tall (I have zero hope that I will). In so many ways I'm not ready to move on from a school where I knew every kid and their cousin by name, but in so many others I can't wait for all the new opportunities high school will bring.

For some of us, elementary school was the best place in the world. That's where they met

their best friends, got the role they wanted in the play, or completely rocked a kid in soccer for the first time. For some of us it was absolute hell, where they got bullied, or were forced into tutoring, or were treated like they were less just because they couldn't spell "science." I think for most of us it was somewhere in the middle. There were good times and bad ones, as well as some teachers we hated and some we loved.

Holy Name of Mary school shaped my life. If you really think about it, children spend more time at school than anywhere else, including their own home - if you ignore sleep. For

10 years, your classmates and your teachers are your family. That same bunch of kids that I met in 2016 carried me through the death of a classmate, the pandemic, and those moments that the world felt like it was burning down. We survived near-failing grades and those impossible math tests, and together we got over stage fright and nearly adopted a turtle. The highs and lows of childhood, all within one block of that place, yet here we are, leaving it all behind.

Was it worth all the algebra classes in the end? I think so. Even if we put on a brave face and say we're ready to move on,

we're all going to miss ditching recess to do Just Dance together. Still, time doesn't care if we want to or not. We still had to choose our high school courses in February, receive our diplomas in June, get our schedules in July, and go to orientation in August. Now, we're going back to school shopping and counting down the days until Sept. 8.

I heard once that our first life is before school and our second is our elementary years. If that's the case, my third life begins this Tuesday at 8:55am.

So here's to everyone else that's going through this shift. You're not the only one terrified. We can do this.

Riddles

- I get shorter every time you use me, but I can help you write a very long story. What am I?

A pencil
- I have a spine but no bones, pages but no feet, and I can take you places without moving. What am I?

A book
- I have a face and two hands, but I can't clap. In a classroom, I can tell you when it's time to leave. What am I?

A clock
- I can be full of letters without being a letter. I can be opened, closed, and carried around all day. What am I?

A backpack
- I have many lines but I'm not a poem. I can help make sure your lines are straight. What am I?

A ruler
- I'm made to disappear, but the better I do my job, the smaller I become. What am I?

An eraser
- I have a lot of keys, but I can't open a single door. You might use me to write your homework. What am I?

A keyboard
- I'm given before I'm taken, and I can tell a teacher exactly how much you know. What am I?

An answer
- I'm always in front of you in class, but you can't see me unless you look up. I can be covered in answers, questions, or drawings. What am I?

The board

- Word Search -



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- Parade
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- Farmer Olympics
- Baby show
- Pig races
- Dairy show
- Live music
- Pumpkin catapult
- Tractor pull
- Car show
- Demolition derby



The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

What's a pencil's favorite place to visit?



Pennsylvania!

Kaydan Dundas (6)

Hey Kids... Every Riddle Kid that appears in the paper gets a FREE MILKSHAKE at the Sunset Diner!

St. Marys Veterinary Clinic is pleased to be the sponsor of the

PET OF THE WEEK



As the kids head back to school, your pet's routine changes too. Extra alone time can lead to boredom or anxiety. Keep them busy with toys, regular walks, and plenty of attention before and after school. A little routine goes a long way toward a happy, healthy pet!



FLOPSY

Our Pet of the Week is Flopsy, a charming Mini Lop rabbit who has quickly hopped his way into the hearts of the Harlton family. Flopsy was purchased by Tom Harlton for his grandson Thomas, who visits from Wales, and he has become a much-loved member of the family farm. He also loves attention and will gladly settle down for a cuddle, especially if it includes a gentle scratch under his big ears.



Thorndale News

A section within the
St. Marys Independent



PURPLE HILL

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Community friends and family support greatly appreciated

NANCY ABRA

Independent Reporter

Who knew that a road trip across the United States would be life changing? With plans to visit their cycling friends in Santa Barbara, California, Mike and Connie Bontje of Thorndale set out last month in their RV. As they are both avid cyclers, they made a point of getting in some kilometres of cycling in every state they travelled through.

When the Bontje's stopped for the evening at an RV park, outside Hesperia, California, Mike decided to go for a short ride. That simple bike ride ended up in a life changing event. He was hit from behind by a distracted driver in a pick-up truck. Mike had to be air lifted to a medical centre in San Bernadino with serious injuries of a compound fracture of

his right ankle, the bone protruding out and the foot at a right angle. He also suffered a tibia fracture to his left leg and T12 compression fracture in his back.

After Mike's 12-day stay in the hospital, he finally got the ok to travel back home. With his injuries, he could not sit on a commercial flight and therefore they came home in a Canadian Air ambulance.

Now at home recouping and recovering, Connie stated "It has been a long ride. Many thanks for all the calls, notes, messages, and prayers we received for Mike. And extra thanks to the Thorndale Gentleman's Book Club for getting and installing a chair lift for Mike. It works like a dream." Adding, "It will be a long recovery, but Mike is a determined man, and we greatly appreciate the support of this community, family and friends."



(NANCY ABRA PHOTO)

The Thorndale Gentleman's Book Club sourced and installed a chair lift in the home of Connie and Mike Bontje for easier accessibility. From left to right are Norm Jary, Bontje's son-in-law Scott Thorn, Rene Coppens (sitting in the chair lift), Brian Teal, Steve Halliday, Mark Glasier. Absent when this photo was taken was Jim Poel.

What's on at the Thorndale Library in September

NANCY ABRA

Independent Reporter

The Thorndale Library offers programs for all ages. EarlyON runs Fridays from 9 to 11 a.m. for children up to age six. Storytime is Tuesdays from 10:30 to 11 a.m. with stories, songs, and rhymes.

For ages 7 to 17, The Art of Hanging Out begins on September 9 from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m., once a month, combining crafts and time with friends. Starting September 10, Happy Club runs 4 to 4:30 pm, weekly for ages 3

to 6, with crafts, games, and experiments. Parents must remain in the library.

For adults, 'Stitch 'n Chat' is September 16 from 6 to 8 p.m.; bring a needlework project and register. The Evening Book Club meets the fourth Thursday of each month, starting September 24 from 6 to 8 p.m. Participants sign out the novel, read it, and meet to discuss. Registration is required.

Special activities include Fused Bead Keychains on September 16 at 3:45 p.m.; Wearable Art, featuring pendants and earrings for adults and seniors, on October 13

at 11 a.m.; and Resin 101 on October 14 at 6:30 p.m. Registration is required.

A welcomed addition to Thorndale



(NANCY ABRA PHOTO)

Last Thursday, crews installed the large sign for the new gas station at the southeast corner of King Street and Nissouri Road in Thorndale. The facility opened to customers the next day, and area residents are pleased to welcome this much-needed addition to the growing community.

Thorndale United Church

BEEF SUPPER

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**Tuesday, October 20, 2026
Thorndale Community Centre
4:30 – 7:00 PM**

Adults:	\$25.00
Child 6-14:	\$10.00
Child 5 & Under:	Free

For Tickets Call: 519-461-0463

LAST DAY TO BUY TICKETS: OCT 11th, 2026

OBITUARY

Ballantyne



We are saddened to announce that Mabel Ballantyne (nee Oliver) our beloved Mother, Grandmother and Great Grandmother passed away peacefully at St. Marys Memorial Hospital on August 31, 2026 in her 101st year after a brief illness.

She is survived by sons Barry (Sandy), Dale and daughter

Brenda Chambers, her grandchildren Brad, Michelle (Matt) McKeen, Kevin and her great grandchildren Nathan and Natalie. Predeceased by husband Grant (1981) son in-law Kelvin Chambers (2024), her parents Mensell and Eva, brothers George (Marie), Ernie (Bell) and sisters Mary (Charlie) Smith, Erma and Florence in infancy. Brothers-in-law Mowat (Ethel), Glen (Lena), and Murray Ballantyne.

She had a strong faith. She attended the North Nissouri Church as a child and continued to cherish that church her entire life. For her 100th birthday, they planted a tree in her honor in the cemetery which she was so appreciative of. She also attended the St. Marys Presbyterian church.

Mother had an incredible work ethic who dedicated almost 70 years of her life to the family farm, hosting family gatherings and holiday dinners. She always said ‘never put off to tomorrow, what you can do today’. Always thoughtful of others, communicating the old fashioned way via letters and cards. She had an incredible penmanship even at the age of 100. Her network of family and friends will miss her dearly.

The family would like to thank Kingsway Lodge for her care. A special thank you to the Dr.’s and nurses at St. Marys Memorial Hospital for their compassionate care during her final days. A Celebration of Life Open House will be held in the Community Hall at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, 317 James St S, St. Marys, on September 13, 2026 from 2 - 4 pm.

In her memory, donations may be made to the St. Marys Memorial Healthcare Foundation or the charity of your choice.

Online tributes at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

HELP WANTED



HIRING EQUIPMENT OPERATOR

The Township of Perth South Public Works Department is seeking a qualified Equipment Operator. Reporting to the Operations Manager, applicants will be experienced with the ability to operate and maintain various pieces of equipment, such as road graders, wheel loaders and tandem dump trucks. The candidate will also be required to complete roadside maintenance activities including, trees, signage, potholes, and debris clean up.

Applicants should have road maintenance and construction knowledge, experience in equipment operation and maintenance and a valid “DZ” license. This position is subject to weekend and winter scheduling and some emergency call-out.

The 2026 salary range for this position is **\$27.73 – \$34.67 per hour** based on a 40-hour work week.

The Township of Perth South offers excellent benefits and a competitive compensation package. For a detailed job description of this position, please visit www.perthsouth.ca

We thank all candidates for their interest, however, only those applicants selected for an interview will be contacted.

Interested candidates are invited to submit a detailed resume expressing their interest to the undersigned clearly marked as “Equipment Operator” by **Thursday, Sept 24, 2026**.

Ken Bettles, Director of Public Works

Township of Perth South

3191 Road 122

St. Pauls, ON NOK 1V0

E-mail – kbettles@perthsouth.ca

Information gathered is under the authority of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and shall only be used for candidate selection purposes.

St. Marys Legion Cribbage

**Starts Tuesday October 6
7 pm sharp**

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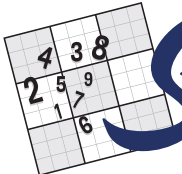
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2			5		6		8	
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Solutions on pg. 27

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St. James Anglican Church

1851-2026



Join Our Celebration!

175th Anniversary of the Congregation

Saturday, September 19, 2026

1:00 pm – Open House and tours of the church
2:00 pm – Musical concert in the sanctuary

Featuring Dave Ryde and CSQ, barbershop harmonies
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Refreshments to follow

All Are Welcome!

65 Church Street South, St. Marys, Ontario
519-284-1147 or stjamesinstmarys@gmail.com

Browns School CAR SHOW

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

10AM - 2PM

Some cars may leave early for other shows

Hamburgers, hot dogs, coffee and cold drinks will be available for purchase in the church shed across the road.

Browns School is south of St. Marys, West of Medina on Road 92 at Line 13 - about 1km East of Cobble Hills Road.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
Max Muir at 519.860.1753

TRICOUNTY FOODGRAINS BANK

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St. Marys United Church

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Tickets available from Cindy Jones 519.284.2704 **OR**
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Community Liaison Committee

The next Community Liaison Committee Meeting will be held on **Thursday, September 10th at 6 p.m.** at the St. Marys Municipal Operations Center. Members of the public who wish to observe are welcome to attend.

Residents who wish to speak in front of the Committee may submit a detailed request in writing to the Committee. The request will be considered by the Committee and approved prior to the meeting.

Please submit all requests, questions, and concerns for the meeting to kara.pelissero@vcimentos.com by **Tuesday, September 8 at 12 p.m.**



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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26TH

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THE WEEK
AHEAD

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PRC & Friendship Centre events – See the
Stonetown Crier on Page 5

St. Marys Public Library events – See Page 18

Thorndale Library September events – See Page 23

FRIDAY, SEPT 11

- Kirkton Fall Fair – gates open 6 p.m., Farmers Olympics 7 p.m., Fireworks at dusk
- A.N.A.F. meat draw – 6 p.m.
- St. Marys Lincolns vs Stratford Warriors at the PRC – 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT 12

- St. Marys Farmers Market at Milt Dunnell Field
- 8 a.m. to Noon, Lions Club serving breakfast
- Friendship Centre Scrapbooking garage sale & bake sale at the PRC, Entrance D – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Community car show at Downie Optimist Community Centre, St. Pauls – 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Kirkton Fall Fair – Parade 10 a.m., Truck and tractor pull – 3 p.m.
- Kinsmen Club Duck Race at Milt Dunnell Field – 11 a.m.
- Downie Central School Class of 1976 50th anniversary – 1-4 p.m. at the school
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw – 5 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPT 13

- Kirkton Fall Fair – Breakfast 9-11:30 a.m., Church service – 10 a.m., Car show – 1 p.m. followed by the demolition derby
- Legion Bingo – Doors open 11:30 a.m., Early bird – 12:45 p.m., Game time – 1-4 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 16

- Friends of the Library management committee meeting at the Library – 6-8 p.m.
- St. Marys Lincolns vs LaSalle Vipers at Vollmer Culture & Rec Complex – 7 p.m.

THURSDAY, SEPT 17

- St. Marys Museum speaker series on postcards at the Museum – 7 p.m.

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Sept 2 - Jude Myers, Stratford	\$50.00
Sept 3 - Hilary & Reid Parker, St. Marys	\$50.00
Sept 4 - Landon Clark, Woodlawn	\$50.00
Sept 5 - Rosanne & James Nieuwkuyk, Thorndale	\$200.00

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Looking
Back

AMY CUBBERLEY
Independent Columnist



Beard vs. Moustache

25 years ago (2001)

St. Marys DCVI welcomes six new teachers and a vice principal this fall. The new teachers are replacing veterans who retired throughout the last school years, including Bruce Hunter, Roy Perovich, Don Giles, Liz Jackson, and Carol Passmore. Joining DCVI staff are Taunya Kittmer, Ian Moore, April Smith, Laurie Linsman, and Jeff McIntyre. Kevin Mills joins staff as the new Vice Principal.

Third and final reading was given to a rezoning bylaw that will allow the construction of a Wellness Centre adjoining the St. Marys Memorial Hospital.

50 years ago (1976)

The extension to the Adanac Images headquarters on Queen Street East is nearing completion. Electrical services are at present being installed. Maurice and Betty Oliver of Adanac are looking forward to using the much-enlarged facilities very soon. The firm is a large producer of school student photographs and wedding pictures.

It will be beard versus moustache at Teddy’s Field on Sunday evening. Stew McLennan of Minor Hockey will lose his beard if their team loses, and likewise if Minor Ball is the loser, Dave Bradley will be minus a moustache.

75 years ago (1951)

Those who use the Motherwell Bridge over the Thames are not pleased these days with the surface of the structure. The boards laid there are turned up at the ends and provide motorists with a thrill each time they pass over the bridge.

A number of Toronto Exhibition visitors who were returning to St. Marys by C.N. train in the small hours of Sunday morning got quite a surprise when the train failed to make a stop at the local train station where it was scheduled to do so at 3:30 a.m. The conductor’s frantic pulling on the signal cord didn’t help matters either as the train whizzed by the station and on past the freight sheds and Maxwell plant. The extra ride finally ended for the local passengers when the train was backed up into St. Marys again after the conductor somehow enlightened the engineer.

100 years ago (1926)

Councillor Millson reported that he and Councilor Bonis had looked over the footbridge on Victoria Bridge and had asked the advice of others. They have concluded that a cement walk would be the best thing, with the wooden walkway to be repaired for the balance of the present year.

Mr. James Purdue, who has long been a familiar figure around the C.N.R. Junction Station, was superannuated last week on a pension. Though by no means in the senile class, Jim has been with the company for no less than half a century. He started with the Grand Trunk when he was a lad of fifteen.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Koalas
2. Switzerland
3. Ganymede (Jupiter)
4. Australia
5. Mercury
6. Sir Isaac Newton
7. United Nations
8. Rebecca
9. Shark
10. Tariff

SUDOKU ANSWERS

4	6	5	9	7	8	2	1	3
1	3	2	6	4	5	8	7	9
7	9	8	3	1	2	5	4	6
3	5	6	7	8	9	1	2	4
2	4	1	5	3	6	9	8	7
8	7	9	4	2	1	6	3	5
6	2	4	8	9	7	3	5	1
5	1	3	2	6	4	7	9	8
9	8	7	1	5	3	4	6	2

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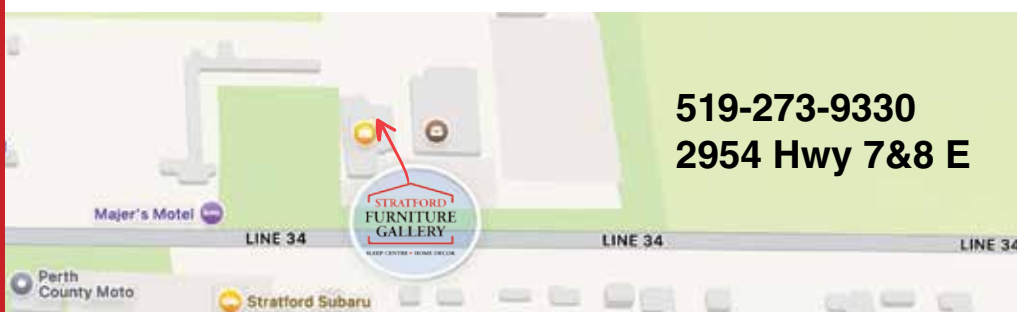


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