

# Exeter Examiner

VOL. 3 • ISSUE 5

Thursday, May 7, 2026

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## Dove's Nest turns thrifty finds into funding for local causes

DAN ROLPH

Editor

Dove's Nest Thrift Store in Exeter has been offering an affordable option for shopping to residents for more than 25 years.

Supported by a team of 23 volunteers, the non-profit organization donates its proceeds to local causes, including six churches, Jessica's House, the Huron County Food Bank Distribution Centre, Artemis Huron and Huron Turning Point.

Started by Elizabeth Davis, the thrift store has shifted locales several times throughout its history. Its roots are humble, getting its beginnings in a basement. Now, it sits in the heart of Exeter's downtown on Main Street.

Joan Heywood, who serves as treasurer on the five-person Dove's Nest board, said the store's long history in Exeter shows how vital it has become to the community.

"There is really a need," she said. "If we were to close, there are a lot of people who would miss this store. The times now, there's a lot of people who can't afford to go and buy new."

"It's important to us that we're giving back."

Despite its thrift store label, the volunteers at Dove's Nest strive to create a space that steps beyond the stereotype of a thrift store filled with dusty and forgotten items.

Board member and store merchandiser Josey

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(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

## LIFESAVING OUTDOOR AEDS INSTALLED THROUGHOUT LUCAN

Ribbon cutting ceremonies were held at each of the four locations that outdoor AEDs were installed in Lucan. The AED at the Lucan Soccer Complex was donated by the Lucan Soccer Club and Jan and Daniel Regan. From left are Coun. Daniel Regan, Lucan Biddulph Mayor Cathy Burghardt-Jesson, Lucan Soccer Club president Dave Allen, Lucan Soccer Club vice-president Morgann Jones and Lucan Soccer Club treasurer Colin Whitehead

## Community initiative brings four new outdoor AEDs to Lucan

DAN ROLPH

Editor

After a local family's first-hand experience with cardiac arrest, the community has rallied together to install four new automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in outdoor community spaces in Lucan.

The AEDs, which are housed in outdoor weather-proof cabinets called SaveStations, have been installed

at the Lucan Biddulph Community Memorial Centre, the Lucan Soccer Complex, Elm Street Park and Market Street Park.

During an official ribbon cutting ceremony on Wednesday, April 22, where the community highlighted the locations to spread awareness, Lucan-Biddulph community services and facilities director Darcey Cook emphasized the importance of ensuring an AED

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# Andrew Darling

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# COMMUNITY

## Grant Haven Media prominent at OCNA Awards



(KAREN HELSDON PHOTO)

Grant Haven Media publications were the winners of several awards at the recent Ontario Community Newspaper Association convention. On hand for the awards ceremony were, left to right: Publisher Stewart Grant, Regional Editor Galen Simmons, Director of Business Development Heather Dunbar, Reporter Jeff Tribe, Tillsonburg Post Editor Jeff Helsdon, Simcoe Advocate Editor Chris Abbott, and Reporter Amanda Nelson.

### GRANT HAVEN MEDIA STAFF

#### Staff Contribution

Grant Haven Media publications were big winners in the Ontario Community Newspaper Association (“OCNA”) awards.

Held in Collingwood on April 24, the awards are an annual competition that pits community newspapers against each other in a wide variety of categories. The event also includes the annual induction ceremonies for the OCNA Hall of Fame.

Tillsonburg Post editor Jeff Helsdon was the winner of the prestigious Reporter of the Year Stephen Shaw Award. Helsdon also placed third for Best Busi-

ness Feature for the story on Shaw’s Ice Cream. Post contributor Jeff Tribe won that category with a story in the Simcoe Advocate profiling Norfolk’s wineries and micro-breweries. In addition, Tribe placed second in the Best Guest/Freelance Column category.

Tillsonburg Post designer Stacie Eden received an honourable mention for Best Use of Colour. Long-time Tillsonburg resident, newspaper editor and former OCNA president, the late Bill Pratt was inducted into the OCNA Hall of Fame during the evening.

Simcoe Advocate Editor Chris Abbott captured first in the Best Sports Pages division.

Michelle Malvaso of The Paris Independent took the other big award of the



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

2026-27 OCNA President Stewart Grant was on stage to help introduce this year’s Hall of Fame inductees, which included Bill Pratt, Editor of the Tillsonburg News; Gerald Tracey, Publisher of the Eganville Leader; Frank Macintyre, Publisher and Editor of the Dundalk Herald; and Maia Master, Publisher of the Toronto Russian Press.

evening, Photographer of the Year. The Independent took a pair of thirds, with Edward Lander in the Arts and Entertainment category and Chris Whelan for Best Editorial Column.

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo’s farm edition for 2025 was the second-place winner for Best Special Section.

Connor Luczka, editor of the Stratford Times, was second for Best Editorial, circulation 8,000 and under. The Times’ Amanda Nelson was second in the Most Creative Grip and Grin Photo category and received an honourable mention in Best Guest/Freelance Column category for a piece written by Canadian musician Loreena McKennitt.

Designer Erin Parsons took first in Local Retail Outlet for an ad in the Wil-

mot-Tavistock Gazette. Gazette Editor Galen Simmons was third in the Health and Wellness story category.

Also on the advertising front, Grant Haven publications were awarded honourable mentions for Best Creative Ad. Recognized were: Parsons for a St. Marys Independent ad, Michelle Foster for the Simcoe Advocate, and Sarah Cairns for the Stratford Times.

“Given that we were a small one-newspaper operation just a few years ago, it was pretty surreal to attend the gala with so many talented team members, and I was thrilled to see them recognized by their peers,” said Grant Haven publisher Stewart Grant, who was installed this weekend as the new President of the OCNA.

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# EDITORIAL

## Traffic safety and construction: We should talk about the roundabout



DAN ROLPH

Editor

In the short time it has been since construction began on Main Street in Exeter, traffic flows have already started shifting elsewhere to avoid delays.

For drivers traveling to communities outside of Exeter, there are two options to skirt around the town.

Detours direct them to Morrison Line, taking them by the Morrison Dam Conservation Area.

Alternately, there is the option that Google Maps seems to usually suggest — Airport Line. And for those who opt to take that option, they're already receiving a reminder of why its intersection with County Road 83 is a challenging one to traverse.

I was recently driving along Airport Line while return-

ing from a quick trip to Goderich, and I found myself trapped in a line of traffic as drivers waited for the right moment to make their way through the busy intersection. It likely took me 10 minutes to push through the spot, and I found it noteworthy that an OPP cruiser was stuck in the same situation as me, coming from the opposite direction and waiting for a brief break in the traffic.

It's not a particularly uncommon experience. I've had plenty of moments sitting at the intersection where I've found myself waiting longer than I'd like.

I think it is the earliest in the year that I have had a noticeable delay at the spot that can often get jammed while drivers pass through on their way to the lakeshore during the busy tourism season.

From what I've heard from others in the community, and from the amount of chatter I've seen in our local Facebook groups, it seems like I'm far from alone in having that experience recently.

However, we are still months away from summer and the rush of tourists from the Greater Toronto Area the season will bring.

The intersection is one that has been drawing a lot of attention over recent months, particularly after Huron County council's decision to remove a project that would have installed a roundabout at the intersection from this year's budget.

It was a close decision, splitting the council chambers 8-7, but the majority was ultimately unswayed by the comments from local representatives calling for action. That decision marked the second time the project faced delays. It was first proposed for inclusion in the 2025 budget but was pushed to this year for consideration.

Just weeks after the decision to remove it from the 2026

budget, a collision happened at the intersection that left at least one driver injured and two vehicles damaged.

Since the roundabout project's removal from the budget, some members of county council have spoken during meetings about their concerns of setting a precedent, and that they feared it could lead to calls for roundabouts at many of the county's intersections.

However, I don't think moving ahead with a roundabout project could be considered precedent setting.

The intersection of Airport Line and County Road 83 is one of the busiest, if not the busiest, intersection in Huron County. The county has a documented history of consultations noting its dangers from a process that began investigating solutions as far back as 2021.

As well, the county has received legal advice warning of the liability issues created by not pursuing the project while knowing of those dangers. If a collision were to happen at the intersection before a roundabout's installation, the county could face claims of negligence that might leave taxpayers footing the bill for any damages.

Now, traffic is flowing to the intersection even more than usual as crews begin their work in town.

South Huron council did recently take matters into their own hands by lowering the speed limit on Airport Line near the intersection. However, that change is not expected to significantly reduce the risks that lead to collisions.

With two consecutive years of construction slated for Exeter's Main Street, and the tourism season fast approaching, I am increasingly concerned that it may only be a matter of time before a serious injury, or something even more tragic, occurs at the intersection.

For the sake of our community and for the people driving through it, I truly hope my fears never become reality.

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Funded by the Government of Canada  
Financé par le gouvernement du Canada



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# Community initiative brings four new outdoor AEDs to Lucan

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

is accessible.

“Sudden cardiac arrest can happen anywhere at any time,” said Cook. “Having an automated external defibrillator readily available, especially in outdoor, high-use community spaces, can make the difference between life and death.”

“These stations help remove barriers and ensure help is never far away.”

According to the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, 60,000 cardiac arrests occur outside of a hospital every year in Canada. When cardiac arrest is experienced outside of a hospital, only one in 10 individuals survive.

However, survival rates can double with the use of an AED and CPR.

In Lucan, those chances have been improved thanks to the efforts of the Merner family.

Tina Merner said the outpouring of support from the community was remarkable after the family’s own experience with sudden cardiac arrest.

“We’ve been in Lucan for 16 years, and this community always, in my opinion, rallies around everyone and is very supportive,” she said.

Following the family’s experience, the Lucan men’s hockey recreation league and the Lucan Businessmen’s Golf Association mobilized to install an AED in the arena, just outside of the ice surface.

Seeing that outpouring of support, the

family wanted to give back to the community that was there in their time of need, and Merner began reaching out to local groups and organizations that she thought may want to get involved in bringing another AED to the community.

She said it didn’t take much convincing to get others on board, and the family’s mission of getting one or two defibrillators installed quickly expanded to the four that have been installed in many of Lucan’s outdoor spaces.

The devices were purchased thanks to the support of the Lucan Ilderton Baseball Association, Jan and Daniel Regan, the Lucan Soccer Club, the Optimist Club of Lucan and the Lucan Biddulph Fire Department.

“They’re not a huge financial investment and can make such a difference in any situation when it’s needed,” said Merner.

While speaking during the ribbon cutting ceremony, Mayor Cathy Burghardt-Jesson said the installation of the AEDs represents an important step forward for the community, ensuring that help is within reach when it is needed.

However, she noted that the efforts of the community represent much more than the devices themselves.

“It’s about people,” said Burghardt-Jesson. “It’s about neighbours looking out for one another, and it’s about a community that steps up when it matters most.”

“This initiative reflects the very best



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Four new AEDs can be found in outdoor community spaces throughout Lucan thanks to a community-driven initiative. A new AED at the Lucan Biddulph Community Memorial Centre’s baseball field was donated by the Lucan Ilderton Baseball Association and Jan and Daniel Regan. From left are Action First Aid senior account manager Christine Drury, Lucan Biddulph Mayor Cathy Burghardt-Jesson, Colton and Tina Merner, Coun. Daniel Regan and Lucan Ilderton Baseball Association president Stephen Tangney.

of Lucan-Biddulph. A caring, responsive and connected community.”

Action First Aid senior account manager Christine Drury commended the community’s ability to work together to install the devices while noting the lifechanging impact they bring to the area.

“These placements will make a difference in your community,” she said. “They will continue to make an impact, and they

will save lives.”

While four AEDs were unveiled, Burghardt-Jesson emphasized that there are other locations throughout the community that could benefit from having an AED nearby. She urged anyone interested in supporting future installations to get in touch.

“We want to talk to you,” she said.

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Our Senior of the Week is Darlene Edwards. Darlene was born at Victoria Hospital, London in 1951 and lived in St. Marys until the age of four. Darlene spent the greater part of her life in Exeter with husband Wayne for 43 years and nine years ago, she returned to St. Marys to be closer to family. Darlene has three children and nine grandchildren. She recently moved to Fairhill and often visits Tim's in the afternoon for a sip and a chat.

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, contact us at [info@exeterexaminer.com](mailto:info@exeterexaminer.com)

Exeter Examiner  
**Photo Quiz**



**Who are you looking at?**  
*By Judy and Barry Johnson*



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*HINT: We are diving ducks and there is nothing ORDINARY about us.*

**This week's answers are found on pg. 30**

**WEEKEND QUIZ**  
By Jake Grant

1. What is the largest living species of lizard?
2. What fashion brand is known for the double "G" logo?
3. How many championships do the Toronto Raptors have?
4. What baby animal is called a puggle?
5. The gong belongs to which section of the orchestra?
6. Who wrote The Jungle Book?
7. Captain Kirk was the captain of what Star Trek starship?
8. The term Grand Prix was first used in a motor race in which country?
9. Who was the first Marvel villain to appear in Fortnite?
10. What is the name of Bluey's little sister?

**This week's answers are found on pg. 30**

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# Dove's Nest turns thrifty finds into funding for local causes



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Dove's Nest Thrift Store in Exeter has been a place to find affordable shopping in the community for more than 25 years. Above are the members of the five-person board that works to keep the store running. From left are secretary Joanne Cooper, treasurer Joan Heywood, president Donna Regier, store merchandiser Josey Christmas and store window display designer Janice Webber

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

Christmas described the Dove's Nest approach as one looking to create a feeling for shoppers that is more upscale than they may expect.

"We want to have that boutique feel," she said. "We've had people come in here and not realize we're a thrift store."

To keep that feeling, Christmas said they specifically ask the community for clean, gently used donations, including

clothing and household items.

"Everything that comes through, we go through it meticulously," she said.

More recently, Dove's Nest has also started a new partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron, which operates The Little Shop nearby and specializes in children's wear.

Though Dove's Nest will still accept donations of children's clothing, the store gives those donations to The Little Shop,

which then shares a portion of the proceeds from the sale of those items with Dove's Nest.

With the partnership beginning in January 2026, Heywood said it is one that has been successful so far.

"It's worked out well," said Heywood. "Very much so."

Having last moved locations in 2021, Heywood said they have been happy with their store on Main Street, though she noted the older building can at times present accessibility challenges, particularly for those using wheelchairs.

With Habitat for Humanity's ReStore location closing in 2021, Heywood said she would like to see Dove's Nest one day expand into a larger, more accessible location that would allow them to accept furniture donations, filling that gap in the community.

Being a store run entirely by volunteers, Heywood said the team is a mixture of long-time volunteers and those who are new to the store. Volunteer tasks can vary, including jobs such as working the cash register, sorting through donations, waiting on customers and taking laundry home.

Some volunteers commit to a weekly shift in the store, while others are on a spare list in case they're needed.

"We always are looking for volunteers," said Heywood.

Wherever Dove's Nest finds itself in the coming years, Christmas said the store's success will continue to depend on the generosity of the community that has never failed to support them.

"We wouldn't be able to give all the

money we've giving over the years if it wasn't for generous donations from the community," she said.

For the latest information about Dove's Nest, including updates about monthly sales, follow the store's Facebook page.



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Dove's Nest Thrift Store aims to provide a boutique-like experience for shoppers.

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# Eccleston Grove: Honouring the family that helped build Grand Bend

ED FLUTER

Examiner Contributor

A proposal is underway to rename Plan 24 as Eccleston Grove, honouring the Eccleston family's longstanding contributions to Grand Bend.

The Eccleston family, who were grocers from London and who originally spent their summers in Grand Bend, made significant contributions to the community during the early to mid 1900s, yet their efforts and accomplishments have received little permanent recognition.

In the summer of 1917, George and Ida Eccleston purchased 45 acres of scrub land in Grand Bend for \$9,100. The land, bordered approximately by Oakwood, Highway 21, Main Street and the North Beach, included what is known as Huron Vista—the large cinder block building at the end of Huron Street.

At that time, the area was little more than sand dunes, small trees, grass and shrubs, with only one structure present, Oak Lodge, a two-story building with an upstairs balcony, and located beside the Huron Street parking lot.

The area next to Oak Lodge became a favoured park and picnic spot called Eccleston Grove, hosting numerous gatherings including the annual Detroit Ford Company picnic.

In 1917, motivated by their entrepreneurial spirit and fondness for Grand Bend, George and Ida built a dance hall on the North Beach at the end of Main Street.

With a wooden roof, open sides and a wooden dance floor running parallel to the water's edge, the venue debuted on July 29, 1917, with what would become the Guy Lombardo Orchestra. Since this was the first paid gig for the group, then called "the London Italian Orchestra," they were thrilled to receive \$10 for their efforts.

Sadly, harsh winter storms from Lake Huron destroyed the dance hall after just two seasons.

Undeterred, in 1919, the Ecclestons constructed a sturdier more permanent building, the renowned Lakeview Casino at the end of Main Street which even had a bowling alley attached, a baseball field behind and which served as a lively hub of entertainment and public service for Grand Bend for the next fifty years.

The Ecclestons donated use of the casino to the Catholic church for mass services for several years, and it was used as a venue for many community fundraisers.

During this period, Ida and her sister-in-law made and rented bathing suits each summer constructed of stockings, bloomers, tops and hats fashioned out of sugar bags, while George focused on building streets and sidewalks.

In the process, George paved Main Street at his own expense, which until then was a dirt road, and which he eventually turned over to the municipality.

Their adopted daughter Ella spent her summers in Grand Bend and winters in Toronto, where she met Eric McIlroy, a successful buyer for the T. Eaton Co. They married in 1932, a year after her father's passing, and they took over managing the casino from Ida in 1937.

In 1924 while running the casino, George and Ida also developed a subdivision of about 400 lots on their land, named Plan 24 — a generic title that has identified the area for over a hundred years.

For a time, Plan 24 was less favorably known as "The Jungle" due to the wild parties hosted in rental cottages, especially over long holiday weekends.

The excessive rowdyism in Plan 24 and other parts of Grand Bend continued until the early 1990s when the council of the day instituted some very strict bylaws and enforced them with rigour.

Yours truly was on council at that time, and I maintain that we helped (along with changing demographics) to curb much of the unruly culture that plagued Grand Bend for many years.

From the start, Eric McIlroy, Ella's husband, showed considerable interest and dedication to the village he'd joined. He was the first Lions Club president, became a member of the first Grand Bend council in 1951, helped form a Grand Bend promotion committee, was the first president of the chamber of commerce, was a charter member of the South Huron Hospital board, was made a life member of the Bluewater Shriners and was a charter member and director of the Ontario Harness Association. With regard to this latter interest, he purchased Merrywood Farm, owned today by Peter Warner, where he built a track to train his horses.

Eric's contributions to the village were so great and so well appreciated that the village hosted an Eric McIlroy Day on June 6, 1981, and awarded him a Plaque and Cairn placed at the corner of Highways 21 and 81, presented in a ceremony by the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

After George Eccleston's death in 1931, Ida had the momentous task of managing the business, so she sold it to Eric and Ella.

The McIlroys then ran the Casino from 1937 to 1966 during the height of the big band era, when dances filled the casino every night featuring many famous entertainers of the time including Louis Armstrong, Glenn Miller, Tommy Dorsey and Les Brown among the favorites.

In an article in the Holiday Newspaper in 1965 entitled "Eccleston Grove 1836 to 1965," Dr. Judith Brigham, a very influential resident in the community at



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The Eccleston family made many contributions to the community of Grand Bend over the years, including building the Lakeview Casino. Pictured is the casino in 1924.

the time and owner of Oak Lodge, wrote the following: "The fine stores and high standards of the Lakeview Casino Dance Hall are a tribute to the knowledge, experience, planning and foresight of the Ecclestons, and provided a solid foundation for the future of Grand Bend."

At the same time, they continued to build, rent, maintain and sell summer cottages and the community was "conscious of the transformation they wrought as bush — covered, wind-swept hilly sand dunes became well built, landscaped summer residences."

Photos at the time show the wild and wind-swept nature of the environment that the Ecclestons had to endure.

In 1966, Ella and Eric sold the casino to a company from Windsor, and attempts at a revival to the "great old days" never succeeded. Subsequently, the casino catered to a younger rock clientele and in its latter years sat dormant until a fire burned it to the ground on July 1, 1981. Rumours still abound that it was arson that led to its demise. An Advocate newspaper article at the time affirmed this with the first line in the article reading "Arson had not been ruled out."

During this time, the Ecclestons continued to develop Plan 24, beginning at Queen Street, behind what is now Tim Hortons, and working toward the lake. The story goes that as they progressed toward the lake, they sold the next line of properties as "lakefront" until they got to last streets before the beach.

To prevent another street from going up in front of them along the North Beach, which had allegedly been considered, the beachfront owners demanded unimpeded easements to and from the waters edge in their deeds. Thirteen properties along the North Beach still have these easements in their deeds today.

The Eccleston's greatest gift of all to Grand Bend, however, was the North Beach which they owned, and which Ella donated to the village in 1981.

In order to protect the covenant, Ella included the following, that "no commercial enterprise of any kind whatsoever shall be constructed on the lands hereby conveyed nor shall there be any further subdivision thereof and that no erection, building or obstruction of any kind whatsoever shall be erected, built and placed upon the said strip of land."

Ella wisely wanted to ensure that that the North Beach remain a public beach.

Because of the many years of joyful entertainment that the Ecclestons brought to the community with their Lakeview Casino, their development of Plan 24 from a deserted wasteland to a thriving subdivision of popular summer cottages (more recently permanent homes) and for their generous donation of the North Beach to the community, along with a multitude of other contributions, it is proposed that the Ecclestons be permanently recognized by the renaming of Plan 24 to "Eccleston Grove," and by the placement of a memento in a prominent location with an appropriate accompanying ceremony.

Next steps include:

- educating the public with the history of Eccleston family and their considerable contributions to the community
- a survey of residents "to get a buy in" by the community, especially in Plan 24
- a presentation to council
- use of the new name in municipal and planning department correspondence and documentation
- design a permanent memento, establish a location, acquire funds install the memento and organize an appropriate dedication ceremony.

It is important to remember that history not recorded is history lost.

# Huron County Pride announces 2026 festival events lineup

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

Huron County Pride has released the full lineup of events for the annual Pride Festival, happening June 2 to 7, 2026.

Last year, the organization welcomed more than 1,500 people to the festival and events throughout the week, and Huron County Pride said it's looking forward to another time of celebration and community building this June.

One of this year's most obvious changes is a shift in venue, moving from Goderich's Courthouse Square to Lions Harbour Park in Goderich.

This year's theme, "Pride through the Ages," aims to put into perspective the voices raised, challenges faced and achievements made by the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and allies. It is also a call to continue the work of fostering inclusion, celebration and pride.

In a press release, Huron County Pride said, "Whether you're joining for the first time or returning to celebrate again, we can't wait to welcome you."

The organization thanked local businesses, community groups, volunteers and neighbours for their support that ensures the festival continues to grow. Every Huron County Pride event will be open to the public, and the organization said each event is designed to bring people together in fun, meaningful and inclusive ways.

The schedule of events includes:

**Tuesday, June 2**

**Pride poster-making/bring your**

**own craft evening**

Start the Pride festivities by flexing your creative and community-building muscles. Huron County Pride is inviting friends and allies to come together for a time of connection and sharing creations. Bring your arts and crafts, and/or make some Pride posters in the vein of protest and celebratory posters used during the queer liberation movement.

Seaforth Library (108 Main St. S., Seaforth)

6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Admission: free

**Wednesday, June 3**

**Movie afternoon at the museum**

Huron County Pride is partnering with No Hate in Huron for a screening of "Parade: Queer Acts of Love and Resistance," a documentary detailing the history and voices behind the 2SLGBTQIA+ movement in Canada. There will also be a time following the film for an intergenerational discussion around queer stories and presence in the community.

Huron County Museum (110 North St., Goderich)

2 p.m.

Admission: free (seating is first-come, first-served)

**Thursday, June 4**

**Tie-dye/acid wash evening**

Huron County Pride is inviting the community for an evening of making throwback (or fashion-forward) styles at the MacNaughton Park Pavilion in Exeter. Bring a shirt, shorts, or whatever other clothing you would like to brighten up and personalize. The organization

will have limited t-shirts of their own for attendees to tie dye or acid wash.

MacNaughton Park Pavilion (68 Hill St., Exeter)

5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Admission: free (bring your own clothing to dye/wash)

**Friday, June 5**

**Pride trivia night**

Team up with friends for a friendly night of queer trivia at Bad Apple Brewing. Test your knowledge, meet new people and maybe win a prize or two. The organization will be drawing from ages past and present for questions, so all ages will have something to add.

Bad Apple Brewing (73463 Hwy. 21, Zurich)

7 p.m.

Admission: by donation (up to teams of four)

**Saturday, June 6**

**Fourth annual Huron County Pride Festival**

Huron County Pride's main event, the fourth annual Pride Festival. This year, the organization will be celebrating together at the Lions Harbour Park, offering more space and more opportunities to make connections. Enjoy live music, drag performances, an artisan market, community booths and the family Pride area. Everyone is welcome.

Lions Harbour Park (Harbour St., Goderich)

10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Admission: free

**Sunday, June 7**

**Pride worship services**

Celebrate Pride in two inclusive wor-



ship services led by Rev. Alex Jebson, minister at Blyth and Brussels United Churches and chairperson of Huron County Pride. During these services, the community will celebrate Blyth and Brussels United Churches officially becoming Affirming Congregations, an official designation and commitment to being 2SLGBTQIA+ affirming communities. All are welcome.

Brussels United Church (61 King St., Brussels) – 9:30 a.m.

Blyth United Church (430 Mill St., Blyth) – 11 a.m.

**Sunday, June 7**

**Bayfield River Valley Trail Association Pride Walk**

Bayfield's fourth annual Pride Walk. Meet at the pavilion in Clan Gregor Square at 11 a.m. for a walk along the Heritage Trail. Show your pride, support diversity and take in the beautiful views of Bayfield.

Clan Gregor Square, Bayfield  
11 a.m.

Admission: free For more information: Ralph Blasting – rjblastingjr@gmail.com

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Grand Bend Art Centre

# Province announces funding to connect local patients to care providers

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

The Ontario Government has announced that the Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team will receive \$4.324 million in funding to connect patients to a primary care team.

According to a press release, 10,157 patients will be connected through the funding that comes through the Primary Care Action Plan in a push to link everyone in the province to a family doctor or primary care provider by 2029.

Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson said the investment is a “significant step forward” for people and families across Huron and Perth counties.

“Our government remains committed to strengthening rural healthcare by supporting the dedicated professionals on the front lines and building a system that is more connected, accessible, and responsive to the needs of both Huron and Perth,” she said.

The \$4.324 million investment into the Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team will be dispersed between the Family Health Teams (FHT) in the region: Bluewater Area FHT, Clinton FHT, Huron Community FHT (Seaforth), Listowel-Wingham and Area FHT, Maitland Valley FHT (Goderich), Grand Bend Area Community Health Centre and Family Health Organization (FHO Exeter), STAR FHT, Stratford

FHT and Happy Valley FHT.

The Family Health Teams receiving funding aim to act quickly to recruit healthcare professionals to attach more patients. Those without a family doctor or who are seeking to find one closer to home may add their name to the Healthcare Connect list, which is the primary method to attach patients to a new primary care provider.

Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team director Joelle Lewis said the funding reflects the strength of primary care in the region.

“By aligning teams, providers and community partners, we are improving how care is coordinated, making it more connected and easier for people to ac-

cess and navigate where they live,” said Lewis. “This collaborative approach is a major step forward for our region to ensure everyone has access to primary care and the supports they need to stay healthy.”

The Huron Perth and Area Ontario Health Team were funded through the latest call for proposals under the Primary Care Action Plan. All 124 teams that received funding across Ontario are expected to connect an additional 500,000 patients to primary care.

The investment also builds upon the \$822,604 investment made in 2024 to help connect an additional 2,000 residents in Huron and Perth Counties to a primary care provider.

# Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health awarded \$100,000 to scale cancer screening access

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

MaRS Discovery District and the Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) have announced the grand prize winner of the Rural and Remote Community Cancer Screening Challenge, an innovation competition designed to improve access to cancer screening for people living in rural, remote and underserved communities across Canada.

The challenge called on a diverse group of innovators — founders, re-

searchers and community organizations — to develop practical solutions that reduce barriers to screening participation.

Five outstanding finalists were selected in August 2025 and received \$15,000 to pilot their solution in the fall.

Following an extensive evaluation process, Gateway Centre of Excellence in Rural Health (CERH), a non-profit based in Goderich, was selected as the winner of the challenge. The grand prize winner, who was announced at MaRS’s annual health tech summit Impact Health, receives \$100,000 to support the scaling

and implementation of its solution.

Gateway CERH’s Integrated Rural Screening Initiative was designed to normalize cancer screening conversations in public, non-clinical settings. By embedding breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening education into active, community-centred programming, this solution has already achieved substantial reach across rural communities.

Gateway CERH increased awareness of cancer screening through multiple approaches, including targeted screening education, delivered at 10 in-person

community events, reaching more than 450 rural residents, including farmers, firefighters, seniors and the general public, over five months.

“By integrating screening facilitation within trusted community settings, the model aims to improve uptake, streamline pathways to diagnostic follow-ups and reduce strain on primary care,” said Gateway CERH president Gwen Devereaux. “We are excited about the opportunity this funding creates to continue advancing cancer screening initiatives in rural communities.”

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## SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION 2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS ACT, 1996

FOR THE

**ENGLISH PUBLIC - AVON MAITLAND DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (1 TO BE ELECTED TO REPRESENT THE ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF BLUEWATER)**  
The Municipality of South Huron is responsible for conducting the election for the Municipalities of South Huron and Bluewater.  
**Please visit [www.southhuron.ca](http://www.southhuron.ca)**

**ENGLISH SEPARATE - HURON-PERTH CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (1 TO BE ELECTED TO REPRESENT THE ELECTORAL DISTRICT OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF BLUEWATER)**  
The Municipality of South Huron is responsible for conducting the election for the Municipalities of South Huron and Bluewater.  
**Please visit [www.southhuron.ca](http://www.southhuron.ca)**

### NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS

Nominations/Registrations may be filed during regular business hours at the office of the Clerk for the Municipality of South Huron, 322 Main Street South, Exeter Ontario N0M 1S6 between Friday, May 1st, 2026 and Thursday August 20th, 2026 and on Nomination Day, Friday August 21st, 2026 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Nomination /registration papers and full particulars may be obtained at the Municipal Office.

A signed consent to the nomination, a declaration of qualification by the candidate, the \$100.00 filing fee (cash, money order or certified cheque) and identification of the candidate are required.

Electors are hereby given notice that if a greater number of candidates are certified than are required to fill the said offices, an election will be held. Voting Day will be Monday, October 26th, 2026.

Please be advised that no person who proposes to be a candidate may solicit or accept contributions for election purposes or incur expenses until that person's nomination has been filed.

**ALEX WOLFE**  
CLERK  
MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON

**DATED THIS 21ST DAY OF  
APRIL, 2026**

**CHANDRA ALEXANDER**  
CLERK  
MUNICIPALITY OF BLUEWATER

# Piecemakers Quilt Show returns to St. Marys this weekend

## Stitching together tradition and creativity



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Local St. Marys quilters (from left) Wendy Anderson, Joan Robinson and Darlene Roger recently won National Awards at the 2025 Quilt Canada National Juried Show in Toronto. Their award-winning quilts will be on display at the 2026 Piecemakers Quilt Show, running April 23-25 at the Pyramid Recreation Centre in St. Marys.

LYNNE GODKIN

Examiner Contributor

Quilting enthusiasts, art lovers, and community members alike should make plans for this weekend as the Huron Perth and Stonetowne Quilt Guilds present the highly anticipated Piecemakers Quilt Show, taking place over three days from April 23-25 at the Pyramid Recreation Centre in St. Marys.

Established in 1994, the show celebrates the timeless art of quilting while showcasing the innovation and passion of today's quiltmakers. The upcoming show promises to bring together a stunning array of traditional patterns, modern designs, and everything in between; with over 300 quilts and other quilted items crafted by our Quilt Guild members, ranging from hand-stitched heirlooms to contemporary textile art. There's something magical about seeing hundreds of hours of work stitched into a single quilt and each piece tells a story—about the maker, the fabric, and the tradition it carries forward. Visitors can expect to see a wide variety of styles, including patchwork, appliqué, paper piecing, plus national award-win-

ning quilts from the recent Canadian National Juried Show at Quilt Canada 2025 in Toronto. The Guild members are an accomplished group with exceptional talent.

In addition to the quilt exhibit, the show will include a Merchant's Mall, a Boutique, and a Luncheon/Tea Room. Come for the day and take some time to explore the beautiful town of St. Marys. In addition to the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame, St. Marys boasts beautiful walking and hiking trails that take in the lovely rural landscape, as well as a vibrant main street where you might also spot some heirloom quilts in downtown store windows.

Whether you're a seasoned quilter, a beginner, or simply curious, this show is a wonderful opportunity to be inspired. Organizers hope people walk away not just with admiration, but with ideas and a deeper appreciation for the craft.

The event is being held Thursday, April 23 (10 am to 5 pm), Friday, April 24 (10 am to 5 pm), and Saturday, April 25 (10 am to 4 pm) at the Pyramid Recreation Centre at 317 James Street South, St. Marys. The cost is \$10 admission, with cash only accepted.

### DECLARATIONS DE CANDIDATURE LE CONSEIL SCOLAIRE CATHOLIQUE PROVINDENCE (FRENCH LANGUAGE SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD)

Un (1) à élire-représentant les régions combinées à l'intérieur des Comtés de Lambton, Huron et Bruce.

### LE CONSEIL SCOLAIRE VIAMONDE (FRENCH LANGUAGE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD)

Un (1) à élire-représentant les régions combinées de toutes les municipalités des Comtés de Waterloo, Wellington, Middlesex, Huron et Perth Les formulaires appropriés au bureau du Greffier.

Chaque nomination doit être dûment signée par le candidat et classée par la candidat ou un agent entre la période de l'année débutant vendredi le 1 mai 2026 et finissant vendredi le 21 août 2026 (Journée des nominations) entre 9 h et 14 h. Un honoraire prescrit au montant de cent dollars (\$100.00) doit accompagner le formulaire. Les règlements provinciaux requièrent que l'honoraire soit en argent comptant, chèque certifié ou un mandat, carte-client ou carte de crédit. Les cartes de crédit n'est pas accepté à Sarnia. Les chèques personnels ne sont pas être acceptés. Le formulaire du candidat doit être approuvé par le Greffier afin que la personne nommée devienne un candidat certifié pour le poste qu'ils a été nommé.

Veillez noter que les nominations pour le Conseil Scolaire de Langue française doivent être classées comme suit:

### LE CONSEIL SCOLAIRE CATHOLIQUE PROVINDENCE (FRENCH LANGUAGE SEPARATE SCHOOL BOARD)

Les nominations peuvent être classées entre 9h et 14h, le jour des nominations le vendredi 21 août 2026 ou avant le jour des nominations pendant les heures normales de bureau. Les nominations peuvent être classées au bureau du Greffier de Sarnia au C.P. 3018, 255 Rue North Christina, Sarnia, Ontario. N7T 7N2 ou à votre demande, au bureau municipal de votre municipalité si la distance entre votre résidence et le bureau municipal de Sarnia est au-delà de cent (100) kilomètres.

### LE CONSEIL SCOLAIRE VIAMONDE (FRENCH LANGUAGE PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD)

Les nominations peuvent être classées entre 9h et 14h, le jour des nominations le vendredi 21 août 2026 ou avant le jour des nominations pendant les heures normales de bureau. Les nominations peuvent être classées au bureau du Greffier de London au C.P. 5035, 300 Dufferin Avenue, London, Ontario, N6A 4L9 ou à votre demande, au bureau municipal de votre municipalité si la distance entre votre résidence et le bureau municipal de Sarnia est au-delà de cent (100) kilomètres.

Au cas où il y aurait un nombre insuffisant candidats certifiés pour remplir les postes disponibles, les nominations pour les postes libres seront réouvertes seulement le mercredi 26 août 2026 entre 9h et 14h, heures de bureau, et toutes nominations additionnelles, si requis, peuvent être classées au bureau du Greffier désigné.

L'électorat est dûment notifié au cas où il y aurait un nombre excédent de candidats certifiés pour les postes disponibles les bureaux de vote seront ouverts aux dates précisées, dans le but de permettre les notes avancées.

Si vous avez l'intention de poser votre candidature aux élections municipaux pour quelque poste que ce soit, vous devez premièrement compléter et classer le formulaire approprié indiquant votre candidature au bureau du Greffier assigné avant de dépenser aucun frais monétaire ou d'entreprendre des prélèvements de fonds monétaire à votre campagne électoral.

#### Municipalités du Comté de Huron :

<b>Florence Witherspoon, Greffière</b> Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh	<b>Carson Lamb, Greffier</b> North Huron	<b>Andrea Fisher, Greffière</b> Goderich
<b>Kim Johnston, Greffière Dèputè</b> Morris-Turnberry	<b>Meaghan McCallum, Greffière</b> Huron East	<b>Alex Wolfe, Greffière</b> South Huron
<b>Caitlin Gillis, Greffière</b> Howick	<b>Chandra Alexander, Greffière</b> Bluewater	<b>Steve Doherty, Greffier</b> Central Huron

# Exeter, Usborne and Stephen amalgamated 25 years ago



(JOHN MINER PHOTO)

South Huron was created 25 years ago through the amalgamation of Usborne and Stephen Townships with the Town of Exeter. To mark the milestone, Rob Morley, the first mayor of South Huron, spoke during the April 16 council meeting. In front from left are Morley and current Mayor George Finch. In middle from left are Coun. Marissa Vaughan, Coun. Milt Dietrich, Coun. Aaron Neeb, Drew Robertson (former councillor for Ward 1), Barb Robertson, Laurie Dykstra (former deputy clerk), Jane Brown (spouse to Larry Brown, South Huron's first CAO). In back from left are Deputy Mayor Jim Dietrich, Coun. Ted Oke, Keith and Sandra Strang (former clerk), Jamie Parker (son of former Road Superintendent Ken Parker), Mag Urlin (spouse of former Deputy Mayor Dave Urlin), along with her daughters Tracey Urlin-Whitesell and Jodi Urlin-Kukulaand, and Coun. Wendy Mcleod-Haggitt.

## JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

When the Ontario government first started suggesting that municipalities should look for partners to merge with in order to cut costs, Rob Morley said councils didn't take it seriously.

"We listened to them, but we didn't really care. We were okay," Morley said in a presentation to South Huron Council marking the 25th anniversary of the amalgamation of Usborne and Stephen Townships with the Town of Exeter.

Two events changed that attitude, said Morley, reeve of Usborne Township prior to amalgamation and the first mayor of South Huron.

One was the move by the Ontario government in 1998 to collapse 23 local governments covering the townships, villages, towns and city in Kent County into a single municipality called Chatham-Kent.

"Believe me, they weren't really happy and the rest of us got real scared, real fast. All of a sudden everything they had been telling us was starting to

look for real," Morley said.

The second event that convinced remaining skeptics that change was coming was the Walkerton water tragedy.

"That really woke a lot of us," said Morley. "We knew there was going to be change then."

A South Huron amalgamation committee was formed with Morley elected chair and Larry Brown, clerk of Stephen Township, elected secretary.

Meetings were held with neighbouring municipalities, including Grand Bend, Bosanquet, Village of Thedford, Hay Township, Blanshard Township and the Village of Lucan.

While Grand Bend was keen to join with the South Huron group, it was in another county. Some municipalities simply wanted to stay the way they were.

In the end, it was Usborne, Stephen and Exeter that agreed to join.

The amalgamation agreement stipulated that each municipality would maintain their own work sheds with only one road manager. It was also

stipulated that the financial assets of Exeter, Stephen and Usborne would be put into separate reserves to be used in those former municipalities.

The fire departments were merged under one administration, along with the arenas, sports fields and community centres.

In the first election of the newly created South Huron, Morley was elected mayor, Dave Urlin deputy mayor, Drew Robertson and Harvey Ratz as councillors for Stephen Ward, Ken Oke for Usborne Ward and Pete Armstrong and Joe Hogan for the Exeter Ward.

Larry Brown was the new CAO, Sandra Strang clerk, Laurie Dykstra deputy clerk, Ken Parker road manager and Jane McPherson treasurer.

Morley said it took a lot of hard work to make the new municipality function over the next few years. The credit belonged to the staff more than to the elected council, he said.

"Council wasn't the major ingredient when this municipality was put together."

Morley said Larry Brown as CAO was amazing.

"He could talk you into buying snow on a wintry day. He was good at his job. What he said was gospel, he was smooth and he understood people."

One of the biggest setbacks for the new municipality was the receivership of the contractor rebuilding the library and municipal offices in the adjoining town hall.

As a result, staff were jammed into a few offices, working elbow to elbow for two years before the library and town hall project was complete.

Morley praised the current council for the Main Street reconstruction project and obtaining the funding from the province. That was something that was on council's plate back in 2001.

Asked by Mayor George Finch for his advice on obtaining funding from upper levels of government, Morley said to go after them for everything, absolutely everything.

"You never get anything unless you ask," he said.

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**NOTICE OF NOMINATION FOR OFFICE**  
 Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s. 32)  
**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR MUNICIPAL OFFICE?**  
**2026 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS**  
**NOTICE TO MUNICIPAL ELECTORS OF THE COUNTY OF HURON**

**NOMINATIONS**

Nominations for the positions listed below must be made on the prescribed form available at your municipal Clerk's Office. Nomination forms must be filed, with the prescribed declaration by at least 25 persons (excluding Howick and Morris-Turnberry), either in person or by your agent, with the Returning Officer of the appropriate municipality during that office's normal office hours between the first business day of May in 2026 to Thursday, August 20, 2026 and between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. on Friday, August 21, 2026 (Nomination Day).

The required filing fee for the Head of Council is \$200.00 and all other offices are \$100.00 (cash, debit, certified cheque or money order made payable to the appropriate municipality) must accompany the signed form. Full details on the procedures to be followed may be obtained from the appropriate Municipal Clerk.

**MUNICIPAL OFFICES FOR WHICH PERSONS MAY BE NOMINATED:**


<b>Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh</b>		<b>Municipality of Bluewater</b>		<b>Municipality of Huron East</b>	
MAYOR	(1)	MAYOR	(1)	MAYOR	(1)
DEPUTY MAYOR	(1)	DEPUTY MAYOR	(1)	COUNCILLOR	
COUNCILLOR	(5)	COUNCILLOR		Brussels Ward	(2)
		Bayfield Ward	(1)	Grey Ward	(2)
		Hensall Ward	(1)	McKillop Ward	(2)
		Zurich Ward	(1)	Seaforth Ward	(2)
		Hay East Ward	(1)	Tuckersmith Ward	(2)
		Hay West Ward	(1)		
		Stanley East Ward	(1)		
		Stanley West Ward	(1)		
Returning Officer – Florence Witherspoon Township of Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh 82133 Council Line, RR#5 Goderich, Ontario N7A 3Y2 (519) 524-4669 www.acwtownship.ca		Returning Officer – Chandra Alexander Municipality of Bluewater 14 Mill Ave. Zurich, Ontario NOM 2T0 (519) 236-4351 www.municipalityofbluewater.ca		Returning Officer – Meaghan McCallum Municipality of Huron East 72 Main Street, South Seaforth, Ontario NOK 1W0 (519) 527-0160 ext. 38 www.huroneast.com	
<b>Town of Goderich</b>		<b>Township of Howick</b>		<b>Municipality of Central Huron</b>	
MAYOR	(1)	REEVE	(1)	MAYOR	(1)
DEPUTY MAYOR	(1)	DEPUTY REEVE	(1)	DEPUTY MAYOR	(1)
COUNCILLOR	(5)	COUNCILLOR	(3)	COUNCILLOR	
				East Ward	(3)
				West Ward	(3)
Returning Officer – Andrea Fisher Town of Goderich 57 West Street Goderich, Ontario N7A 2K5 (519) 524-8344 www.goderich.ca		Returning Officer – Caitlin Gillis Township of Howick 44816 Harriston Road Gorrie, Ontario N0G 1X0 519-335-3208 www.howick.ca		Returning Officer – Steve Doherty Municipality of Central Huron 23 Albert Street, Box 400 Clinton, Ontario N0M 1L0 (519) 482-3997 www.centralhuron.com	
<b>Municipality of Morris-Turnberry</b>		<b>Township of North Huron</b>		<b>Municipality of South Huron</b>	
MAYOR	(1)	REEVE	(1)	MAYOR	(1)
COUNCILLOR	(4)	COUNCILLOR		DEPUTY MAYOR	(1)
		Blyth Ward	(2)	COUNCILLOR	
		East Wawanosh Ward	(2)	Ward 1 – Stephen Ward	(2)
		Wingham Ward	(2)	Ward 2 – Exeter Ward	(2)
				Ward 3 – Usborne Ward	(1)
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# Dashwood Men's Club supports local causes



The Dashwood Men's Club's final meeting of the season on April 24 was another opportunity for the local non-profit organization to support local causes. The club made donations to groups including the Bluewater Youth Tug of War team, the South Huron Hospital Foundation, the Canadian Mental Health Association Thames Valley and the South Huron Arts Centre. The South Huron Hospital Foundation received a \$7,500 donation from the club. From left are foundation chair Rob Tait, club vice-president Bob Biggam, club president Brian McCann, club past-president Matt Runge, club secretary John Trembulak, club treasurer Mike Tieman and foundation board member Chris Keller.



The Dashwood Men's Club donated \$1,500 to the Canadian Mental Health Association Thames Valley. From left are club past-president Matt Runge, Lindsay Barrett-Easton of the Canadian Mental Health Association Thames Valley, club vice-president Bob Biggam, club president Brian McCann, club secretary John Trembulak and club treasurer Mike Tieman.



(BARRY JOHNSON PHOTOS)

The Bluewater Youth Tug of War team received \$500 from the Dashwood Men's Club during the club's meeting.



The South Huron Arts Centre, a local hub for the arts that offers programming for residents, received \$500 from the club. From left are Angie Tripp and Helen Kadey of the South Huron Arts Centre, club vice-president Bob Biggam, club president Brian McCann, club past-president Matt Runge, club secretary John Trembulak and club treasurer Mike Tieman.

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# Homegrown Home Improvement

Refresh with local pros 

## Repurpose rooms and breathe new life into a home

Homeowners do not need to get hung up on room labels as they explore ways to reinvent their spaces. Just because a floor plan labels a space as a formal dining room doesn't mean the area has to remain that way.

Repurposing rooms in a home comes down to aligning the space a person has with their lifestyle needs. Here are a few ways to rethink interior spaces and make a switch to improve utility.

- Identify unused or under-used rooms. Take note of spaces that are cleaned but rarely used. For many people, this is a dining room or a guest suite. Either of these rooms can be transformed into something new.

- Invest in multipurpose furniture. Even people short on space can transform their homes. Replacing a traditional bed with a murphy bed or a daybed can make a room more suitable for a home office or yoga studio, but still provide a space for the occasional

houseguest to sleep. A pull-down shelf desk in a bedroom or even a walk-in closet can turn an area into a compact home workstation.

- Claim dead space. The area under the stairs or another small spot often is used to collect junk. Instead, it can be turned into a built-in wine rack, a reading nook for kids or even a pet sanctuary with just a few modifications. Analyze areas around the home that seem like they don't serve a purpose, and then figure out a way to make them more functional.

- Establish room zones. Some people simply cannot transform an entire room into something else. Visual partitioning makes it possible to create rooms within rooms. An area rug can be used to define a border of a space. Open bookshelves can serve as a wall to separate a sleeping area from a lounging spot. Lighting can add dimension to areas in a space. A pendant light over a craft-

ing or work table can be used to define the space.

- Look at utility areas. Unless you are a do-it-yourselfer or have a hobby that takes up much of the garage or basement, utility areas are major spots in a home to consider repurposing. A garage can be turned into a home gym, kids' play area or even a hobby shop. Modular flooring and insulated walls can make the room comfortable. Attic lofts are the ultimate quiet zones, and can be serene spots for reading, med-

itating or doing homework. An unfinished basement can be converted into a finished space to serve many different purposes. From media rooms to a teen lounge to a hobby cave, the opportunities are endless.

A good rule of thumb before converting any room is to give it a test run. Move in a piece of furniture and test how it works with its intended function. Assess lighting, noise and foot traffic for a week, and then move ahead with changes if the result is positive.

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# Make This Summer Unforgettable: Your Guide to Outdoor Living and Adventure

## CANADIAN TIRE

Contributed Article

As the days grow longer and the sun shines brighter, Canadians everywhere are gearing up for a season of outdoor fun, relaxation, and adventure. Whether you're dreaming of backyard barbecues, lakeside escapes, or family camping

trips, Canadian Tire Exeter is your one-stop destination for everything you need to make the most of summer.

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# Homegrown Home Improvement

Refresh with local pros



## Essential Spring Car Maintenance Checklist

**Tires:** Swap winter tires for all-season tires, check air pressure (including the spare), and inspect tread for uneven wear.

**Undercarriage:** Wash: Deep clean to remove salt and winter debris that can cause rust.

**Battery:** Test battery health (voltage should be 12.6V) and clean terminals of corrosive buildup.

**Fluids:** Check and top up engine oil, coolant, brake fluid, power steering fluid, and windshield washer fluid.

**Wiper Blades:** Replace worn or cracked wipers to handle spring rain.

**Brakes:** Inspect pads

and rotors for damage or rust caused by winter conditions.

**Filters:** Check engine air filter and cabin air filter for debris, replacing them if needed.

**Lights:** Test headlights, brake lights, turn signals, and hazard lights.

**Belts & Hoses:** Inspect for cracks, leaks, or loose connections.

**Interior Detail:** Clean floor mats and carpets to remove accumulated sand and salt.

**Ensure Safety:** Ensuring your tires, brakes, and lights are in good condition after a tough winter is crucial for safety.

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### Collins Home & Colour

SPRING 2025 · HOME REFRESH

## Give Your Home a *Fresh Start* This Spring

There is something about longer days and open windows that makes us want to see our homes with new eyes. Spring is the perfect season to shed what is tired and bring in what feels alive, and it does not have to mean a full renovation. Sometimes all it takes is the right colour on the wall, a new window treatment, or a piece of furniture brought back to life.

#### ◆ FRESHEN YOUR WALLS

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#### ◆ LAYER LIGHT & PATTERN

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#### ◆ REFRESH YOUR EXTERIOR

First impressions start outside. A bold front door colour makes an instant impact, while a quality deck stain or exterior wood finish protects and beautifies through every season. It is one of the best projects you can tackle on a spring weekend.

A spring refresh does not have to be overwhelming. Start with one room, one wall, or even one piece of furniture. Our team at Collins Home & Colour is here to help you find exactly what you need, because great design should feel personal, not generic.

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# SPORTS

## U84 Hockey League donates \$1,000 to hospital foundation



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The 2026 HHL U84 hockey league held games twice in Zurich, raising \$1,000 through the season to support the South Huron Hospital. The teams presented a cheque to the foundation on March 25. In front from left are Jim Lewis, Tommy Maguire, Brian DeNiere, Macauley Morton, Mark McLlwin, Michael Forrester, Dan Hurrel, Mike Veri and Mark Mouzas. In back from left are Dean Schram, John Carter, Mel Andrews, Lucas Andrews, Brad Jansen, Brad Coates, Bill Webber, Dylan Bedard, Paul Gunn, Jeremy MacGregor, Tom Hayter, Justin Bullock, Jeff Pfaff, Ivan Bedard, Brent Dawson, Dave McLlwin, Dylan Carter, Brian Horner, Dave Bryson and Aiden Murphy.



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# U16B Sabres storm to OMHA title

DAN ROLPH

Editor

“It’s a special group.”

That is what U16B Sabres head coach Marty DeBruyn said of the team that went all the way to become all-Ontario champions at the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) championships from March 27 to 29 in Oakville.

The team’s season may have been a dominant one, but they got a strong reminder of skill of the teams they were up against when they dropped their first match of the tournament, losing 1-0 to the Kawartha Coyotes.

DeBruyn said that loss was exactly what the team needed.

“It was a bit of a reality check,” he said. “The boys needed to know that they had to put a better product on the ice and play better.”

“It put us in our place and let us realize what it would take

to win. The boys never looked back after that loss.”

After dropping the first match, the team found their stride and went on to shut out the Sturgeon Lake Thunder, pulling off a strong 6-0 win.

They kept that momentum into the second day of the tournament with a pair of wins against the Douro Dukes that put them into the final on day three.

“After that first loss, we just rolled,” said DeBruyn. “It was like there was no doubt. Nobody could really touch us after the boys decided they wanted to win.”

In the final, the team was once again facing the Kawartha Coyotes, who handed South Huron their only loss of that weekend.

But the final was far from a repeat of their first meeting.

South Huron was first on the board, but Kawartha replied with their own goal to push into

the second frame on equal footing.

A dominant second period from the Sabres put them ahead when they racked up three goals. Though Kawartha found one more goal in the third period, it wasn’t enough to close the growing gap in scoring as the Sabres found two goals, putting the game at 6-2 in favour of the Sabres by the final buzzer.

“It was a lot of elation and happiness,” said DeBruyn. “The boys have won a lot of stuff in the last few years, but never an all-Ontario. To get that all-Ontario, everybody was pretty happy.”

DeBruyn said it is difficult to name specific highlights for the team after a solid season, but he said seeing the faces of the players and the coaches in the last seconds of the final was special, especially with a team that included players from outside their centres.



(LINDSAY BARTON PHOTO)

The U16B South Huron Sabres are champions after taking the top spot in this year’s OMHA championships, which took place in Oakville from March 27 to 29. In back from left are trainer Cam Barton, assistant coach Todd Dittmer, assistant coach Colin Gibbings, Winston Finkbeiner, Aubrey Webster, Mason Finkbeiner, Jasper DeBruyn, Kaelen Horlor, Reid Barton, Evan MacCuspey, Colton Fedorko, Blake Masse, head coach Marty DeBruyn and assistant coach Matt Froud. In front from left are Nolan McCann, Finn Theophilopoulos, Dan Dittmer, Logan Parsons, Graeme Froud, Kallen Grant and Jason Govers.

“I felt relieved that those boys got to win an all-Ontario,” he said. “I knew we were the team to beat, so if we wouldn’t have won, it would have been a little disappointing with the season we had.”

For DeBruyn, who is hanging up his hat as head coach with the season’s end, the win was the perfect way to cap off the journey.

“It was a pretty awesome way to end it,” he said.

# South Huron’s U15A Sabres return home as provincial champions

DAN ROLPH

Editor

It was a dominant season for South Huron’s U15A Sabres, but that season was capped off on the highest note imaginable when they became Ontario Women’s Hockey Association (OWHA) champions.

The team competed in the provincial championships from April 10 to 12, which were hosted in communities throughout the Greater Toronto Area. They began the first day of the provincials facing off with Owen Sound, walking away with a 3-0 win, followed by another shutout against Oakville, toppling them 2-0.

April 11 proved to be the closest the team would come to a loss in the tournament, tying with the Whitby Wolves 1-1. The team then followed that game up with a 1-0 victory against Cambridge in overtime, which was enough to push them into day three.

South Huron played the Waterloo Ravens in the semi-finals on April 12, winning that matchup 2-0 to secure their spot in the final against the St. Cathrines Brock Badgers.

In a close final game, it was South Huron walking away with their white hats, winning 1-0.

Head coach Laura Barfett said it was a well-earned moment made possible by the hard work and dedication of the team.



(JILL KERSLAKE PHOTO)

The U15A South Huron Sabres are OWHA champions, returning home with their white hats after a nearly flawless run in the provincials from April 10 to 12. In back from left are assistant coach Dave Reschke, trainer Erika Foran, Hailey Maes, Lyla Hern, Brooklyn Dickins, Halle Reschke, assistant coach Kevin Dickins, Brianna Leppington, Lily Van Dinther, Nora Pearn, Erin Farquhar, Maggie Van Dinther, assistant coach Dave Farquhar and head coach Laura Barfett. In front from left are Ali Gentner, Lauren O’Shea, Lily Smale, Addison Mattucci, Ridley Kerslake, Laci Gentner and Charlotte Cole.

“Everyone was just so ecstatic,” said Barfett. “It was unreal how the smiles on those girl’s faces were the biggest I’d ever seen them. It was a moment of pure joy.”

Barfett said the team was made up of two groups of girls who grew up on the ice together. With an emphasis on keeping positive and supportive of their teammates, she said those two groups clicked together like magic.

“It was like nothing I have seen before,” she said. “The team chemistry was unbelievable.”

Their chemistry proved to be the secret ingredient that not only took them all the way, but also made them one of the teams to beat throughout the province. By the end of their 2025-26 season, they had a record of 60 wins, three losses and five ties.

Barfett said the team’s goalie, Lily Smale, was a vital part of their success throughout the year. Smale allowed a total of 45 goals in the season, and she

capped off that season with a nearly perfect set of games in the provincials, allowing just one goal.

“Lily Smale is an unbelievable pick of a goalie,” said Barfett. “She was always level-headed. She was ready to go. The second she stepped onto the ice it was go time.”

After their big win, the team returned home to an excited community that showed up to support them during an April 18 victory parade, which Barfett said was a perfect way to both recognize the team’s accomplishments and have a final moment together as a team before the girls continue playing in other centres.

“It was nice to see the girls rewarded after all the hard work they did,” she said. “Everyone is so glad to go out with a bang.”

“I am riding this high for quite a while,” she added. “I have never been so proud of a group of young ladies.”

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# COLUMNS

## Another infamous ghost hamlet of South Huron



**BOB HEYWOOD**

*Examiner Columnist*

In the 1861 “County of Huron Gazetteer” list of Stephen Township patrons, Chester Prouty was identified as a teacher, living on what we now know as the Airport Line. It was Lot 6 Concession 2 to be exact, where the good man hung his hat.

According to Belden’s 1879 County atlas, Prouty was listed as both farmer and township clerk, the position which he held for several years, serving under various reeves and councils. For the purposes of this story, we must look back to his short teaching career.

For a year or two, Mrs. Prouty served at Union School Section #13, located on Dashwood Road, serving students from both Stephen and Hay Townships. The school was built on the north side between the 5th and 6th concessions, almost equal distance between Exeter and Dashwood. I remember the one room structure setting in a grove of tall trees, prior to its demolition.

In the early years of development, the area was low lying and marshy, so initially the lake road deviated slightly at different spots to allow for passage. Eventually, Hay and Stephen laid a mile of corduroy (side by side logs) both to make the road passable and to straighten it out. Hundreds of acres of dense bushland surrounded the site. The trees soon attracted the interests of two local entrepreneurs, Robert Bissett and Thomas Greenway, Centralia merchant and politician.

They built a sawmill to harvest the trees only to find out they had erected their structure on the road allowance and were ordered to move it. Oops! Several frame shanties and houses were soon built to accommodate labourers and their

families.

It was a hamlet in the making and a community without a name. There never was a store or post office or community hall or church. Only the one room school and the busy sawmill and no doubt a whiskey still or two. It seems the employees of the sawmill were of such low caliber both in education and in morals, the little pioneer settlement began to develop and bare a less than desirable notoriety.

Drunkenness and debauchery prevailed, along with rowdiness and fist-cuffs. Even the local newspapers were reporting on the misdeeds of the populace. That’s where Chester Prouty comes back into the story. The Proutys were devout Christians. The township clerk’s dear wife, as the local teacher, was having to cope with some of the ill effects of the bad habits that prevailed in the settlement. It was for this reason that Chester Prouty named the place “Sodom” after the biblical Old Testament city that was destroyed for its wickedness by providence.

Prouty’s religious fervor was released, and soon church and Sunday school meetings were being held in local homes.

In 1877, Samuel and Silas Stanlake, twin brothers from the area, purchased the sawmill and were devoted to changing the reputation of their community. According to the Stephen history book, “in June 1896 the Royal Templars of Temperance held their district council meeting, dinner and tea in Samuel Stanlakes orchard, with 100 in attendance.”

Soon, a glee club was formed and a debating team was ready to compete with other local teams.

Unfortunately, the famous name stuck, although no one ever erected road signs. When the bush lots were depleted, the Stanlakes devoted themselves to farming. All was going fine with Silas eventually marrying Maud Porter who had moved from Goderich Township to teach at the Sodom School. They soon began what would become a large brood of children

and a very tragic story which I would accidentally come face-to-face with in a chance encounter.

Several years have passed since on a Sunday morning the writer of this column travelled to Bright, Ontario, to be the guest speaker at the annual anniversary service of the United Church in that village. There was a full sanctuary that morning, not owing to the guest minister’s renown, but rather because the Plattsville congregation had cancelled their own service to come together as a show of support to their sister church.

After the service, we enjoyed a time of refreshments and fellowship in the lower auditorium. As usual, I was amazed at the number of people who made their way to my table to recount their association with my hometown of Exeter. Either they had been born here, or they had worked in our community, or they had relatives or friends who lived in Exeter.

We were getting ready to head home when a taller gentleman, probably in his early 80’s made his way across the room and held out his hand which I took in mine. “So, you’re from Exeter. I know the place well. I used to live near your town and now I live in the white house in Washington.” His grin soon broke to explain that a few miles from where we were standing, there is indeed a small hamlet in Oxford County called Washington, Ontario, and indeed he lived in a neat little “white sided” cottage on the front street. I could tell he had used this line before.

He went on to tell me that he was now retired after spending many years working in the sandpaper factory in Plattsville. He asked if I was related to Earl Heywood, the radio singer, which I affirmed.

The next question came as a bit of a surprise.

“Do you know where Sodom is from Exeter?”

I told him that I loved local history and I was acquainted with the settlement of Sodom about four miles west of Exeter on Highway 83.

“You probably know

what happened to the city of Sodom in the Bible” was his next query, to which I quickly replied that I knew the Old Testament account of Abraham, his nephew Lot and his wife and how God destroyed the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Quickly he said, “Well, my name is Harry Stanlake, and I was one of the three survivors of the Sodom fire on June 3, 1923.”

I was lost for words for a moment. I had also often heard of that tragedy in the small Stephen Township hamlet.

The June 7 edition of the Exeter paper described that horrible event in this way: “Exeter has witnessed a tragedy the like of which has never been known in this community. Fire which destroyed the home of Mr. Silas Stanlake on the Lake Road, claimed as its victims, six souls, in the persons of Mrs. Stanlake aged 38, her four children, Clarence, six; Charlie, four;

Wilfred, two; and a baby boy not quite three weeks old; also Albert Stanlake (Harry’s uncle) aged 45.”

The newspaper account continued: “On Friday night shortly after 11, when the family were sound in their first sleep, the fire demon swept down upon the comfortable home that nestled amongst the trees a short distance from the road.”

The father had been awakened by the crackling of the fire which had started in the summer kitchen. As he opened the door, the inferno blasted into the main kitchen. Silas rushed back upstairs to awaken his wife, and he headed downstairs to open the front door which was jammed shut from being seldom used.

He managed to break a window through which my new friend Harry climbed, along with his sister Beatrice and later his father, who was unable to climb the stairs to rescue the younger children and his dear wife.

The next day, the community was in a state of shock upon hearing the news. Dr. Hyndman, coroner, could not definitively identify the cause of the blaze.

On Sunday the funeral was held in the opera house and never was such a crowd gathered at a funeral in the history of Exeter. The charred remains of the six bodies were buried together in a single coffin. Between two and three hundred cars were in the line of procession, the first cars reaching the cemetery before the last had left the Main Street service location.

I am certain Harry must have relived that night many times during his long life. I met him once again at a gathering in Exeter, but the tragedy was not mentioned.

For many years, the derelict one room schoolhouse was the only sign of a once busy group of local pioneers.

### Board of Directors, Director Role Huron County Food Bank Distribution Centre (HCFBDC)

*Are you passionate about eliminating hunger in our communities? Join the board of an award-winning, rapidly growing food rescue agency working to ensure no one in rural Ontario goes without access to food!*

#### About HCFBDC

HCFBDC is a food rescue and distribution agency serving Huron, Perth, and Bruce Counties. We supply food to food banks, aid agencies, high schools, and remote rural communities through our various programs. In 2026, HCFBDC was the recipient of Second Harvest’s Ontario Front Line Impact Award for Food Rescue — a recognition of the impact and reach of our work across the region.

As demand for our services grows and our operations expand, we are building a Board of Directors with the skills and experience to lead through this exciting growth. We are seeking professionals who want to help shape the next chapter of a high-impact organization.

#### The Role

This is a volunteer governance position. Directors attend monthly board meetings, serve on committees, and bring their professional expertise to bear on the organization’s strategy, finances, and operations.

#### Time Commitment

Approximately 5 to 10 hours per month, including a two-hour board meeting and any optional committee and planning work.

#### What We’re Looking For

- We welcome candidates who bring one or more of the following:
- Finance or accounting expertise to strengthen financial oversight
  - Fundraising experience — whether professional or demonstrated through results
  - A legal background, particularly familiarity with the regulatory framework governing Ontario nonprofits
  - Hands-on experience in nonprofit board governance
  - Knowledge of or connection to the food security sector
  - A connection to / knowledge of the communities we serve is an asset

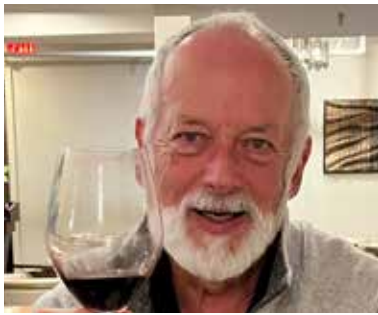
*We are looking for directors who take board service seriously and are ready to contribute meaningfully to an organization doing critical, ground-level work in rural Ontario.*

#### To Apply

Please send a brief expression of interest and your résumé to [harlick@applicants.ca](mailto:harlick@applicants.ca)



# OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: The mystery and wonder of Mount Etna



PAUL KNOWLES

Examiner Columnist

The sky was blue, and the clouds white, although they did not obscure our view of Mount Etna, as we began the coach trip from Messina to the slopes of this active volcano. And this was all just as well, because by the time we were well on our way to the highest point of our trip, the clouds and mist were rolling in, and when we reached our final destination, the most prominent feature was fog.

But that was okay. The thing about Mount Etna is, it's unique and mysterious – the only active volcano on the island of Sicily, and one of three active volcanos in the Isole Eolie chain of islands that stretches north from Sicily. Those volcanic islands include two others that are still active – Stomboli, the easily identified triangle that can be seen from the western shores of Calabria, and Volcanu (the volcano from which the name, “volcano,” derives).

But Mount Etna is the big guy. In fact, it's Europe's largest and highest active volcano, ejecting huge amounts of lava every year.

But, say the experts, this Etna is carefully monitored by scientists, so it is safe to visit – when “they” say so. And since “they” said so, and we had the chance to go to Mount Etna during our Senior Discovery Tours visit to Calabria, we were in.

The main reason a visit to Mount Etna is considered safe was explained to us by our Sicilian guide. Volcanos fall into two categories – “explosive” and “effusive”. Effusive volcanos tend to erupt often or continually, but in more moderate fashion. “Moderate” being a relative term. Mount Etna is an effusive volcano.

So we joined the early-morning queue to board our coach in Siderno, on the east coast of Calabria, and took the one-hour-plus trip across the toe of Italy to find reach Villa San Giovanni, the port for the ferry to Sicily.

The ferry ride across the Straits of Messina is brief, perhaps 20 minutes, but there is nonetheless something magical about sailing toward the legendary island of Sicily for the first time.

We docked in Messina, and began the hour and a half ride south to the slopes of Mount Etna.

Mount Etna is 3,400 meters high. We went just over half way up, to the 1800-meter level, stopping on route, in Zafferana Etnea, for scrumptious pastries and espresso. The guide said that this was to help us to acclimatize to the altitude, but I suspect it has more to do with

the passion all Italians have for pastries and coffee.

Back on the coach, we continued the climb, passing through fascinating layers of topography and plant life. Before long, the predominant feature of the landscape was lava – many hectares of lava flow border the roadway up Etna. It's a stark, dark landscape, although hardy plants begin to grow not long after the lava has cooled. In fact, as lava breaks down, it becomes one of the most nutrient-rich soils anywhere.

And as we rose higher, the temperature plunged, and snow appeared. By the time we reached the top, snow covered almost everything. People were skiing and snowshoeing.

The lava fields – and the views of the mountain – were increasingly obscured by cloud as we climbed toward our 1800-meter destination. And when we reached the parking lot, visibility was a few dozen meters.

But we persisted, because we had disembarked at the site of five craters, and were still able to view some of them. As the mist swirled, the views opened briefly, and then were again shrouded in fog. As I said, the entire adventure had a certain air of mystery.

Visitors can go higher than 1800 meters – there are cable cars and specially outfitted vehicles that head further up, as far as 2900 meters, the high point anyone is allowed to go. But all the literature says, “Go with a guide,” and there are factual accounts of foolhardy folk



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

A view of some of the tourism facilities at the 1800-meter level, still surrounded by snow.

who ignored this advice, and died in an eruption of lava.

While at maximum height, we were invited to dine (Italy, right? Amazing food, right?). The restaurant is La Cantoniera, and it, too, has a Mount Etna story. During a dramatically large eruption in 1983, the original La Cantoniera was consumed and buried by lava flow. Today, the restaurant where we dined is built on top of the lava that contained the remnants of the former building.

And in the main floor dining room, there is a video screen showing that story, as well as wildly dramatic videos of previous Etna eruptions. It tends to inspire visitors to check the view out the windows every few minutes as you dine... just in case.

Our lunch at La Cantoniera, by the way, was a lavish buffet spread, with all the great Italian – and specifically Sicilian – tastes. Sausages, pasta, gnocchi, bruschetta, sundry mushrooms, eggplant, bacon, cheese. Wine by the bottle. And then, of course, pastries, all the pastries.

So did we get a perfect, close-up view of Mount Etna? No. But did we experience the mystery and the wonder of finding ourselves on the slopes of Europe's largest active volcano. And did I mentioned pastries?

Paul Knowles is an author and travel writer, and Past-President of the Travel Media Association of Canada. To contact Paul about speaking engagements, email [pknowles@golden.net](mailto:pknowles@golden.net).



A lava field on Mount Etna.



One of five craters visitors can view at the 1800-meter level.

# ABOUT TIME AND TIMES: Seasons in my one-room school



**JUDY FINKBEINER JOHNSON**

*Examiner Columnist*

The one-room school that I attended, S.S. #4 Sharon, northwest of Crediton on what is now called Babylon Line, was not only a country public school but also a community hub.

Generations of my ancestors attended Sharon School, from the pioneers' children who went to the newly built log school, replaced by the yellow brick school built in the early 1900s, to my five-years-younger brother who graduated in the mid-1960s. This was the seat of learning for local farm children for more than a century.

They followed different life paths. Some had careers that took them far away in the world, others farmed on the same road they grew up on. Sharon School students became teachers, farmers, homemakers, agricultural specialists, professors, nurses, administrators.

One thing all of us have in common is fond memories of S.S. #4 Sharon.

## COMMUNITY HUB

Producing the annual Christmas concert required multiple rehearsals to herd our country cats who became seasonal (not seasoned) actors. A bespoke curtain went up to the packed schoolroom. Plays blended plots, humour, songs, and choreography

with a message of being kind to others. All those gentle lessons fell away the next day in fever-pitched snowball fights. Two teams hurled hard-packed snowballs at each other from the protection of snow fortresses.

Progressive crokinole parties were extremely popular in the day. There were several tables of four adult players. The men and women changed tables and their partners each game. Women in the community provided refreshments that included a selection of sandwiches followed by desserts.

In the day, most families had a crokinole board. Ours dated from 1902 from my great-grandfather Charles Treitz. It was passed down through the generations, moving to Listowel area to Sarnia to the family farm near Crediton, and on to the next generation. Each owner's name is carved on the back of the board. Refurbished with the brightening of zone lines and replacement of battered wooden centre pegs, it is still in superb shape for playing a fast-paced game.

Past students embarking on marriage were hosted at presentation evenings. A collection financed gift purchases; coffee tables, lamps and telephone tables, also known as gossip benches, were hits.

## SCHOOL SEASON

Early spring through June was a wonderful season at school. Even the walk to school was full of delights. Halfway there, under trees on a hill, someone had thrown out daffodil bulbs that survived, triumphantly trumpeting in spring and growing in number. Before school ended for the summer holidays, the wild strawberries in the grassy ditch were ripe for snacking.

A short walk away, there was

an annual excursion to a sugar bush with a family-run maple syrup business. Access to the bush was by a long laneway along a line fence with shrubs, tree stumps, and fence posts. Our teacher made the walk fun with puzzles beginning in a hollow stump by the road. Each clue led to another, ending at the spot to begin our maple syrup tour. We discovered tender little wild leeks, eating them after stripping the outer layers.

The earliest wildflowers were already competing to be the showiest display. They peeked and poked through last year's maple leaves, around tree trunk bottoms, or standing up next to fallen logs, their delicate beauty contrasting with rugged tree bark. There was bloodroot named for their roots with red juice Indigenous peoples used for dye for clothing and baskets, as well as ceremonial and war paint. Yellow trout lilies with mottled leaves resembling trout skin grew in colonies hundreds of years old, spreading by underground root runners.

White trillium nodded their way into spring, solitary or in huge carpets. Their flowers turned pink during the last stage of blooming. Red trilliums, also called wake robins, were harder to spot with their dark petals.

There were groups of what we called umbrellas, may-apples. Stems grew up to over half a metre tall, topped by dinner-plate sized leaves that hid a small white fragrant flower. I imag-

ined that fairies sheltered under huge mayapple leaves when it rained and came out in sunshine to dance around the abundance of brightly coloured spring wildflowers.

We ate lunches our moms had made for us, packed into plain-coloured, square metal lunchboxes. I traded my salmon sandwich for my best friend's chocolate spread sandwich, something I never had at home.

In winter months, the older boys in school developed a keen interest in world geography, especially African countries. Bookshelves held years of National Geographic magazines with photo features that expanded their education.

## BASEBALL TEAMS

In the spring, the boys' attention turned from geography to baseball. Because during the best year at school, there were fewer than two dozen kids, it was hard to put together a ball team. I was baseball-challenged but finally made the team in Grade 6. When my five-years-younger brother started school, his baseball skills got him on the team immediately and with relief tinged with envy, I was relegated to score-keeper.

We played against other one-room country schools' teams, Blackbush, Khiva and Greenway. Our teacher chauffeured us to games, putting smaller kids in the car and older kids in the trunk, held open by bats.

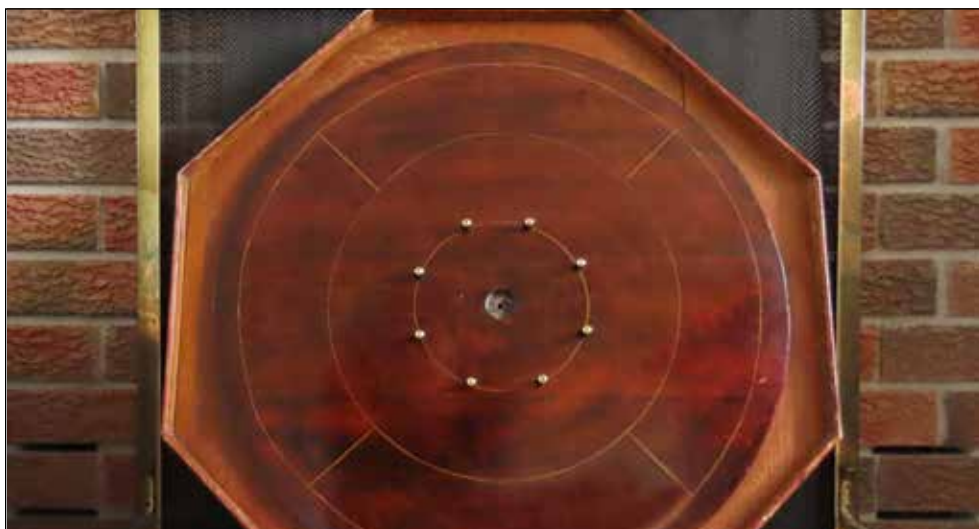
The Sharon School baseball team was high on hope and much lower in prowess. I recently came across a diary that included the results of two games. We lost one 45 runs to 4; the next one 38 to 5.

My comment was pitifully optimistic, "At least we're going in the right direction."

The thing is that our public-school education truly did help us to go in the right direction. We learned about school subjects and much more, including teamwork. The one-room country school taught us about how different everyone was, and how much the same. It helped provide a firm foundation for our future, whether within a few miles of the school, in Ontario cities or continents away.

## NEXT COLUMN

*Marriage through generations in the family, traditions that spanned decades and creative pranks are recalled through decades of anniversaries.*



(BARRY JOHNSON PHOTO)

My great-grandpa Charles Treitz purchased this crokinole board in 1902. It was made by Schultz Bros. Brantford. Its very sleek surface requires considerable skill not to send the buttons off into the gutter. I have enjoyed countless games on this with family members of four generations through decades. It was taken to Sharon School for progressive crokinole games evenings for adults.



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# PROTECTING ONTARIO'S TURTLES: Small actions that make a big difference



**DR. SOPHIE FARRELL**

*Examiner Columnist*

After a long and hard winter, the days are finally getting warmer, and Ontario's eight native turtle species are coming out of hibernation and are on the move again. While these fascinating reptiles play a vital role in keeping our ecosystems healthy, their future is uncertain, as all eight species are currently designated as species at risk. The good news is that there are many things that we can do to help protect them and increase their chances of survival. After hibernating all winter, our native turtles are out and about anytime between April and November, although most sightings are in May and June as they travel to find mates and nesting sites. Females lay their eggs on dry land, bury them, and leave — a nest without a mother nearby isn't abandoned. The eggs usually hatch in late

summer or early fall. Here's a fun fact: for many turtle species, the gender of the hatchlings is determined by the incubation temperature of the eggs.

### Why turtles matter

Turtles are important in keeping our local wetlands and ecosystems healthy. They help prevent erosion by propagating plant seeds, distributing nutrients and, since they're scavengers, they help clean the water by eating dead fish and animals that are sources of harmful bacteria and pathogens. Because less than one percent of all turtle eggs will survive to adulthood, and turtles can take up to 20 years to reach maturity, it can take decades of nesting before a turtle replaces itself. Every turtle lost is a blow to the local ecosystem.

### Why they're at risk

While habitat destruction is the biggest threat to our turtles, vehicles are a close second. Turtles travel several kilometers to find mates and lay eggs, so both males and females have to cross roads that have been built through their remaining wetlands. Other threats to our turtles include eggs and hatchlings being eaten by predators, being struck by boats, getting caught as fishing bycatch and poaching for food or as pets, both of which are illegal.

### How you can help

- Watch for turtles on the road. Turtles frequently cross roads to

find mates or lay eggs, so drive carefully, slow down and give them space. - Leave nests alone. Don't disturb laying females as this can cause them to give up on laying and cause serious health problems. If you find a nest, leave it where it is. If you'd like to protect it, you can install a nest protector, but make sure it won't trap hatchlings or affect the temperature. Visit [ontarioturtle.ca](http://ontarioturtle.ca) for guidance. Reporting nest locations to a monitoring program can also help conservation efforts. - If you find an uninjured turtle on the road, you can help it cross the road if it's safe for you to do so. Be aware of traffic and make sure that you're visible. Always move the turtle in the direction it was heading, otherwise, it will likely try to cross again, and leave it well off the side of the road. Handle the turtle as little as possible, and wash your hands afterward as turtles can carry bacteria such as salmonella. If you're not comfortable picking it up, you can gently guide it using a car mat, board or shovel. Never lift a turtle by its tail, as this can cause serious injury. Visit [ontarioturtle.ca](http://ontarioturtle.ca) for information on how to safely pick up and move turtles. - If you find an injured turtle, call the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre (OTCC) at (705) 741-5000 (option 9) right away. They have a network of volunteer "turtle taxis" who can transport injured turtles to their

specialized hospital for treatment and release. Place the turtle in a well-ventilated plastic container with a secure lid (turtles can climb!). Don't offer food or water and place the container somewhere dark and quiet at room temperature. Record the location where the turtle was found (GPS coordinates, road and fire number) so that they know where to release it. Turtles have an amazing ability to heal, and with proper care, can recover from injuries that look very severe. No turtle is too injured to try saving. - If you find eggs that have been dug up or disturbed contact OTCC. Their rehabilitation centre incubates thousands of eggs a year for release back into the wild. Their team can give you guidance on how to properly handle and collect the eggs so that they can be transported for incubation. Note the location of the eggs so that they know where to release the hatchlings - If you find a dead turtle, even dead turtles are valuable for conservation. A recently deceased female may have eggs that can be incubated, and the data and tissue samples are very useful for research. Note the location the turtle was found as above, place it in a dry bin and call the OTCC at the number above. For more information on Ontario's turtles, including conservation and rehabilitation efforts, safe handling tips, how to build a nest protector or to



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

**A painted turtle with a shell fracture that was brought into the clinic in 2025 for "turtle first aid" before it was transported to OTCC. The turtle was successfully rehabilitated and released.**

check out the turtle hospital, visit our fabulous friends at the Ontario Turtle Conservation Centre at [ontarioturtle.ca](http://ontarioturtle.ca)

**Note:** Our veterinary practice volunteers as a "first aid station" for the OTCC. If you find an injured or dead turtle during our operating hours (8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday to Friday), and you are able to bring it to Clinton, please call Clinton Veterinary Services at (519) 482-3558 and we'll arrange a transfer to OTCC. As we are busy caring for our patients, we are unable to go pick up turtles. Outside of our operating hours, please contact OTCC at (705) 741-5000.

*Dr. Sophie Farrell is a veterinarian at Clinton Vet Services in Clinton, Ontario. She practices small animal, emergency and honeybee medicine.*

## GREY MATTER: Telling Your Story: where do you begin?



**ANNETTE GERDES**

*Examiner Columnist*

One of my favourite memories of my grandparents is of them gathered around the card table, laughter spilling over the clatter of cards, or watching the horse races in Clinton with quiet excitement. I loved hearing the stories behind those days the little victories, the playful rivalries, the moments that made them smile or shake their heads. Now, I share those same stories with my children. They never met their great-grandparents directly, but through these stories, they feel connected and they have so

many questions I don't always know the answers to. It's a reminder of how important it is to start these conversations while we can: ask questions, make notes, even create a scrapbook so these memories live on for the next generation.

Interestingly, this idea of storytelling came to me from a resident who requested an article on the topic not to ask for help telling their own story, but to share the importance of telling one's story in general. The timing felt ironic and perfect: shortly afterward, I attended a conference where keynote speaker Mike Downie spoke about the same idea. He reflected on Terry Fox and Vicki Keith remarkable Canadians whose legacies continue to inspire, not just because of what they accomplished, but because their stories were shared, remembered, and passed on. Their courage and determination live on because someone cared enough to listen and to tell their story.

It made me think about the stories all around us stories that may never make headlines, but

matter just as much. Every life is full of moments that shaped us, challenges that tested us, and lessons that guided us. And the more I thought about it, the more I realized how often these stories remain untold, even though they hold so much value for the people we love.

Telling your story is important in ways we don't always realize. It helps us make sense of our lives, connecting experiences, triumphs, and even heartbreaks into something meaningful. It reminds us of our own resilience; of the strength we didn't always notice in ourselves. It can even bring clarity to moments we may have carried quietly for years.

For our families, stories become treasures. They provide context, history, and a sense of identity. For my children, hearing about their great-grandparents' lives help them understand not just where they came from, but who they are now. Even if some details are missing, the act of sharing, the conversation itself is what matters most. And for those of us who listen, stories

create connection and deepen understanding in ways that nothing else can.

So, where do you begin?

The truth is you don't need to start at the beginning. Start with a moment. A memory that makes you laugh. A time you were proud. A challenge you overcame. Maybe it's a lively game of cards, a day spent at the racetrack, a favourite family recipe, or even a small story that has stuck with you over the years. Here are a few tips to help capture your stories:

- Write the way you speak – Don't worry about perfect grammar or style. Just tell it naturally.
- Focus on feelings, not just facts – What did it feel like? Who was there? Why did it matter?
- Ask gentle questions – "What was happening around me?" "Who influenced this moment?" "What did I learn?"
- Keep notes or create a scrapbook – Even small notes or pictures can spark memories and start conversations.

- Record a conversation – Sometimes speaking aloud is easier than writing, and hearing your own voice can bring the story to life.

Stories don't need to be polished or complete to be meaningful. Conversations over coffee, casual chats with family, or little notes tucked away in a notebook all of it keeps memories alive. And sometimes, these shared moments lead to even more questions, laughter, and understanding between generations. Spring reminds us that it's never too late to begin. Perhaps reading this could be your invitation: a daughter, a son, a grandchild, someone who wants to know their family's stories. Start the conversation.

Ask questions. Make notes. Make memories last. Even one story at a time can make a lifetime of difference.

Your story matters. Your family will treasure it. And the best time to begin... is now.

*Annette Gerdes,  
General Manager, Goderich  
Place Retirement Residence*

## MENTORING MATTERS: A caring adult can change everything



AMY WILHELM

Examiner Columnist

This week, I'd like to speak directly to parents, guardians and caregivers in our community. You've likely seen or heard about Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron (BBSSH), you may also know that we are always looking for volunteers to mentor and support young peo-

ple. But this week, I want to shift the focus to those young people themselves.

If you've been considering reaching out for support for your child or children, but aren't quite sure if they'd benefit, or if it's the right fit, I hope to help answer some of those questions for you.

At BBSSH, we serve children and youth between the ages of six and 17 — young people who are navigating various forms of adversity. That adversity can take many shapes, including economic hardship, family instability or social isolation. While each situation is unique, what these young people often share is the need for one simple, powerful thing: someone in their corner. A consistent, caring adult. Some-

one who shows up, listens and believes in their potential can make all the difference.

The impact of these mentoring relationships can be clearly seen. Young people in our programs build stronger connections, experience improved mental well-being and develop the skills and confidence needed for success in school, work and life.

Yet beyond the statistics lies something more meaningful: a young person coming to believe they matter, and that their future holds real promise. After all, the children we support today are the ones who will shape our communities tomorrow.

For families interested in getting involved, the process begins with a simple eligibility form to ensure the program is a good fit.

From there, we connect with you directly, guide you through an application and meet one-on-one with both parents and children to better understand your needs. Training and ongoing support are provided every step of the way. If you believe a young person in your life could benefit from mentorship, we encourage you to reach out.

The following was written by a Little Sister:

"When I first discovered Big Brothers Big Sisters, I did not think it would change my life as much as it did. Little did I know I was going to meet one of my role models and mentors that would change my perspectives and be someone I could open up too. When being matched in 2021 with someone who truly got

to understand me and my past, I opened up like I had known her for years, which was different. This program helped me do that, helped me become better at handling things emotionally and able to really talk about anything. Me and my match are still paired today, going onto five years. We have both grown, changed and understood each other. The impact this program had on me then and even now was and is life changing. I became a version of myself I did not even know I had in me."

Sometimes, a single connection can make all the difference. We're only a call, email or visit away. Join us and be part of something truly #BiggerTogether.

## SOUTH HURON COUNCIL BRIEFS

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

### Speed limit cut on Airport Line approaching Highway 83

South Huron Council has approved cutting the speed limit to 60 kilometres per hour on a section of Airport Line south of Highway 83.

The reduced speed zone will be for 600 metres from the intersection with 83. The vote to drop the speed limit follows the decision by Huron County council not to proceed this year with installation of a \$3.25 million roundabout at the intersection. The roundabout had been recommended by consultants as the best way to increase safety at the heavily used intersection.

In a report to South Huron council, Don Giberson, infrastructure and development general manager, said the reduced speed limit will not affect many of the factors that lead to dangerous collisions at the intersection, including the angle of impact between northbound vehicles and east/west bound vehicles.

### Public asked for opinion on Exeter dog park

The public are being invited to participate in a survey on whether they are in favour or opposed to South Huron establishing a dog park in Exeter.

A 2025 report to council identified 10 possible locations for a dog park in the community. Costs for most sites were estimated at more than \$25,000. Several busi-

nesses and individuals have pledged to donate about \$7,000 to offset the costs. The rest of the money would come from South Huron's Parkland Reserve, which is made up of money collected from development charges.

Possible sites identified for a dog park included areas next to Exeter elementary school, the rodeo ring, McNaughton Park, east of the curling club, north of Elliot Park and Darling Park. The survey, which can be accessed through the municipality's website and Facebook page, is open until May 21.

### Parking and animal issues dominate bylaw complaints

Most of the bylaw complaints received by South Huron in the first three months of

the year were for animal and parking issues.

Eighty-five formal tickets and eight warnings were issued during the period. Most of the parking complaints involved snow removal being hindered.

In total, South Huron received 383 requests for service in the first quarter, including bylaw complaints, up from 322 in the same period of 2025.

### Private cemeteries supported

South Huron paid out a total of \$15,000 in 2025 to assist private cemeteries in the municipality with the money being used for general and lawn maintenance, painting and monument stabilization.

The six cemeteries that received the money were Hen-



sall Union Cemetery (\$4,000), Crediton Cemetery (\$4,700), Zion Cemetery (\$1,900), Kirkton Union Cemetery (\$2,000), Elimville Church Cemetery (\$500) and McTaggart Cemetery (\$1,900).

Council allocated another \$15,000 for private cemeteries in 2026.

## Kirkton-Woodham Optimist Club holds April fish fry



(KIRKTON-WOODHAM OPTIMIST CLUB PHOTO)



(KIRKTON-WOODHAM OPTIMIST CLUB PHOTO)

Over 1,000 hungry diners made their way to the Kirkton-Woodham Community Centre as the Kirkton-Woodham Optimist Club hosted another successful fish fry on April 26. With the exception of COVID-19 years, the organization has been holding its April fish fry every year since 1981. Though the popular event offered takeout, diners didn't mind lining up around the community centre for their turn to get a helping.

The Kirkton-Woodham Optimist Club's April fish fry is made possible thanks to an army of community volunteers.

# BACK IN TIME

## 30 Years Ago

May 15, 1996 - Lucan resident Pat Hodgins has done her part for the Canadian Cancer Society. For the past 20 years she has raised more than \$13,000 by participating in the Great Ride Against Cancer.

“We’ve taken a good egg and made it better” said Bill Gray, president of L.H. Gray and Son Ltd. as he describes a new egg developed by his company. The secret behind the new egg is the addition of flax to all other natural ingredients fed laying Leghorn hens at Gray Farms in Moorefield.

## 55 Years Ago

May 13, 1971 - The new facility of Huron Motor Products, located on Highway 4 south of Exeter in Osborne Township was officially opened Thursday afternoon.

The first sod was turned Thursday night for the new parish hall at Trivitt Memorial Anglican Church in Exeter.

May 17, 1971 - Specials at Bob and Shirl’s Restaurant and Gas Bar this week include three loaves of bread for \$1.15, three quarts of milk for \$1.57 and a flat of eggs for \$2.15.

May 13, 1971 - Barbara Lamport was chosen Queen of South Huron District High School at the annual At Home Dance Friday night.

## 65 Years Ago

May 13, 1961 - The Ausable Conservation Authority has recommended that construction of a bypass ditch around Hensall be accepted as a flood control scheme.

The Salvation Army will receive a gift of over

\$4,000 from the estate of a William Foster who died in 1954.

Jack Fulcher, area census commissioner, addressed members of Trivitt Memorial Guild on the forthcoming census take.

Over 350 persons filled Clinton Legion Hall to capacity to hear Lester B. Pearson speak to the Huron Liberal Association.

## 70 Years Ago

May 14, 1956 - Uel J. Schroeder, a former SHDHS student, was one of three RCMP constables cited for bravery in the gun-battle capture of four armed bank bandits in New Westminster, B.C.

Calvin Fahner of Crediton was one of 27 student ministers who graduated from Toronto Bible College Friday.

Parents of more than 90

boys and girls in town expressed a desire to have their children play in a junior band, Cecil Wilson, chairman of the special band committee, announced Wednesday.

## 80 Years Ago

May 12, 1946 - A memorial baptismal font in honour of the late Mr. and Mrs. William D. Weekes, presented by their son Frank, was unveiled in Caven Presbyterian Church on Sunday.

The Huron-Perth baseball league will resume operations in the OBA after war-time absence of several years.

## 105 Years Ago

May 13, 1921 - Mr. Sam Wein of Crediton has sold out his barber shop to Emmerson Wenzel of Kitchener who takes possession in August.

# OBITUARY

## McKinnon



March 7, 1952 – April 25, 2026

Passed peacefully on Saturday, April 25, 2026 at the Blue Water Rest Home, Zurich. Dear brother-in-law of Janet McKinnon and brother of Nancy-Rae and Bob Lovie, Kim and Judy McKinnon, Jeffrey and Sandy McKinnon, Wayne McKinnon and Derek McKinnon. Step-brother to Doug Turkheim, Cheryl

and Garry O’Brien, Dan and Julie Turkheim, Lori and Rick Dellow and Donna and Kevin Armstrong. Loving Uncle to his many nieces and nephews and great nieces and nephews. Predeceased by his parents, Betty (1969) and Raymond (2010), his younger brother Randy (Rudy) McKinnon (2016), his older brother Kevin McKinnon (2023), his loving stepmother, Joan McKinnon (2023) and his long time special friend Betty Geddes (2023). Shane will be remembered for his big smile, laughter and his sense of humour. In 1969, his first job was running a bread route delivering baked goods for the Tasty Nu Bakery in Zurich. Then he decided to follow in his father’s footsteps and worked for the Bank of Montreal and his first training job was in Kingsville where he was a member of the Kinsmen Club. He will also be remembered for his love of family get togethers, Montreal Canadiens, Toronto Blue Jays and partying with all of his old buddies at the Annual Zurich Bean Festival. Special thanks to the entire Nursing staff and Admin staff at the Blue Water Rest Home in Zurich. Everyone there is so patient, caring and loving always when they are dealing with the residents. Also special thanks to Dr. Hammond for his care for Shane. Cremation has taken place. Visitation will be held at Haskett Funeral Home, 49 Goshen Street North, Zurich on Saturday, May 9th from 10 - 11 AM. Where Shane’s funeral service will be held at 11 AM. Interment to follow at St. Boniface Roman Catholic Cemetery, 72567 Bronson Line, Zurich. If you are unable to attend the funeral, the family invites you to watch the service live or at your convenience by visiting [www.facebook.com/haskettfh](http://www.facebook.com/haskettfh). A celebration of Shane’s Life will be held following the interment at the Zurich Community Centre, 15 East Street, Zurich from 1 – 4 PM, with time for speeches and memories from family and friends at 2:30 PM. Donations to the West Huron Care Centre (Blue Water Rest Home), Alzheimer Society Huron Perth, Canadian Celiac Association or any other charity of your choice would be greatly appreciated by the family.

Joan and Joanne From  
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 would like to thank all of our clientele for their patronage, dedication and friendship over the past 45 years. We have been fortunate to have met so many people, experienced numerous family milestones and built strong, lasting and memorable relationships!  
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# Riddles

I melt away when spring is here, disappearing year by year. What am I?

Snow

What begins with T, ends with T, and has T in it?

A teapot

What has to be broken before you can use it?

An egg

What has a face and two hands, but no arms or legs?

A clock

What has many teeth but can't bite?

A comb

What can travel around the world while staying in one spot?

A stamp

I'm small and green and sit on a stem, in spring I open—then close again.

What am I?

A bud

I'm soft and white and float in the sky, on a breezy spring day I drift right by.

What am I?

A cloud

What has legs but doesn't walk?

A table

What has a neck but no head, and wears a cap?

A bottle

What kind of room has no doors or windows?

A mushroom

# Sudoku

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

Solutions on pg.30

# Pet of the Week

## SPRING PLANTING SEASON IS HERE!

As your garden grows, remember to keep your pets safe too. Some plants, fertilizers, and mulches can be harmful if curious pets decide to taste them. Choose pet-safe plants, store gardening supplies out of reach, and keep an eye on pets while they explore outdoors. A little care goes a long way in keeping your furry friends happy and healthy.

Grow with care—for your whole family.



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## ODIS

Odis is a Silver Lab who recently moved from Exeter to Grand Bend, who enjoys long walks on the beach & belly rubs. He is big, yet agile and had lots of four legged friends in Exeter including Rue, Lenny, Rory, Stu & Maui. If anyone has ever met Odis, they know he is a gentle giant!



Nominate your pet to be a Featured Pet by emailing [info@exeterexaminer.com](mailto:info@exeterexaminer.com)

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H X E P P V C J T C A U J C L C Y X C L  
I F T I Y A D Z A W G Q C G I Y X T I C  
T J H N H Q M T P I V P F F P Y P S S R  
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Y M K N J O D R A P S Y H U X U Z M N C

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# COMING EVENTS

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## MAY

### GRAND BEND AREA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

#### MAY

**MON. & THURS. 8:45-9:45 Medium Low** impact aerobic exercise that includes cardio, strength, & flexibility exercises. Community Room GBACHC. [cmaxfield@gbchc.com](mailto:cmaxfield@gbchc.com)

**MON. & THURS. 10 – 10:45** High low impact aerobic exercise with Joy that includes cardio, strength, and flexibility. Community Room GBACHC [cmaxfield@gbchc.com](mailto:cmaxfield@gbchc.com)

**MON. & THURS. 11:15-12:15** Gentle Exercise Community Room GBACHC. Exercises done seated or standing. To register contact [cmaxfield@gbchc.com](mailto:cmaxfield@gbchc.com)

**MON & THURS 1:00-2 PM Functional Fitness with Julie.** Most gentle class for people with mobility issues. Hensall Arena and virtual in Grand Bend at GBACHC Mondays. Thursdays in person in Grand Bend Contact Julie at [jdatars@gbchc.com](mailto:jdatars@gbchc.com)

**TUES. & THUR. FRI. 8:30AM** Exercise Port Franks Community Centre. Line Dancing from 8:30-9 am. Medium Low impact aerobic exercises from 9-10 [cmaxfield@gbchc.com](mailto:cmaxfield@gbchc.com)

**TUES. & THUR. 6:00-6:45PM Joys Evening exercise classes** High low impact Community Room GBACHC. Saturday mornings from 10-10:45 am. [cmaxfield@gbchc.com](mailto:cmaxfield@gbchc.com) Wed. 10-11:00 am Walk & Talk Hensall Arena. Contact Grace at [gbonnett@gbchc.com](mailto:gbonnett@gbchc.com). Fun social walking program with coffee and chatting to finish

**WED. 9:20-11 AM Pinery Walking Group.** Meet at the Lambton Heritage Museum parking lot 9:00 am Email [Lindseyashworthducharme@gmail.com](mailto:Lindseyashworthducharme@gmail.com)

**THURSDAYS 9:30-12 Early On program free program for adults with children birth to 6 years.** Adult Day Wing, GBACHC. Contact [earlyonchildcare.ca](mailto:earlyonchildcare.ca) or 519-786-6161 x 9226.

**WED. MAY 6TH 1:30-3 PM**

**COPD support Group, Education and support with others.** Contact Peter Morrissey at 519-238-2362 X 284 or [pmorrissey@gbchc.com](mailto:pmorrissey@gbchc.com) for details

#### MAY 8

**Service Canada will be offering a Canadian Dental Care Plan Drop-In Session Friday** in the Community Room at the Grand Bend Area CHC 69 Main St East 12:30-3:30. This will be for new people as well as those who need to renew their Dental benefits for this year. You will need your SIN (and spouse if applicable) member number and valid photo id. Check out [Canada.ca/dental](http://Canada.ca/dental) for details.

**FRIDAY, MAY 8 5-8pm.**

The Ilderton & District Lions present Wall-eye Fish Fry. Ilderton Community Centre.

**FRI. MAY 8, 15, 22ND**

**“Vinyasa Yoga and Chair Yoga”** GBACHC in Community room. Vinyasa at 8:30am, Chair at 9:45 am. Contact [cmaxfield@gbchc.com](mailto:cmaxfield@gbchc.com)

**STARTS MAY 13 7-8PM**

Sound Therapy Class. Harmonic Memory Healing with Cindy Waghorn. Wednesday evenings beginning. Doors open at 6:30pm. Come as you are able, no sign-up needed. \$25 per class at door - cash or e-transfer. Bring a mat/blanket and a pillow. Wear comfortable shoes. Trivitt Memorial Church, 264 Main Street, Exeter

**TUES. MAY 19, 26TH AND JUNE 2ND**

**“Bone Health & Balance”** Free 3 week educational and exercise program designed to improve balance and strength and avoid falls to maintain your independence. Education on how to keep your bones healthy. Program runs 1:30-3 pm in the Community Room at GBACHC 69 Main St E. Contact Kate Mason Occupational Therapist at [kmason@gbchc.com](mailto:kmason@gbchc.com) or 519-238-2362 x 241

**WEDNESDAYS MAY-JUNE 3RD 1-10:30 “Pulmonary Rehab Program”** GBACHC. Contact Peter Morrissey a [pmorrissey@gbchc.com](mailto:pmorrissey@gbchc.com) or 519-238-2362 x 284 for information

**THURS. MAY 21ST. 1:30 -3:30 Alzheimer’s caregiver support group.** Support group program with trained facilitator Randy Chapman. 1-800-561-5012. Adult Day wing at GBACHC.

**FRI. MAY 8TH, 15, 22ND - 10-12 “Diabetes Cooking Classes”** Hensall Community Christi an Church 78 King St. Hensall. Contact Elaine at the Grand Bend Area CHC 519-238-2362 x 242 to register. FREE Spots still available. Open to everyone! Topics include Balanced Breakfast, Liver Health Nutrition and Heart Healthy Cooking.

**TUES MAY 19 -1:30-4:30PM.**

**Loss Hearts Sewing Bee.** Good Neighbours of Bluewater, 28 Goshen St. N., Zurich. All welcome, by donation. No experience required. Materials supplied. Call 519-236-7081 or email [gnoib@hay.n](mailto:gnoib@hay.n)

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**THURS MAY 7 10:30AM-11:30AM**

Book Social (Adults) Exeter Library Branch

**TUES 3:30PM-4:30PM**

CAD Makers Club (ages 12+) [REGISTRATION REQUIRED].

**THURS MAY 14TH, 10:30AM-11:30AM**

Craft and Connect (formerly Crochet for a Cause)

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 27TH 3:30PM-5:00PM**

Teen Advisory Group

**WEDNESDAY MAY 27TH, 6:00PM-**

**8:00PM**

Board Game Cafe

**KIRKTON LIBRARY BRANCH**

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**WEDNESDAY MAY 13TH, 4PM-5PM**

Crafternoons (ages 6-12)

**WEDNESDAY MAY 20TH, 3:30PM-4:30PM**

Art Club (ages 10+)

**FRIDAY, MAY 29 & SATURDAY, MAY 30 South Huron Hospital Auxiliary**

**RUMMAGE SALE. South Huron Recreation Centre. 94 Victoria St. E. Exeter.** Friday, May 29 from 2 to 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, May 30 from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Donations accepted Thursday, May 28 - 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the South Huron Recreation Centre. Zamboni entrance. Proceeds going to Patient care needs. All items left over are then donated to local charities in our area.

**MAY 30**

**Hensall Yard Sales.** Discover treasures at yard sales throughout the village and stop for a delicious breakfast served by local firefighters.

**SATURDAY MAY 30 Jessica’s House Hike for Hospice.** Community walk along the MacNaughton-Morrison Trail followed by a Scavenger Hunt through Exeter and lunch, games and activities at the Recreation Centre. Register today. [www.jessicas-househospice.ca](http://www.jessicas-househospice.ca)

## JUNE

**JUNE 3**

**Bayfield Village-Wide Yard Sale. 8-11 a.m.** There are bargains throughout the village as the yard sale is held in Bayfield.

**JUNE 13**

**Ailsa Craig United Church raffle to raise money for a new furnace.** Draw date Tickets \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Etransfer [acunit-edfundraising@execulink.com](mailto:acunit-edfundraising@execulink.com) and send a picture of the transfer to 519-671-2988 and receive back a picture of your tickets.

**JUNE 18 Exeter Town-wide Yard Sale.** Exeter. Great deals on collectibles, treasures and other good stuff at Exeter’s town-wide yard sale.

**SAT, JUNE 27 3PM Fundraiser for Raquel Murray.** Port Franks Community Centre. Sat., June 27 - 3pm. Wear your pink! Family friend outdoor fundraiser event with food, music and games for the children and families. For info: [llattard@gmail.com](mailto:llattard@gmail.com)

**SUN, JUNE 28 - 2-4 P.M.** Crystal Gage and Ryan St Denis, Country and Western. Zion United Church, 6 Victoria Ave W, Crediton. \$25.00/person call Ruth 519-234-6035 or Joan 519-237-3806

**The London Orchid Society will be holding an Orchid Plant Sale**

**May 23, 2026 10 am to 4 pm**

Admission \$5.00.

At Siloam United Church, 1240

Fanshawe Park Rd. E. Contact

Daryl 519-666-2927 or

[www.londonorchidsociety.com](http://www.londonorchidsociety.com)

**SAT, JUNE 20**

**White Squirrel Cares Foundation. Rock the Range.** Newfoundland Kitchen Party Edition. Sat., June 20. White Squirrel Golf Club. Music by: Off the Rock Canada’s Great Big Sea Tribute. In support of Magnetic Moments Campaign.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 28 - 2-4 P.M.**

Crystal Gage and Ryan St Denis, Country and Western. Zion United Church, 6 Victoria Ave W, Crediton. \$25.00/person call Ruth 519-234-6035 or Joan 519-237-3806

**JUNE 4 10:30AM-11:30AM**

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**WEDNESDAY JUNE 10TH, 4PM-5PM**

Crafternoons (ages 6-12)

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**THURSDAY JUNE 11TH, 10:30AM-11:30AM**

Craft and Connect (formerly Crochet for a Cause)

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17TH 3:30PM-4:30PM**

Art Club (ages 10+)

**WEDNESDAY JUNE 24TH, 6:00PM-8:00PM**

Board Game Cafe

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

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## PHOTO QUIZ ANSWER

Common Mergansers

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# CLASSIFIED

ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR  
EXETER CHAPTER #222

## BBQ Half Chicken Dinner

Sunday, May 24, 2026

Prepared by Pineridge Barbeque Co.  
Served by Exeter Eastern Star Members

Includes: homemade potato salad, creamy coleslaw, Pineridge baked beans, roll & butter, Jumbo Soft Cookies

TAKE OUT ONLY - \$25 PER MEAL | ADVANCE TICKETS ONLY

Pick-Up Time: 4-6 p.m.

Exeter Masonic Hall, 248 McConnell St., Exeter, ON

**FOR TICKETS CALL:**

Jeanie 519 235 1588 | Cathy 519 236 4134

## EXETER

### 1 BDRM APARTMENT in House

Main Level / 5 steps from grade, 4 appliances, all inclusive utilities (Hydro, Heat / A/C, water & sewer). In very clean, well maintained older individual House. Newly renovated including new kitchen & bathroom cabinetry & fixtures.

Short walk to 3 schools & downtown.

ABSOLUTELY NO PETS OR SMOKING ON ENTIRE PROPERTY! 1 parking space with guest parking available. 1 year Lease with full 1st & last month in advance. Require 3 strong references (previous Landlord's preferred; NO family or friends)

2 VERY nice 1 bdrm, all inclusive units available.

Must be seen to appreciate! Great for Seniors!

#1 @ \$1,900/month, all inclusive. Available April 1, 2026.

#2 @ \$2,000/month, all inclusive. Available April 15, 2026.

Call: 519-235-4543

& ask for Mark or Leave a Message.

Happy Birthday



Laurie, Mark and Dave invite you to join us as we honour our mom, Marilyn Heimrich, at an Open House to celebrate her upcoming 90th Birthday.

Where: St. Peter's Lutheran Church Parish Hall  
22 Goshen Street South, Zurich  
When: Sunday, May 17 from 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm  
Your presence is your gift.

## Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett • 519.272.5742 • jtsquote@gmail.com

Joel Hackett is a certified Arborist residing in the St. Marys area. Currently, he spends most of the year running Joel's Tree Service. For contact call 519.272.5742 or email jtsquote@gmail.com



Dear Arborist,

Good afternoon.

I hope you have a minute to answer a question that my husband and I have had for a long time. While we are out for a drive we have noticed that some spruce trees will have formed a large ball at the top.

We have often wondered what causes this?

Could you please enlighten us?

Thank you for your time.

Julie

Dear Julie,

In the past, standard practice was to top spruce trees; in fact, it was recommended. However, this practice was not

a good idea, as it caused sucker growth. When the central leader is gone, multiple

leaders grow up in a dense clump, which leads to the formation of a ball at the top of the tree. Because the new growth is weak and prone to failure, the top of a spruce tree can break off due to wind or decay. I have also seen damage caused by squirrels that compromises the tree's top.

If a Spruce tree is compromised its normally better to just remove it. Topping is unsafe and no longer considered an acceptable practice.

Sincerely,

The Arborist

Dashwood Diner

Serving All Day Breakfast

(519) 237-3116

185 Dashwood Main St,  
NOM 1N0



## White Squirrel Watch



PHOTO BY  
RICK LUXTON

FEMALE SQUIRREL SPOTTED BY THE LUXTON FAMILY IN THEIR BACKYARD NEAR THE BUTTERFLY HOUSE.



Nominate your White Squirrel sightings by emailing info@exeterexaminer.com

## Overheard At McCafe

Brought to you by: McDonald's

Grand Bend, 75 Main Street East • 519-238-6991 Exeter, 261 Main Street North • 519-235-4227

"The road closure in Exeter is causing headaches for everyone. I think drivers did not believe the bridge closure sign."

"Spring is here! The bridge construction in Grand Bend is making it difficult to manoeuvre around town. Soon the tourists will arrive!"

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others? Either email them to us at info@exeterexaminer.com with the title "Overheard at McCafe" or call 519.655.2341.



# The Hub

April 29, 2026

## Important Dates

**Monday, May 4th**  
Regular Council Meeting  
6:00 PM (EST)\*

**Tuesday, May 19th**  
Regular Council Meeting  
6:00 PM (EST)\*

\*South Huron Council meetings are open for in-person attendance and continue to be livestreamed. See our website **Agendas, Minutes & Meetings** page or the South Huron Youtube channel at meeting time to access the livestream video link. A recording of the meeting will be available on the municipal Youtube Channel following the meeting.

### South Huron Votes 2026—Third Party Advertising

A person, corporation or trade union must register with the Clerk from May 1 to October 23, 2026 if they spend money on advertisements or other materials that support, promote or oppose a candidate in the municipal election, or question on the ballot.

Rules for third party advertising are set out in the Municipal Elections Act, 1996. A third party advertisement is an advertisement in any broadcast, print, electronic or other medium that has the purpose of promoting, supporting, or opposing a candidate in the election, or a "yes" or "no" answer to a question on the ballot.

Individuals, corporations, and trade unions who wish to conduct third party advertising in a Municipality of South Huron election must be registered with the Clerk. A third-party advertiser cannot spend money on their campaign, accept contributions, or begin advertising until their registration is certified by the Clerk. Advertisements must identify the name of the registered third-party advertiser, the municipality where they are registered and contact information.

Candidates cannot register as a third-party advertiser and cannot direct a third-party advertiser.

Reminder: Candidates may file a nomination form during regular business hours from May 1, 2026 through to 2:00 p.m. on Nomination Day, August 21, 2026. Candidate Packages are available for pick up at town hall, or on southhuron.ca.

For more information regarding the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election, check out the *Municipal Election* page on SouthHuron.ca, contact the Clerk at vote@southhuron.ca or drop into the Clerk's Department at Town Hall (322 Main Street South, Exeter).

### Stephen Utility Billing

Stephen utility bills have been mailed/emailed.

Payments are due in office by the April 30th deadline.

If paying online or at the bank, make sure to leave enough time for the payment to be processed by the bank to avoid late fees. [www.southhuron.ca/services/payment-options/](http://www.southhuron.ca/services/payment-options/)

### Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off

The County of Huron 2026 Household Hazardous Waste Program will be held on Sat, May 23 from 9am- 3pm at the Water/Sewer Operations Centre, 82 Nelson St., Exeter (South Huron) Household Hazardous Waste, including:

- Battery acids
- Pesticides
- Gasoline
- Pool chemicals
- Drain cleaners
- Rat poison
- BBQ starter
- Ammonia
- Oven cleaners
- Cleaning Fluids
- Paint/solvents
- Bleach



No PCB's, commercial, infectious or radioactive wastes will be accepted. In every home there are products that need special care. You will recognize them by warning signs. The County of Huron Household Hazardous Waste Disposal Program is an opportunity for you to clear potentially dangerous wastes out of your home and dispose of them in an environmentally safe manner, at no cost to you.

The Huron County HHW Depot at the Mid-Huron Landfill in Holmesville (37506A Huron Rd) is open year-round Tuesday to Saturday 8:00am to 1:00pm and FREE to all County Residents.

### Exeter Main Street South Reconstruction

Sign up to receive weekly project updates via email.

See our *Exeter Main Street South Reconstruction Project* page at SouthHuron.ca for details and sign up for progress reports.

### Hub E-Newsletter

Have you subscribed to our bi-monthly e-newsletter, The South Huron Hub?

You're just a few clicks away from receiving municipal updates, job opportunities, community events and more directly to your email inbox. Learn how easy it is to sign up by visiting the *South Huron Hub Newsletter* page at SouthHuron.ca

Our information is accessible! Contact us if you require alternative formats.

**MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON**  
322 Main Street South, PO Box 759, Exeter, ON N0M 1S6  
PHONE: 519-235-0310 • FAX: 519-235-3304 • TOLL FREE: 1-877-204-0747  
WEBSITE: [www.southhuron.ca](http://www.southhuron.ca)

**Building Services ext. 6**  
**Community Services ext. 222**  
**Transportation, Roads ext. 230**  
**Water & Wastewater, Landfill ext. 230**  
**Afterhours ext. 7**