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Approximately 100 people took part in Wilmot Township's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Memorial Walk on Monday. Contributed photo

Wilmot holds National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Memorial Walk

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wilmot Township held its second National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Memorial Walk on Sept. 30.

The event was held in partnership with the Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Indigenous Women's Healing Circle and Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary.

A release from Wilmot described the day

as a somber gathering and an opportunity for community members to come together and deepen their understanding of the lasting and ongoing impacts of colonization on First Nations, Métis and Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Participants gathered at Schmidt Woods and had the opportunity to participate in a traditional smudging ceremony conducted by the Indigenous Women's Healing Circle before taking a self-guided walk.

The path was lined with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and oral storytelling.

Mayor Natasha Salonen emphasized the importance of the memorial walk.

"The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is important for Canadians to gather in community, further individual learning and recommit to a path of understanding and action. I was encouraged to

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Chaos erupts at meeting after region releases crop-destruction report

Contradictions over validity of NDA

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The attempt to acquire 770 acres of land in Wilmot Township by the Region of Waterloo for a future mega-industrial site has reached a new level of confusion.

The release of a report on the controversial destruction of 160 acres of corn on a recently sold farm failed to provide the public and elected officials with any detailed information. Some councillors in the region were so disappointed they sent it back to staff to take another stab at it. Council also asked for a legal opinion on the status of confidentiality obligations.

Kevin Thomason is a Wilmot resident and part of the Fight for Farmland group. He said the report didn't answer a single question and included none of the information Salonen's motion asked for.

"It had five or six very detailed points we were hoping would be clarified and instead we got a three-page report that said nothing. Not only was that the message coming from members of the public, but it was also clear from a number of councillors."

Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen, who put the motion to table the report on the agenda about two months ago, was one of them.

"I also was surprised by this report and I appreciated and recognized the legal context of some things that cannot be shared in the open, however, even the fact that the financial implications weren't included in this to me was pretty alarming."

One of the most controversial parts of the

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COMMUNITY —

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Memorial Walk

Continued from page 1

see so many residents join us in honouring the lived experiences and oral stories of Indigenous peoples who continue to live with the intergenerational impacts of the residential school system and colonization.”

She added all levels of government, including municipalities, must continue to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

“The path to true reconciliation is a long one; it will take everyone to address the historic injustices committed against Indigenous peoples and build a truly equitable future for all.”

Salonen said it was wonderful to see the growth compared to the 2023 event.

“Last year, we had between 20 to 30 people, so to see 100 this year was fantastic. People are interested in both learning and taking part in a day of mourning for Indigenous peoples. ... It was great to see people wanting to gather for that.”

She explained the most interesting portion of the day may have been when the formal portion was done and people just stood around and talked.

“After the walk, refreshments were available and a few booths with the public library, ecumenical working group and we

had a sacred fire. But it was the conversations I had with people and the ones I overheard.”

Salonen said one of the stories she read to the crowd was “Phyllis’s Orange Shirt,” which led to an interesting chat.

“A little girl was asking her mom why her shirt was taken away. She was probably kindergarten age and it’s great to get to hear and see people reflecting on and questioning what they were learning to gain a deeper understanding.”

She added many people made it obvious they were interested in learning more by putting library resources on hold to be picked up at a later date.

“We are getting to see the impact and hear community conversations happen. It really shows how much of a success the day was. The only negative thing I heard was all the mosquitos,” joked Salonen, who added many people were both moved and surprised by how impactful emotionally their experiences were.

With this year’s event in the books, Salonen’s attention turns to planning for 2025 and she already has a few ideas on how to make the day even better thanks to feedback, which will include education on the Calls to Action.

“A lot of people didn’t even realize all



Participants in orange shirts walk through Schmidt Woods during Wilmot Township's second National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Memorial Walk on Sept. 30, reflecting on the lasting impact of colonization on Indigenous communities. Contributed photo

the calls that exist. Many wondered what kind of movement has been made on them and next year, I think we are going to try and look at trying to incorporate a way to update which calls have been acted on and in what capacity.”

She added there were a few parents at this week’s event a little concerned about

the age-appropriateness of the materials being presented, but their fears were quickly put to rest.

“All stories and content were geared towards kindergarten to Grade 8 age, but much like a Disney movie, there are other meanings for all age levels, but it made it very appropriate for any age to come.”





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COMMUNITY —

Confusion over Wilmot Township land acquisition and NDA Issues

Continued from page 1

entire land acquisition in the township is, according to staff at Wilmot and the region, that a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) exists, meaning no one can discuss the majority of the details in a public setting. The details to date have only been brought up behind closed doors at in-camera meetings.

One question the Gazette has asked but has not been answered is who at each municipality was responsible for signing an NDA and where the documents originated from. That information has remained secret.

A heated debate at last week's meeting started when Coun. Rob Deutschmann questioned if an NDA was still in place.

"What document are we talking about that has subjected us to confidentiality at this point? I would have expected at a minimum that this report would have had details of any discussions we had with the province regarding this corn. That, at a minimum, I would have expected in here because the NDA no longer applies and we're not subject to that."

He summed up his request by asking anything not specific be made more specific.

"Who was the Biofuel company? Who were the farmers who asked about it? Who are the farmers that came (to plough the corn down) and how much did we pay them for the work they did? That's not subject to any confidentiality agreement. That should be for the people to hear."

Regional chair Karen Redman responded by asking Deutschmann what the logic was

behind his request.

"We are going down this rabbit hole again. If someone approached me and I am farmer 'X' and I don't want to do 'Y,' why would I think that would show up in a public document?"

After Deutschmann responded with, "Why would you not," Redman suggested the region may not have taken the lead on the destruction of the crop.

"It's an interaction between someone who approached me, not necessarily the region. I know we worked very closely with the Township of Wilmot staff," Salonen said.

Deutschmann, an attorney by trade, wasn't satisfied with Redman's answer.

"Did the parties have a discussion saying don't disclose my name? Is staff going to say we talked to some people and not to disclose their names? Did we sign NDAs with these individuals? No."

The Gazette asked Thomason if he considered the chaos at the meeting a win for those against the land acquisition since some councillors are beginning to lose patience with the behind-closed-doors process.

"They don't even know if they have an NDA and the questions councillors had were embarrassing to the region. It didn't show that they knew what was going on and it didn't show they were aware. It reflected the chaos of this entire land assembly."

Thomason said he fully believes the province is calling all the shots and the region is being dragged along.

"In the end, it's not at all what anyone wants or needs," he said.

Mayor Natasha Salonen welcomes Emmanuel at Brighton child care expansion to Wilmot Township

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

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Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre has announced it has secured a new location in Baden.

Emmanuel at Brighton is a not-for-profit organization with deep roots in Waterloo Region and a strong commitment to forest and nature-based early childhood education. This expansion means families in Wilmot Township and beyond will have increased access to quality, non-profit child-care services.

"We are thrilled to see this childcare expansion, which will address the growing demand for accessible, high-quality childcare in Wilmot Township," Mayor Natasha Salonen said in a press release.

"The addition of this trusted non-profit organization, known for its forest and nature-focused approach, will be a true asset for our community, benefiting children and families for years to come."

"It's clear that the transition of ownership of the school at 3601 Sandhills Rd. from Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health to Emmanuel at Brighton is rooted in both organizations' commitment to supporting Waterloo Region children and families."

Wilmot Township extends a warm welcome to Emmanuel at Brighton and celebrates the positive impact their presence will bring to the community. The Baden Emmanuel at Brighton Child Care Centre location is set to open in Fall 2025.

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COMMUNITY —

Photos from Wellesley's Apple Butter and Cheese Festival

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The town of Wellesley and, in fact, the whole township area and beyond came alive on Saturday during the annual Wellesley Apple Butter and Cheese (ABC) Festival.

Those in search of pancakes with local maple syrup for breakfast and anyone looking for cheese and apple products weren't disappointed as the ABC festival enjoyed beautiful weather and large crowds.

Pictured are highlights from the parade and the day.



MPP Mike Harris was happy to be involved flipping pancakes for breakfast at the always successful ABC Festival in Wellesley Sept. 28.



The Wellesley Fall Fair ambassadors – junior ambassador Manni Hayer and Katie Musselman – are chauffeured by Wellesley's Calvin Schmidt in the ABC Festival parade Sept. 28. Photos by Wendy Richardson

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September 28, 2024



Junior Wellesley Fall Fair Ambassador Manni Hayer is trying her best to get milk out of Mootilda with not much success, but she had fun trying!

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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

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COMMUNITY —

Learning the volunteer's role in pain and symptom management in hospice

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

There are many volunteers in the Stratford, St. Marys and Perth County areas who do tremendous work in various facets of life.

One of these would be with the Rotary Hospice Stratford-Perth.

Last week, the area hospice volunteer group, meeting at the Optimist Hall in Shakespeare, heard from hospice clinical resource nurse Stacey Hallahan about the volunteer's role in pain and symptom management in hospice.

The objectives include recognizing the unique experience of pain, recognizing the impact and importance of pain management, understanding the volunteer's role in identifying and reporting pain, and recognizing various comfort measures that a volunteer can perform.

The discussion surrounded what pain is and what pain means to individuals.

The group learned that symptom management is addressing not just pain, but also other discomforts to improve quality of life.

Hallahan said the hospice volunteer's role is crucial in observing, reporting and supporting individual clients and residents.

She also reviewed what total pain means. It includes four sections of physical, psychological, spiritual and social pain.

The group discussed how each of these could impact someone's pain and, when

someone expresses his or her pain in one way, it may be due to one of these factors.

Discussion also ensued about common symptoms of pain and how to notice non-verbal cues for pain.

"Everyone experiences pain differently, and just because two people experience the same situation, that does not mean they are feeling the same level of pain," Hallahan said.

"This is important to understand when supporting residents and their families, as it reminds everyone to be empathetic and considerate of each person's unique experiences."

The volunteer role in pain and symptom management is to observe, communicate and then support. That support could be in a variety of ways, including pillows, lighting, warm blankets, engaging in reading or music and being a calm presence for each individual.

Volunteers also need to know their limits and to ask for help when they are unsure of a situation, while reporting any sudden changes in pain levels, symptoms, confusion or agitation of the patient to the registered staff.

The Rotary Hospice of Stratford-Perth is now in its fifth year coming to the aid of individuals and families.

For more information, contact Hallahan at 519-508-4900 ext. 551. More information can be found at www.rotaryhospice.ca.



Clinical resource nurse Stacey Hallahan talks to the group of hospice volunteers in Shakespeare last week on their important and unique role helping those families in their home environment and in the Rotary Hospice Stratford-Perth facility at 80 Greenwood Dr.



Pictured from left are Rotary Hospice Stratford-Perth social worker Jaclyn Turpin, hospice clinical resource nurse Stacey Hallahan and hospice volunteer coordinator Katie O'Donovan. Photos by Gary West

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COMMUNITY —

Winners from Wellesley Fall Fair Scarecrow Competition

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

At Wellesley Fall Fair time, a scarecrow committee consisting of Michelle Thompson, Wendy Richardson and Kari Hoffman put the word out for area residents to get involved in the annual scarecrow competition.

There were five categories including a high-school category, business category, traditional category, most-colourful category and the best fair-theme-related category.

Shown below are the winners in each category. The organizers were very happy to have 32 scarecrows registered, making this year the second-largest Scarecrow Trail, the largest being the very first year of the competition. The scarecrow competition began in 2015.



The winning scarecrow in the traditional category was from Emma Fountain from Wellesley. Contributed photos



The scarecrow judged the most colourful was from Peter and Gayle Draper of St. Clements.



This scarecrow is from Wellesley District Public School, which had its own competition. Teacher Jason Hambleton organized for eight scarecrows to be created and displayed within the school. The scarecrow pictured was the winner.



The scarecrow judged the best in the business category was from Millers Stone in Heidelberg.



The best theme-related scarecrow was from Gordon and Cameron Bast from Wellesley.

COMMUNITY —

Heidi Danen a gift to the Ambassador Competition for 14 years at the Stratford Fall Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Recognition of area do-gooders is what local newspapers are all about, and a young, energetic Tavistock woman fits that description to a tee.

Heidi Danen, whose home is in Sebastopol on the northern edge of Tavistock, was honoured recently by members and guests of the Stratford Agricultural Society and fall fair during the fair's opening night Sept. 19.

Following 14 years of guiding and chairing the fair's Ambassador Competition, she has decided to announce her retirement from a job she says she has certainly enjoyed.

With emotion in her voice, she said "it has been an incredible opportunity to get to know so many young adults and be there during their ambassador journey."

"The ambassador program has served as a second family to me, both in Stratford and across the province at different agricultural events. It was a tough decision to step back, but it was time to offer this experience to someone new."

She said her decision was made easier knowing Amanda Gray-Eve, who was a fall fair ambassador in Stratford in 2014, will be just as passionate about leading the program as she has been.

Danen wanted to thank the agricultural society, the ambassador program and all the lifelong friends throughout the province she made along the way.

Danen, who also co-chaired the very successful Stratford Fall Fair in 2024 and was, herself, the Tavistock Fall Fair Ambassador in 1996, has encouraged many young adults in the Tavistock and Stratford communities to get involved "with an experience they will never forget."

Danen was raised on her parents, Bart and Gerry Danen's dairy farm east of Tavistock on the 16th line in Oxford County's East Zorra Township, where her brother Jack, sister-in-law Jane and their family continue the dairy farming tradition.

It is interesting to note that Heidi Danen's nieces have all participated and done well in the ambassador competitions for both the Tavistock and Stratford fall fairs.



Heidi Danen (second from the right) was always praised by the young adults who entered the Stratford Fall Fair Ambassador Competition. She was flanked after announcing her retirement at this year's competition by, from left, 2024 runner-up Marissa Van Straaten, 2024 ambassador Marshall McCannell, and 2023 ambassador Faith Knechtel. Photo by Gary West

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COMMUNITY —

New Hamburg Legion to launch Poppy Campaign in late October

SCOTT DUNSTALL

Gazette Correspondent

Poppy Campaign season is fast approaching.

Since its adoption in 1921, the poppy has become widely recognized as the symbol of Remembrance, with the Royal Canadian Legion managing its distribution in communities across Canada. In Wilmot, the Poppy Campaign is organized by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532, New Hamburg. Starting Oct. 25, poppy boxes will be placed in local businesses and community spaces, with the wearing of poppies continuing until Nov. 11.

The funds generated during the campaign will go to provide immediate assistance to servicemen and women that are in need. This may include food, shelter or medical attention for them or their families. Locally, much of the funding raised also goes to:

- Educational bursaries
- Comforts for veterans in hospital.
- Community medical appliances
- Medical research
- Medical training specific to veterans
- Awards for local students competing in the annual poetry and poster competitions that has Remembrance as the subject matter.

In 1931, thanks to the efforts of the Royal Canadian Legion, the Canadian government enacted the Armistice Day Act, establishing Nov. 11 as a day to honour those "who gave their lives that freedom might prevail." Thirty-nine years later, in 1970, the Holiday Act was passed,

officially recognizing Remembrance Day as a national holiday alongside others.

Canada lost 711,500 lives in the two major wars of the 20th century. The table

World War	ONE	TWO
Participants	628,736	1,081,865
Men	624,218	1,031,902
Women	4,518	49,963
Died	66,573	44,927
Taken Prisoner	2,818	8,271

below highlights our nation's participation and losses in each conflict:

Every year, the New Hamburg Legion runs the Poppy Campaign leading up to Remembrance Day on Nov. 11. This year, a memorial parade and service will take place at the New Dundee Cenotaph on Nov. 4. On Nov. 11, a memorial parade will be held in New Hamburg, featuring a moment of reflection at the New Hamburg Cenotaph followed by a full service at the New Hamburg Arena. A reception and fellowship will be held afterwards at the New Hamburg Legion in the main hall.

A special feature this year will be the Tudor Squadron 822 Cadets, who will stand guard at the New Hamburg Cenotaph from 8 p.m. on Nov. 10 until 10 a.m. on Nov. 11.

At this time of year, please take a moment to reflect on the sacrifices that have been made for our freedom and the protection of our families and consider wearing a poppy.



Donations collected during the Poppy Campaign help provide immediate support to veterans and active service members in need. Legion.ca photo

Intact Insurance donates \$2,500 to TAP

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

There was a cheque presentation last week in Tavistock that will surely make a difference in the lives of those in need in the Hickson, Tavistock and Shakespeare areas.

Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP) and program director Angie Brenner accepted a \$2,500 cheque from Intact Insurance representatives at the Zehr Insurance office in Tavistock.

Brenner says the money couldn't have come at a better time, with kids back at school and with the Christmas season just around the corner.

John Clifford, business development manager for Intact Insurance, said the company continues to support local charities, in this case through their partner, Tavistock's Zehr Insurance Brokers and branch manager Kurtis Waymouth.

The company presented TAP with the same donation last year and hopes to be able to do the same in the future.



Intact Insurance representatives presented a \$2,500 donation to the Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP) last week. Pictured from left are Zehr Insurance Tavistock branch manager Kurtis Waymouth, Intact business development manager John Clifford, TAP program director Angie Brenner and Intact Insurance senior underwriter Chaney Aitcheson. Photo by Gary West

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COMMUNITY —

HPCDSB education director announces retirement next year

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

While it's never easy to say goodbye, Huron Perth Catholic District School Board (HPCDSB) director of education Chris Roehrig feels the time is almost right to put a period at the end of his long career in education.

Roehrig, who has served as director of education at HPCDSB since 2019 and served in the same capacity with the Brant Haldimand Norfolk Catholic District School Board (BHNCDSB) for seven years before that, recently announced his upcoming retirement on Feb. 24, 2025. He will depart the school board as one of the longest-serving directors of education in Ontario.

"I've been told by folks you know when it's time and I think I came across that," Roehrig said. "For our system, we just launched a new strategic plan; I'm feeling the list of things I wanted to knock off when I started is either complete or down to the final stroke. So, it's time. I'm excited about what's next. It's really less about what I'm leaving behind and more about what I want to accomplish next."

"It's been a long career. It's been 30-some-odd years, so I'm ready."

Feb. 24, 2025, is a date of particular importance for Roehrig as it will be 31 years to the day since he was first hired

as a full-time teacher in 1994 at St. David Catholic Secondary School in Waterloo. But his teaching career began six years before that when, as a 19-year-old student at St. Jerome's University (University of Waterloo), he began working as an uncertified supply instructor at Catholic schools in Waterloo Region.

After leaving St. David, Roehrig taught at St. Benedict Catholic Secondary School in Cambridge and Resurrection Catholic Secondary School in Kitchener before serving as vice principal at St. Anne's Catholic Secondary School in Clinton and St. Mary's in Goderich between 2001 and 2008. In 2008, he was appointed superintendent of education at BHNCDSB before being promoted to director four years later.

"Any of our system accomplishments are really a result of the people around me," Roehrig said. "I can't take credit for them alone. The (HPCDSB) system's had several accomplishments in the last five and a half years; among them is our work in student achievement. We've positioned the board into the top-20 per cent in the province in EQAO results and our grad rates are super high, so we're really proud of that."

Though it was an initiative pushed forward by necessity during the COVID-19 pandemic, Roehrig said he's proud of the board's efforts in incorporating information and computer technology into

everyday classroom learning, including the deployment of Chromebook laptops with every student across the board.

"There's ubiquitous access to technology," he said. "COVID, which was another thing altogether, really accelerated and organized (education technology). We had to really bear down on work with our infrastructure and some of the back-end stuff to really make sure the work we did during COVID went as smoothly as possible. I'm quite, quite proud of that."

While Roehrig said he will miss both the people he's worked with and the everyday interactions with the communities he serves that he became accustomed to over the past three decades, he's looking forward to having more time on his hands to read the mountain of books he's been meaning to read over the last number of years, dedicate some time to self-discovery and soul-searching, and decide what's next for him in this new chapter.

"We are grateful for Chris' experience, vision and faithful leadership during his role as our director of education," HPCDSB board of trustees chair Mary Helen Van Loon in a press release. "He has been both guide and anchor through some very difficult, challenging times within the board and the greater community. His passion and dedication to faith formation and excellence in student achievement can only be matched by his love for our



Huron Perth Catholic District School Board director of education Chris Roehrig will retire from his position on Feb. 24, 2025. Contributed photo

Huron-Perth system. It has been a pleasure and an honour to work alongside him."

Though he says the expectations for our school systems and the accountability of those who work within those systems are much higher than they were when he first started teaching, Roehrig believes the HPCDSB is in an excellent position to continue improving its service to students and their families now and in the future.

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COMMUNITY —

New Dundee WI members attend Federated Women's Institutes of Canada 23rd triennial convention in Truro, N.S.

NANCY BIRSS

New Dundee WI

The Federated Women's Institutes of Canada (FWIC) is alive and well and putting forth resolutions to improve health care and justice in Canada.

Over 160 Women's Institute (WI) members from across the country met in Truro, N.S. in mid-September with the aim of "Sailing into the Future with a Recipe for Success" to work towards strengthening our organization and improving issues in health care nationwide. We also elected our new FWIC president, Lynn MacLean from Nova Scotia, and said a huge thank you to past president Margaret Byl from Ontario, who led us through the covid years and managed to very successfully keep us all on track.

Two members of the New Dundee Women's Institute attended the Truro convention, Eleanor Berry and myself. Berry has been to several FWIC conventions over the years, while this was my first FWIC triennial convention. It was wonderful to meet new friends from across Canada and reconnect with friends who attended the International Triennial ACWW



Southern Ontario Support (SOS) members who attended FWIC Convention in Truro, N.S. last month. Contributed photo

(Associated Country Women of the World) Convention last May in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

The FWIC passed several resolutions focusing on streamlining Canada's health-care system and will be submitted to the Government of Canada: that the Government of Canada establish a federal accreditation program which will certify

and make Canadian trained family doctors eligible to work in any province across Canada to practice medicine under one national license to practice.

A second resolution aimed at getting foreign trained doctors, be they Canadians who studied abroad or immigrant trained doctors who have all trained to Canadian standards, to be eligible to practice in Canada under one national license sooner rather than later.

Again, addressing national health care and the lack of family doctors across the country, it was passed that FWIC request that Canada establish a federal accreditation program and Canadian students studying abroad be granted greater access to residency training programs in Canada to encourage them to return to Canada to practice medicine.

Sexual assault of women especially was another topic of discussion and resolution. The British Columbia WI women put forward resolutions which were passed and

focused on provincial standardized training of forensic nurses across Canada, create a national forensic nursing bursary and federal funding to support forensic nurses so that more can be trained and more quickly available for sexual assault victims after assault has taken place. Also passed was a resolution to initiate a women's advocacy and awareness campaign to increase the knowledge of this public-health crisis across Canada.

One last successful resolution aimed at federal correctional institutions replacing needle exchange with safe injection sites.

I am so very proud to be part of this WI organization (with the motto "WI Cares") in addressing these very difficult issues Canada wide.

FWIC is a member society (as are all provincial WIs) of the international organization Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) comprising over 9 million members around the world from over 80 countries. Member women's groups may be Women's Institutes or women's advocacy or agricultural societies in different countries.

As president of Southern Ontario Support (SOS) and coordinator to ACWW, our local SOS society aims to also spread the word and assist with women's advocacy around the world by virtue of our number of members (thus increasing worldwide women's representation with ACWW's consultative status at the UN), and we are also fundraising to support this worldwide advocacy and projects of sustainable development for women. Proceeds of our sales of handmade soap and roasted hazelnuts will go directly to ACWW.

Please reach out if you are interested in any level of WI/SOS/ACWW for more information and to support our cause. All are welcome.



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COMMUNITY —

SWPH accepting Nurse-Family Partnership referrals to support first-time parents

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) is launching a new, free program this fall. It aims to support those experiencing financial or social hardships who are preparing to become first-time parents.

The Nurse-Family Partnership will pair clients with a public-health nurse until their child reaches two years of age. The service aims to promote healthy practices during pregnancy, develop safe and nurturing parenting skills, provide guidance on accessing community resources and teach essential life skills such as budgeting and stress management.

“Our goal is to empower young parents by providing them with the knowledge and resources they need to give their child a healthy start in life,” said SWPH public-health nurse Kayla Rooke.

To be eligible, individuals must be 24 years or younger, pregnant with their first child, 28 weeks pregnant or less,

experiencing social or financial hardship and residing in Oxford County, Elgin County or the City of St. Thomas.

“It is completely cost-free. If someone was eligible and enrolled in the program, they would be connected with a public-health nurse who would provide in-home visits. With that, we can meet the family where they are at,” explained Rooke.

“It is unique because we can eliminate those transportation barriers.”

The initiative supplies soon-to-be and new parents with health-teaching information and it adheres to a clinical model which guides its implementation.

“There are core competencies, however, we are able to take that program content and customize it to meet each client’s needs. Every family is going to have unique needs or different areas where they are looking for support. We really want to follow the client’s heart’s desire. They are the experts of their own lives,” said Rooke.

She explained the new program, while

different from the Healthy Babies Healthy Children program, does work hand in hand with it.

“The scope (of that program) is wider in terms of who is eligible to enroll. Parents can sign up even if they have multiple children. Healthy Babies Healthy Children is for prenatal care during the post-partum period and during early childhood development.”

Rooke explained the program has three main goals – improving pregnancy outcomes, enhancing child health and development and supporting parental life core skills.

“The nurse is going to work closely with the clients to identify personal as well as parenting goals and by the end, they can move forward independently. We aren’t necessarily providing financial support directly, however we are able to connect them with different resources in the community that may be able to support them with that.”

Other goals include having new parents

engage in healthy practices during pregnancy, learn how to build a strong network of support, gain access to other community resources that support the parent and baby and build life skills such as budgeting and managing parenting-related stress.

The Nurse-Family Partnership is an evidence-based home-visiting program designed to enhance the health, wellbeing, and self-sufficiency of first-time parents and their babies. Originating in the United States over 40 years ago, it has expanded globally and is currently implemented in eight countries, including Canada, where it operates in Ontario, Nova Scotia and British Columbia.

The program is funded jointly by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and local municipalities. It will continue as long as the funding partners are on board.

For more information or to begin enrolling, visit www.swpublichealth.ca/en/my-health/nurse-family-partnership.aspx or call 1-800-922-0096.



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STRATFORD NISSAN



COMMUNITY —

Wilmot Family Resource Centre hosts 30th annual Poor Boys Luncheon fundraiser

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In a tradition that goes back three decades, the Wilmot Family Resource Centre hosted its annual Poor Boys Luncheon to raise money for its programs and services.

Held this year at the New Hamburg Community Centre on Sept. 26, the luncheon is the family resource centre's largest fundraiser of the year and features a meal of wieners and beans and hotdogs over both a lunch and dinner seating.

"We were thrilled to see our community share a meal together and we are pleased to see that our event has become part of a tradition for so many people," said Wilmot Family Resource Centre communications and events lead Amanda Humphreys.

"This is our largest fundraiser each year," said centre executive director Trisha Robinson in a press release preceding the event. "We rely on corporate sponsorships, volunteers and attendees to help us raise as much as we can to support the work we do in the community."

While the total raised was not available as of press time, Humphreys told the Gazette this year's event was supported by 65 local businesses, individuals or families



Attendees at the Wilmot Family Resource Centre's 30th annual Poor Boys Luncheon are served up a meal of wieners and beans and/or hotdogs. Photo by Sharon Leis

who either donated money as a sponsor or donated goods and services to help make the event possible.

She said more than 300 people attended the Poor Boys Luncheon across both seatings and nearly 80 volunteers stepped up to make it possible, doing everything from

serving wieners and beans, hotdogs and drinks, bussing tables, setup and teardown, decorating and helping in the kitchen.

"The money raised supports the programming and services offered by the Wilmot Family Resource Centre year-round, including Early Years programming,

seniors' programming and services such as our food bank, free clothing cupboard, Indigenous supports and family violence prevention," Humphreys said.

"The Wilmot Family Resource Centre is proud to provide wrap-around services for individuals and families in the rural communities of Wilmot and Wellesley townships."

For more than four decades, the Wilmot Family Resource Centre has been a leading provider of social services to families and individuals in Wilmot and Wellesley townships. The resource centre is a multi-service agency offering a wide variety of programming and supports to individuals and families in Wilmot and Wellesley townships including Early Years programs, parenting and family support, food assistance, employment counselling and family violence prevention services.

"As demand for our services continues to grow each year and housing becomes less affordable and food becomes more expensive, we see more and more people who are really struggling," Robinson said in the press release. "We are so grateful for the businesses and individuals that donate and support the work that we do to help people survive and belong."

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COMMUNITY —

Francis Furniture closing after nearly 90 years of service

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Sept. 12 marked 88 years in business for a furniture staple in the heart of Tavistock.

Francis Furniture was started by Peter Francis's father, James H. Francis, back in 1936. Not only have I been a long-time customer of the store, but I also worked for Peter Francis in the late '90s.

As for how he was able to be successful for so many years, he explained it was a commonsense recipe.

"We wanted to always treat everyone fairly in life. Our principles were customer satisfaction, keeping our markups low, no misleading advertising and we treated all customers alike. We appreciate the support we have received over the years locally and throughout Ontario," said Peter Francis.

The original store, opened in 1936, housed both a furniture and a funeral business, however the funeral home was moved across the street when a home was purchased in 1945. The first addition to the furniture building was completed in 1972 and it grew larger again in 1974.

"Those were good retail years and the business expanded very quickly. We were delivering furniture throughout Ontario as far as Cornwall and Windsor, up to Sudbury. We had three trucks on the road in the heydays before the days of the big box stores."

Peter Francis added even with the larger stores being very present in today's economy, he's proud Francis has been able to stay in business for so long.

"If I had not suffered a stroke and aging health, we would be carrying on. I don't have any family members interested in taking on the store so we had to make the decision to close. When we had local people wanting to buy the building, it was time to act."

Peter Francis, closing in on 83 years of age in November, was at work every day since joining the business in 1962, including the evening before he had surgery on Feb. 8. He suffered a stroke during the operation, something tough to deal with when he worked seven days a week for so many years.

"I never felt like I went to work a day in my life. Looking after people, both in the funeral home and the furniture store, was my dedication to life and being able to support the community in any way we could."

One part of the business that remains unique to this day is Peter Francis, since day one, has always offered exclusively, in-house financing. He said it was just the right way to do business.

"It was a service to the public to make it easier for them. Sometimes people just needed that extra hand instead of going to banks to borrow. It made it easier for customers

to build up furniture in their homes. In the years we expanded, some of my suppliers gave me a break too and that's why we always gave our customers a break."

He added no business can be successful without good people working behind the scenes. The lack of staff turnover at Francis is a testament to positive working conditions.

There were a few other aspects of the business that aren't seen today, including no-charge delivery and setup.

"We hope people remember us as a company that was fair to deal with and gave good customer service. We always had free delivery and we did not like add-ons. What our customers saw as the price on the furniture is the price they paid. Service and fairness were always front and centre."

Another anomaly about Francis Furniture is the bookkeeping was, and still is to this day, done by hand on ledgers and the store has never accepted credit cards. Peter Francis said he was just too busy to make a change to the world of computers, something he received accolades for from his accounting firm.

The company slogan seen on the side of every Francis truck, is "The Business Built with Satisfied Customers." Peter Francis explained sometimes bowing down to the consumer was just a part of doing business.

"Even right up to the end, we realize some customers can be unreasonable. I always had it that even if we did things that normally a store wouldn't do, we did it. We took our losses at times and satisfied clientele may not tell all their friends, but dissatisfied customers will tell all their friends."

Peter Francis explained he always did his best to keep a positive attitude over the years, something that served him well.

"I always found if there was a situation doing business that annoyed me, I always put my right foot forward and said what can I do to solve this. Sometimes you can solve a problem just by helping somebody. If you don't have anger, you don't have near the stress. It takes a lot of energy to be angry, yet it doesn't take much to show your appreciation to someone."

Peter Francis also wanted to thank his family for their many years of support.

"My wife, Avis, was a very integral part of the operation working in the office, being a buyer and a super salesperson. My son, Scott, has also been a tremendous help over the years. I wanted to thank them both."

There is still some inventory available for purchase in the store at up to 40 per-cent off before the doors close for good. While Francis Furniture may be closing, the memory of quality and service will carry on for many years.

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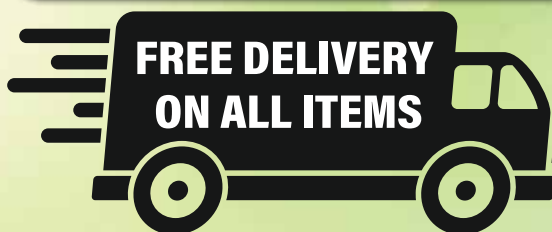
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COMMUNITY —

OBITUARY

DUNN: Robert Jason "Rob"



It is with great sadness, we announce the passing of beloved husband, father and grampa, Robert Jason Dunn, suddenly on Wednesday, Sept 18th, 2024, at the age of 59 years.

Dearly loved husband of 36 years to Kim Dunn (Ruby), father of Brad Dunn (Katie), Mitch Dunn (Tori), Amber Kollman (Matt). Proud grandfather to Myles, Natalie, Bennett, Finnley and Ruby. Survived by his mother-in-law Patricia Ruby (Robinson), brothers Leslie Dunn and Martin Van de Byl, and sisters Tammy Dunn and Melissa Everleigh (Chris). Also survived by sister-in-law Crystal Ruby and brother-in-law Mark Ruby (Jaana) along with many nieces and nephews.

Predeceased by his parents, Lorne Dunn and Marilyn Neff and father-in-law Fred Ruby.

Rob was born in Sault Ste Marie October 19, 1964, before moving to Stratford as a child. He met the love of his life Kim in 1984, and they wed in 1988 before welcoming their three children. He enjoyed watching his sons and now his grandson play hockey. He was never one to turn down a friend needing a hand or listening ear. He was a hardworking, dedicated husband, father and friend.

Rob entered the construction industry in his teens working with Roth Drainage, Ken Krantz, and Paul Ramseyer to name a few before starting Dunn Excavating in 1991. Rob was very passionate and dedicated to his craft and will be greatly missed by so many.

A small family service will be held to honour his life. A celebration of Rob's life will take place at the Royal Canadian Legion, Tavistock on Saturday, October 19, 2024 from 2-5pm.

The family would appreciate if you could share your memories of Rob on the Memory Wall of the website.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) and Stratford Perth Humane Society would be appreciated by the family. Personal condolences can be posted at www.francisfh.ca

IN MEMORIAM



In fond memory of a dear husband, father, Poppa, and great Poppa

DOUG BOWLBY

who died
October 6, 2016.

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always remembered.*

OBITUARY

KALBFLEISCH: Barry John "Bib"



Passed away peacefully at Freeport Hospital on September 27 at the age of 57.

Beloved husband of Julie (nee Stere) for 27 years. Loving and devoted father to Cameron and Emily. Beloved son of Lois Kalbfleisch and predeceased by his father Gary Kalbfleisch. Dear brother of Krista Faddies (Edward) and Bryan Kalbfleisch (Polly). Remembered by his aunts and uncles Gloria Klein, Ina and Edward Davy, Larry Freil. Cherished brother-in-law to Shelley Schenk and Kim Bell (David). He'll be sadly missed by his nieces, nephews, cousins and godson Dennis Bell.

Predeceased by his mother and father-in-law Rose and Claire Stere, his grandparents Edna and Alfred Ledger, Irene and John Kalbfleisch, his aunt Merle Freil and uncle Gilbert Klein.

Barry loved his family more than anything else. He was proud of Cameron and Emily and the people they've become. He taught his children many skills with patience and kindness, he supported them in their sports and interests. We enjoyed many years of camping and campfires with family and friends. Many cherished family memories were made at Pike Lake and on the shores of Lake Huron. Barry was a devoted Boston Bruins and Seattle Seahawks fan. He loved listening to many genres of music and attending live music events.

Barry loved his friends and was always up for a good time. Everyone will miss his smile, his zest for fun and adventure. Barry was a devoted employee of 25 years at Formatop Manufacturing Company. He was a member of Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, New Hamburg.

Further to Barry's wishes, cremation has taken place. Family and friends were received in the Francis Funeral Home, 77 Woodstock St. N., Tavistock for a memorial visitation on Wednesday, October 2, 2024 from 2-4 and 6-8 pm. A memorial service will take place at the funeral home, on Thursday, October 3, 2024 at 11 am. A private inurnment will take place at Riverside Cemetery, New Hamburg.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Grand River Hospital Foundation or Trinity Lutheran Church, New Hamburg would be appreciated. Personal condolences can be posted at www.francisfh.ca

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.



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COMMUNITY —

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

1. What is the birthstone for October?
2. What famous TV show premiered Oct. 11, 1975?
3. Name one of the two companies which offer boat tours at Niagara Falls
4. What popular soft drink was originally known as "Brad's Drink"?
5. The science of apple growing is called what?
6. What was Johnny Appleseed's real name?
7. Is pumpkin a fruit or vegetable?
8. What is the capital of Israel?
9. What is the newest NHL franchise?
10. What do you call a female fox?

Answers found on page 30

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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.

October 1-8, 2014, Edition (10 years ago)

The sixth annual Oxford cross-country Milk Run was held once again at the farm of Larry and Julie Schwartzentruber just west of Hickson on Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2014. About 850 students from 14 Oxford County public schools across the Thames Valley District School Board participated in six age categories for both boys and girls.

"In 1980, Terry Fox ran for me. Today I am running for (____)." That was the message on stickers each child wore participating in the Terry Fox Run at Tavistock Public School on Thursday afternoon, Sept. 25, 2014. Together they raised \$2,325 and counting. The entire student population of 292 students plus about 25 staff and 20 parents participated.

International students visiting Tavistock and attending Northwestern Secondary School in Stratford are Roberto Aldea Cebello, with Rich and Shelley Schoonderwoerd; Lucia Muñoz Benard with Cindy Mogk; Marina Bagano, with Amy Bender; Victor Gonzalez and Joarcky Lopes with Mike and Jess Harvey; and Iago Souza with Mandy and Chris Shewchuk. Their exchange program runs from Sept. 11 to Oct. 14.

September 29 - October 6, 2004, Edition (20 years ago)

They call themselves the "Resilient Ritsmas." That's the team name for the eight surviving children and 28 grandchildren of Abel and the late Tina Ritsma of Stratford, who have raised over \$20,000 in the past three years in the Walk to d'feet ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis). Of 11 children, three have died of the rapidly progressive fatal neuromuscular disease in the last 20 years. The family has made it their commitment to raise awareness and funds for ALS research.

Another milestone has been reached. The Tavistock and District Historical Society is now officially incorporated under the umbrella of the Ontario Historical Society. The society's application for affiliation was approved by the Ontario Historical Association's board of directors at the September meeting.

Students of Tavistock Public School participated in several Terry Fox challenges last week in conjunction with the Terry Fox Run held Friday morning. In a pizza challenge, the class that raised the most money during the week of Sept. 20-24 won a pizza party. Mrs. Sheldon's Grade 3/4 class was the winner as students brought toonies, loonies, quarters, dimes and nickels. The entire school managed to raise \$1,536.80 for the Terry Fox Foundation.

September 26 - October 3, 1984, Edition (40 years ago)

Members of the East Zorra Junior Farmers met at the Tavistock Arena on Saturday afternoon to carry out a project begun a short time ago. They had sent flyers to farm residents offering to paint the mailbox free of charge. There was even a choice of colours. About 30 responded and the group went about their task with lots of vim and vigor. The committee in charge of the project was made up of Kathy, Mark and Judy Reibling.

The Optimist Club of Shakespeare announced the winners of their dream home contest on Saturday night with two Stratford couples jointly holding the winning ticket. Ervin and Frances Heimpel as well as Bob and Cheryl Chesla accepted the keys to the \$80,000 home on Sunday. Club president Don Weitzel made the presentation along with Ken Lowe, chairman of the house committee.

The Hickson Peewee Softball team completed their 1983-1984 season last Monday evening by winning the Ontario Rural Softball Association (ORSA) championship losing only one game in five rounds of playoffs. The Hickson boys played 57 games throughout the season, including tournaments, for a 51-6-0 win-loss record. Coached by Tom Murray and John Todd, the team includes: Terry Eaton, Brad Stock, John Velda, Garth Winterton, Jason Murray, Julian op de Weegh, Jim Zinn, Mark Wilhelm, Andy op de Weegh, Bill Killing, Pat Ward, Sid Langille, Steve Zilke, Roger Wright, Brian Blum, Allen Delow and Vince Oldford.

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SPORTS —

Braves look to get healthy and reduce penalties

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

Tavistock has played five games of the 2024-2025 Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) season and the team's general manager has taken away some good and some bad.

Brent Lange said, overall, the Braves are in a good spot but is concerned about injuries and taking penalties at key times in games.

"Not to make excuses, but the two games we lost we had a short bench with some key guys out due to injury after the Wellesley game. At Saturday's loss to New Hamburg, we were missing a couple of key players as well and got into some penalty trouble late in the game that cost us."

Lange explained the team is getting into penalty trouble at the late stages of some games when they should be trying to tie the game up or get an extra goal to cushion a win.

"With the unnecessary penalties in the games or late stages of the games, once we have our full team back, there could be a couple of players in the stands the next game if they want to keep taking unnecessary penalties that cost our team a chance win."

He added he has been pleased with the way the players have been competing through the tougher games and how they battled until the end.

"For the most part, I am happy with the way the players are adapting to the new coaches and our team is coming together very nicely. We just need to get over the injury bug here and once we can ice our full team, it should be a very hardworking, competitive, gritty team that can score as well and won't get pushed around."



New Hamburg's Antonio Pasqualino broke the 100-point plateau over the weekend with a three-point performance against Tavistock. Photo by Censational Photography

Lange added he's also excited about some new additions to the roster.

"We have recently added a couple players from Junior B in Tanner Hunt from the St. Catherines Falcons (who is going to school in Waterloo) and Jaden Shiell from the St. Marys Lincolns. They will fit in very well and bring some good size and grit to our team. And as of Saturday, we're fortunate to have Nicholas Hambly returned to us from Stratford Warriors."

Tavistock started the weekend with a 4-2 win in Woodstock on Friday. The Braves went three for six on the powerplay and were led by Carson Bernhardt's three points. Ethan Sharpe added two assists while Marc Dionne and Jack Hodge added single markers. Kaden Lange stopped 29 of the 31 shots he faced to earn the win in net.

It was a different story at home Saturday as New Hamburg rode a four-goal second period to a 7-4 win. Stephen Peppas did

score three times for the Braves in a losing effort.

Lange added he is pleased with the team scoring 25 goals in five games, but the 24 against is worrisome.

"Our defence is coming together as we currently have eight blueliners but only seven are healthy right now. Our goaltending is a bit of a question mark right now as we have a younger goalie tandem and both are battling in there. We do need to improve on our goals against in big games or any game in general. Giving up five, six or seven goals a game is not going to be good come playoff time."

Pasqualino hits milestone with Firebirds

Not only did New Hamburg down Tavistock on the weekend, but a longtime veteran passed the 100-point mark with the team. Antonio Pasqualino picked up a goal and two assists and now has 102 career points in 143 games.

On Friday, the Firebirds hosted Paris and earned a 6-2 win. Jake Thompson picked up the hat trick to lead the attack.

Notes

- Muskoka has fired its head coach after just six games. "Effective immediately, Jason Dawe has been relieved of his head-coaching position with the Muskoka Bears Junior C Hockey Club. We thank him for his contribution to the team and wish him all the best in the future," said a statement on the team's Facebook page. The team, in its first PJHL season, has lost all six games but is among the league leaders in attendance.
- New Hamburg's Jake Thompson leads the Doherty division scoring race with 11 points in six games.

Stonecroft Charity Golf Tournament raises \$7,000 for Community Care Concepts

JOHN ROSS

Stonecroft Community resident

In an impressive display of community spirit and generosity, the Stonecroft Charity Golf Tournament, which took place Aug. 19 at Rebel Creek, successfully raised \$7,000 for Community Care Concepts, bolstering the vital services they provide in New Hamburg.

This significant contribution underscores the commitment of both participants and organizers to support local initiatives that make a tangible difference in the lives of residents. Community Care Concepts, a non-profit, volunteer-based organization, is known for its dedication to enhancing the quality of life for seniors and special-needs adults.

They will undoubtedly put these funds to excellent use, ensuring that their programs continue to thrive and expand.

The tournament also presented a gift



Pictured at the Community Care Concepts (CCC) cheque presentation are, from left to right, Jane Neath, CCC community programs manager Karla Rabidoux, Stonecroft Charity Golf Tournament chair Marjan Billing and David Connolly. Contributed photo

of 132 pounds of food and \$630 to the Wilmot Family Resource Centre.

The success of the tournament is a testament to the power of collective effort and the shared vision of a community united in its pursuit of the common good.

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SPORTS —

New Applejacks head coach preaches defence first

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

Derek Lebold was a heck of a hockey player but when you look at his statistics over his three years in Wellesley with the Applejacks and six years with Milverton in senior hockey, he didn't score more than two goals in any season.

Lebold, who spent the past two seasons as an assistant under Ryan Gerber, said his coaching philosophy is to take care of his team's end first, something he learned as a player.

"We preach a lot about our standard of play away from the puck and how we play the game so we can get it back on our sticks quickly. That's always been how I was taught. I was lucky enough to play for some really good coaches at Junior A and B camps way back in the day," he said.

He added those coaches instructed him to play the game the way it should be played, which is something he's brought into his style behind the bench.

"I think any good team is going to structure itself out from the defensive side of

the puck and what is done by players away from the puck. If you can get those standards in place with a team early on, you can let the creativity shine with the skilled guys who have the ability to make plays."

He explained there are a few non-negotiables players need to follow. So far, they have been followed, which has led to a record of three wins and two losses through the Applejacks' first five games with just 11 goals against.

"If those can be met, and we have seen it this year in the games we have won, we have success and we are going to carry that over," Lebold said.

While Wellesley's defensive philosophy has led to a good start to the season, Lebold is also giving credit to the rookie goaltending tandem of Brandon Abbot and Xavier Bussiere.

"Abbot, who we brought in from the St. Marys Lincolns, and Bussiere from the Cambridge AAA program are two outstanding kids and phenomenal goaltenders. There have been times we have started chasing the game a bit and you

need goalies in this league to sometimes keep you in games. Both of them do that in spades for us."

He added the team's goal is to have the lowest goals-against average in the league.

Anyone involved in junior hockey in Wellesley knows how important the Gerber family has been over the years, a family commitment that resulted in a Schmaltz Cup title two seasons ago.

"The whole Gerber family set a precedent over the last seven or eight years. Players want to play here because of the work they have done to build up the organization. Ryan (Gerber) taught me a lot about being consistent every time I come to the rink."

Lebold said that includes a consistent message, making sure players have a clear understanding of what his expectations as a coach are and staying true to his word.

"He was always honest with the players in meetings. I was a player once too, as was he, and you appreciate that as an athlete. His honesty and his consistency every day were something I leaned on,



Derek Lebold is in his first season as head coach with the Wellesley Applejacks of the Provincial Junior Hockey League. Contributed photo

especially during the Schmaltz Cup run. I give the family so much credit for the work they have done."

Other members of the Gerber family involved in the team over the years include Brock, Brad and Ryan's wife, Nicole.

Seniors' baseball is alive and well in Shakespeare

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

There were four full teams of senior ball players, both men and ladies, in Shakespeare last week as "participation" was in full view on the ball diamond at the Shakespeare Ball Park.

Players from as young as 50 to over 80 years of age were

having the time of their lives enjoying the great weather and each other's company, and loving the good food served up by wives of some of the Shakespeare Swans team.

In the end, the Kitchener Cougars beat out their city rivals, the Kitchener Bat Attitudes, 12-0.

In the runner-up game, the Shakespeare Swans outscored

the Cambridge Legends 23-2.

The teams play Tuesdays and Thursdays in the summer, and most players will say no matter the score, their age or gender, they are just glad to be still having fun and getting exercise and fresh air in the great outdoors.

The teams were generous enough to make an \$850 donation to the Shakespeare Community Athletic Association for use of the park facilities for their games.



The Shakespeare Community Athletic Association Ball Park is enjoyed by senior ball players playing the game they love in the championship last Thursday under sunny, warm conditions. Contributed photos



The cooks in the Shakespeare park's kitchen were kept busy feeding the senior ball players, including their husbands. Pictured from left are Angela Meconi, Ellen Fuhr and Sharon Loutit.



Players from the Shakespeare Stingers waiting for their chance at bat.



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SPORTS —

Jr. NBA program returning for 2024-2025 season

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Sports Director

For the past two seasons, the Jr. NBA National Development Program has run a Stratford-Tavistock division and, starting this October, the program will return for its third year.

Canada Basketball invited the Huron-Perth branch of the program to renew its application for the 2024-2025 season and will expand its age eligibility this year. Boys in grades five to eight are eligible to register for the program, up from last year, when it was only open to students in grades six to eight.

This year's program will run a weekly non-competitive, instruction-based session at the Tavistock Public School. The

program is still working to determine which day of the week works best for its participants and their parents. The cost will be approximately \$75 which, in addition to a spot in the program, also covers insurance, a reversible jersey and a basketball for each participant.

Danny Millar, a coach certified by the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP), and Brendan Leis returns to oversee the program this year. Leis is a community coach with several years of experience in multiple sports. Millar said the program is "blessed" to have Leis as a coach and also noted that he is excited to bring the junior NBA program back to Huron-Perth.

"The Jr. NBA is comparable to hockey's Timbits program, except that the Jr. NBA



is open to older ages," said Millar. "The athlete can be exposed to a fast-paced introduction to the sport of basketball. It is developmental, meaning we place an emphasis on the fundamentals of the game."

Millar also explained his view on the program's value to young basketball players.

"It is a worthwhile experience because the kids are engaging with friends in a healthy, physical venture. For those who play other sports, it builds their skillset in terms of physical conditioning, aerobic capacity and the ability to work as part of team."

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Working smoke alarms focus of Fire Prevention Week

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

The Wilmot Township Fire Department has issued an urgent call to action – ensure every home has working smoke alarms.

With fire-related fatalities remaining at a high level since 2020, this year's theme, "Smoke Alarms: Make Them Work for You," is a critical reminder that lives depend on it.

Following the success of last month's "Test Your Smoke Alarm Day," the Wilmot Township Fire Department encourages residents to make fire safety a year-round habit. The reality is that most deadly fires happen in homes without working smoke alarms. It's the law in Ontario to have a working smoke alarm on every floor and

outside all sleeping areas – don't wait until it's too late.

"Working smoke alarms provide the early warning needed to escape a fire safely," said Wilmot Fire Chief Rod Leeson. "Ensuring they are working can prevent tragedies and save lives."

Most deadly fires happen at night when families are asleep. In many cases, victims never wake up. A working smoke alarm may be the only thing between you and tragedy.

Residents should take the following actions to ensure their family's safety:

- Install smoke alarms outside each sleeping area and on every storey of the home, including the basement.
- Test smoke alarms monthly by pressing the test button.

- Replace smoke alarm batteries at least once a year.
- Replace any alarm that is over 10 years old or does not respond during testing.
- Practice a home fire-escape plan regularly to ensure everyone knows how to evacuate safely in an emergency.

"In too many cases, we've seen lives lost that could have been saved by something as simple as a working smoke alarm. It's a small device with the power to prevent unimaginable loss," said Leeson.

He also reminds residents that, in addition to working smoke alarms on every floor of the home, a well-practiced home fire-escape plan is the best way to ensure their entire household is prepared to

escape a fire in their home safely.

"Every working smoke alarm is a potential lifesaver. In a fire, seconds matter and the early warning provided by these devices can be the difference between life and death," added Ontario Fire Marshal Jon Pegg.

The Wilmot Fire Department is organizing a Fire Prevention Week event. Community Safety Day will be held on Saturday, Oct. 5 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the New Hamburg Community Centre. Meet local firefighters, enjoy free treats, live demonstrations and family friendly activities like the fun-house obstacle course and fire fit challenge. There is no charge for attending.

Farmers urged to focus on fire prevention as part of winter prep

BRIAN CREWS

Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Every year, farm fires result in tens of millions of dollars in losses to buildings, businesses and farm animals, and the financial losses don't consider the toll on farm families.

Fire is always a threat to Ontario farms, but the good news is there are ways to reduce the risk they pose. Barn fires in particular are a serious concern, especially during colder winter temperatures, because cold weather increases condensation on cold surfaces and the corrosive mixture of barn gasses and moisture invades the electrical system. The increased use of heating equipment also poses risks of ignition with gas heaters, for example.

Regardless of the time of year, some of the biggest fire risks in farm buildings come from dust and cobwebs, extension cords and heaters, and electrical plugs, receptacles and panels.

The increasing size and high-tech nature

of modern farm facilities, including live-stock barns, also mean losses are higher when disaster strikes. Ontario Fire Marshal statistics show those range between \$20 and \$30 million annually.

That's why earlier this year, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture began partnering with

the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs to share resources and promote fire safety and prevention on Ontario farms.

I'm a dairy farmer just north of Trenton, and I also represent farmers in Hastings, Lennox and Addington, Northumberland and Prince Edward counties as a director on the board of the OFA.

Fire prevention is a 365-day-a-year job, but as we are working to get our farms ready for

winter, it's a great time to put a little extra effort into protecting our businesses. It can be hard to know where to start, so a fire-prevention inspection by a professional from the local fire department or your insurance provider can be a great help.

Nobody likes the idea of an inspection per se, but these individuals can offer a wealth of

pointers and ideas about little things that can make a big difference in fire prevention – and they are just as interested as you are in keeping your farm buildings, live-stock and crops safe. Easy steps farmers can take to reduce the threat of fire include hardwiring or using waterproof plugs or outlets, keeping buildings clean of dust and cobwebs, replacing extension cords and identifying potential hotspots with a thermal imaging camera.

A few dollars spent on electrical upgrades can make a big difference. For example, installing an arc fault breaker can prevent a heat-causing fault that could easily cause a fire. And general tidiness to keep on top of dust and cobwebs is always a good idea.

Despite our best efforts, fires do happen. This means it's a good idea to be prepared. Have a few big fire extinguishers handy in the barn or workshop and know how to use



A fire truck drives beside a farm field. Photo courtesy of Ontario Federation of Agriculture

them. As well, ensure that you, your family and your employees know where those extinguishers are and what your emergency response plan is.

If you're interested in learning more, join OFA on Oct. 9 when we are partnering with the Ontario Association of Fire Chiefs to host a webinar focused on fire prevention and insurance on the farm. Registration is available at ofa.on.ca.

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- Make a home fire escape plan and practice it at least two times a year. This way everyone knows what to do when the smoke alarm sounds and can get outside and stay outside.

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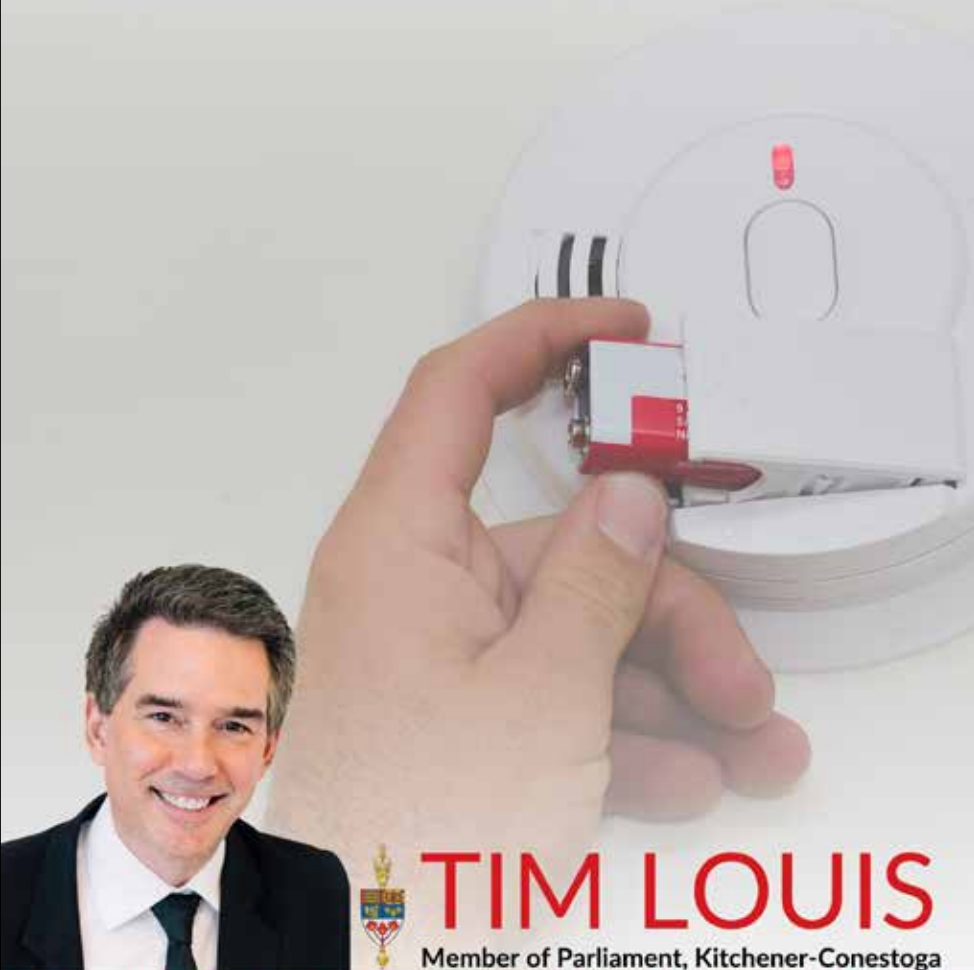
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COMMUNITY —

New Hamburg Legion once again calling on families to come forward with information on local veterans

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

As he awaits the arrival of the freshly published 11th edition of the Royal Canadian Legion's Military Service Recognition Book (MSRB), New Hamburg Legion Branch 532 MSRB coordinator Bob Berg is already hard at work in search of information on local veterans for the book's 12th edition.

With past copies of the books available for the public to read at both the New Hamburg Legion and the New Hamburg branch of the Region of Waterloo Library, the MSRB project sees coordinators from Legions across the province collect information on veterans lives and their military service beyond what may or may not be available through public military service records. To do that, Berg and his counterparts throughout Ontario must reach out to surviving family members – a task that becomes more difficult as time goes on and family members either move, get married or pass away.

For the next edition of the book,

Berg is collecting the names of residents who served from Blandford-Blenheim Township, East Zorra-Tavistock Township, Wellesley Township and Wilmot Township. While some were born in those townships and others moved there later in life, Berg said they must have lived there at one time or another.

"It really bothers me because some of the (veterans we don't have any information on) are New Hamburg Legion charter members," Berg said, reading through the list of veterans he is seeking more information on. "... It's a funny thing. (The late) Ernie Ritz had his list of charter members, and then it boils down to in the newspaper in 1967, 15 years after this legion started, they awarded the first life membership and in that story, it says ... the legion had 21 charter members. All the other paperwork shows 30-something."

While Berg is seeking more than just New Hamburg Legion charter members for next October's MSRB – mostly local Second World War veterans – he hopes his efforts over the next six months or so will also help uncover a little more about the

New Hamburg Legion's history.

To help Berg in his mission to honour those military veterans whose stories have nearly been lost to time, this newspaper will regularly publish a list of local veterans' names in the hopes their family members or those who know their family will get in touch with Berg by emailing rwberg@gmail.com so they can help him craft a military biography, share heartwarming stories and add a personal touch with photos of their veteran family members for publication. Berg also requires the family's permission to publish a veteran's photo and biography in the MSRB.

"I believe this is a great project to recognize their service; not just their service but I like to have a little bit of personal details in there, too," Berg said. "... I do every story the same and now everybody's doing it, actually. They didn't before."

Berg is seeking family members of the following local veterans:

- Jim Barber
- Claude Bowman
- Ross Bowman
- John Bricker

- Stanley Carroll
- Arthur Chappell
- Sydney A. Cheeseman
- Stanley G. Clark
- William Jack Clark
- John W. Clifford
- James Cornish
- Leo Deguire
- Orville Delong
- Harry P. Dick
- David Evans
- Frederick W. Fox
- Norman W. Gardner
- Walter V. Gardner
- G. Geiger
- Bruce Grayham
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- Stanley B. Grey
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- Robert Haire
- Lloyd R. Hamilton
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- Lorne W. Head
- Claude Herteis
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- Douglas McLennan
- Ross Merner
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- Duncan Torrie
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- William Whaling
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- Stanford C. Wright
- Donald Holman
- Dorothy B. Holst
- Walter Holst
- Brook H. Hostetter
- Harry Katzenmeier
- Rev. Norm A. Keffer
- Lloyd Kilgour
- Dave Klassen
- Alfred Knarr
- Father Louis H. Batte
- Fred Lackey
- Frederick H. Wigle
- William M. Weichel
- Kenneth S. Wescott
- James A. Van Trigt
- Eugene Vargo
- Stanley Tribe



New Hamburg Legion Military Service Veteran Book (MSRB) project coordinator Bob Berg looks through photos of local Legion charter members, some of whom he is hoping to get more information about for the 12th edition of the Royal Canadian Legion's MSRB to be published next October. Photo by Galen Simmons

COMMUNITY —

Our Town takes the stage in our town

MERCEDES KAY GOLD

Gazette Correspondent

The Community Players (TCP) is celebrating 40 years of local theatre love. Anne of Green Gables kicked off the 2024 season and the carefully selected three-act play written by American playwright Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*, will close out the season.

Edward Albee described *Our Town* as “the greatest American play ever written.” The play is a true theatre masterpiece set in the fictional town of Grover’s Corners focused on the everyday lives of its residents. The primary character is the stage manager, acting as a narrator, who guides us through the intricacies of Grover’s Corners and even appears as several secondary characters throughout the play. This all-important commentator is played by Anna Maste for the TCP production.

Our Town may have been written in 1938, but the three acts flow through topics rele-

vant to today. From struggling to addiction to deciding between college or working in the family business to death.

The audience follows Emily Webb, played by Jill Prince, from navigating single to married life. In true storybook style, Emily falls in love with the boy next door, George Gibbs, played by Ryan Dunham. We meet Frank and Julia Gibbs, the town doctor, his wife and George’s parents as well as Charles and Myrtle Webb, Emily’s parents.

The timeless glimpse into American life is set between 1901 and 1913. However, The Community Players’ production will be uniquely set in the 1950s, a period TCP found resonates deeply with the themes of the play. The team felt strongly about the era’s evolving social dynamics and the focus on family and community align perfectly with the timeless messages of the play.

Artistic director Brooke Gamble shared an exciting piece of theatre news. *Our Town* will be staged in a thrust configura-



The poster for The Community Players’ production of *Our Town*. Contributed image

tion, meaning the audience will be sitting on three sides of the stage. It will be neat to see if the thrust stage is square, semi-circular or half a polygon. The audience will be closer to the world of Grover’s Corners and have a better seat for a bird’s eye view, creating a more intimate experience.

Over the years, the company has strived to choose productions focused on community and tradition. This season is no different. *Our Town* captures the essence of our town through

shared experiences, connections and community. As a special tribute, the set features hidden Easter eggs highlighting notable monuments in New Hamburg. Gamble is delighted for the audience to spot familiar landmarks, connecting everyone to the story The Community Players is telling.

Our Town is more than a look into the tiny town in New Hampshire or the impact of death on the ones left to go on, but rather sharing the notion of discovering joy in small moments and

never taking life for granted.

There’s a reason Broadway has a new revival of *Our Town* set to hit the stage in the fall of 2024. Lucky for us, this local production of *Our Town* takes to the stage Nov. 7-16 right here in New Hamburg. Tickets go on sale Saturday Oct. 5 at 9 a.m. Be an early bird. Tickets are just \$32 for the first weekend. Don’t delay, as prices go up to \$37 after that. Follow for cast updates and behind-the-scenes rehearsal photos on Instagram @TCPNH

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OPINION —

The advent of Canadian conservation fundraising

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO OUTDOORS

By Jeff Helsdon



A significant milestone in conservation fundraising was marked on Sept. 20 in Port Rowan when the Port Rowan Ducks Unlimited Chapter marked its 50th anniversary.

This was not just any anniversary, as it signified 50 years of the start of local chapters and the conservation fundraising dinner concept in Canada.

Ducks Unlimited Canada was formed in 1938, just a year after the organization was started in the U.S. With the majority of the ducks breeding on the Canadian Prairies, early visionaries knew they had to improve hab-

itat where the ducks raise their young. The first project was on the ground in 1938 in Manitoba.

Although the organization had members and donors in the early days, it didn't have local chapters and fundraising dinners as are known today. That started in the mid-1960s in the U.S.

In 1974, Hazard Campbell, who was a Buffalo, N.Y. resident and a member of the Turkey Point Company on Long Point Bay, convinced fellow members of the storied duck-hunting club Jack Rice and Dr. Duncan Sinclair of Aylmer to attend a DU dinner in his hometown. Rice

and Sinclair were so impressed with the Buffalo DU dinner they questioned why they couldn't do the same in Canada.

On Oct. 23, 1974, the first dinner of the Ducks Unlimited Long Point Bay Chapter was held in the Tillsonburg Community Centre. The committee members, who became known as DU Canada's Magnificent Seven, were William Red Anderson, Tillsonburg; Walter Burton, Tillsonburg; Harvey Ferris, Port Rowan; Lloyd Leask, Simcoe; Dr. Elmer Quintyn, Tillsonburg; Rice and Sinclair.

The next dinner, and every one since, has been held in the Port Rowan Community Centre.

The importance of this milestone can't be understated. Prior to this, DU Canada had members but fundraising was not of the scale that quickly took off after the first dinner. Millions upon millions of dollars was raised for wetland conservation through the conservation dinner program.

Sinclair went on to become the

national president of DU Canada. He also lent a hand in starting the organization in Mexico, Australia and New Zealand.

The mark was not only made on wetland conservation but spread to forests as well. In the United States, the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTFF) led the drive to re-establish the wild turkey across the country. When a reintroduction program was started in Canada, southwestern Ontario residents led the way. Dr. Dave Ankney, a zoology professor at the University of Western Ontario, and Joel Hopkins of London pushed bringing wild turkeys back to Ontario after a hunting trip to Virginia with their spouses. Both had cottages at Long Point.

When the turkey reintroduction started, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters led the way, and worked with the NWTFF. The first release in the program to bring back wild turkeys was in Norfolk County and a fundraising dinner to help with costs of the program was held in Port Rowan.

The conservation dinner concept is part of hunters paying for conservation. Hunter dollars have assisted with preserving hundreds of thousands of acres of wetlands, bringing back the wild turkey, the elk and enhancing habitat for waterfowl, turkeys, deer, ruffed grouse and many non-game species.

Today, conservation dinners are held in many communities across the country. Rural communities with smaller populations often contribute more than cities. One lesser-known fact is Norfolk County chapters of DU, Delta Waterfowl, the National Wild Turkey Federation (which since pulled out of Canada), the Canadian Wild Turkey Federation and the Ruffed Grouse Society of Canada have all at one time been the top fundraisers for their organizations in the entire country.

Jeff Helsdon is an award-winning outdoor writer, a columnist for Ontario Out of Doors and writes for several other outdoor publications.

What's happening to us?

INTERFAITH COUNSELLING CENTRE

By John Dinner

There is a lot of conflict in our world today. From feuds with neighbours across the street to cross-border warfare around the globe, conflicts of all kinds and severity routinely make news headlines. Some are longstanding and historical in nature. Others can be more hysterical, with personal expectations clashing with behaviours or ideas that contrast with their own. Today, whole groups of people are

caustically categorized and routinely dismissed as being either liberal or conservative, right or wrong, patriots or traitors, democratic or fascist. The list goes on.

In this hostile climate, our first question may well be, "What's wrong with them?" A better question might be, "What's happened to us?"

It's easy to blame the news media or social media, as this is where much of our information originates that we then use to bolster a point of view or disparage another's.

When I think back to my school days, I don't recall being taught how to ask a good, constructive question when coming up against a perspective that doesn't fit with my own. Today, many questions only seem to inflame and create distance. I hereby acknowledge that, during the pandemic when faced with a statement that didn't align with my own thinking,

I would often ask, "What's your source of information?" Underlying that question is an inherent suspicion the information source is suspect or doesn't meet my personal standard or bias. Please forgive me.

A better way to ask a question (based on some lived experience) is to start with the assumption that, just perhaps, I don't have all the facts and possibly don't completely understand the "facts" I do have. This better way is to be curious about another person's thinking, engaging in respectful dialogue by leaving room for the possibility that the other might just help me have a better and richer understanding of the issue we're discussing. How great would that be?

Core to this is being open to a view different than one's own. It's a state of mind that is receptive to new ideas and willing to consider them without preconceptions or biases. This can be contrasted with a closed mind that is resistant to new ideas

or different ways of thinking. Those with a closed mind tend to have a felt need to be right. Those with more of an open mind tend to fear missing important and relevant information and are therefore hungry to learn and seek others' perspectives.

Having an open mind doesn't mean we have to abandon our beliefs or betray our values. It does help guard against incorrect assumptions or misunderstanding. It also allows for the possibility of new insights and learning. It may just make our homes, our neighbourhoods, our communities and, ultimately, our world more enjoyable and peaceful places to live.

John Dinner is a registered psychotherapist who works as a counsellor at Interfaith Counselling Centre in New Hamburg, Ont. He used to think he was usually right. By being more open minded, he's learned that's not always the case.

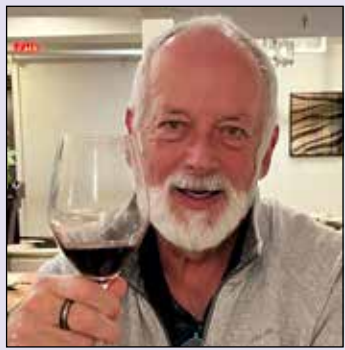
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TRAVEL —

Playing my way through the Maritimes

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



When we headed out on a three-week road trip through the Maritimes in August, I made sure we had packed all the necessities of life – golf clubs, wine and my guitar. Oh, and perhaps some clothes.

I took the guitar because I enjoy playing, but also because I am part of a very amateur group of musicians who were giving a concert shortly after our return, and if I didn't play for three weeks, I would be out of practice and my fingers would lose their callouses.

So, I determined to play my way around the Maritimes with initial stops in eastern Ontario and Québec. Little did I know.

Because, yes, I did play the guitar most days – in a tiny house, in an elegant Charlottetown hotel, in B&Bs and country inns and waterfront cabins – but my musical experiences went way beyond strumming my own six-string Yamaha.

It all started in Woodstock, N.B., where we were invited to visit the Connell House Museum. The Connell House is quite different from a typical local museum because the main galleries all focus on specific, unique and unusual exhibitions. I will write more about it in a future column but here, I am going to focus on my musical experience which was indeed unique because one of the rooms at Connell House is jam-packed with musical instruments from all over the world and through the ages.

In any other museum, there would be signs saying, "Do not touch." At Connell House, visitors – especially those interested in music – are invited to touch and, in fact, to play any instrument they choose! Remarkable.

In the centre of the room were two keyboard instruments – an antique piano similar to those made in Beethoven's time, and a spinet. I plunked out a couple of tunes. In one corner, in sharp contrast, was a theremin – that

weird electronic instrument you play without touching it, merely waving your hands over the thing. It is perhaps best known as the instrument played in the original Star Trek Theme. As a would-be musician and dedicated Trekker, I was in heaven. I was also virtually incompetent when it comes to manipulating a theremin, but I can say that I have played the thing – even if the result was painfully unrecognizable.

Before we left New Brunswick, we toured the Sabian cymbal factory in Meductic. It's a working factory, producing 500 cymbals a day which are shipped all around the world. Ask a drummer about Sabian cymbals – he or she will either own them or want them. More about Sabian in a later column. Let me just say I was invited, first, to hammer a cymbal (part of the production process), at which I was very inept, and then to play a unique symphonic instrument called crotales – a tuned set of small cymbals that play a bit like a xylophone. I didn't ask for a second opinion, but I thought my spontaneous composition was quite nice. Although, at a price of about \$2,500, I don't think I will be investing in a set of crotales, a lovely, handcrafted instrument, though.

Our first port of call in Nova Scotia was Halifax. There, on the beautiful waterfront, we discovered a small xylophone, probably intended as a child's toy. But, now determined to sample every musical instrument in sight, I hammered away until an impatient child, waiting to play, gave me a very evil eye.

We then spent almost a week on Cape Breton Island, and yes, you will hear more about that soon, too. But I had an eye-opening (or should I say ear-deafening) experience at the Celtic Music Interpretive Centre in Judique. There, visitors are invited to pick up a fiddle and follow the

simple instructions on a video in order to learn to play a simple tune.

I tried. Really, I did. The result sounded like a herd of cats being fed through a wringer. I will stick to guitar.

But speaking of guitars, I was sorely tempted to buy an amazing creation we found in a shop called The Lovely Nelly in Georgetown, P.E.I. There, I discovered electric guitars crafted by David Vaglio – and unique guitars they were. His instruments, all perfectly playable, were built on a violin case, a tennis racquet, a washtub (I loved the washtub) and more unlikely foundations. And if you ask, the staff of The Lovely Nelly are happy to supply cords and a small amp so you can experience the unique pleasure of playing an electric, washtub guitar.

I confess that my musical experiments were not vaguely related to the fine music we encountered throughout the Maritimes. Those ceilidhs, concerts and dinner shows were astonishing, and I'll be telling you more about them in the coming weeks.

So no, I offered no threat to any of them. But I did get to smile a lot in these unique Atlantic destinations where the stereotypical Maritime warmth and welcome extended invitations to play antique, unique and top-quality instruments. And I learned some valuable musical lessons – like, never, ever touch a fiddle again.

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



An array of instruments at the Woodstock museum, all available for visitors to play!



The author playing a washtub electric guitar in Prince Edward Island. Photos by Paul Knowles



Unsuccessfully hammering a cymbal in production at the Sabian cymbal factory in New Brunswick.



Playing a child's xylophone on the Halifax waterfront.

COMMUNITY —

Let's Tree Wilmot hosts tree-planting during National Forest Week

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative reporter

Let's Tree Wilmot, a group of volunteers in Wilmot Township with the goal of enhancing the natural environment by planting trees, marked National Forest Week with a successful tree planting behind Nithview Home in New Hamburg Sept. 28.

The group invited locals to join members as they partnered with Tri-County Mennonite Homes, the owner of Nithview Home, to continue their efforts to enhance the habitat of approximately 35 acres of floodplain behind the seniors residence on the shores of the Nith River. Let's Tree Wilmot and its volunteers were joined for the tree planting by Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis.

"I'm really thankful for the federal government's \$2

billion Tree Grant because our township just does not have the resources and it allowed us to buy a truck so that we can water the trees," said Let's Tree Wilmot member Marlene Knezevich. "And in my opinion, if you're not going to maintain the trees, there's no point planting them."

This was the second Let's Tree Wilmot event in September. On Sept. 14, volunteers planted trees at Foundry Park in Baden and Fairmount Cemetery. Another planting project is scheduled for the Haysville Community Centre on Oct. 26.

"For our group, we feel like it's helping the land come back to where it should be," Knezevich said. "And so, over time with planting 4,000 trees and increasing more natural habitat, that to us is our big role in reconciliation."

Let's Tree Wilmot is always in need of more volunteers to help with both planting and maintaining the trees, as



Pictured are Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis, Let's Tree Wilmot member Marlene Knezevich and Wilmot Coun. Steven Martin at Let's Tree Wilmot's tree planting behind Nithview Home in New Hamburg Sept. 28. Photo by Chris Hussey

well as other less-physical tasks.

"We are always looking for volunteers. For people who don't want to or are unable to do the physical part of tree planting, there's running educational programs and we have our website. We'd love to have somebody who knows WordPress and Elementor help us with that," Knezevich said.

"And if anybody just loves trees and you'd like to run some kind of program, we're totally open to that. And then, we have what we call our water warriors. We have shifts in the summertime with parks assigned to different people. Also, in some of our park areas, we have somebody we call our tree guardians who just keep an eye on the park. If something is happening there or there are some tree needs, they let us know. We're always looking for people to keep an eye on our trees."

For more information on upcoming tree-planting events and how to volunteer with Let's Tree Wilmot, visit www.letstreewilmot.ca.



OPEN HOUSE SATURDAY OCTOBER 5TH 1:00 - 3 PM

51 QUEEN STREET TAVISTOCK - MLS#40639912 \$899,900

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COMMUNITY —

AMDSB board of trustees looking for new Perth or Huron resident to take up trustee vacancy

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After a recent vacancy was announced, the Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) is looking for a new trustee for its Perth East seat.

According to Chera Longston, communications manager with the AMDSB, the vacancy occurred due to unmet requirements of the Education Act, where trustees are required to be physically present at regular meetings of the board. David Briant, the former trustee, is listed as absent or attended through Microsoft Teams in most of the meeting minutes of the past school year.

“Our trustees play a vital role in overseeing the focus in our education system as related to our strategic plan,” Graham Shantz, director of education, said in a media release. “They are individuals who are passionate about public education and they advocate for student achievement and wellbeing.”

There are nine trustees on the board, each representing a geographical portion of the district and the schools within. Perth East represents Central Perth Elementary School, North Easthope Public School, Sprucedale Public School, Milverton

Public School and Mornington Central Public School.

Normally, trustees are elected every four years during the municipal election, but this position is being filled through an application and interview process. The term will begin once appointed and runs until autumn 2026.

The successful candidate does not need to be a resident of Perth East. They only need to live within either Huron or Perth counties. They must be a Canadian citizen, at least 18 years old, not legally prohibited from voting and not disqualified by any legislation from holding a school board seat.

If interested, residents can submit a letter of interest along with a resume outlining their interest for the position, qualifications and other pertinent information to barb.crawford@ed.amdsb.ca.

“We encourage anyone interested in this position to learn more about the role and to submit an application before the Oct. 17 deadline,” board chair Robert Hunking said in that same release.

For more information on the position, visit www.amdsb.ca/apps/pages/index.jsp?u-REC_ID=1091747&type=d&pREC_ID=1395854.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2024

<p>THURSDAY, OCTOBER 3</p> <p>Library Showcase Oct 3rd to Oct 5th Drop by the Tavistock Library during open hours to check out all the cool non-traditional things we have to borrow from ukuleles to kitchen appliances. <i>Tavistock Library</i></p> <p>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5</p> <p>Community Safety Day - A fire prevention week event 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. <i>New Hamburg Community Centre 251 Jacob Street, New Hamburg</i></p> <p>Southern Gospel Music Concert featuring the Torchmen Quartet 7 p.m. \$10 donation at the door. <i>Shantz Mennonite Church 2473 Erb's Rd., Baden</i></p> <p>Movie Day at the Tavistock Library 12 p.m. Come and watch Hocus Pocus. Enjoy a free movie and popcorn! <i>Tavistock Library</i></p> <p>MONDAY, OCTOBER 7</p> <p>Garden Wilmot's monthly Garden Talk will be "Chocolate: from Rainforest to Sweet Treat" 7-9 pm <i>Wilmot Rec Complex</i></p> <p>Wilmot Council meeting 7-11 p.m. <i>Council chambers 60 Snyder's Road West Baden</i></p> <p>SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8</p> <p>After School Hangout Oct 8 & 15 4-5pm at Tavistock Library. Drop in after school to make paper mache creatures! <i>Tavistock Library</i></p>	<p>WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9</p> <p>Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship 12:00 pm. Cost is \$14.00 Register by September 27th to 519-664-1900 or 1-855-664-1900 <i>Wellesley Rec Complex 1401 Queen's Bush Road, Wellesley</i></p> <p>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12</p> <p>Mini Pumpkin decorating at the Tavistock Library Oct 12 12-1pm Paint and design your own book-inspired pumpkin for our Storybook Pumpkin Contest! All ages welcome. Registration required. <i>Tavistock Library</i></p> <p>WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16</p> <p>Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship 12:00 p.m. Cost is \$14.00 Register by October 11th to 519-664-1900 or 1-855-664-1900 <i>Wilmot Rec Complex 1291 Nafziger Rd.</i></p> <p>East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting 7 p.m. <i>Council chambers 89 Loveys Street, Hickson</i></p> <p>THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17</p> <p>Anniversary event celebrating 30 years of smart exercise and falls prevention 10:30 a.m. Open to all registered VON participants. New participants must call 1-888-866-7518 to register. 60 minute exercise class Commemorative T-shirts for sale \$15 (Limited Stock) <i>Join one of our 3 locations Innerkip Community Centre -695566 17th Line Memorial Hall Tavistock - 3 Adam St Ingersoll Fusion Centre- 121 Thames St N</i></p>	<p>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19</p> <p>Tavistock Fall Expo 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. <i>Tavistock Missionary Church, 77 Mogk Street, Tavistock</i></p> <p>TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22</p> <p>Wellesley Council meeting 6:45 p.m. <i>Council chambers 4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill</i></p> <p>After School Hangout 4 - 5 p.m. Our ages 6-12 Surprise Book Club meeting! Please register in advance. <i>Tavistock Library</i></p> <p>WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 23</p> <p>Community Care Concepts Lunch and Fellowship 12:00 pm. Cost is \$14.00 Register by October 18th to 519-664-1900 or 1-855-664-1900 <i>Linwood Community Centre 5279 Ament Line Linwood</i></p> <p>SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26</p> <p>The Community Players of New Hamburg 40th Anniversary Open House 2 -5 pm. Come celebrate our 40th Anniversary with us. Stop by to share memories and reunite with friends! From 3pm to 4pm, we will have a presentation of shows from our past, sing-along to some of our favourite show tunes and Artistic Directors from past and present will share some words. RSVP today and celebrate this amazing milestone with us. <i>251 Jacobs Street, New Hamburg</i></p> <p>WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30</p> <p>Learn to Curl 7 p.m. 5 Weeks (October 30th - November 27th) 519-301-5620 <i>Tavistock Arena</i></p>	<p>SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3</p> <p>Southern Gospel Music Concert featuring the Master's Four Gospel Quartet. 6:30 p.m. Free Will Offering <i>Rosebank Church 1434 Huron Road, Petersburg</i></p> <p>THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7</p> <p>The Community Players of New Hamburg present their fall production of "Our Town" 8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.thecommunityplayers.com <i>Studio theatre at the New Hamburg Community Centre, 251 Jacob Street, New Hamburg</i></p> <p>Theatre Wellesley presents "A Good Old Fashioned Big Family Christmas" by Pat Cook Nov 7 & 8 at 7:30 p.m. Nov 9 & 10 at 2 p.m. Tickets \$20 online:www.theatrewellesley.com or cash at Pym's Village Market in Wellesley <i>Steinmann Mennonite Church 1316 Snyder's Rd W Baden</i></p> <p>FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8</p> <p>The Community Players of New Hamburg present their fall production of "Our Town" 8 p.m. Tickets can be purchased online at www.thecommunityplayers.com Other performances: Saturday, Nov. 9 - 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 10 - 2 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 14 - 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 15 - 8 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 16 - 2 p.m. & 8 p.m. <i>Studio theatre at the New Hamburg Community Centre, 251 Jacob Street, New Hamburg</i></p>
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Open House - Sat. Oct 12th 10 - 1pm. or by appointment.

Weekly Quiz
Answers

1. Opal
2. Saturday Night Live
3. Golden-yellow
4. Pepsi
5. Pomology
6. John Chapman
7. Fruit
8. Jerusalem
9. Utah Hockey Club
10. Vixens

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