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Two cows graze happily on pumpkins leftover from Halloween. Cassidy Wagler recently shared this photo to the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook page.

New Oxford County council has big decisions to make on two critical files

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

Members of Oxford County council have some important issues on the go this term, ones which could potentially be expensive for taxpayers.

The county's director of paramedic services, Ryan Hall, gave council a long presentation on what the future of the department could look like. Council voted unanimously to accept it as information, as incoming elected officials will have to decide in 2027 what steps to take going forward.

Phase 2 of the plan will provide more detailed facilities planning based on the

Continued on page 2

St. Agatha man faces rare dual diagnosis of ALS and MS

Family seeks community support

AMANDA NELSON

Gazette Reporter

A 51-year-old St. Agatha man and his wife are asking for community support following a diagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) in November.

The diagnosis makes Chad Hayes the 48th documented person worldwide to have been diagnosed with both ALS and multiple sclerosis (MS), an extremely rare combination.

Hayes has experienced a rapid decline in his health over the past year. After living with MS, specialists recently confirmed he also has ALS, further complicating his condition and adding to the number of medical appointments and supports he requires.

Hayes has lost the ability to work and drive, and is currently working with ALS Canada and occupational therapists to access assistive devices. Given the aggressive progression of his condition, his medical team in London has advised that his life expectancy is severely limited. He and his wife must now urgently find an accessible home that can accommodate his changing mobility needs.

His wife, Carrie-Anne Blane, said the additional costs of care, medical appointments and relocating to a more accessible home have placed the family under significant

Continued on page 3

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Future of paramedic services and road safety to be decided

Continued from page 1

deployment model previously approved by council. It will establish functional requirements, assess land and facility options, refine building layouts and project sequencing, and develop more reliable capital and operating estimates.

In his final interview with Grant Haven Media as the county's warden, Marcus Ryan said population growth and demographic change are fuelling the need for paramedic services to expand.

"We are, in general, an aging population which requires more health care. A lot of people do not have access to primary care. Then we have a homeless population that has more demands for health care in general and, in particular, emergency care."

He added the result is many more people calling 911 in Oxford and using ambulances because they have not been able to access primary care, and now they are in an emergency situation due to exposure to the elements, mental health, addiction or general health problems.

"Our calls keep going up. Part of the plan to keep a reasonable response time is always going to be to add ambulances and paramedics. Eventually, you are going to have to build a larger ambulance hall," said Ryan, who added the county needs to look at different service delivery models.

"Is there a more efficient way we can allocate the ambulances and paramedics throughout Oxford County such that we can maintain response times and not simply throw paramedics, ambulances and of course tax dollars at that problem?"

The plan said existing stations provide a strong geographic foundation, but several facilities are approaching their garage capacity.

The report also included financial projections based on the need for an additional 63 to 70 ambulance garage spaces by 2055. Using the report's planning assumptions, expansion would require between 94,500 and 105,000 square feet of additional station accommodation, along with 31,500 to 35,000 square feet of shared garage space.

The estimated capital cost of this expansion ranges from $37.8 million to $42 million. By comparison, a centralized model is projected to cost between $18.5 million and $19.3 million. That option would include a 15,000-square-foot headquarters supported by nine satellite posts.

Road safety is the second hot-button topic all municipal councils in Oxford will grapple with next year. Council adopted the core components of a Road Safety Strategy Framework, including a road safety vision of "Road Safety for All" and a road safety goal of "Zero Fatalities and Serious Injuries."

The next step is for the county to pitch the plan to Oxford's member municipalities and Ryan hopes they will all join in to make it a collaborative effort.

"Our population is growing, and there are more people on our roads. … People are travelling through Oxford from Waterloo Region to Middlesex and London. At the same time, we still have children getting off a bus and going to school, walking to a library or to soccer, and we want people to walk around our downtowns," said Ryan.

He added the focus of the strategy needs to emphasize the safety of people who are walking or on a bicycle while at the same time moving people and goods through communities on major regional roads. Ryan said it's just not okay for people to die or sustain injuries on those roads.

"A lot of people will say we're never going to get there, but that's surely the only acceptable goal. That being said, it's not entirely in the power of municipal governments because we don't control who gets a license or what you have to do to get a license … but there are things we can do, and we need to raise that standard to make sure it is safe for people to move around Oxford County."

Ryan explained there are steps the county can take to improve safety on its roads, but he also would like to see other levels of government take steps within their jurisdiction.

"We can put rumble strips and oversized stop signs and add roundabouts, but at the end of the day, a human still gets in a big heavy machine and drives it down the road, and the provincial and federal government regulate that entirely. For example, I haven't been tested as a driver in 40 years. I think that is ridiculous."

He added we have all seen someone behind the wheel and questioned if that person should be driving at all based on what they just did. Ryan used the example of sensors on today's vehicles that put the brakes on when we get too close to something backing up in our driveway. He would like to see that technology expanded.

"My car will show me a stop sign when it shows up on my screen, but it will let me drive right through it. Are we doing the best we can do to protect a parent crossing the road with a child to go to school when we would allow that car to do that?"

Oxford County received over 400 responses to an online survey on traffic safety where over 55 per cent of respondents said road safety was a significant issue or area of concern. Issues noted were speeding, poor behaviour and distracted driving, and there was agreement that urban and rural issues needed to be addressed uniquely.



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Community asked to support local man following rare ALS diagnosis

Continued from page 1

financial pressure.

"We will be travelling back and forth to London to meet with his team, dietitian, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physio, neurology, nurses – there are so many people involved on his team," said Blane. "But travelling, medical devices and now we have no choice but to move because where I am does not suit someone in a wheelchair. Also making sure we have appropriate furniture and devices, like a shower chair; it's a lot of changes we need to make in a very short timeframe."

Though government financial support is available to Hayes, the family says delays in accessing those funds, combined with the growing list of expenses, have left them seeking help from the community in the meantime.

Before his diagnosis, Hayes was known to friends and family as an energizer bunny – someone who was always on the go.

"Once upon a time, I was full of energy, so to go from that to basically zero has been extremely overwhelming for me," said Hayes. "I was a carpenter, I did custom renovations and I taught self-defence classes, and now my hands go limp, so I can't even pick things up."

Blane described her husband as strong, hardworking and confident; someone who was always willing to lend a hand.

"His work wasn't just a job; it was who he was," reads the family's GoFundMe page. "For his entire life, he built his career with his own two hands, doing the only work he had ever known."

ALS is a progressive neurological disease that affects the nerve cells responsible for controlling voluntary muscles. As the disease advances, it causes increasing muscle weakness and loss of movement, eventually affecting everyday functions such as walking, speaking, swallowing and breathing. There is currently no cure.

The family is now facing the considerable emotional and financial challenges of navigating Hayes' diagnosis while preparing for the changes ahead.

A GoFundMe campaign has been launched to help cover relocation expenses, travel to London for medical care, assistive devices, treatments and services not covered by OHIP, as well as funeral expenses.





(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Chad Hayes, 51, of St. Agatha, was recently diagnosed with both amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and multiple sclerosis (MS), making him the 48th documented person worldwide with both conditions. His family has launched a GoFundMe campaign to help cover medical, travel and relocation expenses.

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New Hamburg Legion receives $28,800 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant for accessibility upgrades

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

The New Hamburg Legion is opening its doors wider to the community thanks to a $28,800 Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) grant that has helped fund much-needed accessibility upgrades to the branch's entrances and washrooms.

Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris visited Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 on Nov. 11 to celebrate the completion of the majority of the renovations, which began in August and are expected to be fully completed by the end of November.

The provincial capital grant covered the full cost of the project, which included widening entrances, installing touchless automatic door openers and reconfiguring washrooms to better accommodate people who use wheelchairs, walkers and other assistive devices.

According to Legion secretary Connie McKie, the upgrades were necessary to bring the aging building into compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA).

"The building is out of date with AODA standards and needed upgrading," McKie said. "The improvements allow better access for those using assistive devices. The total grant is the cost of the project which we wouldn't have been able to afford without OTF assistance."

The improvements include larger openings at the branch's entrances and automatic doors that can be activated with the wave of a hand. The washrooms have also been redesigned within their existing spaces to make them easier to navigate for those with mobility challenges.



(MIKE HARRIS FACEBOOK PHOTO)

Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris pauses for a solemn moment in front of the New Hamburg cenotaph on Nov. 11, as the community gathered to honour and remember those who served. Harris was also in New Hamburg that day to celebrate accessibility improvements at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532, made possible through a $28,800 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant.

Harris said the investment will help ensure the Legion remains an accessible and welcoming gathering place for the entire community.

"Our Legions are an essential part of our communities. They honour our veterans, support local families, and bring neighbours together," Harris said in a press release. "This $28,800 investment will help ensure that everyone can access and enjoy the New Hamburg Legion.

"I'm proud our government is supporting these improvements and the incredible volunteers who make this branch such an important part of the community."

Founded in 1953, the New Hamburg Legion currently has 362 members, many of whom volunteer their time supporting veterans, their families, seniors and other community organizations, including the Wilmot Family Resource Centre.

The branch also serves as a gathering place for community events, including the annual veterans' dinner held the Saturday before Remembrance Day and the Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser in February.

The Legion will also host a community visit with Santa on Nov. 29 from 1-5 p.m., with everyone welcome to attend.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the provincial government that supports community organizations through grants aimed at improving facilities, expanding opportunities and strengthening communities.

During its 2025-2026 funding year, OTF invested nearly $107 million in 746 community projects across Ontario.

For more information about the Ontario Trillium Foundation and its grant programs, visit www.otf.ca.

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Publisher
Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com
Editor
Galen Simmons • galen@granthaven.com
EZT/Oxford Reporter
Lee Griffi • leegriffi@rogers.com
Wilmot/Wellesley Reporter
Amanda Nelson • amandajanewriter@gmail.com
Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries
Erin Parsons • thewtgazette@gmail.com
Business Development
Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com
Billing Administrator
Cindy Boakes • boakescindy1576@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant
Wendy Lamond • wendylamond74@gmail.com
Contributors
Gary West, Diane Danen, Mercedes Kay Gold

143 Queen Street E., St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2
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Tavistock Men's Club bags sauerkraut for sales throughout the year

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

You might have to go a long way to find a group of men in Tavistock who work as hard together as the members of the local Men's Club.

Known for their famous homemade sauerkraut, club members come together every year to chop cabbage, pack it into 15 barrels, let it ferment and bag hundreds of pounds of the popular dish for their annual November sauerkraut and pork chop drive-through supper.

This year, they served more than 600 hungry residents who came out last week to take home a meal they never seem to get tired of eating.

As those who live and farm around Tavistock often say, "Their sauerkraut can't be beat."

Club president Brian Boland said he is very proud of the dedicated members and volunteers who continue to donate their time for a great community cause.

He said sauerkraut supper chair Ross Schumm did another tremendous job coordinating members and the various committees to bring everything together.

"The dinner continues to be a very good community event, when many people come from near and far to get their delicious and nutritious annual meal," Boland said.

Once the drive-through dinner was over, the club sold another 200 bags of sauerkraut for people to take home.

Members are now preparing for more Christmas sales, along with partnering with their friends at the Shakespeare Optimist Club to sell locally prepared Black Forest and bone-in hams.

The club's homemade sauerkraut is available in 2.5-pound bags for $5, while locally cured, three- to four-pound hams from Walnut Hill Butchers in North Easthope Township are available for $20.

Boland said the club appreciates its loyal patrons, whose continued support helps members carry on their community service work in Tavistock and the surrounding area.

He added the club is always happy to welcome new members who enjoy attending dinner meetings with guest speakers and, most importantly, have a desire to give back to their community.

After all, being part of the Men's Club is about more than hard work. It's also about having fun, making new friends and helping make Tavistock a better place to live.



(BRIAN BOLAND PHOTOS)

Incoming Tavistock Men's Club president Jim Pitcher, front and centre, joins fellow club members as they bag homemade sauerkraut into 2.5-pound bags for sale throughout the year, especially leading up to Christmas. The sauerkraut sells for $5 per bag, while locally cured Black Forest hams from Walnut Hill Butchers are available for $20 each.



Tavistock Men's Club sauerkraut committee chair Ross Schumm says this year's batch of homemade sauerkraut could be the best the club has ever produced in its Kraut House.



Tavistock Men's Club member Jim McGregor agrees this year's batch of homemade sauerkraut could be among the club's best yet.

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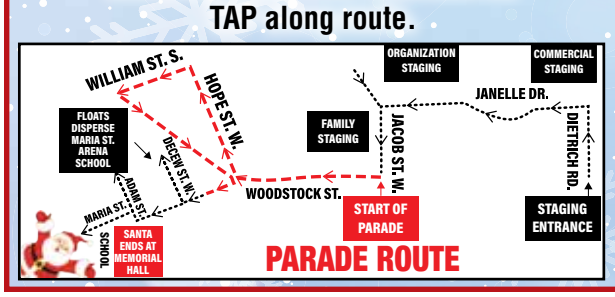
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New Hamburg community gathers to remember the fallen

AMANDA NELSON

Gazette Reporter

Hundreds gathered at the New Hamburg Cenotaph on Nov. 11 as the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 hosted its annual Remembrance Day ceremony, honouring those who served and sacrificed their lives in war.

Dignitaries from across the region joined veterans, community members and local organizations in laying wreaths at the cenotaph in remembrance of those who served. Wreaths were also presented on behalf of the member of provincial parliament and member of parliament.

Following the ceremony, Legion president Bill Pearson, alongside Rev. Dr. Tanya Varner, chaplain, John Svartsjo, sergeant-at-arms, and Charlie Bronson, parade marshal, led the procession to the New Hamburg Community Centre, where the service continued.

Pearson welcomed those in attendance before the ceremony, which included a moment of silence and the playing of "The Last Post" by bugler Andrew Bauer. Piper Chad Gravill performed the traditional lament, "Flowers of the Forest."

Music also played an important role in the service, with performances by Waterloo-Oxford Secondary School's Appassionata under the direction of Ashley Valenta, and the New Hamburg Concert Band.

Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen spoke on behalf of the township, reflecting on the sacrifices made by generations of Canadians and the freedoms and opportunities those sacrifices have afforded the community.

"Although it is a sombre time, when we stop and reflect, those we are remembering are the only reason we get to have all of the events and opportunities that make our community such a great place," she said.

"We always say, 'Lest we forget,' and we talk about those who put their lives in service to this country for us. But I find that we sometimes don't equate that with the fact that we should actually be grateful for the opportunities we are afforded because of those sacrifices.

"Young men and women throughout history have gone forward and fought for a greater good, and they have fought for the privileges and opportunities that we have. I find that we often take those for granted. Today is a great time to recenter and remind ourselves of that."

The service concluded with a closing prayer from Rev. Varner, followed by the singing of the Royal Anthem and the retirement of the poppy flag.

Following the ceremony, attendees were invited to the Legion for the traditional beef stew lunch and an opportunity to gather in fellowship.

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 thanked everyone who attended and took part in this year's Remembrance Day service.



(AMANDA NELSON PHOTOS)

The Legion Colour Party marches the poppy flag into the arena during New Hamburg's Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov. 11.



The poppy flag is brought into the New Hamburg Community Centre as part of the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532's Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov. 11.



Legion members welcome dignitaries at the New Hamburg Cenotaph during the Remembrance Day ceremony on Nov. 11.



Legion members place their poppies at the front of the New Hamburg Community Centre, in front of the wreaths laid in honour of those who served and sacrificed.



A display featuring actors portraying Canadian soldiers, including an Indigenous soldier, stands at the entrance to the arena during the Remembrance Day service on Nov. 11.

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The Kin Cabin celebrates first anniversary

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

What began as a vision to create a welcoming space where people could gather, create and connect has grown into a unique creative destination in Shakespeare.

The Kin Cabin, located inside the iconic Harry Ten Shilling building, recently celebrated its first anniversary. Owner Samantha Weber marked the occasion with Après Tea, bringing people together to celebrate a year of creativity, new experiences and community connections.

Originally from Kitchener, Weber moved to Shakespeare in 2022 and quickly fell in love with the small-town atmosphere. Her vision was to create a flexible space where people could gather for workshops, creative projects, meetings and events, while also offering photography, branding and social media services.

When The Kin Cabin first opened its doors, Weber described it as a mini boutique studio designed to feel warm and welcoming.

"It's an extension of my home and heart," she said.

One year later, that vision has continued to evolve in ways she hadn't originally anticipated.

"I originally envisioned The Kin as more of a rental space for gatherings and creative projects," Weber said. "While that's still something I offer, I've discovered how much I enjoy creating experiences that bring people together to learn something new."



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Samantha Weber, owner of The Kin Cabin in Shakespeare, celebrates the business's first anniversary with Après Tea, a fitting choice since the business is located inside the historic Harry Ten Shilling Building.

The response has included some pleasant surprises, with people travelling from outside the area to attend workshops and events in Shakespeare. Weber has also been fortunate to develop a group of local regulars.

"Whether someone is visiting for the first time or coming back for another workshop, it means a lot that they're choosing to spend their time at The Kin," she said.

One of the most exciting additions has been Hive & Honey, a guided honey-tasting experience Weber developed with her good friend, Melanie Nobre, an urban beekeeper from Waterloo.

What began as an idea between the two has grown into a Perth County Signature Experience. Guests explore six different honeys, each paired with food and drinks, while learning about honey and the local businesses behind the pairings.

Weber is excited to continue offering Hive & Honey, with dates already scheduled into spring 2027. She also hopes to collaborate with more local educators and businesses interested in sharing their knowledge and skills with others.

Weber credits much of the first year's success to the support of the community and the organizations that have helped along the way, including Harry Ten Shilling, Perth County Tourism, RTO4 and the Stratford Business Starter Company program.

"I think the biggest thing I've learned this year is that running a small business really does take a community," she said.



Guests attending The Kin Cabin's one-year anniversary celebration in Shakespeare were greeted by a decorative sign at the entrance inviting them to enjoy the Après Tea.

She is grateful to everyone who has attended a workshop, rented the space, shared a social media post or recommended The Kin Cabin to a friend.

"Those things might seem small, but to a small business owner, they mean so much."

"It's been a year of learning as I go, figuring out what works and realizing that success doesn't always look the way you imagined it would," she said. "I'm really proud of what I've created, and even more grateful for the people who've been part of it."

After a year of trying new ideas, learning what works and discovering unexpected opportunities, Weber is proud of what The Kin Cabin has become.

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Local authors preserve Swiss Mennonite food traditions in new book

GALEN SIMMONS
Regional Editor

From homemade pies and summer sausage to cream potatoes and apple butter, the foods prepared in Swiss Mennonite kitchens across Waterloo Region nearly a century ago tell a story of hard work, resourcefulness and community.

Local authors Barb Draper and Eileen Freeman have captured those traditions in their new book, Grandmother's Kitchen: Foodways and Recipes of Swiss Mennonites of Waterloo County, 1920s to 1950s, which they will launch at Puddicombe House in New Hamburg Nov. 22 at 2 p.m. Both women grew up in Swiss Mennonite families in Waterloo Region and wanted to preserve the recipes, stories and values passed down through generations.

"The Swiss Mennonite women and families are amazing," Freeman said. "They have an amazing story to tell, and there hasn't been a lot of people that have told this story."

Draper, a historian, explores the role food played in Mennonite family life, farming and community, while Freeman, a retired registered dietitian, focuses on recipes passed down by their mothers, Selina Frey and Eloise Cressman, as well as Freeman's mother-in-law, Irene Freeman.

The book examines how Mennonite women fed their families using ingredients grown on their farms, preserving fruits and vegetables and making the most of what was available during lean years.

Many recipes have been adapted for modern kitchens while remaining faithful to their historical origins.

"For every recipe, we've tried to keep it historically faithful, but we've tried to modernize it so our cooks can do it," Freeman said.

Each recipe includes notes explaining how grandmothers traditionally prepared the dish, along with suggestions for making it easier or healthier today.

One thing that surprised Freeman during her research was just how balanced the diets of Swiss Mennonite families were, with plenty of fruits, vegetables, meat and dairy.

There was, however, one particularly popular indulgence.

"They also ate a lot of pie," she said, explaining that some families valued the lard produced from their pigs so much that they didn't bother making bacon so they could render the lard for pie-making.

Along with traditional fruit pies, the book explores dishes such as shoofly pie, a molasses-based dessert, Mennonite dressing, cook cheese and pickled corn.

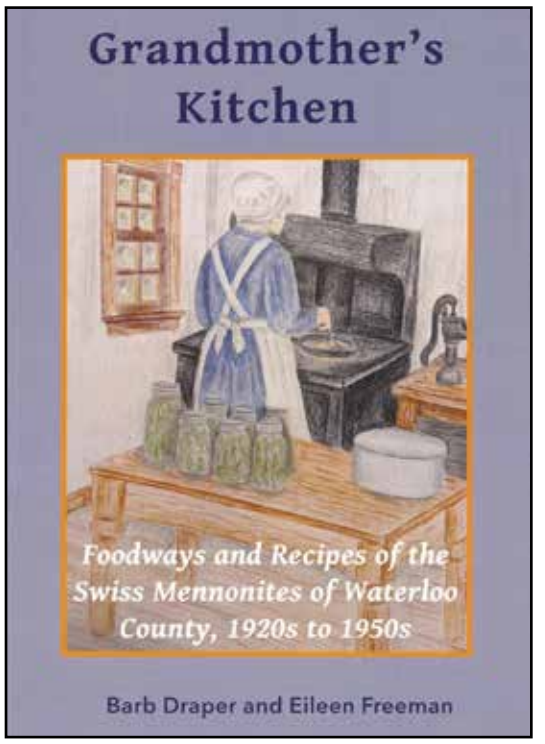
Beyond the food itself, the authors hope readers appreciate the values of thriftiness, hard work, faith and community that shaped their ancestors' lives.

For those who grew up in the tradition, the book offers a nostalgic look back at their mothers' and grandmothers' kitchens. For younger generations, it provides an opportunity to discover how their ancestors lived.

The Nov. 22 launch holds special significance for Freeman, who grew up near New Hamburg and attended Nith Valley Mennonite Church. Her brother and his family operate Puddicombe House and invited the authors to host the event there.

Both authors will give presentations, answer questions and sign copies of their book, which will be available for purchase.

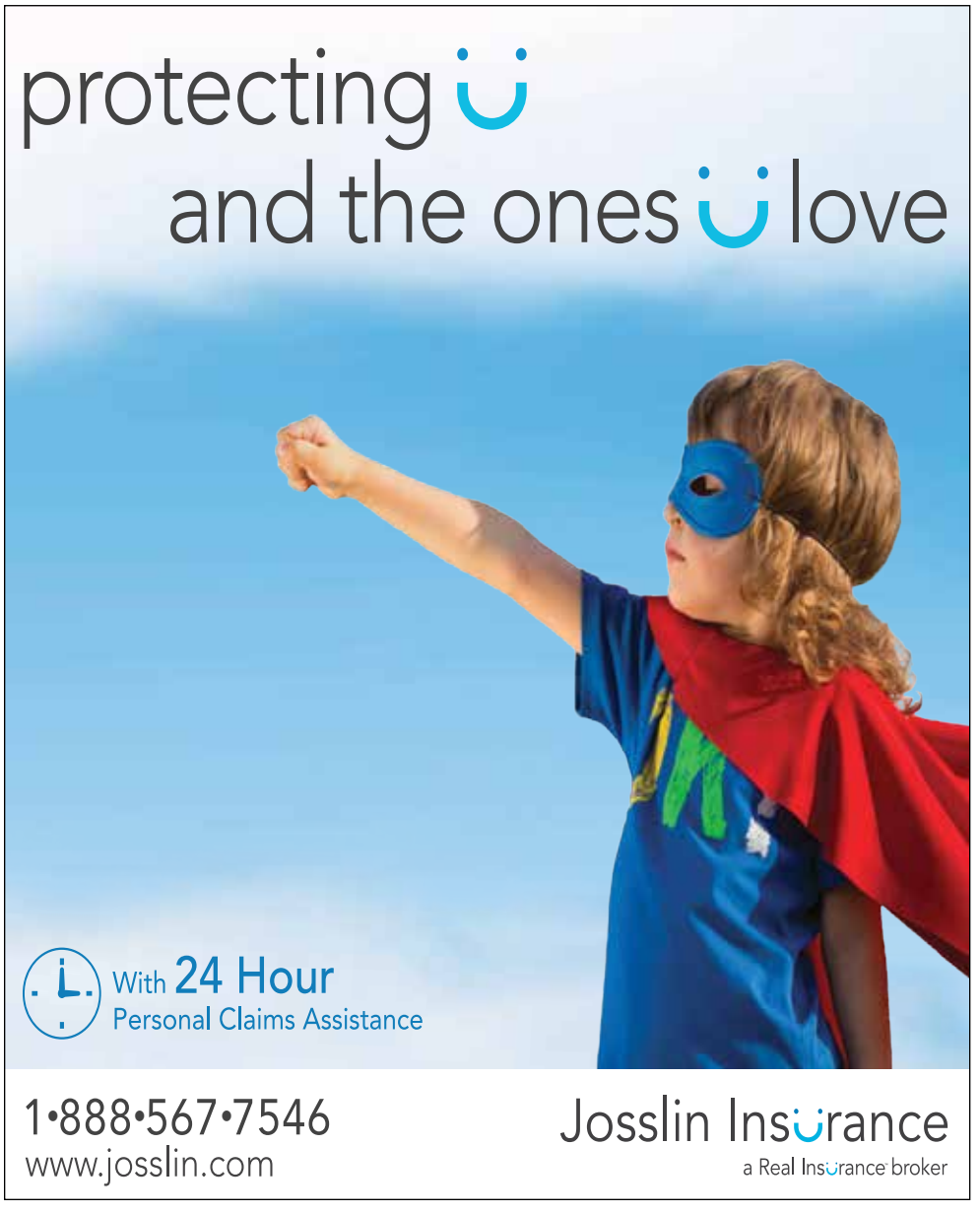
Copies are also available through select retailers in the Elmira area and at Puddicombe House, as well as online at sites.google.com/view/grandmotherskitchenmennonite/home?pli=1&authuser=0. To order a copy or for more information, email grandmotherskitchenmennonite@gmail.com.



(CONTRIBUTED IMAGE)

Grandmother's Kitchen: Foodways and Recipes of Swiss Mennonites of Waterloo County, 1920s to 1950s, by local authors Barb Draper and Eileen Freeman, preserves traditional recipes and explores the food culture of Swiss Mennonite families nearly a century ago. The authors will launch their book at Puddicombe House in New Hamburg Nov. 22 at 2 p.m.





Shakespeare Optimist Club serves more than 700 at annual fall fundraiser

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Members of the Shakespeare Optimist Club held one of their biggest fall fundraisers last week, serving more than 700 hungry guests at the Shakespeare Optimist Hall.

Club president Jeremy Witzel thanked everyone who came out to enjoy the popular dinner, featuring Kennedy's of St. Agatha rolled ribs, pigtails, sauerkraut and ever-popular scalloped potatoes, along with delicious pies from the village's own Shakespeare Pies.

Witzel, who also serves as the district Optimist Club's lieutenant-governor, extended a special thank you to the ladies of the Shakespeare Opti-Mrs. Club, South Easthope Mutual Insurance and Cascades of St. Marys for their continued support.

He also thanked the community at large for always coming out to support the club's activities and putting the fun in fundraising.

That continued support allows the long-established club to give back to the community through numerous youth activities and other worthwhile projects.

Witzel encouraged everyone to stay tuned for more upcoming Optimist Club events and save-the-date announcements.

"It's a small community with big hearts, and great things can happen when we all work together," the club president said.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Shakespeare Optimist Club members Ted Danen and Dietmar Walch adjust their serving aprons as they prepare to serve more than 700 guests at the club's annual fall fundraiser at the Shakespeare Optimist Hall last week.



Marshall Mohr of Kintore, left, receives congratulations from Shakespeare Optimist Club president Jeremy Witzel after winning $2,312 in the club's 50/50 draw. Mohr thanked the club for a better-than-average evening of fun and fellowship and said he hopes to return in the spring when the club hosts its next Kennedy's rib, tail and sauerkraut dinner on the Thursday before Good Friday.



Licensed child-care sector dealing with fallout from ECE wage freeze, part one

Executive calls out province as new facility remains shuttered due to recruitment challenges

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

"As executive director of Paris Child Care, I am deeply disappointed by the Ontario government's decision to freeze the registered early childhood educator (RECE) wage floor and halt previously funded wage increases for 2027."

These are the words of a statement released publicly by Tavistock resident Krysta Hajovic, calling out the province over its wage freeze. Early childhood educators were to receive a $ 1 per hour raise next year, but the provincial government has put a stop to it.

"At Paris Child Care, our new mission and vision centre around 'Inspiring Children, Empowering Educators.' We have intentionally placed educators at the forefront because quality child care begins with quality professionals. We are doing our part. But we cannot do it alone," the statement continues.

Hajovic, who posted her statement on various social media platforms and sent it to several elected officials, said the response from the public has been very positive. On the other hand, the reply from others has been quiet.

"I have heard back from one, and it's the new mayor of Brant County, Jennifer Kyle. I found it interesting she is the only one who got back to me because realistically, she has the least amount of power in this situation because it is a provincial issue," Hajovic said.

Brantford-Brant MPP Will Bouma has not replied to Hajovic. Grant Haven Media has reached out to him for comment, along with other government officials.

Hajovic added child-care operators did not get a heads-up when the wage freeze was announced and learned about it from media reports. She also has a theory on why it may have happened, and it has to do with the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC), the federal-provincial program designed to make licensed child care more affordable for families with children under six to provide care for $10 per day.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Krysta Hajovic, a Tavistock resident and executive director of Paris Child Care, said the provincial government's wage freeze on registered early childhood educators will make it even more difficult to open a new 65-space child-care centre in the Brant County town.

"It's been no secret the provincial government has not managed the funds for CWELCC properly," she said. "They've been fighting with the federal government trying to sustain it. We're not even close to the $10 a day target in Ontario."

Hajovic said she feels the province is freezing wages to offset underfunding from the federal government as a way to recoup funds.

"I think they are pointing the fingers at each other in a battle against CWELCC and in the end, it's the staff and the RECEs who are taking the hit for the fight."

Ontario parents are currently paying an average of $19 per day for licensed child care through CWELCC. The most licensed providers can charge is $22.

Hajovic said it is utterly impossible to recruit and retain staff and added the province keeps saying there aren't enough child-care spaces available, but she has a new building in Paris with 65 spaces ready to open and she can't open the doors because she can't find qualified staff.

"It is sitting empty because I haven't been able to find staff to allow me to fill those spaces. I need 15 employees, and at least 10 of them need to be RECEs. There are good RECEs, and there are not so good RECEs. We have an obligation to be very particular with the quality of the people we are hiring."

A child-care centre cannot ignore provincial staffing requirements because it has difficulty recruiting. It must maintain the required staffing ratios and qualified-employee proportions, and failure to comply can result in enforcement action by the Ministry of Education, including administrative penalties.

"We held a job fair in October and heavily advertised it. We had 32 people attend and only two were RECEs. I spend over $600 a month on recruiting," Hajovic said.

Part of the problem is many applicants are early child-care assistants (ECA). Unlike RECEs, ECAs are not regulated by the College of Early Childhood Educators. Hajovic said the ECA program is bogus.

"It is not a real thing. Some international career college is saying come to Canada and take this program and you'll get a job. Then they come to us and we're saying we can't hire you. The program isn't months long; it's hours long to get a certificate."

Hajovic said the province is investing money in trades but there is no cost savings for someone looking to enter a RECE program, one that typically takes two years to graduate from in Ontario. She added while she is not an RECE, all she wants is to advocate for her staff.

"I see what they put in every day and I know what they deserve. It is a lot more than a dollar an hour. At the very least, give them what they are expecting."

She said it is important for the public to not believe everything they hear.

"My wait list for the new centre is hundreds long. This beautiful, state-of-the-art facility has three dark rooms."

In her statement, Hajovic said her organization is doing its part, but it's time the provincial government did theirs.

"And as a leader, I will not stay quiet. I will speak up. I will advocate. I will fight for my team."

Early childhood educators called out the Ontario government at Queen's Park recently.

"To freeze wages in the middle of an affordability crisis is both heartless and foolish," said Carolyn Ferns, policy coordinator at Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care. "In real dollars, this is a direct cut for our lowest-paid educators."

The current wage floor is $25.86, and Ontario has raised the minimum pay for early childhood educators by $1 per hour each year through the initial child-care deal with the federal government.

In part two of this story, we will hear from provincial politicians, including NDP MPP Teresa Armstrong, the Ontario NDP's critic for child care.

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A once-in-a-lifetime trip along the Danube River in November

GARY WEST
Gazette Correspondent

Every once in a while in one's life, it's a good idea (I think) to step outside of one's comfort zone and explore new areas of the world.

We recently flew from Toronto to Amsterdam, then on to Budapest, Hungary, where we boarded an Avalon river cruise ship and set sail on a journey that would take us through Austria and Germany, with a visit to the Czech Republic.

As experienced travellers will know, on a river cruise, you get to know almost everyone. There were fewer than 100 passengers on board this time of year, compared to the thousands of passengers aboard the large ocean cruise ships.

I don't want to admit we're getting old, but what the heck, we're sure not getting any younger, and the time to cruise is now.

If you're in need of a nearby travel agent, our friends at Stonetown Travel made all the arrangements, and several of us from surrounding communities were able to take advantage of their great planning and hospitality.

Along the way, we saw history stretching back centuries.

In Budapest, Hungary, we explored a city steeped in history that suffered tremendous destruction during the Second World War under Nazi Germany.

It was fitting that, just a few days after our visit, ceremonies were being held around the world on Nov. 11, Armistice Day, to remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in wars that claimed the lives of millions of soldiers and civilians.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

A small group of passengers from Ontario and British Columbia enjoy their journey along the Danube River in Europe. The travellers booked their trip through Stonetown Travel, which has offices in St. Marys and New Hamburg.

Even though there were many obstacles to overcome during our trip, the biggest was the low water level in the Danube River following a very dry summer and fall in that part of Europe.

Farming crops in the region must have been difficult, to say the least.

With water levels too low for the river cruise ship to navigate certain stretches, Avalon arranged for passengers to travel by bus between ports. The company also provided substantial discounts to those affected by the changes.

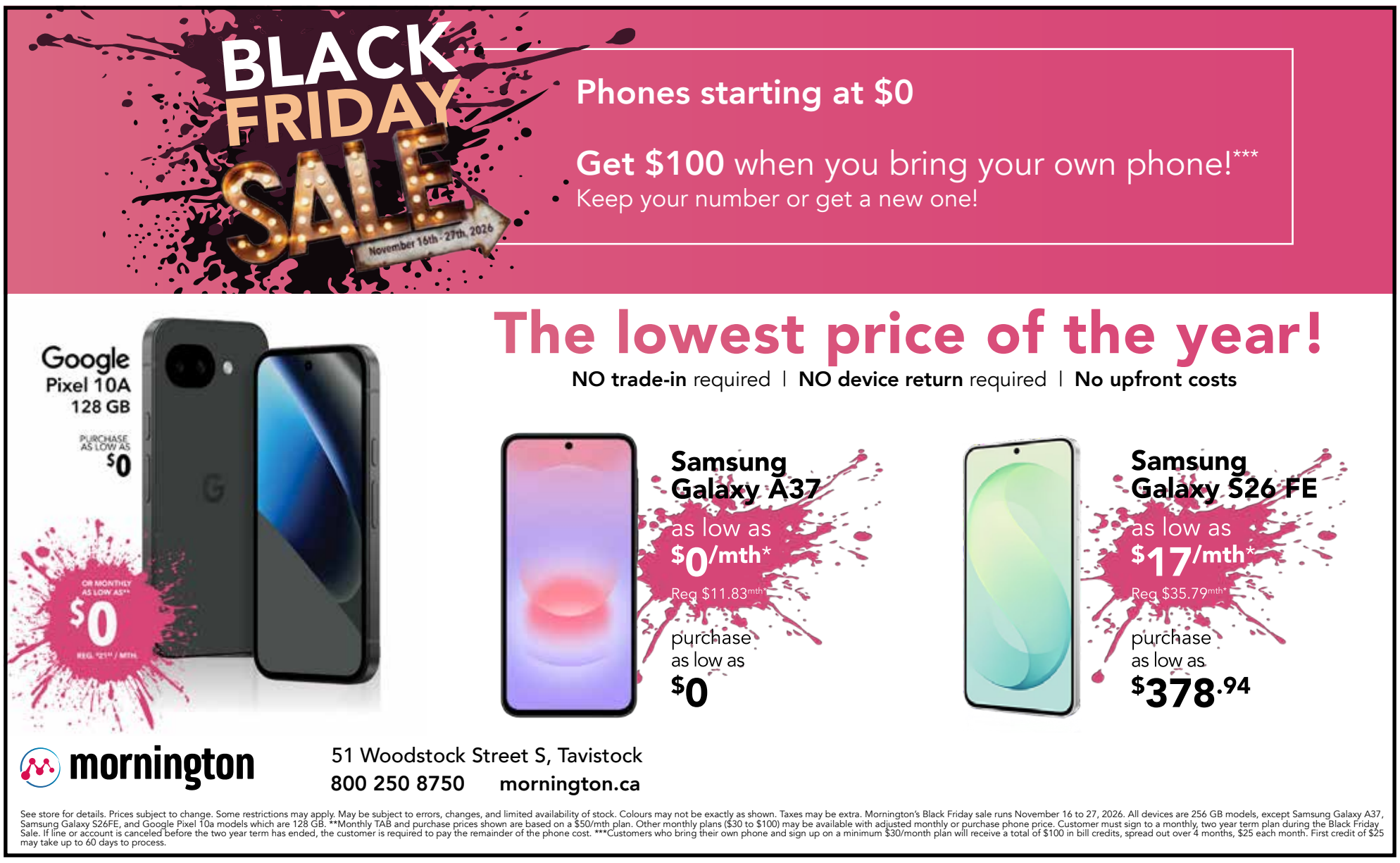


The breathtaking interior of a church in Vienna, Austria, features elaborate gold detailing and beautiful paintings adorning the ceilings and walls. The stunning architecture was among the many memorable sights during a recent trip along the Danube River.

Despite the unexpected challenges, we were still able to visit some incredible tourist destinations and experience the history and beauty of this part of Europe firsthand.

As Heather, one of our newfound travelling friends from Kitchener, said, "If you're given lemons, you make lemonade."

And that's exactly what we did!



High Noon luncheon draws a crowd to Grace United Church in Tavistock

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

It was a packed house at Grace United Church in Tavistock last week as area residents gathered for the November High Noon luncheon.

Sponsored by the Tavistock and Area Ministerial Association, High Noon brings local churches and residents together once a month during the winter for fellowship, an interesting guest speaker and a donation-only lunch.

Everyone is welcome to attend, regardless of church affiliation.

November's guest speaker was Stratford's Jean Aitcheson, a retired registered nurse who founded the Stratford Mission Depot on the second floor of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Stratford.

Aitcheson is well known throughout the area for dedicating much of her life to helping those in need, both at home and around the world.

For more than 30 years, she has helped collect and redistribute unused and surplus medical supplies, along with equipment such as wheelchairs and walkers, to people and communities that need them most.

Her humanitarian efforts have taken her to remote communities throughout Central and South America and Africa, where she has led countless outreach missions to improve the lives of those less fortunate.

Those who know Aitcheson often compare her to the Energizer Bunny, saying she just keeps going and going.

And Aitcheson has no plans to slow down, continuing her humanitarian work for as long as she is able.

Her decades of dedication and service were recognized nationally in December 2022 when she was appointed a member of the Order of Canada by Canada's Governor General.

Despite the recognition, Aitcheson continues to take her work in stride, remaining focused on helping others and ensuring much-needed medical supplies reach those who can use them.

Anyone with surplus or unused medical supplies they would like to donate can contact Aitcheson at the Stratford Mission Depot at 519-276-1975.

The next High Noon luncheon will take place Thursday, Dec. 10, at noon at Trinity Lutheran Church in Sebastopol.

Rev. Mary Boland of Tavistock encourages everyone to attend the December gathering, which will feature local musicians performing songs of the Christmas season.

As always, everyone is welcome to enjoy the fellowship, entertainment and donation-only lunch.



(MARY BOLAND PHOTO)

Stratford's Jean Aitcheson speaks to a packed house during the November High Noon luncheon at Grace United Church in Tavistock. Aitcheson, a retired registered nurse and member of the Order of Canada, shared her experiences helping people in need around the world through her humanitarian work.



SWPH to amalgamate its Woodstock sites with a $5.5-million price tag

Health unit says planned move to 712 Peel St. will bring client services together

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

The Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) board of health has decided to relocate its multi-building Woodstock operations to a single location, but the move won't come cheap.

All operations will move to 712 Peel St. in Woodstock, the current Oxford Children's Aid building, to serve Oxford County and surrounding regions from a single-site model. The move is expected to occur in late summer 2027 after millions of dollars in renovations.

As a tenant, SWPH will occupy approximately half of the building, with the other half continuing to operate independently through Children's Aid.

"This central site offers an efficient use of existing public sector space that is currently underused," said Bernia Martin, outgoing chair of the SWPH board of health. "It keeps public-health services local, with a more practical approach to delivering those services to our clients."

Renovations will begin this fall, and SWPH said it will share updates with the community as planning advances.

SWPH currently operates from three separate addresses in Woodstock: 410 Buller St., 93 Graham St. and leased dental space at the Oxford County Community Health Centre.

"In 2023, the board of health formed a special building ad-hoc committee to explore options that would bring its services together, including new construction, leased space and other available development properties. The committee chose 712 Peel St. for its location, functionality and value," said Martin.

"We see great advantage in moving toward a centrally located, single-site model in Woodstock. The core benefit of this decision is it will allow us to deliver clinical, dental, harm reduction and other programs and services through a more functional and accessible building."

The cost of leasing the current properties totals $680,000 per year. All SWPH sites, including the St. Thomas office, are funded through the annual operating budget shared across the municipalities of Elgin County, Oxford County and the City of St. Thomas, as well as a portion funded by the Ministry of Health.

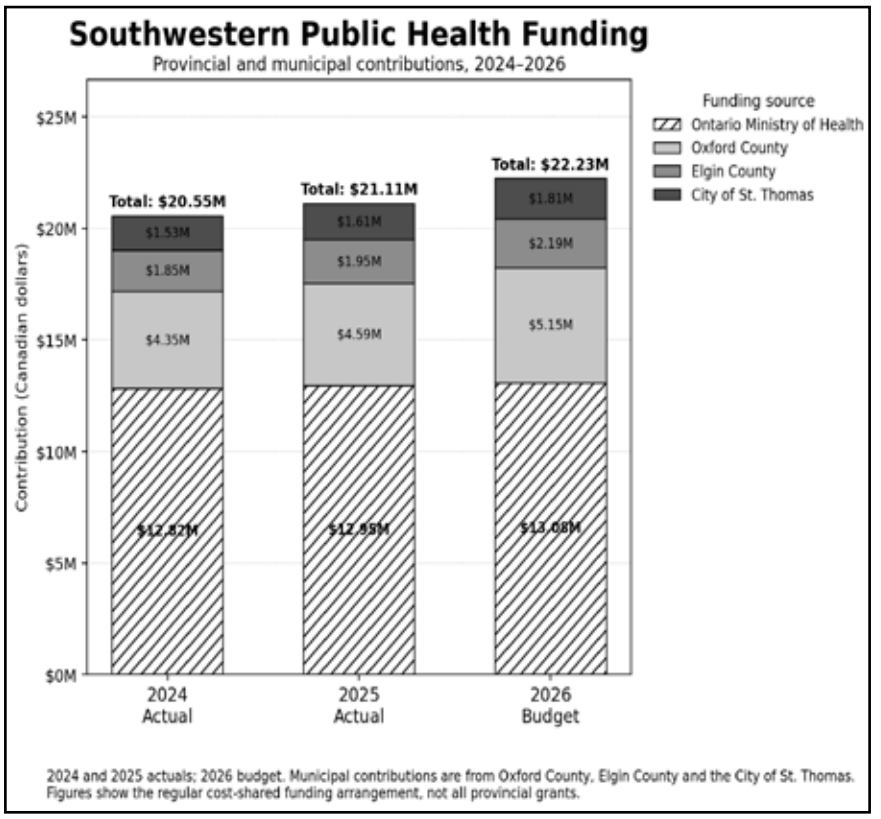
The health unit has not released what the cost of rent will be at the new location but will do renovations with a board-approved $5.5-million estimated budget.

"The initial announcement was intended to inform the community about the board of health's decision to proceed with a relocation of our Woodstock operations. We are committed to sharing more information as the project progresses at swpublichealth.ca/about-us/woodstock-site-project," Martin said.

The health unit's location at 1230 Talbot St. in St. Thomas is not affected by the announcement.

Public health units are funded by both the provincial government and the municipalities they serve. SWPH received money from the taxpayers of all Oxford County municipalities, Elgin County and the City of St. Thomas.

In Ontario, municipalities are legally obligated to pay their share of a local public health unit's costs, even if they disagree with the amount being requested. The authority comes from Section 72 of Ontario's Health Protection and Promotion Act.



(CONTRIBUTED IMAGE)

Southwestern Public Health is funded by the Ontario Ministry of Health along with participating municipalities, including Oxford County.

Tavistock Santa Claus parade returns Nov. 28 with new activities

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Santa Claus will once again make his way through downtown Tavistock as part of this year's Christmas celebrations on Saturday, Nov. 28, beginning at 1 p.m.

The Tavistock Men's Club will once again host and organize the popular annual parade, with a few new additions planned for this year.

Parade co-chairs Mark Kozdras and Don Junker say Maria Street will remain closed after the parade leaves the post office area to allow the New Hamburg Concert Band to perform for a short time.

Parade participants can be picked up off Maria Street in the arena parking lot or at the public-school parking lot.

Also new this year, the Tavistock Royals hockey team will host a children's carnival at the Tavistock Memorial Hall from 2-5 p.m., following the parade.

Children will have an opportunity to meet Santa at the Memorial Hall and enjoy milk and cheese sticks provided by the Dairy Farmers of Oxford County. Candy treats will also be available.

This year's parade theme is "A Favourite Christmas Carol," and organizers are hoping to hear plenty of Christmas music as the floats make their way through the village.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Rudolph's red nose will shine brightly once again as the Tavistock Santa Claus parade returns Saturday, Nov. 28, beginning at 1 p.m. The popular annual parade will follow its traditional route through the village.

Floats entered by families, organizations and businesses will be judged at 12:30 p.m. at the corner of Janelle Drive and Jacob Street West.

Residents are encouraged to check the parade route in the advertisement in this week's Gazette.

For more information or to register a float, visit tavistockmensclub.ca or email info@tavistockmensclub.ca.

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Grace United Church celebrates children and youth during Sunday service

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Grace United Church in Tavistock welcomed children and youth to its Sunday worship service with a special message recognizing World Children's Day, observed annually on Nov. 20.

Established in 1954, the international observance promotes the wellbeing and rights of children around the world.

The service opened with nine-year-old Blakely Griffi lighting the Christ candle, followed by a message from Rev. Marilyn Arthur encouraging worshippers of all ages to embrace kindness, courage and faith.

Arthur reminded the congregation to always be kind, never be afraid and not try to hide their faith.

"We are never alone in God's world," she said.

The service also featured Inside Out, a children's film about Riley and the importance of understanding emotions, including joy, sadness, fear, disgust and anger. The message reminded those gathered that everyone experiences these feelings throughout life and that it is okay to express them.

Grace United Church youth leader Carol Young assisted throughout the service and announced the church's annual Project Good Tidings initiative, which is collecting gifts until Dec. 6.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Rev. Marilyn Arthur speaks to children and youth during a special Sunday worship service at Grace United Church in Tavistock, encouraging them to always be kind, embrace their faith and understand that it is okay to express their emotions. Youth leader Carol Young is seated behind her.



Grace United Church youth leader Carol Young welcomes children to Sunday's service in the church's Zion Hall and announces Project Good Tidings, a Christmas gift collection supporting Tavistock Assistance Program, Optimism Place, Shelterlink and The Christmas Place. Rev. Marilyn Arthur is seated behind her.



Longtime Grace United Church member and choir participant Elizabeth Halliday will continue serving as chair of the church board for 2026-2027.

Organized by the church's youth, the project supports Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP), Optimism Place women's shelter, Shelterlink in Stratford and The Christmas Place, part of Operation Sharing in Woodstock.

Young encouraged congregation members to donate new gifts that would help spread Christmas cheer to those in need.

She suggested choosing items they would be happy to give to members of their own families, emphasizing that all donated gifts must be new.

Following the service, the congregation held elections for its church board and session, conducted by board chair Elizabeth Halliday.

Elected to the church board for 2026-2027 were Carol Shewfelt, Monica Shantz, Bill Brown and Brad Reibling, with Halliday continuing as chair.

Elected church session members were Anne King, Dale Smythe, Wayne Shewfelt and Kelli Zehr.

Tavistock veterinarian Dr. Wayne Shewfelt honoured for lifetime of service to bovine medicine

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A familiar and respected face to generations of farmers throughout Perth, Oxford and Waterloo counties, Tavistock veterinarian Dr. Wayne Shewfelt has received a prestigious honour recognizing his nearly five decades of service to bovine veterinary medicine.

Shewfelt was recently named an honorary life member of the Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners (CABV) in recognition of his clinical expertise, leadership, mentorship and lifelong commitment to advancing veterinary medicine.

Throughout his career, Shewfelt has earned the respect of farmers, fellow veterinarians and students alike through his dedication to animal health and his willingness to share his knowledge and experience with others.

A longtime dairy practitioner, educator and leader in his profession, Shewfelt has helped advance bovine veterinary medicine while mentoring countless young veterinarians who have followed in his footsteps.

For dairy farmers across the region, seeing Shewfelt walk into the barn often meant knowing their animals were in capable and experienced hands.

Through his many years with the Tavistock Veterinary Clinic, which he helped establish, Shewfelt built lasting relationships with farming families who relied on his expertise, whether for routine herd health care or emergencies in the middle of the night.

In the early years of the practice, his wife, Carol, played an important supporting role, often answering telephone calls from farmers at all hours when Shewfelt was on call.

Alongside fellow veterinarians Dr. Bruce Robb and Dr. John Chesney, Shewfelt helped establish a veterinary practice that became an important part of the agricultural community.

His commitment to continuing education has also been a defining part of his career. Always eager to learn and share new developments in veterinary medicine, Shewfelt has generously passed along his knowledge to colleagues, students and younger practitioners.

His contributions to bovine medicine, leadership within professional organizations and dedication to mentoring future generations have left a lasting impression on the veterinary profession across Canada.

But Shewfelt's contributions to the Tavistock community extend well beyond the barn and veterinary clinic.

Raised near Kincardine, he was an accomplished hockey player in the Central Junior B Hockey League before going on to spend many years coaching minor hockey at the Tavistock arena while his children were growing up.

He was particularly admired for his involvement with local hockey teams, including the years he spent coaching alongside his son, Greg.

Wayne and Carol Shewfelt raised three children, Scott, Greg and Meagan, while becoming familiar faces throughout the community.

Whether he was treating sick animals, coaching hockey, curling or volunteering through his church, Wayne Shewfelt has always been willing to lend a hand and share his time with others.

For the many farmers, families and friends who have come to know him over the years, his recognition as an honorary life member of the Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners is a fitting tribute to a lifetime of dedication.

And while the national honour recognizes his contributions to veterinary medicine, those who know him in Tavistock will tell you his greatest legacy may be the countless lives, both human and animal, he has touched along the way.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Dr. Wayne Shewfelt, left, receives recognition for his appointment as an honorary life member of the Canadian Association of Bovine Practitioners from Dr. Scott Westlake, a longtime fellow veterinarian at the Tavistock Veterinary Clinic. Westlake presented the honour Sept. 16 on behalf of the association during its virtual annual meeting. The recognition celebrates Shewfelt's nearly five decades of dedication to bovine medicine, professional leadership and mentorship.

Student creativity takes centre stage at W-O showcase

AMANDA NELSON

Gazette Reporter

Students at Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School (W-ODSS) are performing in The Opening Showcase on Friday, Nov. 27, at 7 p.m. in the library.

The student-led performance includes a mix of original and previously performed pieces, including monologues, musical theatre acts, comedy, student-written scenes, technical designs and more.

"Everything is student-driven, so costumes, makeup, hair, all the acting, the directors," said Heather Lamont, teacher-director. "It's several different acts pieced together, so some of them are student-written and others are pieces from performances we've done in the past."

The performance is a unique blend of past productions, new musical pieces and monologues, which student producer Billie Eidt said was both fun and challenging to put together.

"In doing a showcase like this, you have to find a balance between the musical acts and the monologues and the scenes so that the audience feels engaged," they said. "There are students who like to sing, and I don't have a lot of knowledge in musicals, so it's a lot about working together and learning from each other."

Brenna Goldrick, student head of costume design, said she appreciates the hard work she and her team put into the costumes for the winter performance. She noted the showcase is unique because it features everything from 1800s-inspired costumes to contemporary clothing.

"With a normal show, the costumes are based on one theme," she said. "In this case, we have the 1800s and then a café and everything in between, so it's been interesting. I really love it, though, and I love making costumes for shows."

The evening is open to everyone and runs approximately an hour and a half. Tickets are $10 at the door, with the wider community invited to attend and support the students as they fundraise for another trip to STARFest Nationals in the spring.

"I hope people walk away feeling impressed by what we've done," said Eidt. "It's a fun role and it's been fun to work with everyone, so I hope people see that."

W-ODSS is also hosting a Winter Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 1-4 p.m. The fun begins following the Baden Santa Claus Parade, making it an ideal second stop for community members.

Families are invited to enjoy an afternoon of games and activities, including a silent auction, story time, face painting, a dance party, a scavenger hunt and more.

Tickets are $5 per person or $20 per family. Additional costs may apply for special activities and purchases from vendors, including the W-O Eco Club, along with several student and community vendors.

The Winter Bazaar will serve as the main fundraiser for the STARFest Nationals competition.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Students involved in the upcoming production of The Opening Showcase prepare during a dress rehearsal. Tickets will be available at the door, with the community invited to attend and support Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School students. Back row: Cordelia Morton, Sophie Ernewein and Billie Eidt. Middle row: Abigail Gingerich, Oliver Hill, Maddi Wilde and Brenna Goldrick. Front row: Toby Wiles, Niava, Olivia Logan and Brooke Ottoson. Missing performers: Jonathan Roussel, Phoenix Charland, Chip Gull, Justin Nelson and Carmen Peter.

QUIZ TIME

BY JAKE GRANT

1. Jiminy Cricket first appeared in what book?
2. The apostle Paul was called by Jesus on the road to which city?
3. What items did the Stamp Act levy a tax on?
4. What is the layering process of making pastry called?
5. Who is the villain in "A Nightmare on Elm Street"?
6. The 1976 Summer Olympics were held in which city?
7. What bird can swim but cannot fly?
8. Where do "Yoopers" live?
9. SpongeBob SquarePants lives in a house shaped like what?
10. What is Wales' national dish called?

Answers found on classified page

Optimist Club of Downie Inc.

OPTI-CASH CALENDAR DRAW

Nov. 1 Cory Houghton, Mitchell	$50.00
Nov. 2 Donna Tinning, Perth South	$50.00
Nov. 3 Kate & Chris Grima, Cambridge	$50.00
Nov. 4 Isaac Nyenhuis, Sebringville	$50.00
Nov. 5 Martha Welchman, St. Marys	$50.00
Nov. 6 Paul Wivell, Perth South	$50.00
Nov. 7 Chris Ney, Sebringville	$200.00
Nov. 8 Matt Aarts, St. Marys	$50.00
Nov. 9 Bruce Armstrong, St. Marys	$50.00
Nov. 10 Murray Barber, Granton	$50.00
Nov. 11 Ed Muegge, Waterloo	$50.00
Nov. 12 Liane Tomkins, Shakespeare	$50.00
Nov. 13 Matt & Erin Verellen, Stratford	$50.00
Nov. 14 Micheal & Anita London, St. Marys	$200.00

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OBITUARY

THOMAS: Marlene Gail



Marlene Gail Thomas, age 85, of Shakespeare, passed away peacefully with family by her side at the People Care, Tavistock on November 15, 2026. Born in Stratford, daughter of the late Samuel and Mary (Gibbard) Campbell.

Predeceased by her husband Lowell Thomas (2002), sisters Sharon Gervais, Linda McLeod and brother-in-law Reginald Thomas (Agnes).

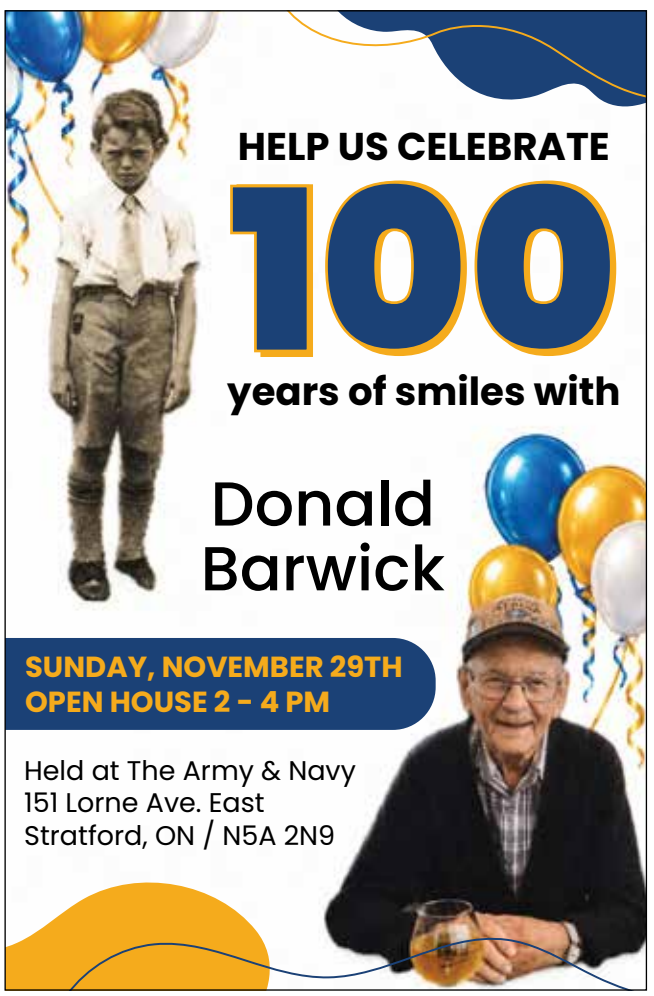
Marlene is survived by her children Michael Thomas and Vicki Thomas (Peter Shillolo). Grandmother to Spencer Marsh (Alannah). Lovingly remembered by several nieces and nephews.

Marlene was secretary/treasurer for the South Easthope School Board for many years. She later worked payroll at Kmart and worked at the Stratford Festival until her retirement.

The family would like to thank the staff at Anne Hathaway Retirement Residence and most recently People Care Tavistock for their care and compassion.

In keeping with Marlene's wishes, a family service will be held with burial at Avondale Cemetery. Memorial donations in Marlene's memory may be made to Shakespeare Community Athletic Association or the Stratford General Hospital through the W.G. Young Funeral Home, 430 Huron Street, Stratford. www.wgyoungfuneralhome.com

100TH BIRTHDAY



OBITUARY

DORSCH: Carol Laureen (Ruby)



Passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family on Wednesday, November 11, 2026 at Nithview Home, New Hamburg, Ontario. Carol Dorsch of New Hamburg in her 83rd year, born November 26, 1943 in East Zorra Township, Ontario.

Beloved wife of Richard Dorsch whom she married August 17, 1963. Loving mother of Susan and husband Glenn Sider of New Dundee; Chris and husband Kyle O'Malley of Ann Arbor, Michigan and Deb and husband Tim Albrecht of Cambridge. Cherished grandmother of Meghan (Frank), Nicole (Andrew), Matthew (Becky), Brett (Chelsea), Shawn, MacKenzie, Keltie, Brady, Allegra (Connor), Graham, and JaymieAnn. Cherished great-grandmother of 7 great-grandchildren.

Survived by her sisters Bertha Ruby, Verna Mae and husband Gerald Boshart, Miriam and husband Stewart Schneider and Elaine and husband Dale Leis, and sister-in-law Margaret Ruby.

Predeceased by her parents Aaron and Laura (Schwartzentruber) Ruby and by her brother Ken, and sisters Merva (Milford) Roth, Jean (Gayle)Yoder, and by her sister-in-law Loreen.

For 45 years Carol was a dedicated and familiar face in the community as the office manager at the Wellesley Veterinary Clinic. Her warmth, organization and care for both the animals and their owners left a lasting impression on everyone who walked through the doors. Outside of work Carol found joy in the simple pleasures of life. She loved spending time outdoors, taking long walks and working on the farm. Carol shared a deep and enduring bond with her beloved husband, Richard and together they shared a passion for the open road, spending countless happy hours traveling on the motorcycle. Whether taking a quiet weekend cruise though the countryside or embarking on a long journey, Carol loved the freedom of the ride and the memories she and Richard built together along the way. Carol was deeply committed to her faith and church life, serving in multiple ways over the years. Above all else, Carol cherished her family. She was a proud and devoted Mother and she deeply treasured every moment spent with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Carol will be forever missed and lovingly remembered by her husband Richard, her children, grandchildren great-grandchildren and extended family and many dear friends.

Relatives and friends will be received at the Mark Jutzi Funeral Home, 291 Huron Street New Hamburg, Ontario on Sunday, November 15 from 2:00 - 4:00pm and 6:00 - 8:00pm. Celebration of Life will be held in the chapel of the Mark Jutzi Funeral Home on Monday, November 16, 2026 at 2:00pm with a reception to follow in the Waterwheel Room. Private burial at a later date.

Family and friends can watch the service via Live Stream if you Click here to view the Service.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Mennonite Central Committee would be appreciated by the family. Personal condolences can be shared at www.markjutzifuneralhomes.ca

OBITUARY

FLOOD: Margaret



Passed away peacefully on Wednesday, November 11, 2026 at St Mary's Hospital. She was born 85 years ago to Walter and Helen (Vogel) Faulhafer.

Margie loved her family, traveling throughout North America, hiking, puzzle books and novels. She was a kind-hearted lady whose door was always open to her friends and family. Nothing made her happier than welcoming someone for a visit or a game of cards.

Beloved wife to Burt, whom she missed dearly since his passing on January 28, 2020. Another hole in her heart was for her oldest son, Bradley, who left us June 7, 2025.

Dearly missed by Bradley's wife Kelly, son Barry and his wife Leanne, son David and his wife Cara and daughter Ann. She is sadly missed by her grandchildren Katelyn & Josh, Laura, Emily & Brad, Wesley, Jacob & Emily, Montana & Jess, Rachel & Anthony and Sarah as well as her great grandchildren Scarlett, Beckett and Callahan. Beloved sister to Ron & Peg Faulhafer as well as Burt's many brothers and sisters.

Margie's family express their deep gratitude to all who visited and cared for her during her last months, especially Dr Stacy Snider, Dorothy Harding, the wonderful residents at Nith Terrace and Christina Held. She loved you all.

At Margie's request, there will be no visitation or funeral service.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Princess Margaret Hospital Cancer Center or the Heart & Stroke Foundation would be appreciated by the family. Personal condolences can be shared at www.markjutzifuneralhomes.ca

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Mark Jutzi Funeral Home, 291 Huron Street, New Hamburg, Ontario.



by PeterS 2026

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Answers found on classified page

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The Old Gazettes

By Sydney Grant

Slowly but surely, I'm reading through the past pages of the Tavistock Gazette (est. 1895). Within this weekly column I'd like to share with you some of my findings.

November 9-16, 2016, Edition (10 years ago)

The Tavistock Braves slipped to eighth place in the Doherty Division of the Provincial Junior Hockey League on the weekend with two tough losses to the second place Paris Mounties. On Friday night, they lost another one-goal game in Tavistock, then dropped a 5-1 decision Saturday night in Paris to put their record at 3-13-0. Saturday night in Paris, the Braves got on the board first with a goal by Tanner Johnson from Jake Wiffen and Kellen Gedies. However, Paris replied a minute later on the power play and proceeded to build up the lead with another two power-play goals.

The Tavistock Men's Club and dozens upon dozens of volunteers held another successful Roast Pork and Sauerkraut Supper on Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2016. More than 1,700 meals were either served, delivered, or picked up. The Club's famous homemade sauerkraut was started more than six weeks before with 11 bins of cabbage donated by Beanhaven Farms. Members cut and packed the cabbage one Monday evening in mid September and tended to their barrels daily up until the day of the supper when it was cooked to perfection. The menu also included other local products such as 1,200-plus pounds of roast pork accompanied by 36 pails of boiled potatoes, 35 gallons of apple sauce, homemade coleslaw, 70 pounds of old cheese donated by Saputo, 320 loaves of two-tone bread baked by Guenther's Bakery in Milverton, and 307 apple pies baked by Quehl's Restaurant.

November 8-15, 2006, Edition (20 years ago)

The Tavistock Minor Hockey Parents group along with Smully's family restaurant served 620 meals of schnitzel or chicken fingers on the weekend to raise funds for the association. The third annual event is held the first weekend in November. The 50/50 draw winner was Tom Munro winning $350. There were also 10 free dinners drawn for, donated by Smully's. Winners will be contacted by phone. Minor Hockey Parents donated $12,500 to Tavistock Minor Hockey executive at the banquet in April from their fundraising efforts from the previous year.

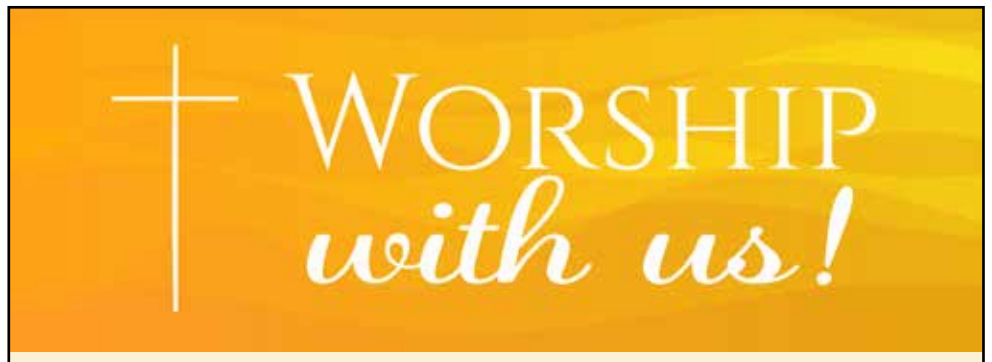
It was a tight race all the way around as electors went to the polls Monday, Nov. 13, for the 2006 municipal election. Only 35 per cent of voters turned out – 1,820 out of an eligible 5,198. In Ward 1, Tavistock, it was too close to call as incumbent Dave Oliphant was awarded the seat by one vote over challenger Linda Fulton with a tally of 506-505. Clive Lawry topped the Tavistock polls with 563 votes. Rob Gribble managed 92 votes overall.

November 12-19, 1986, Edition (40 years ago)

On Tuesday, Nov. 4, at 7 p.m. the Tavistock Parent Teachers Association held a very informative meeting welcoming all parents to come and get a taste of the new math curriculum now being used. Mr. Francis welcomed Mr. Lonnie Hodson, math consultant for Oxford County, who gave an interesting talk on the "whys" of revamping the math program kindergarten through Grade 8. He stressed this is not a new math but rather a new approach to old math.

For the second consecutive year, Tavistock native Roger Ruby has taken the grand champion dairy prize at the Salmon Arm Fall Fair in Salmon Arm, B.C. Bunalta Citation Loopy (V.G.) won the honour. This 1,800-pound Holstein is the dairy herd from which four up-and-coming heifers have been produced.





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To have your place of worship listing included here, please contact thewtgazette@gmail.com

SEND STORY IDEAS AND LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TO GALEN SIMMONS AT GALEN@GRANTHAVEN.COM

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

PJHL Roundup: Braves hold narrow lead on Applejacks as heavyweight battle looms

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

First place is on the line as the Tavistock Braves are set to host the surging Wellesley Applejacks at the Tavistock and District Recreation Centre on Friday at 7:45 p.m.

The Braves have a two-point lead on the Applejacks, but Wellesley, winners of six straight, has a game in hand.

"Wellesley is a good team with lots of firepower, and it should make for a really good game," said Braves general manager Brent Lange. "We have only played them once this season, so it will be good for our guys to see another top team."

He added the team played poorly during a loss in Norwich on Saturday.

"At times, we looked like a last-place team in the league. Hopefully we bring our A game Friday against Wellesley because I know they will come out ready to play. We usually get good crowds with them and they travel well with a good following of fans. I'm sure they can expect a good, fast-paced game with two top teams going head-to-head."

No starting goalie had been named by press time, but there is no doubt Andrew Torchia has turned into one of the league's top netminders. He has a minuscule goals-against average of 1.71 and a save percentage of .932, both of which top the Doherty Division. Last season, the Baden native ended the season with marks of 3.11 and .899.

"Andrew has been great for us this year," said Lange. "He has worked hard all summer with his brother, Nathan Torchia, at Nathan's goalie school, Torch Goaltending. He has improved since last year and is playing with great confidence. We have a lot of confidence in him as well."



(PHOTO COURTESY OF TAVISTOCK BRAVES)

Baden's Andrew Torchia leads the Doherty Division in goals-against average and save percentage this season. His father, Mike, had a successful career in junior and professional hockey

He added Andrew Torchia's numbers are some of the best in the league and the team has a solid one-two punch between the pipes.

"Torch is really coming along here and pushing Richy (Blake Richard) as well. Both are number one goalies basically; that is why we rotate them most of the time. We have had a couple games this year where the odd soft one went in, but they're only human and it happens. That's why we're a team, and the next guy up just picks them up and we keep battling."

Andrew Torchia's talent comes naturally as his father, Mike, spent four seasons with the Kitchener Rangers, leading the team to a Memorial Cup runner-up finish in 1990. He was selected 74th overall in the 1991 NHL draft and played six games for the Minnesota North Stars before embarking on an 11-year professional career in the British Ice Hockey Superleague with the Manchester Storm. He also played three seasons with the legendary Cambridge Hornets of the OHA Senior A loop with former pros Gilber Dionne, Steve Rice and Peter Zezel.

Tavistock kicked off last weekend's games with a 5-1 trouncing of New Hamburg. Keenan McGrath led the Braves' balanced attack with a goal and an assist, while Owen Yagar, Tucker Otto, Even Palubeski and Liam McHugh also found the back of the net. Kayden Livingston scored the lone Firebirds marker, his fourth of the season. Andrew Torchia stopped 17 shots to earn the win as Tavistock fired 31 shots at the New Hamburg net.

The outcome wasn't as positive for the Braves on Saturday as they dropped a 4-3 overtime decision in Norwich. Tavistock led 3-2 after 40 minutes on goals from Yann Raskin, Palubeski and Carson Bernhardt, but the Merchants forced the extra period with just under two minutes remaining in regulation. Ethan Osborne, with his 10th of the season, won it for Norwich.

New Hamburg kept pace with the top teams in the division with a 7-4 win in Paris on Saturday. Kayden Livingston scored twice to lead the Firebirds, while Oliver Lyon, Tate Davison and Aydan Burns added two points each.

Wellesley had a perfect weekend with a 4-0 win over Dorchester on home ice Saturday and an 8-5 victory over Paris at a rare Monday night game. James Gall stopped all 29 shots he faced against the Dolphins, while Ethan Stover, Kyler Morgan and Colton Henderson had two points each. Against the Mounties, Issac Lorentz, Kyler Morgan and Benjamin Morton had three points each to lead the attack.

SOUTH - DOHERTY DIVISION

gamesheetstats.com

RK	TEAM	GP	W	L	OTL	T	OTW	PTS	SOW	SOL	GF	GA	DIFF	PCT	PIM	RW	ROW	STK
1	Tavistock Braves	20	14	2	3	0	3	32	0	1	88	49	+39	.800	432	11	14	Lost 1
2	Wellesley Applejacks	19	15	4	0	0	1	30	1	0	89	52	+37	.789	472	13	14	Won 6
3	New Hamburg Firebirds	19	13	5	0	0	1	27	0	1	80	63	+17	.711	265	12	13	Won 1
4	Norwich Merchants	20	10	10	0	0	3	20	2	0	61	84	-23	.500	461	5	8	Won 1
5	Hespeler Shamrocks	20	7	10	3	0	0	17	2	0	65	81	-16	.425	354	5	5	Won 2
6	Dorchester Dolphins	19	6	11	0	0	1	14	0	2	65	87	-22	.368	392	5	6	Lost 5
7	Paris Mounties	21	4	13	3	0	0	12	0	1	67	99	-32	.286	459	4	4	Lost 8

DIVISION LEADER	MOST GOALS FOR	BEST DEFENSE	BEST PP%
Tavistock Braves 32 PTS	Wellesley Applejacks 89 GF	Tavistock Braves 49 GA	Tavistock Braves .256 PP%

Royals split weekend games and move up in standings

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

The Tavistock Royals have found themselves in a tie for fourth place in the Ontario Elite Hockey League's (OEHL) South Division after a Friday win and Saturday loss.

Tavistock hosted the Milverton Four Wheel Drives on Friday night and earned a 6-3 come-from-behind victory. The Royals trailed 2-0 after 20 minutes, but two goals by Colin Martin and a single from John McDonald gave Tavistock a 3-2 lead. The Four Wheel Drives scored a late second period marker to tie it up, but Tavistock scored three consecutive third-period goals to earn the win.

Sean Kienapple scored the game-winner two and a half minutes into the final frame and added an insurance marker nine minutes later. Tyler Ried scored a late goal to finish off the scoring. Kienapple and Drew Gerth had three points each while Marek Pavlas kicked out 22 shots to earn the win in net.

In Seaforth on Saturday, Tavistock fell behind 2-0 after two periods of play and couldn't muster a comeback. The Centenaires went up 3-0 early in the third period before Matt Zilke scored his third of the season to cut into the deficit, but the Royals would end up losing the game 3-1.

Next action for Tavistock is Saturday at 7:30 p.m. when they host the cellar-dwelling Delhi Flames. The Flames have lost each of their nine games to date, scoring just 13 goals and allowing 82 goals against.

The Royals are also hosting an event at the Memorial Hall on Saturday, Nov. 28, following the Tavistock Santa Claus Parade. A Kids Carnival will feature an appearance by the jolly old fellow himself along with games and activities for kids of all ages. The cost is $2 per game and the event runs from 2-5 p.m.

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NEW LISTING - Enjoy easy one-floor living in this inviting 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom bungalow in Tavistock. Ideal for downsizers or retirees, this home backs onto peaceful farmland. The unfinished basement provides plenty of potential for additional living space, hobbies or entertaining. Make it your own and enjoy the possibilities. Immediate possession available! This is one home you do not want to miss viewing.

SAT., NOV. 21ST 10:30-12:00 NOON AND SUN., NOV. 22ND 1:00-3:00 PM



280 HOPE ST. E., TAVISTOCK
MLS#X13865732 • NEW PRICE $599,900
This spacious, well-maintained home offers three bedrooms, an updated kitchen, multiple living areas and a finished lower level with potential for a fourth bedroom or multi-generational living. Enjoy the mature, treed backyard and decks. Offering flexible living space and move-in-ready comfort, this home is aggressively priced and ready for its next family!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21ST 1:00-3:00 PM



40 DOURO STREET, STRATFORD
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Great opportunity for investors, first-time buyers or families! This duplex features two separate living units: a 3-bedroom lower level and a 2–3-bedroom upper level with finished attic, 3-piece bath and in-suite laundry. Includes a detached garage and storage shed. Within walking distance of downtown and public transit, there is also potential as a spacious single-family home. Immediate possession available!

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Royal Agricultural Winter Fair recognizes fair ambassadors from across Ontario

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

For the first time in its more than 100-year history, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto welcomed fair ambassadors and Queen of the Furrow winners from across Ontario for a special luncheon and day of recognition in mid-November.

Among those attending the inaugural Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAAS) Ambassador Day were Wellesley-North Easthope Fair Ambassador Manni Hayer and Wilmot-New Hamburg Fair Ambassador Maddi Lichti.

Both described the event as a wonderful experience and an opportunity to meet and connect with fellow ambassadors from across the province.

They enjoyed hearing about the experiences of ambassadors from other agricultural communities and learning from guest speakers who shared their knowledge and insights.

Hayer and Lichti said they were grateful for the opportunity to represent their respective agricultural societies at the Royal, one of Canada's longest-running agricultural exhibitions.

They also thanked the Royal's directors and staff for organizing the inaugural luncheon and creating an opportunity for discussion, learning and networking.

The event brought together fair ambassadors, Queen of the Furrow contestants, chaperones and special guests for a day of connecting with others involved in Ontario's agricultural fairs.

Participants also had the opportunity to hear from motivational speakers and representatives of the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies.

Hayer and Lichti said they look forward to sharing what they learned with their home communities of Wellesley and New Hamburg.

Both hope the Royal will continue hosting Ambassador Day in future years, giving other young agricultural representatives the same opportunity to make new friends, exchange ideas and celebrate the important role agricultural fairs play in communities across Ontario.

For the two local ambassadors, it was an experience they won't soon forget.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Fair ambassadors and Queen of the Furrow contestants from across Ontario gather for a group photo during the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto. Manni Hayer and Maddie Lichti are pictured at the far left of the front row, while 2026 Queen of the Furrow Carmen Ward of Grey County is pictured in red at the far right. Also joining the group are Sugar and Spice, two Angora ewes who served as mascots for this year's Royal.

New ownership brings promising future for Maples Home for Seniors in Tavistock

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Positive changes are on the horizon for the Maples Home for Seniors in Tavistock as the facility prepares to come under new ownership.

When Harrison Jarlette, president of Jarlette Health Care Services, visited the home Tuesday afternoon to introduce himself to residents, their families and staff, he brought some welcome news about the future of the long-established facility.

After speaking with residents in both the retirement and long-term care sections of the home, along with numerous staff members, the feeling in the room was one of joy and relief.

Jarlette put to rest rumours that the Maples might be closing, assuring those in attendance the facility has a promising future.

The visit follows the announcement that Jarlette Health Care Services has entered into an agreement to purchase Caressant Care, which operates 15 long-term care homes and 10 retirement homes across Ontario, including the Maples.

The sale comes as Caressant Care owner Jim Lavelle prepares to retire after more than five decades in the long-term care business.

Jarlette said there are still some loose ends to tie up, with Dec. 18 identified as an anticipated date for finalizing the sale. However, the transaction remains subject to provincial regulatory approvals.

Jarlette outlined plans that, subject to the necessary approvals, would eventually see a new, state-of-the-art long-term care facility built in the area, while the existing Maples building on William Street would be converted entirely into a retirement residence.

A location for the proposed long-term care home has yet to be determined, but the hope is to keep it as close to Tavistock as possible, within northern Oxford County.

Jarlette also reassured residents and staff that there would be no immediate disruption to services, and that residents would not be required to move as a result of the ownership transition.

Existing employees will also continue their employment under the Jarlette family, something Lavelle had emphasized as an important part of the sale agreement.

Jarlette Health Care Services has been in the health-care business since 1970, beginning in Midland, where the family-owned company remains headquartered.

The business is now in its third generation of family leadership, with Harrison Jarlette having taken over as president from his father, David Jarlette, about a year ago.

The company currently operates 14 long-term care homes and eight retirement lodges across Ontario, many in smaller communities.

When the opportunity arose to purchase Caressant Care, Jarlette said the acquisition was a good fit with the company's future goals and plans.

The Maples currently has 44 retirement residence beds and 43 long-term care beds, with a lengthy waiting list of applicants hoping to secure a space when one becomes available.

While Jarlette does not anticipate any major changes in the immediate future, the first step is completing the provincial approval process.

Applications have been submitted to the Ministry of Long-Term Care and Ontario Health for the transfer of long-term care bed licences, as well as to the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority for the retirement residences.

As part of that process, the Ministry of Long-Term Care is conducting a public consultation, with a public meeting scheduled for Nov. 26 and written comments accepted until Dec. 18.

Further information about the ownership transition is available at www.caressantcare.com/NextChapter.

While there is still work to be done before the proposed changes can move forward, Tuesday's meeting offered residents, families and staff some welcome reassurance that the Maples will continue to have an important place in the Tavistock community for years to come.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

The Maples Home for Seniors on William Street in Tavistock could eventually be converted entirely into a retirement residence under new ownership, while a new long-term care facility is proposed for the northern Oxford County area, subject to provincial approvals.



Long-term care residents at the Maples Home for Seniors listen intently as Jarlette Health Care Services president Harrison Jarlette outlines his family's plans for the Tavistock facility during a meeting Tuesday afternoon.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR:
The people who walk alongside us

We often hear the saying that it takes a village to raise a child. For families raising children with autism and developmental disabilities, the importance of that village can be immeasurable. Important members of my family's village and other families' that deserve recognition and praise are respite workers and babysitters.

The responsibilities of caring for my children with autism are enormous and come with a combination of joys and challenges. Our days can include everything from tickles, bouncing balls, laughter, hugs and cuddles to screaming, self-injury, aggression, difficult transitions and sleepless nights. Parenting these children involves navigating years-long wait lists, assessments, funding applications and 24/7 caregiving responsibilities. My family has learned support doesn't just come from formal programs, it comes from caring individuals who chose to become part of my family's everyday life.

For our family, these individuals have become so much more than child-care providers. They are people who genuinely get to know our boys, recognize their personalities, celebrate their accomplishments and embrace their individual needs. They engage them in play, laughter and activities, creating opportunities for connection, learning and simply having fun.

Their contributions extend well beyond the hours they spend with our children. They give parents like us the opportunity to work, attend appointments, spend time together as a couple, enjoy time with each child individually, or simply take a much-needed breath. They also support fun recreational activities that would not be possible without their help like outings to Clovermead Farm, going to the pool, and so much more. They provide something that can be difficult to find when raising children with complex needs: the reassurance that your children are in the hands of people who genuinely care about them.

To the people who walk through our doors, get down on the floor to play, celebrate our children's accomplishments, navigate their difficult moments and offer our family understanding and compassion: thank you. You may see yourselves as providing a few hours of care each week, but you are helping build something much bigger. You are helping create a village where our children are valued, our family feels supported and none of us have to walk alone.

Tara Parker,
Tavistock

Gazette Puzzles

FIRST SNOW FALL

L	D	G	W	S	L	E	G	N	A	W	O	N	S	F	I	C	D	O	E
H	U	N	K	H	V	T	F	K	R	S	D	J	R	F	Q	O	O	W	H
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Snowflakes **Icicles** **Shovel**
Chilly **Flurries** **Parka**
Snow Angels **Snowman** **Sledding**
Winter Wonderland **Cozy Mittens** **Frosty Windows**
Boots **Frozen Ponds** **White Blanket**

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Pet of the Week

APOLLO



Meet Apollo, a wonderful three-year-old boy who is full of love and ready to be your most loyal friend! Sweet, gentle, and well-mannered, he is a pleasure to have around. He is happy to spend time with his people, whether that means going for a walk or simply relaxing together. With his calm and affectionate personality, he is always happy to be part of the family. Apollo has a high level of energy, so he's looking for a home where he can have daily exercise, enrichment, and structure. If you're looking for a sweet boy to share your days with, Apollo may be the perfect match! Meet him by contacting our Stratford Centre or visiting our website at kwsphumane.ca/adopt/dogs

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Jump onboard rebounding

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



Exercise is essential. Why not make it fun without ever leaving the house! Imagine losing weight and getting fit by simply springing up and down on a mini trampoline. Rebounding is a low-impact exercise with all-over body-boosting benefits inside and out. In just a few minutes of rebounding a day, circulation, digestion and overall strength improves.

This in-home exercise requires a happy-go-lucky disposition, bare feet, a rebounder, a handle for safety and very minimal space. Rebounding is an all-age and all-level appropriate way to increase overall wellness, leading to longevity. Whether you move to music, watch news, cheer for your favourite team or love silence, rebounding is one out-of-this-world way to workout.

Let's get into it.

Rebounding is gentle on joints. Due to the springiness of this low-impact apparatus, rebounding is great for those looking to take pressure off hips and knees.

Rebounding helps improve balance and coordination. As we age, independence is maintained by staying strong in day-to-day tasks. Simply marching while holding the safety bar strengthens the core and improves posture. There is increasing evidence about the link between leg strength and longevity. Sitting is not an option.

Jumping works the whole body simultaneously with a highlight on cardiovascular health. Lower your risk of heart disease and a stroke by adding spring to the step.

Exercise is linked to mental health. Moving the body releases happy hormones, and these endorphins ease anxiety and depression. Physical activity helps manage the stress hormone cortisol, taking you from "fight or flight" to the parasympathetic state of "rest and digest."

Exercise and reap the sleep rewards with a deeper, more restorative shut-eye session.

Exercise helps manage blood sugar by lowering the post-meal blood-sugar spike. Walking helps the body respond better to insulin.

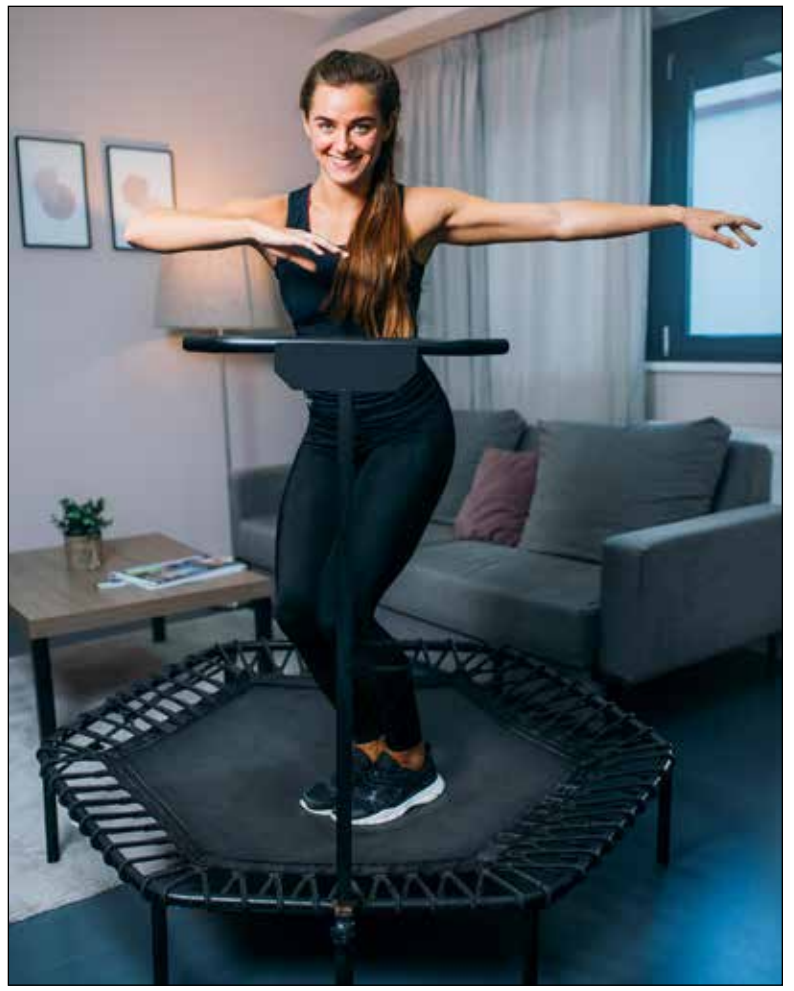
Jumping targets the lymphatic system. Unlike the blood system, which uses the heart as a pump, this system relies on you to move as the only way to help push fluid through its vessels. Bouncing in place is powerful, creating a gravitational shift and lymphatic valves open and close.

Let's get started. No shoes are needed. Just step onto the rebounder and reap the rewards. Using the safety bar boosts confidence for first timers.

Al Carter coined a few terms for rebounding and it's best to begin with the "health bounce," a gentle rocking motion, slowly waking up the body. This is a great way to kickstart the immune system and target the lymphatic system. Keep your feet connected to the base, soften your knees and press down rather than focus on jumping.

Starting slowly allows you ease into an "aerobic bounce" meaning a jog or dancing. Here, the heartrate elevates. Lastly, for my fit friends, we kick it up a notch with the "strength bounce." In this move, both feet leave the mat. This is high intensity and strengthens the body through accelerative force, building cardiovascular endurance.

The rebounder is versatile; you just need a little imagination. Go slow with a few minutes a day or a bounce goal. Go for five minutes or 100 bounces and gradually increase. Start by marching, then progress to jumps, twists and patterns ranging from shuffles to dance moves. Add hand weights or a weighted vest to increase the challenge and benefits. Hydrate and have fun!



(VECTEEZY PHOTO)

A little bounce goes a long way! Rebounding brings fun, fitness and a full-body workout right into the comfort of your living room.

Rebounding is proof you don't need heavy iron to make a huge impact on health. Remember, rebounding doesn't have to mean big jumps. If you need an extra dose of inspiration, Goldie Hawn is over 80 and a fan of fun jumping on her mini trampoline!

Like any new exercise, consult your health practitioner before jumping on board.

Is this what getting older feels like?

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Galen Simmons



I'm not sure if this is a sign of things to come, but exactly one day after I turned 35, I find myself sitting here at my desk, struggling to write my weekly editorial as I endure the worst heartburn of my life.

Maybe it was the burger I had at the casino with Julia over the weekend, or maybe it was the shawarma wrap and fries I had last night, or maybe this is just what getting older feels like now. Whatever the reason, my 36th years on this planet if off to an inauspicious start.

And it's not just the heartburn. While Julia and I were on our honeymoon, I woke up after a relatively decent night's sleep – the bed was comfortable and I didn't toss and turn too much throughout the night – and when I rolled over to get out of bed, I learned I had pulled a muscle in my shoulder at some point in the night.

How I pulled that muscle and why it didn't wake me up when it happened still eludes me, but it took a whole week of massage and muscle relaxants before it started to feel better. While it's not the first time I've pulled a muscle in my sleep, this was, by far, the longest it's taken to feel better.

And speaking of long recovery times, I recently signed on with a personal trainer to help me get back into exercising regularly at the gym. Life had gotten in the way of my regular workout routine – a wedding and a honeymoon will do that – and it had been a while since I had seen a treadmill.

As it always is, the first day back at the gym was intense. My trainer pushed me through the workout, which was relatively mild compared to the workouts I did when I was younger, but by the end of it, my legs were shaking and I could barely get back downstairs to the change room.

What followed was four whole days of muscle pain in my legs, forcing me to take stairs one at a time and utter the least subtle "old-man" groan you've ever heard every time I had to get up from the couch.

Again, this was the longest recovery time I've ever experienced following a return to the gym. Sure, I fully expected a day or two of pain at most, but four days straight was brutal.

Luckily, I've since regained my stamina, and my legs, arms and chest muscles are feeling better after each successive workout, though I have realized I really shouldn't be pushing myself as hard as I did when I was younger.

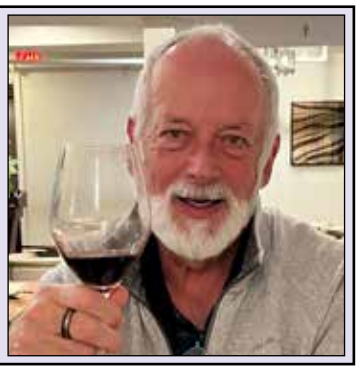
I guess the lesson here is I need to start paying attention to my own physical limitations, whether it's the food I eat or how hard I push myself at the gym. I've also learned stretching is key, not just before and after exercise, but also before I go to bed at night and when I wake up in the morning.

I might be getting older, but at least I can mitigate my physical decline just a little.

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Trois Rivières: a nice surprise along the St. Lawrence

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO



By Paul Knowles

It doesn't require an extensive knowledge of French to figure out that the name "Trois Rivières" means "Three Rivers." That's good linguistics, but bad geography because this historic city's name is based on a 16th-century mistake.

In fact, there are two rivers. Here, the Saint-Maurice flows into the Saint Lawrence, but the mouth of the Saint-Maurice is occupied by several islands, splitting this river into three outlets. The first European visitors mistakenly took those three "mouths" to indicate three rivers.

This was just one of a plethora of facts, anecdotes and stories we heard during one of the finest historical walking tours I have ever experienced. Jean-Phillipe Marcotte of "Personare" was our guide as we strolled through the historic centre of Trois Rivières.

Trois Rivières is the second-oldest French-speaking city in North America, but it is not as well-known as the two larger cities located less than two hours away – Montréal and Québec City. Tourists tend to drive straight past Trois Rivières to get to the more popular destinations, but they are making a mistake.

Trois Rivières is has a deep and rich history, reaching back long before written records to the time before Europeans arrived. But it's also a city that offers a lot of modern-day delights to travellers. We were both surprised and impressed.

But back to the history. There are statues and monuments throughout the city honouring the original European visitors to Trois Rivières, names that we remember from history class: Samuel de Champlain, Radisson, Groseilliers, La Vérendrye – all noted explorers with strong connections to Trois Rivières.

But my favourite was the monument to M. Laviolette, apparent founder of Trois Rivières. I say "apparent" because there is scant evidence of the illusive M. Laviolette. Our guide admitted that "we don't have a clue" who M. Laviolette is. In fact, "for a long time, Trois Rivières did not have a founder." But while the city was founded in the early 1600s (there had been French fur traders in the area since 1585), M. Laviolette was not acknowledged as the city founder until centuries later.

In fact, as Jean-Philippe told us with a laugh as we stood before the bust of M. Laviolette, it is generally agreed that even the name is not the real deal. It's probably a nickname; it translates as "The Violin."

But the rest of the story of Trois Rivières is undoubtedly more historically accurate. And that story unfolded as we walked around the surprisingly well-preserved historic parts of the city in spite of a 1908 fire that destroyed hundreds of homes in part of the city centre.

Although the fur trade was the original impetus that created most of Canada's historic cities, Trois Rivières soon had other enterprises on the go, as well. This was the site of what might have been the first forge in North America. Later, Trois Rivières became an important ship-building centre (a historic reality that has an echo in one of today's important economic drivers, the cruise ship port).

Later still, lumber mills dominated the local economy, which was temporarily good for employment and financial gain, but terrible for tourism because of the incessant odors created by the pulp and paper factories.

That business thrived for decades; massive numbers of logs were still being floated down the Saint-Maurice River until the mid-1990s.

Today, that business is almost entirely gone. But here's where Trois Rivières again emerges as an impressive community. On the site of some of the pulp and paper mills stands a state-of-the-art entertainment centre, the Cogeco Amphiteatre. The Amphitheatre has hosted performers ranging from Céline Dion, Bryan Adams and Burton Cummings to Cirque du Soleil. It's an impressive space, but in my historically focused opinion, it's not the most impressive building in town. That one was once home to nuns.

Trois Rivières is still home to dozens of historic buildings, and the city has a program that funds up to 50 per cent (capped at $40,000) of the costs of restoring homes to their original form. Many have taken advantage of this, and walking the streets of Trois Rivières can feel like journeying back in time.

The most impressive structure is probably the Ursuline Convent. The Ursuline nuns played a prominent role in the history of the city. Today, they no longer occupy the palatial building that once housed the convent, though there is still a small group of Ursulines in Trois Rivières. The order sold their convent, chapel, school and more to the city for $1 on the condition that the building could not be converted into condominiums. Instead, it houses a museum and classrooms for students ranging from kindergarten to university age.

Trois Rivières is a city of stories, ranging from its probably fictional founder to community-minded nuns to Ezekiel Hart (1770-1853), a Jewish entrepreneur elected to represent the city in Québec's legislative assembly, but who was not allowed to serve because he was a Jew. So, the city re-elected him, twice more.

And that's the kind of informed determination that has made this city what it is today – an often-by-passed destination well worth your time.

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



A more historically accurate monument to early explorers connected to Trois Rivières, including Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, sieur de La Vérendrye.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

Historic Trois Rivières: the Usuline Convent is shown at the centre of the photo, the former Anglican church in the right foreground.



A statue honouring the perhaps fictional founder of Trois Rivières, M. Laviolette.



The Cogeco Amphitheatre sits on the former site of pulp and paper mills.



Quintessential old Québec.

PLATTSVILLE, ON

OPEN HOUSE TOUR

9 HOMES TO TOUR

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22 • NOON–4 PM

Township of Blandford-Blenheim, Oxford County

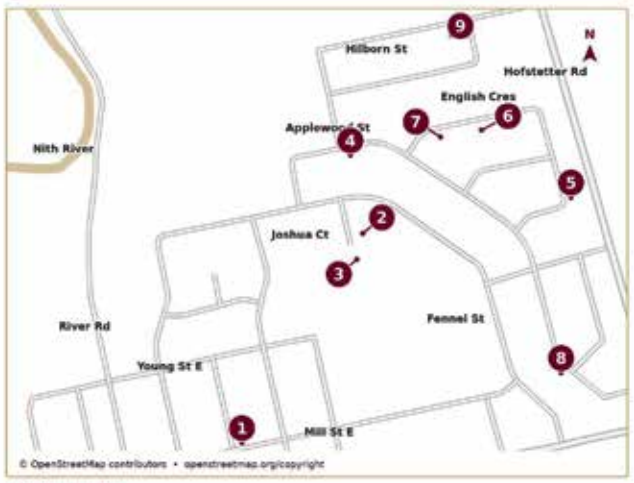


Snacks provided

Open house times vary by listing between noon and 4 p.m.

Open House Tour Map

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22 • NOON-4 PM



TOUR STOPS

1. 28 Mill Street E
2. 14 Joshua Court
3. 26 Joshua Court
4. 53 Applewood Street
5. 116 English Crescent
6. 29 English Crescent
7. 9 English Crescent
8. **203 Applewood Street - Model Home**
9. **43 Hilborn Street - Model Home**

28 MILL Street E
$650,000.00 MLS# 40877181



SHAIN ARNOTT
BROKER OF RECORD, REALTOR®
Arnott & Associates Realty Inc.
519-577-6119 shain.arnott@gmail.com
2-4pm

14 JOSHUA Court
$849,999.00 MLS# 40874225



KYLE WARD
BROKER, REALTOR®
REVEL Realty Inc., Brokerage
226-929-8945 Kyle@wardrealty.ca
2-4pm

26 JOSHUA Court
$859,900.00 MLS# 40878482



MIKE ROTH
SALES REPRESENTATIVE, REALTOR®
RE/MAX Twin City Realty Inc.
519-574-1234 mike.roth@rogers.com
2-4pm

53 APPLEWOOD Street
$874,900.00 MLS# 40866498



KYLE WARD
BROKER, REALTOR®
REVEL Realty Inc., Brokerage
226-929-8945 Kyle@wardrealty.ca
2-4pm

116 ENGLISH Crescent
$899,000.00 MLS# 40865773

ALEX MONTGOMERY
Real Estate Representative, REALTOR®
RE/MAX REAL ESTATE CENTRE INC., BROKERAGE
226-972-1013 alexmontgomery87@gmail.com



2-4pm

29 ENGLISH Crescent
$949,900.00 MLS# 40852956



EMANUEL CATANA
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Smart from Home Realty Ltd.,Brokerage
519-501-3399 emanuel@catanateam.ca
2-4pm

9 ENGLISH Crescent
$998,888 MLS# 40875577



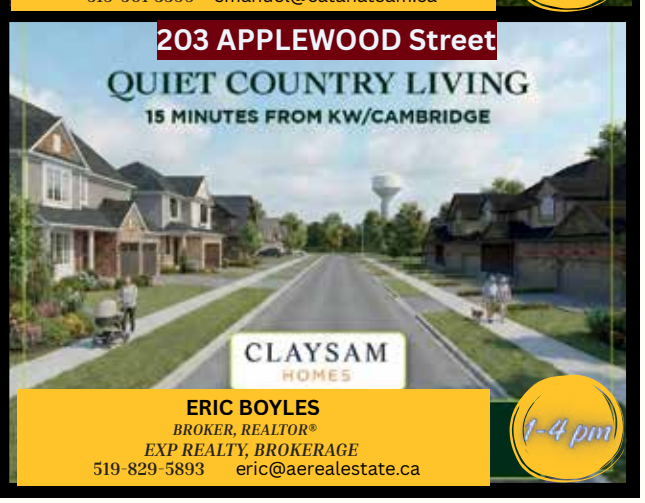
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PEAK REALTY LTD., BROKERAGE
519-747-0231 willseyalison@gmail.com/katiemurray.peak@gmail.com
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43 HILBORN Street
$1,198,888.00 MLS# 40837736



DAVID PARSONS
SALESPERSON, REALTOR®
HOMELIFE MIRACLE REALTY MISSISSAUGA
290-241-9942 dpswrealtor@gmail.com
12-4pm

203 APPLEWOOD Street



ERIC BOYLES
BROKER, REALTOR®
EXP REALTY, BROKERAGE
519-829-5893 eric@aerealestate.ca
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JOIN US THIS SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 2026

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2026

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21

The Catholic Women's League of Saint Joseph's Catholic Church Annual Christmas Market\Bazaar
9 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Free admission. Crafts, baking, Silent Auction, lunch in the Church hall available for purchase. All proceeds allow the women to donate back to the church and community.
Saint Joseph's Catholic Church
96 Huron St., Stratford

Christmas Bazaar
10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Bake Tables, Penny Sale, Raffle with top prize of $700.00, Lunch Tables.
Holy Family Church 329 Huron St , New Hamburg

Morningside Adult Community New Hamburg Annual Christmas Bazaar
10 a.m. - 12 noon
Crafts, Raffle, Baking, White Elephant, Cafe' Silent Auction. Free Admission
Morningside Adult Community New Hamburg, behind McDonalds

Widow and Widowers Banquet
Doors open at 5:00 p.m.
Dinner served at 5:30 p.m.
To register contact Merle by text or phone at 807-737-9215 or by email at merleburkholder@gmail.com. 40 seats available. If you are a widow or Widowers we want to bless you with this banquet
Oasis Mennonite Church
66 Mill Street Baden

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22

186th Anniversary Celebration
9:30 a.m.
Featuring soloist Darielle Chomyn-Davison
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24

Oxford Philatelic Society
7 - 9 p.m.
If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection.
Contact: Don Eaton dheaton3e3@gmail.com
Website: http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford
Church of the Epiphany
560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship
12 p.m.
Please register by Nov. 20 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900
Linwood Community Centre,
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28

Nith Valley EcoBoosters will be hosting its next Repair Café
9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Questions? Contact nvecoboosters@gmail.com
Zion United Church
215 Peel St., New Hamburg

Tavistock Men's Club Santa Claus Parade
1 p.m.
Theme – Favorite Christmas Carol
Entry & Details: call 519-655-3573, email info@tavistockmensclub.ca or online at tavistockmensclub.ca
Downtown Tavistock

Tavistock Royals Kids Carnival
2 - 5 p.m.
Tavistock Memorial Hall
3 Adam St, Tavistock

St. James Lutheran Church 29th Traditional Journey to Bethlehem
4 p.m. & 7 p.m.
A nativity re-creation with live farm animals. Dress warmly and bring a blanket! All welcome. For more details, contact Carol Horst 519-274-4494 or email carolh@cwisp.ca
St. James Lutheran Church (Church's Red Shed)
1998 Line 45, Perth East

Fun with the Firebirds
6:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Drop in and meet players from the New Hamburg Firebirds
Games, activities and awesome prizes!
All ages welcome!
Region of Waterloo Library
115 Snyder's Rd E Baden

"Alone Together" Concert
7:30 p.m.
Featuring Jack Wyndham and Mary Catherine Pazzano
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

Christmas Bazaar
9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Baking, Vendors, Nearly New Sale and more!
St James Lutheran Church
66 Mill St Baden

LYNN RIVER FARM PRESENTS CANDLELIGHT DINNER at Brocksden Country School + Museum
5:30 p.m.
Join us for a family-style Lynn River Farm Christmas dinner inspired by the tables of generations past. Approximately 15% of ticket sales will return to Brocksden to support the school museum. For more information call 519-949-2871.
2719 Perth County Line 37, Gads Hill

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 28 CON'T

The Zorra Caledonian Society (ZCS) 88th St. Andrew's Night in Embro
Doors open 6 p.m. Event begins 6:45 p.m.
Performers inlude the Sim School of Highland Dance, Ingersoll Pipe Band and The Devil's Brigade. For tickets visit www.zorracaledoniansociety.ca.
Embro Zorra Community Centre (EZCC)
355644 35th Line, Zorra

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Wilmot Council meeting
6-7 p.m.
Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road W., Baden

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1

Perth East council meeting
7 p.m.
Council chambers
25 Mill Street East, Milverton

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting
9 a.m.
Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 4

Wilmot Lions/Lioness Club 43rd Annual Tree of Light
6:30 p.m.
Complimentary Hot Dogs & Apple Cider. Mixology Cappella Choir with New Hamburg Concert Band. Dress warm & see you there.
Downtown New Hamburg

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6

Twin City Harmonizers
2 p.m.
All your favourite Christmas songs Sung in 4-part harmony!
Tickets at the door or call (519) 655- 2581
Tavistock Mennonite Church
131 Wettlaufer St, Tavistock

Waterloo Regional Police Chorus
6:30 p.m.
Free admission - Free will offering
Rosebank Church
1434 Huron Rd. Petersburg

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8

Wellesley Council meeting
6:45 p.m.
Council chambers
4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9

Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship
12 p.m.
Please register by Dec. 4 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900
Linwood Community Centre,
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18

Christmas Concert
7 p.m.
Featuring Jack Wyndham and Kyla Altrogge
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25

Community Christmas Dinner
12 noon
Zion United Church is hosting a FREE sit down Community Christmas Dinner for those in Wilmot community who will be alone or lonely this Christmas. Fully accessible location. Registration appreciated by December 15th by email christmaswilmot@gmail.com or 519-662-1182.
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

EVERY WEDNESDAY

TOPS - Taking off Pounds Sensibly
Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
Contact Cathie 519-662-9273
St James Church, Baden

Euchre Night
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
New Hamburg Legion
65 Boulee St., New Hamburg

FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES

Tavistock Seniors Pickleball
Monday, Wednesday & Friday 12-4 p.m.
Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052
Tavistock Memorial Hall, 1 Adam St.
Inside walking Monday & Wednesday morning 9-12 p.m. (October to March)
Contact: Larry Brown 519-240-6715
Tavistock Seniors Card Games
Monday drop in 1-4 p.m.
Contact: Bob Routly 519-301-2118
Tavistock Memorial Hall, 1 Adam St.
VON Senior Exercise Drop-In Standing Class
Tuesday and Thursday 9-10 a.m.
To register contact 519-539-1231 ext. 6319
Tavistock Memorial Hall, 1 Adam St.
VON Senior Exercise Drop-In Sitting Class
Tuesday and Thursday 10:25-11:25 a.m.
To register contact 519-539-1231 ext. 6319
Village Manner, 98 Woodstock St., Tavistock

TAVISTOCK & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM DISPLAYS

Travelling Museum Display: "Heritage of Hickson 4-H Clubs"
This display features 4-H Clubs in Hickson and area since inception in the early 1960's. Many awards and achievements over the years are on display. You can also view some of the projects completed at the 4-H Homemaking clubs.
Location: EZT Township Administration Building (lobby), 89 Loveys Street, Hickson

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW:

- **The Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).**
- **If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:**
  - **Coming Events Word Ad (50 word max.) - $10 + hst**
  - **Coming Events Boxed Word Ad (50 word max.) - $15 + hst**
  - **Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - $35 + hst**

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UPCOMING AUCTION



Herd Dispersal Live Auction Sale
of 135 Bred Cows/Heifers
Saturday November 21, 11:00am
to be held at 554447 Mono-Amaranth TLine, Mono, ON
Preview on day of sale, or by appointment

Directions: Go west through Orangeville on Hwy 9 to County Rd 16 (Veterans Way at Greenwood Cemetery), turn north 5 miles to farm on East side. OR From Shelburne go east on Hwy 89 for 2 miles to Mono-Amaranth Townline, turn south & go 5 miles to farm on East side.Townline, turn south & go 5 miles to farm on East side.

Cattle: (79)Heifers: (18) Char, (17) Blk Simm, (33) Angus, (11) Red -1st time calvers, bred Angus & Limo, vacc. **(18) X-bred Heifers** - bred Black Angus, vacc. **(17) Angus Heifers** - bred Black Angus. **(10) Blk Angus cows** - all bred Black Angus, vacc. **(8) Charolais Cows** - bred Charolais, vacc. **(3) Mixed Cows** - with calf at side, vacc.
All Cows will be preg checked prior to sale.
Lunch Booth
Washroom Available
Terms & Conditions: Cash or cheque with proper I.D. on day of sale. Owner & Auctioneer will not be responsible for any accidents or loss on day of sale. All announcements on day of sale will take precedence over printed ads.

Auctioneers: Kevin McArthur (519) 942-0264
Scott Bessey (519) 843-5083
Email: mcarthurbessey@gmail.com
www.theauctionadvertiser.com/KMcArthur
- full listing & photos

Quiz Time Answers

1. The Adventures of Pinocchio
2. Damascus
3. Paper Products
4. Lamination
5. Freddy Krueger
6. Montreal
7. Penguin
8. Michigan's Upper Peninsula
9. Pineapple
10. Cawl

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