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(PHOTO COURTESY OF SHOW US YOUR WILMOT)

This Pretty Penny caught the eye of Lou Divita during the New Hamburg Board of Trade's annual Cruise Night in downtown New Hamburg Aug. 14. The classic pickup shares the name, "Penny," with Divita's dog, so he shared it to the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook page.

Tavistock to get a permanent paramedic station through sole source contract

New build could be completed by year-end

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

The Village of Tavistock will eventually have its own dedicated paramedic station at the current East Zorra-Tavistock (EZT) public works yard on William

Street.

Oxford County council approved the move, which included awarding a sole-source contract to Woodstock's Sierra Construction for just under \$1 million. The county has been operating at a

temporary facility on the site.

EZT deputy mayor Brad Smith took Mayor Phil Schaefer's place around the county horseshoe at the Aug. 12 meeting and supported the decision.

"In speaking with EZT staff, the

Continued on page 2

Wilmot's new finance director ready to tackle township's financial challenges

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

After years of turnover in Wilmot Township's financial services department and significant work to put the municipality on firmer financial footing, new director of financial services and treasurer Tracy Prince says she is ready to help chart the path forward.

Prince, a chartered professional accountant with roughly 20 years of combined municipal and public-sector experience, recently joined Wilmot after more than four years with the Town of Amherstburg, most recently as chief financial officer. Her extensive career has also included nearly a decade as director of finance for the St. Clair Region Conservation Authority and previous financial roles with the City of London, Woodstock General Hospital and other public- and private-sector organizations.

For Prince, the move to Wilmot represents both a professional opportunity and something of a return home.

"I just thought it'd be an exciting opportunity for another small municipality to get to know," Prince said. "I lived in Woodstock

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EZT deputy mayor praises location for paramedic base

Continued from page 1

temporary agreement has been very amicable. The location they have chosen will highly affect Tavistock and the north end of East Zorra-Tavistock. It has access to one of our paved concessions, and they can go south and cover the top of the township and right up the road there are two nursing homes right on the same street.”

He added that the township is excited to move past being underserved when it comes to paramedic services.

Earlier this year, county council approved additional paramedic staffing hours to improve service levels within the Tavistock area. The 2026 budget request assumed a temporary station location would be established in partnership with EZT. No capital costs related to the establishment of a station were included in the budget, something Woodstock and county Coun. Deb Tait questioned.

“I won’t be supporting this. It should be referred to the capital budget ... and I have an issue with the sole sourcing. I understand what was in the report, but sole sourcing for a piece of equipment only one

supplier has – this is a building just about anyone could do. In the interest of the taxpayer, I can’t support it.”

Chief of paramedic services Ryan Hall said some things needed to fall into place before his department could accurately budget for the facility.

“We had to know we had the resources to plan for the station. ... We had to know what site or property we were going to put this on because that would impact the cost, whether it would be on a municipal site where the property cost would be lower, or a standalone site where costs would be increased.”

He added Oxford needs to engage Perth County to find out if they could partner with the municipality on paramedic services in the Tavistock and Shakespeare area.

“We needed to know if we had resources to work with them and plan around ... and it actually took some time to actually sit them down in a room and have those discussions. That would also impact the location of this permanent station, whether it would be located in Tavistock or

Shakespeare.”

Council approved the plan through a sole-source contract, which can only be used where there are valid and sufficient reasons for selecting a single supplier, including specialized knowledge, compatibility and project-efficiency considerations.

Sierra was recommended as it constructed the existing structure and had direct knowledge of its design and construction.

“Engaging a different contractor could increase project costs and extend the project schedule. Sierra was recommended by EZT staff after their experience with the construction of the existing facility,” said a report from county staff.

It added Sierra Construction has experience with similar projects and has indicated the ability to complete the project by approximately December 2026, reducing the risk of requiring long-term winter staging alternatives.

Warden Marcus Ryan disagreed with Tait’s comments, saying sole sourcing will likely save the taxpayers of Oxford money.

“They are very familiar with the property

and the building. In the private sector, they do this kind of sole sourcing all the time for exactly that reason. Time lost going to a competitive quote costs money ... and I think this is a case where you are probably going to incur lower costs by sole sourcing.”

EZT Fire and Emergency Services operates out of a two-garage facility co-located with the Ontario Provincial Police. The current garage capacity will not support accommodating an additional emergency vehicle while allowing for unobstructed fire responses.

The 2025 Land Ambulance Response Time Performance Report identified decreasing response time performance in 2024 despite adding ambulance hours to the system, a clear signal of geographic coverage issues caused by Oxford County Paramedic Services not having a dedicated station in Tavistock.

EZT has committed \$11,000 toward the installation of a generator at the site, representing 50 per cent of the total cost.

Oxford County looking for feedback on road-safety strategy

Goal is to reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

Municipalities in Oxford County are looking for feedback on how to improve road safety.

The Road Safety Strategy survey is online now at Speak Up, Oxford! until Sept. 8. The survey invites Oxford residents and businesses to share their thoughts and experiences as the county builds a detailed plan to improve safety for all road users and reduce collisions, injuries and fatalities.

Residents can also mark areas of concern for driving, walking or cycling on an interactive map, or fill out an online feedback form to submit a comment or question.

“This is the first time we have done this,” said Frank Gross, the county’s senior manager of transportation. “We were directed by county council in 2025 to proceed with the development of a road-safety framework in collaboration with municipalities, police and paramedic services. A big part of it is to find out what the public’s main concerns are.”

Work to improve road safety begins this year with the development of a Road Safety Framework that will lay the groundwork for future planning. This will be followed by the development of a Road Safety Strategy in 2027 that will include detailed countermeasures and guidance to

address road-safety concerns.

Gross said the survey includes an interactive map where the public is able to drop pins on locations of concern, but anything is on the table.

“We want to hear what the greatest concerns are; is it speeding, pedestrian safety, careless driving, the roads themselves and so on. The framework will be focused on Vision Zero principles.”

Vision Zero is an approach to road safety that aims to eliminate deaths and serious injuries by designing roads and transportation systems around the fact that people make mistakes and that those mistakes should not result in fatal or life-altering crashes. That distinction is often at the heart of Vision Zero; the goal isn’t perfect drivers, it’s a transportation system that is forgiving of human error.

“We realize humans make mistakes, so how do we design roads and intersections to mitigate poor decisions made by drivers. If a driver does make a mistake, we want the impact to be less severe, like in a roundabout, for instance, where drivers are forced to slow down. If they make an incorrect move, the result is a minor collision as opposed to a serious injury or even death.”

Short-term recommendations under a new road-safety strategy could include greater use of illumination at rural intersections, speed feedback signs, acoustical

rumble strips and flashing beacons at stop control intersections. Longer-term actions would focus on roadway design and expanded use of data-driven transportation planning.

The idea of truck routes in Oxford County has been a hot topic for years as the amount of transport traffic continues to rise. Gross explained implementing one isn’t easy since it would involve a great deal of financial resources to ensure appropriate infrastructure.

“Every community would like to see trucks rerouted, but we have to look at what’s practical. The county has actually identified a good movement strategy, which is essentially identifying preferred truck routes. I think it’s more about restricting trucks in specified areas where you don’t want to see large trucks through residential areas or where vulnerable populations exist.”

Gross added once priority truck routes are identified, the next steps are to ensure the appropriate infrastructure is in place and then promote the routes.

The development of Oxford County’s Road Safety Strategy was approved by county council in October 2025. As part of the strategy, the county adopted the Ontario Road Safety Audit (RSA) Guideline, which assesses existing road infrastructure and future transportation capital projects to identify safety hazards,

assign risk ratings and recommend mitigation measures.

Public input and feedback will be sought throughout the process of developing the road-safety strategy. The survey is a first step in getting public feedback and takes only three to five minutes to complete. Visit www.oxfordcounty.ca/speakup to learn more and take the survey.

The county will use public feedback, the analysis of collision and other data, and staff comments to bring back a framework to the next county council in 2026.

“It will identify priority areas, next steps and where the county and area municipalities need to work together on improvements. From the county’s perspective, rural areas might be the priority areas to address.”

In 2025, Oxford County council directed county staff to explore implementing a long-term Vision Zero Plan and adopting the Good Roads Rural Road Safety Strategy following requests from the Blandford-Blenheim, Zorra and East Zorra-Tavistock townships.

The Good Roads Rural Road Safety Strategy focuses on improving safety on rural roads, which have a disproportionately high number of collisions compared with urban roads, through advocacy for provincial funding and consistent road safety design standards.

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Wilmot's new finance director ready to tackle township's financial challenges

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for a few years, and I also grew up in the London area."

Prince arrives at an important time for the township. Wilmot taxpayers saw increases of 10.8 per cent in 2024 and 18.22 per cent in 2025 before council approved a 9.1-per-cent increase for 2026. Years of historically low tax increases and minimal reserve contributions had left Wilmot with depleted reserves and underfunded capital needs, prompting council to begin increasing capital funding and reserve contributions.

The township also turned to KPMG to assist with its 2026 budget and develop a long-term financial plan amid staff shortages and turnover in the finance department.

Prince said that work will give her a valuable starting point.

"I'm going to use theirs as a roadmap," she said of KPMG's work. "I actually just read it today and I thought it was a very supportive document. ... I think it will create a really good roadmap and really be supportive of the communication for the township."

Prince has worked with KPMG, MNP and Deloitte during her career and said independent consultant reports can also provide valuable information to support both staff recommendations and council decisions.

Communicating those decisions to residents will be another priority.

With municipal finance often significantly different from household or private-sector budgeting, Prince said one of her challenges will be explaining complex financial decisions in terms residents can understand.

"How can I translate what's needed in the town to what people would understand in the community?" she said. "I think that's really important."

That focus comes after transparency became a significant issue during Wilmot's 2026 budget deliberations. Several councillors criticized the amount of financial detail initially released publicly, ultimately prompting council to direct staff to publish line-by-line actuals, variances and budget information.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF TRACY PRINCE)

Tracy Prince has been hired as the Township of Wilmot's new director of financial services and treasurer.

Prince is also stepping into a department that has lacked permanent leadership through periods of staff turnover, something she said bears similarities to a situation she encountered previously.

"I think that I find it as an opportunity ... to really kind of right the ship," Prince said. "I think it's going to be a great opportunity, a great challenge, and I really just want to make a difference. That's why I've chosen public sector."

Part of that work will involve ensuring Wilmot is financially prepared for pressures outside the township's control, including changes to provincial funding, development charges, conservation authorities and infrastructure funding.

Prince said municipal finance requires balancing council's direction with the need to maintain the township's long-term financial health.

"It's supporting council, it's supporting the organization to make sure it's financially sustainable and healthy, and having those hard conversations with council," she said.

While there is plenty to tackle, Prince said her first priority is learning – about the township, its residents, their concerns and the council she will advise.

"I'm looking forward to starting a new chapter here," she said. "I think it'll be good."

OPP investigating mischief at East Zorra-Tavistock cemetery

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

thewtgazette@gmail.com

Police are looking for the individual(s) responsible for mischief at a cemetery in East Zorra-Tavistock.

Members of the Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) have been notified that sometime between 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 8, and 5 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 9, unknown

individual(s) attended a cemetery on the 16th Line in the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock and spray painted two tombstones.

Police are asking anyone with information about this incident, including video surveillance, to contact Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

To remain anonymous, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

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Tavistock ambassador heads to CNE competition

AMANDA NELSON

Gazette Reporter

Brooklyn Ross, Tavistock resident and co-owner of Breaking Elements Dance Company, will head to Toronto this week-end to participate in the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) Ambassador of the Fairs competition, being held at Queen Elizabeth Theatre on Aug. 23.

Ross will be representing the Tavistock Agricultural Society, where she has been working as ambassador since last fall. She has continued to represent Tavistock at several events throughout the region, including the Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAAS) Convention in February.

Ross says though she did not grow up on a farm, being from the dairy capital of the world, her life in a small town equipped her for her work as ambassador, and she feels ready to compete on the big stage to represent Ontario.

"I've been around agriculture my whole life," she said. "I don't live on a farm and I didn't grow up on a farm, but I've experienced and been exposed to it my entire life living in a rural town. I loved going to the fair every year and experiencing agriculture throughout the region."

Ross also says her work as a dance instructor has given her a unique opportunity to influence and mentor youth within the community as well.

"I know a large portion of youth in the community because I teach a lot of them in dance," she said. "When they see me out in public, it makes me feel like a celebrity because they all know who I am and are all excited to see me with my crown and my sash. I feel like I have a bigger cheering squad than a lot of people because of all the people I know and all the families in

the community that I'm connected to. It's so much fun being able to represent them outside of the town and community."

The CNE brings in more than 1.4 million people annually and always runs the last week of the summer. This year, the CNE will run from Aug. 21 to Sept. 7.

This year, young representatives from fairs across Ontario will compete to become the CNE's Ambassador of the Fairs. This year-long title takes the winner across Ontario as a representative of the CNE and all agricultural fairs.

Since its inception in 1971, more than 3,000 young people from 100 communities throughout the province have taken part in this contest.

Alongside her duties as ambassador, Ross said she has attended speaking seminars and leadership workshops that have not only benefited her as ambassador but taught her more about public speaking, media and interacting with like-minded people.

"It's been a great experience," she said. "You make so many new friends and people who are doing the exact same thing as you for their communities. It's been a really great way to network with other communities."

She said she strongly encourages anyone interested in agriculture to compete in their local fairs, and that the ambassador experience was more exciting than she expected.

"I would highly encourage anyone to try it out," she said. "There's nothing to lose; it's a volunteer position, and it's a great opportunity. It also looks amazing on a resume. You learn so much, and you get to do so many leadership courses. Even for those who don't win, just the competition portion, there are still so many benefits. You get prizes, you get to meet new



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Brooklyn Ross, Tavistock resident and co-owner of Breaking Elements Dance Company, will represent the Tavistock Agricultural Society at the Canadian National Exhibition Ambassador of the Fairs competition on Aug. 23.

friends through Ontario, and it's good public-speaking experience." The winner of the CNE competition will begin new ambassador duties on Aug. 23.

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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

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Three contestants vying for Tavistock Fall Fair Ambassador title

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

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One of Tavistock's most beloved traditions is back as the Fall Fair Ambassador Competition approaches.

The competition will be held Friday, Sept. 11, at 7 p.m. at Tavistock Memorial Hall. The Junior Ambassador Competition, open to children between the ages of seven and 10, will also take place that evening.

Here is a look at the three young women vying for the title:

Seventeen-year-old Charlee Harvey, daughter of Jess and Mike Harvey, brings energy to everything she does, whether serving up sweet treats at Tavi Chill Ice Cream Store or putting in hard work as a farm labourer. A sports enthusiast through and through, Charlee Harvey loves spending her time on the ice playing hockey and out on the baseball diamond. Looking to the future, she aims to attend firefighting school while remaining deeply rooted in the agricultural field she loves. Charlee Harvey is proudly sponsored by the Tavistock Optimists.

Representing the Tavistock area,

seventeen-year-old Sophie Pullen, daughter of Teresa and Tim Pullen, is a dedicated student at Huron Park Secondary School in Woodstock who also works hard on her family farm. Constantly on the move, Sophie Pullen enjoys softball, school sports like cross-country and track and field, and figure skating. Her future ambitions include continuing her journey with synchronized skating and attending university to study kinesiology, focusing on sports and health. Sophie Pullen is sponsored by the Princess Elizabeth Women's Institute.

Seventeen-year-old Cassidy Heintz, daughter of Jody and Phil Heintz, is a local high school student and a friendly, familiar face to local shoppers at Tavistock's grocery store. Beyond her schoolwork and job, Cassidy Heintz surrounds herself with music, quality time with friends and active involvement in local church events. She has big plans for her future, aiming to attend college for massage therapy before pursuing further studies to become an osteopath with her own practice. Cassidy Heintz is sponsored by the Tavistock Opti-Mrs.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Pictured from left are Tavistock Fall Fair Ambassador contestants Cassidy Heintz, Sophie Pullen and Charlee Harvey.

Section of Huron Road in Wilmot to be closed for culvert replacement

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

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Starting the week of Aug. 24, Huron Road in Wilmot Township will be closed from Holland Mills Road to Haysville Road for a culvert replacement.

The work is expected to take approximately two months. Drivers should follow the posted detour route during the closure.

Temporary traffic signals will be used to keep the southbound lane of Haysville Road open at the intersection of Haysville Road and Huron Road while work is completed. Some delays can be expected in the area.

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Eight contestants vie for Wellesley Junior Fair Ambassador title

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Eight local youth will take centre stage during the opening ceremonies of this year's Wellesley Fall Fair as they vie for the title of Wellesley Junior Fair Ambassador.

The 2026 Wellesley Fall Fair gets underway Friday, Aug. 28, at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre, where the new junior ambassador will be selected as part of the opening-night festivities.

Open to youth between the ages of 12 and 16, the Junior Fair Ambassador competition provides young people from the community with an opportunity to become involved in the fair and represent the Wellesley Agricultural Society.

This year's eight contestants are Madeline King, 14; Riley Purdie, 15; Isabella Barker, 13; Aaron Wiles, 13; Zaid Alqaisi, 12; Madison Hernandez, 16; Caroline Byerley, 13; and Braelyn MaKenzie, 13.

Residents from Wellesley and the surrounding area are encouraged to attend the opening ceremonies and show their support for all eight contestants as the 2026 edition of the Wellesley Fall Fair gets underway.



Madeline King, 14.



Riley Purdie, 15.



Isabella Barker, 13.



Aaron Wiles, 13.



Zaid Alqaisi, 12.



Madison Hernandez, 16.



Caroline Byerley, 13.



Braelyn MaKenzie, 13.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Manni Hayer named 2026-2027 Wellesley Fall Fair Ambassador

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Manni Hayer of Wellesley has been named the 2026-2027 Ambassador of the Fair for the Wellesley-North



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Manni Hayer has been named the 2026-2027 Ambassador of the Fair for the Wellesley-North Easthope Agricultural Society. Hayer, who was the fair's first Junior Fair Ambassador two years ago, invites the community to attend this year's Wellesley Fall Fair Aug. 28-29.

Easthope Agricultural Society.

With Hayer the sole applicant for this year's senior ambassador position, Wellesley Fall Fair directors were pleased to welcome someone who already has plenty of experience representing the fair and her community.

Hayer made history two years ago when she was named the Wellesley Fall Fair's first Junior Fair Ambassador after the program was introduced by Katie Musselman.

Since then, Hayer has continued to volunteer at numerous community events, including the Wellesley Fall Fair, the Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese Festival and Taste the Culture, helping celebrate the traditions and diverse cultures found throughout the Wellesley area.

"Through my previous involvement as junior ambassador with the Wellesley Agricultural Society, I have developed strong leadership, communication, organization and public-speaking skills," Hayer said.

Her previous experience as junior ambassador and continued community involvement will now serve her well as she takes on the senior ambassador role for the coming year.

As ambassador of the fair, Hayer will once again have

an opportunity to represent the agricultural society and promote the Wellesley Fall Fair and the community it serves.

This year's Wellesley Fall Fair runs Friday, Aug. 28 and Saturday, Aug. 29.

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D&D Homestyle Cuisine and Cafe announce ownership change

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

It may be the end of a culinary era in downtown Tavistock, but it is also the beginning of a new one.

Doug and Dianne Sparling have officially sold D&D Homestyle Cuisine and Café to the Churchward family effective Sept. 1, with Chef Will Churchward leading kitchen operations.

"We are excited to pass the spatula to Chef Will," said Doug Sparling. "Will and the Churchwards share our commitment to the community we've worked to build over the years, and we look forward to seeing that carry on through them."

D&D has been providing Tavistock and the surrounding community with great food for 11 years, offering breakfast and lunch from the cafe, as well as catering events. In the near term, D&D will continue to operate as usual. In time, it will become a full-service licensed restaurant, Churchy's Pub, adding dinner service to the menu.

"I plan to mix the Sparlings' cuisine with my own dishes," said Churchward. "I want to provide a unique mix of comfort food and pub food while keeping it interesting and exciting. And I get to do this in the town I grew up in."

Churchward's experience includes time as sous chef at Jasper Brewing Company in Alberta, and more recently, as head chef of Mad Mash in Tavistock. While there, his very first entry into the 2025 Oxford United Way Ultimate Burger Battle won both the People's Choice and Ultimate Burger awards against a field of 16 competing restaurants.

"Our goal is to offer a comfortable restaurant for the community we've called home for over 20 years, somewhere



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

D&D Homestyle Cuisine and Café has been purchased by the Churchward family. The eatery will eventually be turned into Churchy's Pub with Chef Will Churchward (centre) leading the kitchen. Also pictured are Mike and Janet Churchward (left) and Doug and Dianne Sparling (right).

families can come and enjoy together," added Janet Churchward, co-founder and Will Churchward's mom.

Mike Churchward said Doug Sparling would often pitch the restaurant to the family, saying Will Churchward could easily run the place.

"Will wasn't really interested, but after working at Mad Mash for a while, he realized he could do it. Will came to me one day and asked if we could make it happen, and we said yes," Mike Churchward said.

Will Churchward said he's looking forward to the challenge but is fully aware of the amount of work involved.

"We are brainstorming every day and working on what we're interested in selling. We don't really have a theme; it's just going to be pub cuisine but different than what you would get anywhere else," he said.

Mike Churchward said he sees his son's cuisine as comfort food, but a more interesting take on it.

"I would call it pub food, but better," added Janet Churchward.

Mike Churchward added they see Churchy's not as a pub primarily for those of drinking age, but a place where the entire family can spend time together.

"We all remember the days of Smully's where everybody in town felt comfortable going. You could bring your kids, hockey teams could go in after games. It was a great place for a local hangout and we always had that in the back of our minds."

As far as the inside goes, planning continues on what needs to be done. Mike Churchward said they plan to utilize all of the space to increase seating capacity.

"We've been working with a local consultant on how we can make some changes. We think we can easily get it up to 60 seats."

Will Churchward said they are looking at having bingo and trivia nights in the future.

"Some things to get the community more

involved and have fun while doing it."

Janet Churchward added they are open to the possibility of catering to fill some of the holes left behind by D&D.

"The community I am aware of in Tavistock has really been looking forward to having something like this again. We will be able to employ some young people as we get bigger. I believe it's a good thing for the town," said Mike Churchward.

The eatery's hours are expected to be similar to D&D's for the time being, until Churchy's gets ramped up.

"Our goal is not to have to close for very long at any one time. I have started the liquor license process but that will likely take one to two months once we take possession," said Mike Churchward.

"We feel we are leaving the business we lovingly built in good hands and hope the community will continue to support the new business," said Dianne Sparling. "We both look forward to retirement."

She added it's great to see another local family take the restaurant's helm, and she and her husband have a few ways to keep themselves active.

"We see the Churchwards continuing the same atmosphere. We plan to get part-time jobs to keep busy and help out where we can with our new grandchild. Doug is going to start up doing stained glass."

The couple had three reasonable offers over the year and a half the business was for sale, and Dianne Sparling explained she is going to miss seeing the familiar faces and people who have become like family.

"We wish the Churchwards continued success as they start this new venture, and we know the community will support them just as they did us."

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Waterloo Regional Police issue public-safety notice regarding charged person living in Wilmot

Gregory Zehr required to live with parents in New Hamburg

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

The Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS) is issuing a public notification after a man recently released on bail now lives in New Hamburg.

London Police have charged 44-year-old Gregory Zehr with sexual assault with a weapon, forcible confinement, kidnapping, assault with a weapon, possession of a weapon and uttering threats of death or bodily harm. The charges stem from an incident which occurred in London on June 4.

After a court appearance on Aug. 12, Zehr was released on bail conditions and is residing in New Hamburg. Those conditions include living in the town, remaining in the residence or on the property 24 hours a day unless in the presence of surety, having no access to a computer or internet and not possessing any weapons.

"WRPS is releasing this information because it believes doing so is necessary for public safety and to keep the public informed. If you observe Mr. Zehr breaching any of his release conditions, please do not approach him and call 911 immediately," a police press release says.

Zehr has been granted bail after a

contested hearing, despite a Crown prosecutor arguing he should remain in custody.

Police allege Zehr approached a woman walking in the 600 block of Adelaide Street on June 4 and lured her into his vehicle under false pretences. Once inside, police say he produced a knife, restrained the woman's hands and drove her to the area of Oxford Street East and Mornington Avenue, where she was allegedly sexually assaulted.

According to a CBC report, Zehr appeared by video from the Elgin-Middlesex Detention Centre for a bail hearing on Wednesday, Aug. 12.

"Assistant Crown attorney Lisa Defoe opposed his release because of the seriousness of the allegations, while defence lawyer Lisa Gunn proposed a release plan with Zehr's parents acting as sureties. Justice Clive Forbes granted bail," the CBC story says.

A publication ban is in place to protect the identity of the alleged victim.

The report added that, as part of his release conditions, Zehr must live with his parents in New Hamburg and remain under house arrest with limited exceptions. He must have no direct or indirect contact with the alleged victim and must stay

away from the victim's home, workplace and school. Zehr must also wear a GPS monitoring device and comply with the provincial monitoring program.

London police held a news conference to announce the charges, and they believe there may be additional victims.

There are specific rules in Ontario governing when police can publicly identify someone who has been charged, and the distinction between an ordinary police news release and a public-safety notification is important.

Ontario's current O. Reg. 412/23, Disclosure of Personal Information, under the Community Safety and Policing Act, 2019, sets out when a chief of police or designate can disclose personal information.

Two provisions are particularly relevant, the first being disclosure to protect the public. Police may disclose personal information about an individual where the person has been convicted or found guilty of an offence, the chief/designate reasonably believes the person poses a significant risk to other people or property and disclosure is necessary to reduce that risk.

There is a separate provision allowing police to disclose certain personal



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Gregory Zehr is facing several charges including sexual assault in connection with a London police investigation. He is now on bail and living with his parents in New Hamburg under strict conditions.

information about a person who has been charged, convicted or found guilty of an offence. That includes identifying information such as the person's name, age, date of birth and address.

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STRATFORD NISSAN



Massive Siemens Energy turbine transported through Shakespeare



(GARY WEST PHOTO)
A massive Siemens Energy turbine is transported north on Highway 59, south of Shakespeare, Tuesday morning. Traffic was stopped in both directions and hydro crews were required to raise overhead lines to allow the oversized load to pass safely underneath.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Motorists travelling Highway 59 south of Shakespeare encountered an unusual sight Tuesday morning as a massive turbine was slowly transported north on an oversized-load trailer.

The Siemens Energy turbine was large and heavy enough that traffic had to be stopped in both directions as the transport made its way toward and through Shakespeare.

The specialized trailer carrying the turbine featured multiple sets of wheels at both the front and rear to distribute the weight of the enormous load.

Hydro crews were also required along

the route to raise overhead utility lines, allowing the turbine and transport trailer to slowly pass underneath.

Several escort vehicles with flashing lights travelled ahead of and behind the load, warning motorists and helping ensure the turbine could safely make its way along the highway.

Siemens Energy is a global energy technology company headquartered in Munich, Germany, with Canadian operations based in Oakville. The company is involved in technologies used for power generation and transmission, among other areas of the energy sector.

The turbine's destination was not confirmed.

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7:00PM

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SATURDAY

10:00AM

- Gates Open
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- Horse Show
- Kiddie Car Race

11:00AM

- Food Trucks, Ice Cream open
- Zucchini Races
- Sheep Demo
- Baby Show

12:00PM

- Pet & Stuffie Show

1:00PM

- Magician & Juggler (Roaming) start

2:00PM

- Sheep Demo

2:30PM

- Citizen of the Year
- Wellesley IDOL Semi-Finals

4:30PM

- Line Dancing

5:30PM

- Live Music Starts
- Parade Starts from Wellesley PS

6:00PM

- Silent Auction Closes

7:30PM

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Karelsen fourth hopeful in EZT's Ward 3

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

Sheri Karelsen is vying for a seat on East Zorra-Tavistock (EZT) council in the upcoming municipal election.

Karelsen lives in the ward with her husband and two children. In her free time, she enjoys reading, staying active and playing pickleball.

"I am a small business owner, and as a small business owner, getting involved in my community and finding ways to contribute and connect with others is what makes living in a small rural area so special. I am a strong communicator and an active listener who values understanding different perspectives before making decisions. Through my volunteer and board service, I have demonstrated leadership, accountability and a genuine willingness to contribute my time and skills to make a meaningful difference in the community."

She added being a small business owner results in taking on many responsibilities.

"From managing finances and serving customers to making important decisions that affect the future of the business, it requires dedication, hard work, creativity, and strong leadership. Although running a business can be challenging, it can also be rewarding."

Karelsen said being a councillor is an important position; more than the average resident realizes – only 37 per cent of eligible voters turned out in 2022.

"We need to elect the most capable individuals with a wide range of experiences and backgrounds. Diverse councils are better positioned to understand and represent the community they serve. I think at the provincial and federal level, most citizens feel like they have very little control or say in how their tax money is spent, and that's where the municipal level is different."

She explained that the municipal level of government is where the taxpayer's voice can still be heard and where they can get involved, make changes, listen to what the community wants and needs, and implement those changes.

"Having women represented on an otherwise all-male council brings important perspectives, experiences and insights to the decision-making process. Women may identify different community needs, raise considerations that might otherwise be overlooked and contribute to more balanced and inclusive discussions. Ultimately, including women strengthens council by bringing a broader range of voices to the table and helping ensure that decisions reflect the interests of the entire community."

Karelsen added she is a strong communicator and an active listener who values understanding different perspectives before making decisions.

"Through my volunteer and board service, I have demonstrated leadership, accountability and a genuine willingness to

contribute my time and skills to make a meaningful difference in the community."

She said the next steps taken by the EZT community will be important ones as it plans for the next 20 to 30 years of unprecedented growth. Currently, Oxford County has held community meetings and surveys, and she added as taxpayers and residents, everyone should be involved.

"I want to make sure the things we love about these small rural areas can stay intact. Discussions and decisions of this magnitude require people with common sense and great problem-solving skills. As the tax base grows, we need to make sure that we bring people together toward common goals."

Population growth can bring new opportunities to a community, but it also creates greater demand for essential services and infrastructure. Karelsen said as the population increases, communities must ensure services, infrastructure and recreation keep pace with residents' needs.

"At the same time, it is important to manage the needs of the existing community so that current residents continue to have access to quality services and a good standard of living," she said. "Effective planning should therefore balance future growth with existing needs by investing in infrastructure and maintaining community facilities."

She said maintaining existing services while controlling rate increases requires a balance between financial responsibility and the core needs of the community.

"Municipal government fiscal responsibility means managing public funds carefully, transparently and with a focus on long-term community needs. Municipalities need to keep in



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Sheri Karelsen is running for a seat on East Zorra-Tavistock council in the Oct. 26 municipal election.

mind realistic budgets, control unnecessary spending and maintain adequate reserves. They also ensure taxpayers understand how revenues are collected and how public money is spent."

She added by balancing essential services with financial responsibility, municipal governments can avoid waste, respond more effectively to unexpected costs and preserve the quality of services for current and future residents.

"Rather than relying heavily on across-the-board rate increases, they can explore targeted adjustments. Transparent communication with taxpayers is also essential, helping them understand the need for any increases while demonstrating a commitment to keeping costs as low as possible."

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Wellesley extends spring ice season at Bill Gies Recreation Centre

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Ice users in Wellesley Township will have another six weeks to hit the rink next spring after council approved an extension to the ice season at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre.

At its Aug. 18 meeting, council unanimously approved keeping the ice in for up to six weeks beyond the traditional mid-April end of the season, with spring ice available no later than May 31. Council also set the 2027 spring ice rental rate at \$265 per hour.

According to interim manager of recreation Wanda Schaefer, the request came from existing ice users who are already travelling outside the township to rent ice

during the spring.

"Township staff have met with the main ice users a couple months ago and they were voicing that they were using ice elsewhere in other communities for the spring season and have asked that we open our doors for that," Schaefer told council.

The township's four main ice users – Twin Centre Minor Hockey Association, Twin Centre Hericanes, Wellesley Applejacks and Tri Edge Skating Club – have all expressed interest in extending their seasons. Staff said the relatively new Bill Gies Recreation Centre is well suited to offering spring ice because of its insulated construction.

Staff presented three pricing options. Continuing existing affiliated and prime rates was estimated to cost the township

\$18,000, while charging all users the regular \$223-per-hour prime rate would result in an estimated \$8,400 cost. Staff recommended the \$265 premium spring rate, which is comparable to rates in surrounding municipalities and is expected to result in little to no impact on the township budget if anticipated rentals materialize.

Coun. Claude Hergott questioned whether user groups would commit to enough ice to make the extension financially viable. Staff said calculations were based on roughly 200 hours of rentals over the six weeks and, while there are no guarantees, they are confident demand will be there.

Staff members involved with local hockey, skating and curling organizations also told council there is interest in additional spring ice both locally and across

Waterloo Region, including for spring try-outs, hockey and skating clinics, and other programming.

Coun. Derek Brick suggested council could try the extended season for one year and reconsider if demand falls short of expectations.

"I guess we can try it one year and if it doesn't work out, we know better for next year," Brick said.

Coun. Shelley Wagner also asked staff to report back to council following the 2027 spring season with information on how much the additional ice was actually used.

Staff will begin accepting bookings for the 2027 spring season after Sept. 12. Ice will continue to be distributed according to the township's existing ice allocation policy.

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Tavistock's Ruth Albrecht celebrates 90th birthday surrounded by family and friends

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Family and friends gathered at Quehl's Restaurant in Tavistock on Sunday, Aug. 16, for a surprise open house celebrating Ruth Albrecht's 90th birthday.

Born Aug. 16, 1936, Albrecht was raised on the 10th Line of East Zorra-Tavistock by her parents, Clara and Clarence Wettlaufer. She grew up with two younger brothers, Bob and Bill, both of whom predeceased her.

Albrecht attended SS No. 8 Public School on Maplewood Sideroad before attending Woodstock Collegiate Institute.

She married Lester Albrecht on July 14, 1956. After briefly living in an apartment in Tavistock, the couple purchased a farm on the 13th Line north of Hickson in 1957, where they raised dairy cattle and grew mixed crops.

Together, Ruth and Lester Albrecht raised five children – Lyle (Kelly), Bev (Pete) Bell, Roger (Kathy), Deb (Danny) Schurink and Pete (Deana). Today, the family includes 14 grandchildren and

16 great-grandchildren, with another great-grandchild expected this fall.

Farm life kept Ruth Albrecht busy. Along with helping in the fields and barn, she tended a large garden, canned and preserved food, baked and made sure those working during harvest had a full meal – complete with dessert.

Ruth and Lester Albrecht still found time for fun, playing for many years in the Tavistock mixed dart league at the Tavistock Legion and regularly attending local dances.

After selling the farm, the couple moved to Tavistock in October 1993, where Ruth Albrecht continues to live. Lester Albrecht died in May 2001 following a lengthy illness.

Ruth Albrecht has also maintained a lifelong passion for baking and crafts. She began exhibiting at the Tavistock Fall Fair at just nine years old with encouragement from her teacher and mentor, Ruth Rosenberg. Over the years, she also entered exhibits at the Woodstock, Embro and Wellesley fairs.

At 90, she continues entering preserves, crocheting and knitting in the Tavistock Fall Fair and is already working on entries for this year.

Ruth Albrecht worked at the Food-Rite Chinese restaurant in Woodstock and spent years decorating wedding and birthday cakes and baking for special occasions. She later worked with Quehl's catering and in the restaurant and kitchen, while also supplying preserves, baking and crafts for Quehl's General Store.

Though she has slowed down in recent years, Ruth Albrecht continues making holiday gift baskets filled with her preserves, knitting, crocheting and tending her flower gardens. She is also an avid Toronto Blue Jays fan and enjoys attending her great-grandchildren's hockey and baseball games.

Among those helping Ruth Albrecht celebrate Sunday were her sisters-in-law, Annie Mae Albrecht and Ruth Ann Wettlaufer, along with extended family, longtime friends and many others she has met throughout her life.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Tavistock's Ruth Albrecht was overwhelmed by the turnout of relatives, friends and well-wishers who gathered at Quehl's Restaurant on Sunday, Aug. 16, to help her celebrate her 90th birthday.

Shakespeare angler reels in impressive walleye on Baptiste Lake

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A quiet evening of fishing turned into a memorable vacation story for Shakespeare's Bill Schafer after he reeled in a nearly 10-pound walleye while vacationing with his family last week.

Schafer was staying at a cottage on Baptiste Lake, north of Bancroft just off Highway 62, when he decided to head down to the dock for a little fishing at around 9 p.m.

He didn't have to wait long.

Shortly after casting his lure into the lake, Schafer felt his fishing rod begin to shake. On the other end of the line was an impressive walleye weighing close to 10 pounds.

Walleye, sometimes referred to locally as yellow pickerel, are found throughout much of Canada and the northern United States and are a favourite among anglers.

For the Schafer family, walleye is also a favourite on the dinner table. The freshwater fish is known for its mild flavour and tender, white meat.

After a lifetime working as a construction contractor and building countless barns, sheds and houses, Schafer found there are still few things more exciting than reeling in the big one.



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF SCHAFER FAMILY)

Shakespeare's Bill Schafer shows off the impressive walleye he caught while fishing with his family during a week-long summer vacation at Baptiste Lake, north of Bancroft.



No matter how you hold it, this nearly 10-pound walleye made for a memorable catch for Shakespeare's Bill Schafer. After a lifetime spent working as a construction contractor and building barns, sheds and houses, Schafer says there isn't much more enjoyable than reeling in the big one.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM/WILMOT-TAVISTOCK-GAZETTE

Shakespeare's Beth Hovius joins MCC learning tour in Uganda

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A Shakespeare-area woman recently travelled to Uganda with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario to see firsthand how local organizations are helping refugees and other vulnerable communities build more secure futures.

Beth Hovius, who lives on Line 33 south of Shakespeare with her husband, Jake, and their two teenage children, grew up in South Easthope Township and has worked with MCC Ontario for many years.

Hovius recently returned from Uganda with colleagues Kim Lester and Dennis Flaming after travelling from Kampala to Hoima and the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement.

During the learning tour, the group met with four MCC partner organizations working in areas including education, food security, sustainable livelihoods, savings and loans, peacebuilding, and maternal and child health.

Rather than learning about those programs solely through reports, the Ontario team had an opportunity to visit projects, speak with community members and better understand the local partnerships central to MCC's work.

At the Kyangwali Refugee Settlement, the group visited Planning 4 Tomorrow, a refugee-founded organization providing education and support for children who have experienced displacement and trauma.

Along with classroom instruction, students receive mental-health and psychosocial support through activities including art and play therapy. The group learned how those programs are helping children



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF MCC ONTARIO TEAM IN UGANDA)

Young students participate in programming supported through Mennonite Central Committee partnerships in Uganda. Beth Hovius said MCC projects focus on equipping people with the skills, confidence and opportunities needed to shape their own futures.

express difficult experiences, rebuild their confidence and find their voices.

In Hoima, Hovius and the team learned about agricultural training, women-led savings groups and peacebuilding initiatives offered through the Diocese of the Church of Uganda.

Farmers are learning conservation-agriculture practices intended to improve food production while working together to gain better access to markets.

Savings groups also provide opportunities for members to borrow money for school fees, farm tools, household repairs and small businesses. Beyond the financial benefits, the programs help build trust, strengthen decision-making and reduce

pressures that can contribute to conflict within families and communities.

For Hovius and her MCC colleagues, the trip was also an opportunity to recognize the leadership and abilities of the people and organizations already working within those communities.

"MCC projects are not about creating dependency, but about equipping people with skills, confidence and opportunities to shape their own futures," Hovius said.

The learning tour demonstrated how local knowledge and partnerships, supported by organizations like MCC, can help create opportunities for greater peace, dignity and hope.



Kim Lester, left, and Beth Hovius visit Uganda as part of a recent Mennonite Central Committee Ontario learning tour. Both work with MCC Ontario's donor relations, stewardship and development team and had an opportunity to see firsthand how local partners are supporting refugees and other vulnerable communities.



Families wave goodbye to members of the MCC Ontario learning tour during the group's recent visit to Uganda.

New running track completed at Sprucedale Public School

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Students at Sprucedale Public School in Shakespeare will have a new place to get active when they return to class following the completion of a new running track on the school grounds.

Steve Smith Construction of Stratford completed the track last week, with dry summer weather helping the project move along quickly.

The initiative was led by Sprucedale's parent council and spearheaded by council chair Jody Hart.

Despite Sprucedale being a relatively small school, the parent council wanted students to have access to a running track where they could exercise and participate in an activity that requires little equipment or expense.

After reaching out to the community for support, the parent council received donations of time, materials and money that allowed the project to move forward this summer.

The new track, located on the southeast

corner of the school grounds next to the soccer field, will provide students with another option for physical activity throughout the school year.

It is expected to be used during gym classes, for races at recess and lunch, and as part of the school's track-and-field activities.

Shakespeare Presbyterian Church, which organizes races for children during the community's annual field day in June, may also have an opportunity to make use of the new track.

The parent council isn't finished yet.

Plans also include creating a shaded seating and spectator area next to the track. As part of that future project, the council hopes to recognize those who helped make the running track possible by dedicating trees to donors and installing recognition plaques.

Support for the project came from Grit Engineering, Steve Smith Construction, Shakespeare Presbyterian Church, the Shakespeare Optimist Club and numerous other community members.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Steve Smith Construction crews work on the new running track at Sprucedale Public School in Shakespeare. The track is located on the southeast corner of the school grounds next to the soccer field.



The newly completed running track at Sprucedale Public School will be used for gym classes, recess and lunch activities, and track and field, while also providing another opportunity for local youth to get active.

Brocksden Country School Museum brings pioneer skills to life

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

Get ready to step back in time to experience traditional pioneer skills at the Brocksden Country School Museum on Saturday, Aug. 29, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Beading and leather artists will be at Brocksden working on their crafts throughout the day, and a teacher will be in the historic schoolhouse, offering visitors a glimpse into what school was like for children in days gone by.

Visitors can also try their hand at using a cross-cut saw and are encouraged to bring a friend and work together to experience this once-common method of cutting wood.

A working blacksmith will also be on site demonstrating the traditional craft of forging metal. Blacksmithing was once an essential trade in Ontario's rural communities, playing an important role in pioneer life. Blacksmiths made and repaired tools, horseshoes, wagon parts and other metal items needed for farming and transportation.

The trade gradually declined as factories began producing tools and hardware more efficiently, while automobiles and tractors replaced horses, reducing the need



Visitors to the Brocksden Country School Museum can watch a blacksmith demonstrate the traditional craft of forging metal on Saturday, August 29.

for horseshoes. By the middle of the 20th century, many rural blacksmith shops had closed.

While blacksmithing is no longer a necessity in everyday rural life, the traditional craft continues to be preserved and practiced today. Historic villages and museums across Ontario use the tools and demonstrate the skills once used by pioneer



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Bring a friend and work together using a traditional cross-cut saw at the final event of the summer at Brocksden Country School Museum.

blacksmiths, while modern artisans have adapted the craft to create decorative and functional pieces.

The Aug. 29 event offers visitors a chance to learn about these traditional skills, try some hands-on activities and experience a glimpse of life from the past. It is a great opportunity for families and visitors of all ages to step back in time and

discover how these skills helped shape our communities.

Brocksden Country School Museum is located at 2719 Perth Line 37 on Vivian Street, just off Highway 7/8 between Stratford and Shakespeare. For more information, contact Jessie Campbell at brocksdenschool@gmail.com or call 519-271-2619.



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Tavistock Mennonite Church welcomes Grace United congregation for Sunday worship

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Members of two Tavistock churches came together Sunday morning when Tavistock Mennonite Church welcomed members of Grace United Church to share in its weekly worship service.

The two congregations, whose churches are located just a short distance from one another, gathered at Tavistock Mennonite while Grace United Rev. Marilyn Arthur was away on vacation and study leave.

Mary Ellen Ferguson provided the prelude on piano as worshippers arrived before Pastor Julie Ellison White welcomed members of both congregations.

Ruth Steinman led the congregation in worship, while Ellison White's husband, Mike, and daughter, Emma, helped lead the congregation in song accompanied by acoustic guitars and keyboard.

An important part of the service was an opportunity for members of the congregation to share their joys and concerns and ask those gathered to pray for people facing illness and other challenges. Prayers were also offered for those with family members living in areas affected by wildfires.

Ellison White's message drew from the Gospel of John and the story of Jesus appearing to his disciples by the Sea of Galilee, including the miraculous catch of fish and breakfast on the beach.

The joint worship continues next Sunday when members of Tavistock Mennonite Church are invited to join the Grace United congregation for a 10:30 a.m. service led by Arthur in Zion Hall.

On Aug. 30, Tavistock Mennonite Church will welcome Amanda Zehr as guest speaker. On Sept. 6, the congregation will join Cassel and East Zorra Mennonite churches for a joint service in Cassel beginning at 10 a.m.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Those helping lead Sunday's service at Tavistock Mennonite Church included, from left, worship leader Ruth Steinman, pianist and music leader Mary Ellen Ferguson, Pastor Julie Ellison White, and Emma and Mike Ellison White, who helped lead the congregation in song accompanied by guitars and keyboard.

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by PeterS 2026

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Answers found on classified page



1. According to the Bible, what is the name of the final battle between good and evil?
2. Which object, traditionally made of metal, is worn on a cowboy's boots to prod a horse?
3. Who is the Roman god of love?
4. How many lives do cats supposedly have?
5. The Caribbean Island of Bonaire is a municipality of what country?
6. When is the next leap year?
7. Which superhero carries a shield made of vibranium?
8. What do you call two words with the same definition?
9. What game challenges players to remove wooden blocks without toppling the tower?
10. What are the four main ingredients in beer?

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.

August 12 - 19, 2021, Edition (5 years ago)

The Canadian and Ontario governments have announced \$1.2 billion in joint funding to subsidize large-scale, fibre-based broadband projects across Ontario. Funding will improve high-speed internet for nearly 280,000 Ontarians, including 2,000 homes and businesses in Kitchener-Conestoga, according to the announcement on July 30. "We're lucky to have some local projects as well. It's certainly great news for not just our rural communities, but also communities that are just on the edge of town," said Mike Harris, MPP for Kitchener-Conestoga.

Two young New Hamburg entrepreneurs made \$23 from running a lemonade stand last week. Siblings Charlotte, nine, and Henry Killoran, seven, offered freshly squeezed lemonade with organic sugar for 50 cents, along with fresh green beans from the family garden, on Monday, Aug. 2. Their mother, Christie, said the kids were out operating the stand from 12-4 p.m. "They overpaid for the lemonade and gave them \$5, so that really motivated them," said Christie.

About 25 maskless animal activists held a protest outside Springbrook Fur Farm in St. Agatha on Saturday, Aug. 14. Attendees consisted of those from KW Animal Save, as well as some from Fur Free Toronto, and other attendees from Oakville, Burlington, Cambridge, London and Brampton. "There's absolutely no reason in this day and age to be farming fur, or to be wearing fur," said protest attendee Mo Markham. "From an ethical perspective, it doesn't make any sense anymore." Activists claimed factory farms are public safety hazards; animals were allegedly kept in poor living conditions, said Markham, which weakens their immune system and makes them more susceptible to COVID-19.

August 17 - 24, 2011, Edition (15 years ago)

Tavistock Fall Fair's 2010 Ambassador Stephanie Lupton was one of seven semi-finalists at the 40th annual Ambassador of the Fairs Competition at the Canadian National Expedition (CNE) in Toronto this past weekend. "It was an amazing experience," Lupton said Sunday night after returning from the three days of the competition, Aug. 19-21. "I was thrilled to be in the top seven, ecstatic," she added. Lupton's was the first name to be announced in the semi-finals held Sunday afternoon. She was required to say a one-and-a-half-minute speech. She chose to talk about the CNE in general and how it combines farm life and city life together in one event.

The Perth County OPP has investigated a number of incidents in which Perth County residents received calls from computer technology companies advising them their computer had viruses and required immediate protection. Some residents have allowed remote access to their computers while others have provided credit card numbers to the caller so they would install spyware protection.

August 14 - 21, 1996, Edition (30 years ago)

Scheduling aside, the main floor of the new Tavistock and District Recreation Centre (arena) was poured on Monday under ideal conditions. About a dozen men from Turner Murray Contractors Inc. of Lambeth, under the direction of Bill Hicks, began work around 8 a.m. and had the entire floor poured by 3:30 p.m. Liquid concrete was pumped through a six-inch pipe beginning at the west entrance as the crew worked non-stop to accomplish the task. The job required 180 cubic metres of concrete supplied by Boehmers of Stratford. The mixture was pumped into place by A-One Concrete Pumping of Cambridge using an hydraulic pump working under 4,000 pounds of pressure.

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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

Local athletes round out rosters at Canadian Men's Fastball Championships in B.C.

TAMMY STOLL

Submitted to the Gazette

Over the July long weekend, teams from Ontario competed in Napanee at the U17 Ontario Amateur Softball Association (OASA) Qualifier Tournament. This was a chance for teams to earn a spot at the Canadian Men's Fastball Championships, hosted in British Columbia in August.

The four teams that qualified to represent Ontario on the national stage were the Tavistock Athletics, Tara Twins, Elmira Heat and the host team, the Napanee Express.

Teams and players won the right to represent Ontario and a chance to earn the title of Canadian champions. They travelled to Softball City in Surrey, B.C., for the tournament, the week of Aug. 5-9.

There were 12 teams from across Canada representing the west, the east and central Canada. These teams included Team Newfoundland, Nova Scotia Brookfield Elks, Equipe Quebec Releve, Equipe Quebec U17, the Tavistock Athletics, Tara Twins, Elmira Heat, Napanee Express, Saskatchewan Valley Blue Jays, Saskatchewan Prince Albert Astros, Yukon SunDogs and host B.C. Cache Creek Chaos.

The tournament consisted of opening ceremonies followed by two games a day during the round-robin playoffs. Saturday and Sunday were the semi-final playoffs and medal games.

Two local Athletes represented, at the national tournament. Reid McMillan, from Gadshill, who is a graduate player from



The Elmira Heat took home the bronze medal from the Canadian Men's Fastball Championships in Surrey, B.C., Aug. 5-9.

the Wilmot Thunder Association, joined the Elmira Heat team this year, playing back catcher for the team and helping them qualify for Canadians.

Lukas Stoll, from New Dundee, plays for the local Wilmot Thunder Team. When his team did not qualify, players are eligible to be picked up by qualifying teams. Stoll was selected by the Elmira Heat to join their roster in B.C. in hopes of representing Ontario and his hometown in a Canadian championship.

Both boys are students at Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School.

After a gruelling round robin, the Heat finished the series with a 6-0 record, going undefeated. They qualified for the medal round and made it to Sunday of the tournament.

After a lead of 7-4 in the semi-final game against Equipe Quebec U17, the Heat team

fell short, losing the chance to advance to the gold-medal round.

The Elmira Heat brought home the bronze medal, representing Ontario. Equipe Quebec U17 earned the silver medal, and the Nova Scotia Brookfield Elks won the gold medal.

Both boys were honoured to be given the chance to represent their hometowns and Wilmot Township, as well as Ontario, at the national level. They have dedicated their years to the love of baseball, and have been fortunate for their teammates and longtime coaches along the way.

They would also like to thank their teammates cheering them on from home, their community, family, friends and sponsors, including the New Dundee Optimist Club, for believing in them and supporting their journey.

The U17 Wilmot Thunder team



(TAMMY STOLL PHOTOS)

Reid McMillan and Lukas Stoll while playing for the Elmira Heat at the Canadian Men's Fastball Championships in Surrey, B.C., Aug. 5-9.

continues their quest for gold this weekend at the Eastern Canadian Championships, hosted in New Hamburg Aug. 20-23. Six teams from Eastern Canada will flock to Wilmot Township as they round out the fastball season.

We will welcome Bellechasse Quebec, St. Joseph's Chiefs Nova Scotia, Wilmot Thunder Tier 1, Norwich Hitmen, Kawartha Kracken and Innerkip Eagles.

Information for the tournament can be found at wilmotthunder.com.

Young umpires help keep Shakespeare ball games running

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

While players and coaches often get much of the attention on the baseball diamond, there is another group essential to every game – the umpires.

For the Shakespeare Community Athletic Association (SCAA), finding enough umpires to cover games at all age levels can sometimes be a challenge.

Older teams require experienced umpires who have taken the necessary courses and developed a strong understanding of the rules and regulations of the game. For younger divisions, however, umpiring provides local youth with an opportunity to learn those same skills and gain valuable experience.

After completing umpire training, young officials can begin working games involving younger players before progressing to older age groups as their knowledge, confidence and experience

grow.

This season, the SCAA is recognizing 24 umpires who helped keep baseball games running in Shakespeare.

They are Julia Glitz, Annalise Glaab, Teagan Glaab, Emma McCauley, Benson Hodgson, Kegan Hodgson, Nash Follings, Blaine Follings, Miller Follings, Parker Blitz, Tyler Reis, Max Hughes, Zak Hughes, Keaton Bell, Elliott Peters, Nash Wynette, Simon Carter, Ryan Scheerer, Alex Davidson, Coen Smid, Bennett Lichti, Cole Parish, Dakota Maue and Terran McCall.

The SCAA thanks all of its umpires for stepping up throughout the season and ensuring games could be properly officiated.

For young people interested in baseball, umpiring also offers an opportunity to see the game from a different perspective, develop responsibility and confidence, and earn some spending money along the way.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Brothers Blaine and Miller Follings are two of the young umpires who helped officiate baseball games in Shakespeare this season. Both play the game themselves and have taken umpire courses to develop the skills needed to officiate on the diamond.

Oxford Cattlemen celebrate 60 years of annual beef barbecue in Tavistock

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Oxford Cattlemen celebrated a milestone in Tavistock recently as their annual beef barbecue marked its 60th year.

More than 750 beef lovers turned out for this year's fundraiser at the Tavistock Memorial Hall, where volunteers served up generous portions of locally prepared beef along with corn on the cob, potatoes, coleslaw and dessert.

As vehicles made their way around the memorial hall to pick up their takeout meals, local 4-H beef club members helped direct traffic and encouraged visitors to support their fundraising draw.

Behind the scenes, Oxford County beef producers, their families and other volunteers were kept busy preparing and packing hundreds of meals.

More than 400 pounds of outside round beef was prepared for the event, while volunteers outside cooked hundreds of cobs of locally grown corn.

The annual barbecue serves as a fundraiser for local beef producers and has become a longstanding Tavistock tradition over its six decades.

This year's milestone event also comes at a positive time for the beef industry, with local producers enjoying some of the strongest cattle prices seen in recent years.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Volunteers cook hundreds of cobs of locally grown corn outside the Tavistock Memorial Hall in preparation for the Oxford Cattlemen's 60th annual beef barbecue.



Oxford County beef producers prepare more than 400 pounds of outside round beef for the annual barbecue. From left are Oxford Beef president Gordon Dibble, Cole Lansdell, Thomas Wilson and Dave Dymont.



A large crew of local beef producers, family members and volunteers packs takeout meals inside the Tavistock Memorial Hall as vehicles line up outside during the Oxford Cattlemen's 60th annual beef barbecue.

Young Dietrich brothers get an early start on the family egg farm

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

For egg farmers, it's never too early to teach the next generation about life on the farm.

At Dietview Farm in South Easthope Township near Tavistock, brothers Kasey, one, and Reece, three, are already learning what it takes to gather and pack eggs from the family's laying hens.

The young Dietrich brothers rarely need convincing to help out in the barn alongside their parents, Scott and Jordana Dietrich.

While they still have plenty of growing up to do, Scott and Jordana Dietrich hope their sons will be just as enthusiastic about farming 15 or 20 years from now.

The Dietview Farm family's work extends beyond caring for laying hens. The family also grows wheat, soybeans and corn in rotation, while offering custom combining and grain-drying services at their elevator on the northern edge of Sebastopol, near Tavistock.

For now, Kasey and Reece are getting an early education in agriculture and learning firsthand about the daily work that goes into producing eggs for local consumers.



(JORDANA DIETRICH PHOTO)

Brothers Kasey, one, and Reece Dietrich, three, are Grade A all the way as they help their parents, Scott and Jordana Dietrich, gather and pack eggs at Dietview Farm near Tavistock. The young brothers are already learning about the seven-day-a-week work that goes into caring for laying hens and producing eggs.

Cover crops help protect soil on Zehr farm south of Shakespeare

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

After decades of raising hogs and growing crops south of Shakespeare, Steve and Christina Zehr are beginning to find a little more time to enjoy life away from the farm.

The Zehrs farm on Line 33, known locally as Pork Street, where Steve Zehr took over the operation from his father, Mel Zehr, a gifted, natural-born mechanic like his brother, Irvin Zehr of Tavistock.

Steve Zehr was busy in the field last week, no-till planting oats into wheat stubble following the wheat and straw harvest.

The Zehrs use winter wheat as part of their crop rotation alongside corn and soybeans. As longtime hog farmers, they also make use of hog manure to provide nutrients for their crops.

Planting oats as a cover crop after wheat is another way the Zehrs and many other farmers are working to improve and protect their soil. Cover crops help retain nutrients while reducing soil erosion caused by strong winds and heavy rains.

After many years of the seven-day-a-week routine that comes with farming,



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Steve Zehr no-till plants a cover crop of oats into wheat stubble on his farm south of Shakespeare last week. Cover crops such as oats can help retain nutrients and protect soil from erosion caused by wind and heavy rain. Two days after this photo was taken, a welcome rainfall helped provide the moisture needed for the oats to germinate and establish fall cover.

Steve and Christina Zehr have decided to slow down a little. The couple recently purchased a cottage at Lion's Head, giving them a place to escape the daily chores and enjoy some well-earned time at the lake.

Massey Harris tractors bring back memories at Milverton NEAT breakfast

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A pair of Massey Harris enthusiasts had plenty to talk about when the North Easthope Antique Tractor Club (NEAT) travelled to Milverton for a fundraising breakfast last week.

Irene Lantz and her husband, Lorne, drove their antique tractors from their farm west of Wellesley to the breakfast at Main Street-St. Pauls United Church on a perfect, sunny morning.

Lantz is particularly fond of her Massey Harris 44, a tractor she remembers driving as a young girl on her parents' farm.

The couple still lives and farms on the

homestead of Lantz's late parents, Hugh and Edith Forest, near the border of Wellesley and North Easthope townships.

The Massey Harris 44 has deep roots in Lantz's family. Her father purchased the tractor at her grandfather Lupton's farm sale. Lantz's mother, Edith Lupton, was raised on the Lupton family farm near Maplewood in Oxford County.

Now spanning three generations of family history, the Massey Harris was once a workhorse on the Forest farm. It was used for harvesting, plowing and cultivating, as well as powering the hammer mill used to prepare feed for the family's Ayrshire dairy herd.

The family's agricultural tradition continues today. Lantz and Lorne's daughter, Kim, and her husband, Paul Hyatt, along with their two daughters, milk a herd of registered Jerseys on their dairy farm south of Poole. The family also exhibits its cattle at fall fairs, including the Stratford Fall Fair.

NEAT members arrived at the Milverton

breakfast on 27 antique tractors of various makes and models, ranging from roughly 25 to 65 horsepower. Other members travelled from farther afield by vehicle to support the church fundraiser.



Irene Lantz drove her restored, 45-horsepower Massey Harris 44 to the NEAT breakfast in Milverton last week. Her husband, Lorne, joined her aboard his recently purchased, 53-horsepower Oliver 1550.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Barb and George Elg of Milverton are proud owners of this restored 1972 John Deere 4000. The tractor was repainted and restored by TD Restorations of Millbank and features a custom sign created by local artist Brenda Siemon. Both Barb and George are active members of the Main Street-St. Pauls United Church congregation.

Lois McEwin of Milverton, left, and Irene Lantz of the Wellesley area share an appreciation for the Massey Harris 44. The two exchanged a miniature Massey Harris 44 tractor during last Thursday's North Easthope Antique Tractor Club breakfast at Main Street-St. Pauls United Church in Milverton.



Volunteers who prepared breakfast at Main Street-St. Pauls United Church in Milverton gathered beside a rare John Deere 4000 following the NEAT fundraiser. From left are Sheila DeVries, Jean Baillie, Pia Daetwyler, Deb Kuepfer, Eleanor Elg, Betty Crummer, Raymond Kerr, Brenda Coxon and George Elg in the tractor seat.

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Dairy cows enjoy summer pasture near Tavistock



(GARY WEST PHOTO)
Purebred Holstein cows from Logganlane Holsteins enjoy a lush pasture on a perfect August evening west of Tavistock, near the southern edge of Perth County.

Woodstock man charged with impaired driving after colliding with tractor

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF
thewtgazette@gmail.com

A driver is facing several charges after colliding with a tractor in the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock on the weekend, Oxford OPP said in a press release.

On Saturday Aug. 8, at approximately 4:20 p.m., members of the Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to a report of a two-vehicle collision on 16th Line East Zorra-Tavistock.

A pickup truck collided with a tractor.

No injuries were reported.

As a result of the investigation, a 43-year-old Woodstock man was charged with:

- Operation While Impaired
- Operation While Impaired - Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) 80 plus
- Dangerous Operation of a Motor Vehicle

The accused has been released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Woodstock on Sept. 15.

Gazette Puzzles

BACK TO SCHOOL SHOPPING

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Pet of the Week

SADIE

Meet Sadie! This sweet one-year-old girl came to the shelter pregnant with a litter of kittens. She gave birth shortly after arriving, and has spent the last few months in quiet dedication taking care of her little ones.

Now she's ready for someone to take care of her for a change! She is a little shy at first, but once she warms up to you, she is the sweetest little lovebug. Some of her favourite activities include curling up in your lap for snuggles and purring to her heart's content.

Sadie is looking for a soft place to land and a quiet place to rest in her fur-ever home. If you think you could be the perfect family to pamper her the way she deserves, you can meet her in-person at our Stratford Centre or online at kwsphumane.ca/adopt/cats



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Saffron: The superb spice dating back thousands of years

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



Saffron is a spice dating back 4,000 years. Saffron comes from the *Crocus sativus* flower, harvested by hand, and the most expensive spice in the world.

Saffron is popular worldwide among home cooks and chefs, appearing in dishes such as Spanish paella, Iranian basmati rice, Milanese risotto and French bouillabaisse. Saffron is not just main-course magic, saffron is dreamy in desserts as well.

Like all herbs, thanks to Mother Nature, saffron provides heaps of holistic, healthy, body-boosting benefits.

First off, saffron contains piles of plant compounds and all these all-star antioxidants combat free radicals in the body. Crocin gets credit for the eye-catching colour. Saffron is more than striking, research suggests crocin may have antidepressant properties and protects brain cells. There is so evidence to suggest antioxidant safranal supports inflammation, asthma, hypertension, cancer and depression. Kaempferol, an antioxidant found in the petals, boosts immunity.

Back to depression. A 2019 review found that saffron was as effective as conventional medications, fluoxetine, imipramine and citalopram and

with fewer side effects.

Unfortunately, cancer numbers are on the rise, and this lover of all things holistic is hopeful plants may be a cure. A 2020 review found that saffron selectively killed cancer cells and suppressed tumour growth while healthy cells remained healthy.

Weight and blood-sugar management are always on trend. With some Canadians jumping on the Ozempic train and some sticking to a natural path with berberine, alpha-lipoic acid and cinnamon, saffron can be added to the list. A 2023 study found that just 60 milligrams daily for 12 weeks reduced body mass index, waist circumference and weight. These numbers all relate to living a more energetic, disease-free body.

There's also mounting evidence that stupendous saffron may support eye health and Alzheimer's disease, all while lowering total cholesterol and blood pressure.

Bring saffron into the kitchen. Its subtle flavour and aroma make it ideal for savoury dishes. Although saffron is expensive, a small pinch goes a long way. Saffron comes in a thread or powder form. Powder has a lower price point than simply



saffron threads. When they combine beets, turmeric and paprika in a powder, the ticket price may be lower but so is potency and efficacy. Choose a pure powder from a reputable company.

For home chefs, soaking saffron threads in hot, not boiling, water brings a party to the taste buds. All that comes next is choosing a region, recipe and having fun with the fabulous flavour profile.

Saffron love begins with simplicity; rice topped with the power of pomegranates and pistachios. A winning combination of carbohydrate stocked rice, all-star antioxidants courtesy of ruby red pomegranate seeds and healthy fats and plant protein thanks to pistachios.

Saffron rice

Ingredients:

- *1 large pinch of saffron threads
- 1 small yellow onion
- 1-2 tbsp olive oil



- 1 cup of basmati rice
- **2 cups of chicken broth
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ cup fresh or frozen pomegranate seeds
- 3 tbsp of raw chopped pistachios

Directions:

1. *Soak a generous pinch of saffron threads in 1-2 Tbsp of very hot water for 4-6 hours.
2. Rinse the rice and drain.
3. Dice the onion.
4. In a pot, fry the onion in olive oil until translucent.
5. Add the broth, salt and saffron threads with the water to the onions.
6. Bring the water to a roaring boil.
7. Turn down and simmer on low until the rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Do not disturb the process by lifting the lid.
8. Remove the arils, a fancy name for the seeds from the pomegranate, if using fresh over frozen.



9. Uncover rice once cooked and fluff.
10. Top with chopped pistachios and pomegranate seeds.

*For busy bees, place the saffron in hot water in the morning and by dinner prep time, the show stopping colour will be. This is called "blooming" the saffron.

**Vegetable broth works for plant-based eaters

Enjoy!

Saffron is a stupendous supplement to add to your daily protocol, and readily available at your favourite health store. Saffron can be found in a tincture or 100 per-cent, pure capsule, but also paired with vitamins, minerals and herbs. For those looking to alleviate anxiety or mood-boosting benefits, choose a saffron supplement with GABA and 5-HTP. They work synergistically for a happier holistic life inside and out.

Before starting anything new, speak to your health practitioner.

Planting a tree? Make it a keystone one



By Marlene Knezevich

Let's Tree Wilmot

End of summer is near, and it is a great time to be planting. Thinking of planting a tree or three? Consider a native tree that is a keystone species. What is a keystone species? It is a species that provides the most needs for other species in the ecosystem.

When doing a presentation, we ask the group, "Do you like birds?" The majority of the hands enthusiastically go up. Then we ask, "Do you like bugs?" Reluctantly, a few hands rise. The point is, if there are no bugs, there are no birds!

Why? Just like our infants,

baby birds need soft, high-protein food. The source is the larvae or caterpillars of butterflies, moths and others. Doug Tallamy, an entomologist, discovered that mom and dad chickadees feeding a clutch of four offspring need to capture up to 570 caterpillars every day for 16 to 18 days until the hatchlings fledge. That is a lot of caterpillars and they are busy! If there is a lack of food, then there will be fewer birds.

What has this got to do with planting trees? Native oak trees are the top keystone species supporting the nurseries for up to 450

species of butterflies and moths that have evolved together over time. The non-native Bradford pear supports one. The top five keystone species are native oak, native plum and cherry, birch, cottonwood and maples.

For more information, see the chart in the resources section of letstreewilmot.ca under "Why plant native tree." Doug Tallamy also has great webinars available on YouTube.

Planting trees? We want to know about it, so contact us at letstreewilmot.ca/wilmot-rooted-together.

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

Soothing your spirit - and wearing a monkey - in Grenada's rainforest

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



It's not a surprise that when travellers visit Caribbean islands, they often have two thoughts in mind: the beach and rum punches. And there is no doubt that most Caribbean islands have great beaches, and no lack of rum drinks.

But the best Caribbean destinations offer so much more, and it would be a shame to miss the wonders you will find if you dare to leave the beach resort and start to explore.

In my view, Grenada is definitely one of "the best Caribbean destinations." I have a special fondness for the "Windward Islands" – the nations that are in the eastern part of the Caribbean. And when I was in Grenada earlier this summer, the beach played very little part in a menu of fantastic activities – though there is no doubt that the four-kilometre-long Grand Anse white sand beach is one of the best in the world.

But we turned our focus inland and spent one of our days exploring Grenada's spectacular rainforest.

Grenada has 3,800 acres of protected rainforest. The diversity of plants is mind-boggling; there are over 100 varieties of ferns alone.

One of my favourite stops was at Annandale Waterfall and Forest Park. This being the rainforest, it wasn't too surprising that it was, in fact, raining. But this being a tropical island, it also wasn't too surprising that the rain was warm, and nobody seemed to care that we were getting wet because the plants and flowers were astonishing, and the waterfall is beautiful.

Annandale is a 30-foot waterfall on a stream that emerges from the rainforest and plunges into a beautiful, emerald pool below, open for swimming if you so choose. It's one of nine waterfalls in Grenada, which is a volcanic island (there are hot springs you can visit), and so, rises sharply from the oceanfront to the heights of the rainforest.

Not to wax overly botanical, I wandered along paths bordered by dramatic heliconia, lush bougainvillea (the national flower of Grenada), "shampoo ginger," bird of paradise flower, torch ginger

and large, bright yellow flowers called "buttercups" that bear no resemblance to any buttercup I have encountered in Canada – plus, dozens of plants I wouldn't even begin to try to identify. The rainforest is simply beautiful, and I noticed that all of us travel-writing colleagues almost immediately relaxed and stopped to savour the visual delights around us in spite of the rain.

Annandale Falls is just a small part of the large rainforest, which includes the Grand Etang National Park and Forest Reserve. There, visitors will encounter a cornucopia of unique delights.

There is an extensive lake that is actually a volcanic crater. There are beautiful birds, Rainbow Eucalyptus trees with bark the colours of the rainbow, and rather shockingly large Giant Frangipani caterpillars.

But the highlights are the Mona monkeys.

As you enter the park, you encounter this posted warning: "Notice. The Mona monkeys within the Grand Etang National Park live in the wild and can be very unpredictable. If you choose to interact with them, you are doing so at your own risk. The management of the park assumes no liability for any injury sustained as a result of such interaction."

That notice certainly echoed in my head a few minutes and a short distance away, as a Mona monkey sat on top of my head because there are some gentlemen who have apparently trained the wild monkeys to prance about on visitors' heads, arms and shoulders in return for food.

Or perhaps – and I might actually lean toward this explanation – the monkeys have trained the gentlemen. It sure seemed like the monkeys were in charge, at any rate.

Our minibus driver stopped where these monkeys are likely to be found, and next thing we knew, we had become climbing posts for Mona monkeys. It was a ton of fun and no tourists were hurt in the making of those photographs. Nor were any Mona monkeys.

Grand Etang National Park features several walking and hiking trails. The hikes through the rainforest range from relatively easy walks to a challenging trail that climbs up Mount Saint Catherine, the highest peak on the volcanic island.

Of course, as wonderful as the rainforest is, Grenada offers a lot more for visitors to enjoy, including, naturally, the beach. There is the unique and astonishing Underwater Sculpture Park (which I had the chance to re-visit, and which I will write about in a subsequent feature). The island is home to seven chocolate factories (and once you have had Grenadian chocolate, you may never go back), and – you knew we're get back to this – five rum distilleries, which offer the most generous tasting experiences you are likely to encounter anywhere.

The tours of the chocolate factories are fascinating, and the tours of the rum distilleries are tasty as well. Our visit took us to Belmont Estates for chocolate, and to Clarke's Court rum distillery.

But tempting as those options are (and yes, you should yield to temptation in this case), nothing will soothe and inspire your soul like spending time in Grenada's amazing rainforest.

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.



The author with a Mona monkey pal.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

Annandale Falls, one of nine waterfalls in the rainforest of Grenada.



Tropical beauties: heliconia and red ginger lily.



These flowers, called Buttercups, bear little resemblance to the small flowers of the same name in Canada.

Municipal election season is a good time to remember how to disagree

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Galen Simmons



There is nothing wrong with disagreeing with your neighbour about who should be our next mayor or councillor.

In fact, with nominations for Ontario's Oct. 26 municipal election closing Aug. 21 and conversations increasingly turning to the candidates putting their names forward, I hope we're doing plenty of disagreeing over the next couple of months.

Those conversations around dinner tables, over backyard fences, at work and online are an

important part of becoming informed voters.

The challenge is remembering that, in municipal politics especially, the people we're talking about and disagreeing with aren't strangers.

When we argue about a federal or provincial politician, chances are most of us have never met that person. In a municipal election, the candidate whose policies you're criticizing might live three doors down. Their kids might play hockey with yours. They might own the business you visit

every week or be someone you've volunteered alongside for years.

That closeness is one of the things I love about municipal politics, but it also means disagreements can become personal very quickly.

And social media only makes that easier.

There is something about typing a comment from behind a screen that can make us say things we would never say to someone sitting next to us at a hockey game. A disagreement over taxes or development can quickly turn into an attack on someone's intelligence, character or motives. Someone responds in kind, others pile on and, before long, nobody is talking about the issue anymore.

Worse still, those words don't disappear when the election is over.

That's why it's important we learn how to disagree without making those disagreements personal.

We should be able to tell a friend or neighbour we think they're wrong. We should be able to challenge a candidate's record, question their promises and point out when their numbers don't add up. Candidates asking us to trust them with public office should expect that scrutiny.

But we can do all of that without questioning whether someone is a good person simply because they see an issue differently.

Before posting that angry comment, ask yourself whether you would say the same thing to that person's face. Criticize the position instead of the person. Ask someone why they believe what they believe instead of assuming you already know. And, perhaps most importantly, recognize that changing your mind after hearing a good argument isn't losing a debate.

It's learning something.

That matters because municipal elections traditionally struggle to

attract the same level of voter attention as provincial and federal elections, despite local councils making decisions that have some of the most noticeable impacts on our everyday lives.

Property taxes, roads, recreation, policing, fire protection, planning and development, housing, parks and infrastructure are all influenced by the people we elect locally.

Over the next two months, we should talk about this election. Read the coverage. Study the platforms. Attend debates. Ask difficult questions and discuss the answers with people who don't necessarily agree with you.

That's how we become better-informed voters.

Just remember that on Oct. 27, we all still have to live here together.

Democracy depends on our ability to disagree.

Community depends on our ability to do it respectfully.

Five generations for Tavistock's Shirley Ramseyer

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Shirley Ramseyer may now be a great-great-grandmother, but the longtime Tavistock resident says with a smile she still feels like a "spring chicken."

Ramseyer, who lives at the Maples Home for Seniors in Tavistock, recently enjoyed an evening outdoors with family during the annual visit from the Ingersoll Pipe Band.

With perfect August weather for the occasion, Ramseyer invited members of her family to join her for the evening's entertainment.

Knowing her nine great-grandchildren might not be quite as enthusiastic about the sound of bagpipes and drums as she was, Ramseyer figured the promise of ice cream with unlimited toppings afterward would help keep everyone entertained.

Just three days later, the family had another reason to celebrate when Ramseyer officially became a great-great-grandmother.

The newest addition to the family, Marlo James Muirhead, was born to parents Shawmeik and Suane Muirhead.

Ramseyer said she is looking forward to meeting the newest member of the family and having another baby to cuddle.

Now representing five generations of her family, Ramseyer continues to impress those around her with both her sharp memory and sense of humour.



Shirley Ramseyer enjoys a visit from the Ingersoll Pipe Band at the Maples Home for Seniors in Tavistock.

(GARY WEST PHOTO)



Tavistock's Shirley Ramseyer is surrounded by some of her great-grandchildren during a recent family visit. Back row, from left, are Demarius Wint, Alexis Murray, Cale Richmond and Maisy Moore. In the front row, from left, are Millie Brady, Ramseyer, Ivy Habsch and Lennyn Murray. Kneeling in front is Bennet Brady. When asked if she could name all her great-grandchildren, Ramseyer quickly rhymed them off without hesitation.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2026

THURSDAY, AUGUST 20

St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church Annual Red Shed Ham and Corn Roast
Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Meal at 6:30 p.m.
Ham and Corn Roast, Live Country Music and Summer Fun. Fundraising for Wellesley Food Cupboard, Milverton Food Bank, and Youth attending National Youth Conference in B.C. For tickets call Carol Horst at 519-274- 4494 or email: carollh@cwisp.ca
St. James Evangelical Lutheran Church
1998 Line 45, Perth East

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22

Christian Men's Breakfast
9 a.m.

A Call to Action to help those in Need in Our Community. For more information go to: theq1230.github.io/CRLC/mens-group.html
Contact Ken Quiggan at: WCMG@proton.me
Kennedy's Restaurant
1750 Erbs Rd., St. Agatha

Wilmot Heritage Fire Brigades Grand Unveiling of 1948 Ford F155 Bickel Seagrave Pumper

10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
You're invited to come out and see this beauty and our other antique fire trucks, equipment and artifacts. View our collection, have a hot dog and a pop and enjoy the day!
Wilmot Heritage Fire Brigades
10 Bell Drive, Baden

Fryfogel Tavern Annual End of Summer Open House

11 a.m. - 2 p.m.
It will include beverages and snacks as well as an opportunity to look at the Fryfogel family tree. This open house is a great way to come and see all the restoration work that has been done at the Tavern over the summer. Additionally, there will be a raffle with door prizes!
More info: noelle.taylor1017@gmail.com
Fryfogel Tavern
1931 Line 34, Perth East (east of Shakespeare)

MONDAY, AUGUST 24

Food Trucks at Grace United Church Tavistock
4:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Berlin 95, Ish n Chips, El Milagro
Donations to Camp Bimini
Grace United Church
116 Woodstock St. S. Tavistock

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

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28

Wellesley Township Fall Fair 2nd annual Senior Tea
2:30 - 4:00 p.m.
Seniors and almost seniors from Wellesley Township and their surrounding communities are invited to a special afternoon celebrating the people who have helped build and support the rich tradition of the Wellesley Fall Fair. Live entertainment by the "Dynamic Duo". Call Joanne Stewart for details-519-658-0764.
Bill Gies Recreation Centre
1401 Queens Bush Rd, Wellesley

SATURDAY, AUGUST 29

Saturday Stroll in Sylvan Splendor
1:30 - 3:00 p.m.
Spruce Haven Farm is a haven for butterflies, birds, moths, endangered American chestnut tree, tall grass prairie and much more. Come and explore. Free. Details and registration: <https://letstreewilmot.ca/events/spruce-haven-farm>
Spruce Haven Farm, St Agatha

MONDAY, AUGUST 31

Food Trucks at Grace United Church Tavistock
4:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Born2Eat, Los Rolling Tacos, Fo'Cheezy
Donations to Tavistock Agricultural Society
Grace United Church
116 Woodstock St. S. Tavistock

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 1

Ostomy Support Group Meeting
7 p.m.
Speaker – Paul D'Souza from Coloplast
Learn about ostomy products and services from Coloplast. Social time and snacks. Everyone welcome.
(519)273-4327
93 Morgan St., Stratford

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

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

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

Reaching Ontario Sharing Education (ROSE) program
2 p.m.
Learn about the Stratford Mission Depot with founder Jean Aitcheson who will be speaking. Co-hosted by the Braemar W.I. and the ACW of Christ Church. It is wheelchair accessible building and all are welcome. Refreshments will be served. Questions lauracgreen77@gmail.com.
Christ Church
595815 Oxford 59 Huntingford

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship
12 p.m.
Please register by September 4 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900
Wellesley Recreation Complex,
1401 Queen's Bush Rd., Wellesley

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

OPTIMIST CLUB OF PETERSBURG BREAKFAST IN THE PARK
8:30 - 12 noon
Petersburg Park
1338 Notre Dame Dr., Petersburg

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship
12 p.m.
Please register by September 11 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900
Wilmot Rec Complex,
1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Perth County Beef Farmers Annual Beef BBQ Dinner
Dinner 5-7:30 p.m. Live Music 6-10 p.m.
For tickets email perthcountybeef@gmail.com. For more information contact Angela Schneider 519-291-8668
Milverton Agri Centre (MAC)
17 Pierson Street, Milverton

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Wilmot Terry Fox Run
9-11 a.m.
Wilmot Rec Centre,
Schmidt Woods Trail

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

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

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship
12 p.m.
Please register by September 18 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900
Linwood Community Centre,
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

TAVISTOCK FAIR BOOK SALE

The Second Hand Book Nook Sale
Friday, Sept. 11, 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Saturday, Sept. 12, 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
Sunday, Sept. 13, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Lots of books, magazines and puzzles for sale
For more information, call (519)590-1617
Tavistock Fall Fair in the arena
1 Adam St., Tavistock

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.
Tavistock Seniors Card Games
Monday drop in 1-4 p.m.
Contact: Bob Routly 519-301-2118
Tavistock Memorial Hall, 1 Adam St.

FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES CONT

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's Sports Teams"
Check out the earliest Hickson baseball teams and the display full of vintage equipment. History and photos of the Hickson Baseball teams dating back to the early 1900's complement the display.
Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 am-4:30 pm
runs until until the end of September 2026.
EZT Township Administration Building (lobby),
89 Loveys Street, Hickson

PLATTSVILLE & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY

Plattsville & District Heritage Society exhibit "Holidays & Celebrations That Bring Us Together"
June 6 to September 19 | Saturdays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Donations accepted. Refreshments. Contact plattsvilledistrictheritage@gmail.com or call 519.535.1417.
Archive & Museum at Chesterfield,
816661 Oxford Rd 22, Bright

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Deadline: Tuesday prior at 3 p.m.
Contact: thewtgazette@gmail.com

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

Quiz Time Answers

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Armageddon | 7. Captain America |
| 2. Spurs | 8. Synonyms |
| 3. Cupid | 9. Jenga |
| 4. Nine | 10. Water, malted grain, hops & yeast |
| 5. The Netherlands | |
| 6. 2028 | |



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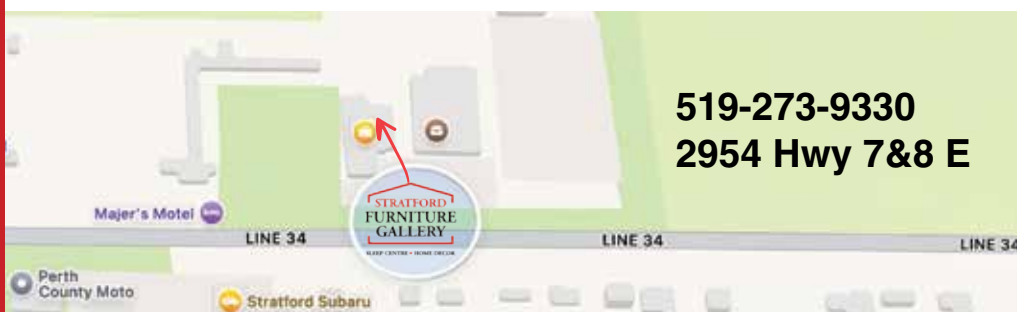


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