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Wide variety of activities planned for Family Day

ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Correspondent

The Town of Tillsonburg is hosting a variety of free events for Family Day on Feb. 16 at Annandale House National Historic Site and the Tillsonburg Community Centre.

Celebrated by several provinces on the third Monday of February, Family Day emphasizes the importance of family bonds and time spent together with friends, relatives or found family.

Annandale House NHS, located at 30 Tillson Avenue is hosting a "Wooly" Family Day and Open House featuring free fun for all ages from 10 am to 3 pm. Culture and Heritage Programs Coordinator Kathleen Watkin is looking forward to the event.

"Families are invited to enjoy a variety of historical family games, a hot chocolate station, and a sweet treat," Watkin said. "Visitors will also have the opportunity to create their own pom-pom animals. Knowledgeable guides will be available throughout the house to answer questions, and guests can participate in our annual family scavenger hunt. In addition, the exhibition Threads of the Past: Wool Artifacts from Our Collection will be open for viewing."

At the Tillsonburg Community Centre (45 Hardy Ave) a variety of events are taking place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., including inflatables, face painting, a mobile zoo and reptiles, balloon artists, and a magic show. There is a full schedule available online and there will be signage and schedules available at the event. It is recommended that families use the east entrance off the large parking lot.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

COFFEE WITH A COP

A new community outreach initiative from Oxford OPP is designed to give the public an opportunity to interact with police in a relaxed setting, while providing information on scams, auto theft and recruitment. Attending the first Coffee with a Cop at the Oxford Street Tim Hortons on Feb. 4 were, left to right are: (front row) Tiffany Fagundes, Shelley Hughes, (back row) Dianne Matychuk, Const. Paul Ruttiman, Const. Owen Snippe, and CMHA Crisis Clinician Devon Mackie. The intent is Coffee with a Cop will occur twice per month in different locations across Oxford County.

Consultation open on town's film policy

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

A consultation process is now open to garner input on the potential of Tillsonburg becoming a film-friendly community.

A draft policy was brought to council last October, but council opted for a public consultation process before proceeding further. That consultation process opened Feb. 9 online, and will be available until March 13. There are also in-person sessions planned for Feb. 24 from 4 to 6 p.m. and March 5, 4 to 5 p.m.

The purpose of the policy is to tap into the multi-billion-dollar Ontario film industry. An announcement of the consultation read: "Ontario's screen sector continues to generate significant economic activity across communities of all sizes. Film productions rely on local restaurants, accommodations, trades, and services; they also increase community visibility, encourage visitor interest, and contribute to economic diversification. By preparing a clear, film friendly framework, Tillsonburg aims to position itself to welcome appropriately scaled productions and support both residents and businesses."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 4

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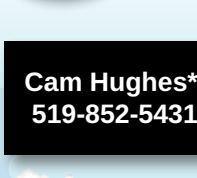
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Celebrate Family Day with the Town of Tillsonburg

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The rink is open for ice skating and families can also enjoy free swims from 10 - 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 - 3 p.m. Pre-registration is required for swimming due to capacity limits, which can be completed online. Visit the Town of Tillsonburg FB page and use the link; or call 519-688-9011 if you have any problems with the registration process.

The town has been celebrating Family Day for over 10 years, with 1500 people enjoying the events last year. Manager of Recreation and Program Services Julie Dawley explained the variety of events allows for both quiet/creative and active/physical activity, but the most important thing is time spent together.

“Our goal is to create a welcoming, low-pressure atmosphere for families to feel included and really enjoy their time as a family,” Dawley said. “For recreation staff, we just love to see families laughing, moving and making memories; that’s what the heart of this event is.”

Thriver Company will be offering free dance classes: ages five and under from 9 - 10 a.m. and ages six and over from 10:30 -11 a.m. It’s a great opportunity for kids to try something new and see if they enjoy it.

Oxford County Library has organized a story stroll, offering a break from the

excitement, at the top of the rink (Memorial Spectator Seating). Katelyn Bennett, Literacy Program Specialist at the Tillsonburg branch, wants to keep the story a surprise, but said that it is connected to the theme for this year’s Family Literacy Day: Make Family Time Meal Time. The story stroll features enlarged panels of a story with different actions under the pages that families can do, following the arrows to participate as the story progresses.

“Following recipes and cooking together is a great way to build early literacy skills together as a family, while doing something fun,” Bennett said. “On our website (OCL.net) we have a booklist if families want to continue with cooking and creating together. We’ll also have flyers at the event with other links and resources.”

Recreation staff and their families often volunteer at the event, and Dawley estimated that she painted 250 little faces last year. Volunteers are welcome at both the community centre and Annandale House; call to express your interest. While the volunteers are the visible supporters, Dawley said the event wouldn’t be possible without the generosity of sponsors.

“Without the help of our sponsors, we couldn’t do it,” Dawley said. “Every smile



(FILE PHOTO)

Face painting is always a popular activity at the Tillsonburg Community Centre’s Family Day festivities, and will continue this year. In this shot from last year, volunteer Kate Nesbitt paints Leia Radev’s face.

and every moment we have is thanks to these people.”

“These simple moments in life are the

most important time,” Dawley said. “You get to slow down and enjoy your family for the day!”



(JOHN BECHT PHOTO)

GOLF COURSE CLUBHOUSE DEMOLISHED

The clubhouse at the Bridges at Tillsonburg golf course was demolished recently due to structural issues in the building that was over a century old. A new events centre will be built in its place, which will be used for a golf tournaments and available for a variety of events. The goal is to have the new structure in place as soon as possible.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

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EDITORIAL

Letter to the Editor

Remember left turn signals

For a small town (Tillsonburg) the large number of drivers here seem to forget what the main purpose of that little lever on the left side of the steering column is for. I shall remind them, it is to signal your turn to the right or left when turning at intersections, driveways, and changing lanes. Other drivers cannot read your

mind about what you are going to do. You may feel that you don't need to signal when there are no other cars around, but that should not be the reason to not use them. They should be used every time, you are turning whether there are other cars around you or not. It should be a habit, it is one part of driving the car.

Robert Poole

Have something to say? Submit your Letter to the Editor here: info@tillsonburgpost.com



Winter sunset.

(JOLENE DEBLIECK PHOTO)

A major life change leads to new aspirations and the achievement of life goals for local woman



EVERYONE HAS A STORY TO TELL

ROBIN KRAFFT

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Cathy Lyn Ryan was raised in Woodstock, and it was there at the Regency Coffee Shop, waiting tables, that she got to know Bill Ryan and his family. They had their first official date 40 years ago, on New Year's Eve, and they've been together ever since.

The couple eventually settled in Tillsonburg and grew their young family, which became the focus of their lives. Bill played for Club Oxford Hockey, so Cathie Lyn spent a lot of time at the rink. She also worked at Dollarama, as one of the first to be hired.

"I'm a people person," Ryan said. "I enjoyed every minute of working there and I'm still friends with the ladies I worked with. In retail, you see things change, stores come and go and restaurants that you love closing down, like Sam's Bar. The hockey players and their wives or girlfriends would go there after games. It was nice to go and hang out, you knew everyone and we were all good friends."

Life changed drastically for Cathie Lyn in 2007 when she suffered terrible injuries in a fall, breaking both legs, with the tibia and fibula broken through the skin. She was flown to Buffalo, New York where she spent five days in hospital as surgeons tried to save her leg. She had therapy at home, but the bones weren't healing and in 2008 she needed further surgery to transplant a donor bone.

Her recovery was slow, and she was traumatized. When she tried to go back to work, it was challenging with her limited mobility. She made the decision to leave the job in 2011, wondering what to do next. Still deeply invested in her community and feeling a lack of social connection, she wanted to start an online forum.

"I started Talk Tillsonburg in October 2012 and spent about five hours a day going to news sites and adding anything about the town," Ryan said. "I started following every organization and club to bring as much as I could into the group, but I shared news from all over."

The group evolved, and Cathie Lyn got more involved with local politics, providing a platform for people to get to know candidates for town council. She promotes local events and believes in giving back, initiating the annual Scarf Bombing and Children Shop for Christmas events. Her goal is to benefit the community and provide valuable information.

"I'm so proud of it because it's so focused on everything about the community, but it hasn't always been easy," Ryan said. "There has been some negativity, and I take it personally, but it's so important to me. I've worked so hard on it, so I keep going. To me, it's my job and I put a lot of pride in it."

While she values the connections that social media provides, Cathie Lyn is drawn to history and simpler times. On a trip to Nova Scotia, she and Bill visited Lunenburg.

"There were so many colourful houses and traditional old white churches and century homes," Ryan said. "It took my breath away. If I could go back and live in a different time it would be the 50s and 60s. I like things that bring back memories of simpler times. Everything moves so fast now, everyone is in a hurry. It's one of the things I like about Tillsonburg; there's still old history here."

She has recently been doing some genealogical research, and added that she likes personal histories, but she wasn't very involved in history classes during her school years. One of her deepest regrets was never finishing high school, so in 2022 she began working towards her diploma. She excelled in her classes and graduated in 2023. It was an incredible moment when she received her diploma wearing her graduation cap and gown, holding her roses.

"It was around that time that the Kinettes hosted their Mom Prom," Ryan said. "I went to prom with all of my friends and I had just graduated high school! CBC saw my story and wrote it up. It was wonderful to show people that it's never too late to achieve your goals."





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Learning more about our Indigenous people



**THE
STAGE
IS THE
WORLD**

LAUREL A. BEECHEY

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

In my Jan. 29 column I wrote about the 1493 Doctrine of Discovery and how European countries sailed to the New World, with the permission of various Christian leaders that they would own what they found.

Through colonization, Indigenous Peoples were put into reservations, where they still are today. Recently, Christian groups in Canada and the government, have apologized for the past wrongs.

My column ended with the question: What else should we be doing to undo the wrongs of the past associated with the Doctrine of Discovery? I was surprised and pleased to have people get in touch and ask what they could do.

First you need to learn and understand our Indigenous Peoples' history. Canadian Indigenous peoples have maintained a strong connection to the land. Most First Nations had beliefs and principles that oversaw their connection with, and care of the land.

With colonization, waves of settlers came to start a new life, all wanting their very 'own' piece of land. George Tillson was one, and a local Indigenous man helped him find the convergence of creeks he needed to run mills he would build. There are mentions in various letters and diaries about the Indigenous children playing with the

pioneer children. So, they obviously lived nearby. The Tillsons purchased the piece of land from the Crown, not the Indigenous people living on it. It didn't take long once the mills were running, that the noise and belching smoke permeated the skies that the Indigenous silently move on.

The Gradual Civilization Act of 1857 was introduced, presuming that the indigenous people would choose Enfranchisement, which was the surrender of their 'legal and ancestral identities for the privilege of gaining full Canadian citizenship and assimilating into Canadian society.' They did not. Many of the aspects of the 1857 legislation became mandatory with the Indian Act of 1876.

The passing of the Indian Act in 1876 under Prime Minister Alexander Mackenzie made way for the start of the residential school system. As we know, Indigenous children were taken from their families to attend these schools, where some were subject to abuse.

Peter and I, through an international charity, have sponsored children in Thailand for many years. I called to ask if we could help the Kashechewan First Nation community on James Bay, who were being evacuated due to contamination of their 30-year old water systems. Unfortunately, even though we have Canadians living without clean drinking water, because Canada is a first-world country, they would not give assistance. How can Truth and Reconciliation work when the basic human right for our Indigenous Peoples to have clean drinking water is not being met?

I researched for hours to find out more about the issues with the water system in Kashechewan First Nation. I found that on April 22, 2024, CBC News posted an update that a UN expert tasked with studying and reporting on human rights, completed a two-week tour and reported verbally to CBC: "I have witnessed the marginalization, of First Nations on reserves, where in many cases the human rights to drinking water and sanitation are not respected." There were "flagrant breaches of First Nations rights to clean water".

Almost two years later, it seems that the Canadian Government did little to nothing to help provide the human right of clear water and sanitation to Kashechewan FN, causing over 2000 residents to be evacuated.

If you wish to know more about the history of Canada's First Nations, visit the Tillsonburg Library has books on Indigenous peoples. Talk to the librarians on where to start your quest, ask for indigenous authors. I started with Tanya Talaga's '7 Fallen Feathers' then her following two books. 'The Survivors Speak' are the stories collected from survivors of the schools, and collected by The Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Drew Eldridge's, 'Cultural Genocide' is another good choice.

'The Survivors Speak' are the stories collected from survivors of residential schools and collected by The Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

It is quite amazing what you learn.



(PETER BEECHEY PHOTO)

TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN

A pair of bald eagles put on a show west of Tillsonburg last week, perching in the top of a tree on North Street West. More common along Lake Erie, eagles move inland in the winter with the lake frozen.

Input sought on making Tillsonburg film friendly

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Mayor Deb Gilvesy became interested in the concept when she was a councillor, and has been advancing it as

mayor.

"I've been really supportive of exploring this option for many years," she said.

The mayor cited the County of Brant as one location that was successful in attracting filming. She said Murdoch Mysteries is one show that has used Brantford for filming.

"Tillsonburg has a great deal to offer the film industry, from our historic assets and scenic spaces to our supportive community and convenient location," Exploring opportunities to attract film and television productions could create new revenue streams for places like Annandale House and

Lake Lisgar, while showcasing Tillsonburg to audiences far beyond our borders," said Gilvesy.

Possible film sites go beyond municipal property, and it's hoped the consultation will indicate the level of interest in this.

"It's not just municipal assets, there's historic homes that can be part of it as well," Gilvesy said, adding County of Brant Mayor David Bailey's home was used in the filming of the Handmaid's Tale.

The online survey is available at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FilmFriendlyTillsonburg>

Contact us: info@tillsonburgpost.com

Tillsonburg POST

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Publisher

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Editor

Jeff Helsdon • jeff@granthaven.com

Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries

Stacie Eden • info@tillsonburgpost.com

Business Development

Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com

Administration

Jen Gaetan • jen@granthaven.com

Contributors

Jeff Tribe, Laurel Beechey, Debbie Kasman,

Paul Knowles

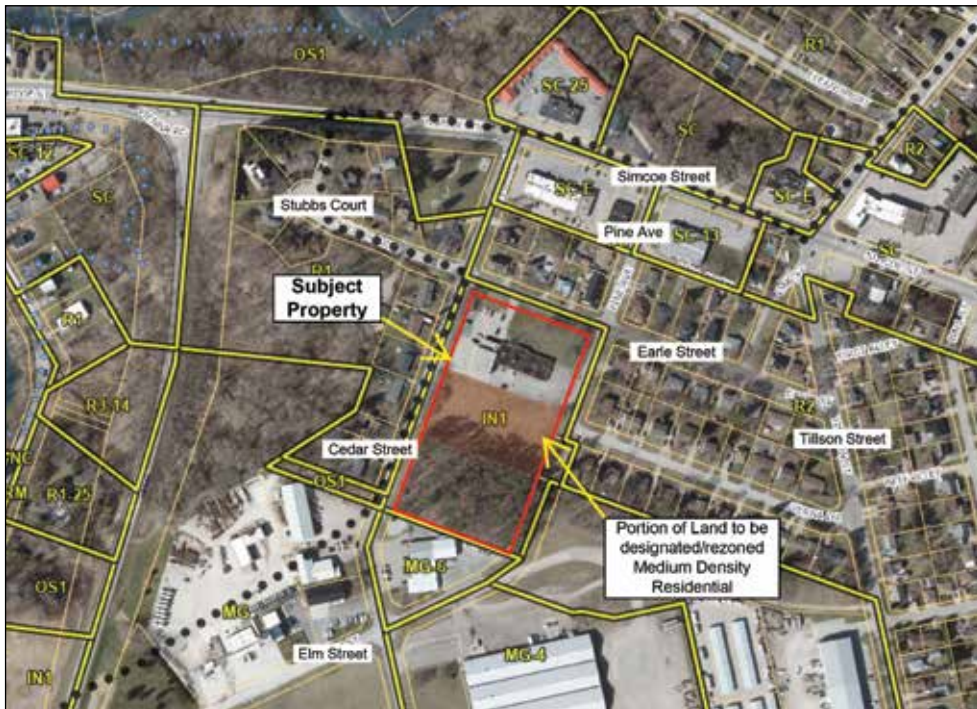
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The innovative model being used for Earle Street development



(OXFORD COUNTY IMAGE)

Although controversial amongst the neighbours when the zoning change was proposed, the development at 31 Earle Street is a unique model.

The town-owned property at 31 Earle is about five acres in size. This includes 1.7 acres rented to the OPP for the property surrounding the former Elliott Fairbairn school, a 1.4-acre field, and the remaining approximately two acres is forested. The development is proposed for the 1.4-acre field. There are environmental protections on the forested land, and it will not be developed.

Tillsonburg Development Commissioner Cephas Panschow has been charged with overseeing the project. He explained the town's Affordable and Attainable Housing Advisory Committee has been working since 2021 to find solutions to provide more affordable and attainable housing. The 29 below-market-rent units in the Harvest Ave. apartment building are one success. The committee was also looking for solutions for the Earle Street property.

The initial proposal was for a seven-storey, 137-unit building, but it was scaled back to a four-storey, 47-unit development.

"The committee heard the feedback from the community and has changed the concept," he said.

The project is being developed jointly between the town and Oxford County housing department. The town will sell the property to a developer through a request for proposal process (RFP) led by the county. The development is to be a mix of below-market and market-priced units. Up to \$1.5 million from the proceeds from the land sales, which will be matched by the county, will be allocated for covering the costs of the affordable units.

While past affordable units have been rental, the goal for this one is for ownership, which is a first in town.

"The partnership is new for Oxford County, where the town is provided a credit to match the county," Panschow said.

The RFP, which was posted Feb. 4, calls for a mix of affordable and market rent units, specifying for: "Construction of a multi-residential building with a minimum of 22 units, to a maximum of 47 residential units (or a proposal that appropriately reflects medium density), with a minimum of 50 per cent at affordable ownership rates. A lower percentage of affordable units may be considered depending on the financial proforma that is completed."

Part of the RFP process will reveal how many affordable attainable units the developer can provide for the up-to \$3 million in funding.

The property's value is estimated to exceed \$1.5 million. Any revenue received from the property sale beyond that will be received by the town, with the purpose to be determined by council at the time.

Panschow compared the affordable ownership model to Habitat for Humanity, which has been used successfully in other centres, such as Norfolk and Brantford.

"You would have to be below certain thresholds to buy one of these units," he said.

Typically, with this model, future resale values of the property are constrained, but some appreciation is allowed.

"There is a way to do that so the units remain affordable," Panschow said.

The development is targeted at entry-level buyers, such as young workers, single parents, and young families.

When the Official Plan amendment came up at Oxford County council, not only did it pass, but councillors were complimentary of the development. Town residents who spoke against the zoning change for the property previously also made a presentation at county council.

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<p>12" X 36" SUITE ABBEY ROBLE</p> <p>MATTE FINISH FROM \$7.99 /SQFT</p>  <p>IN STOCK</p>	<p>6" X 6" TABARCA BLANCO</p> <p>MADE IN SPAIN FROM \$9.99 /SQFT</p>  <p>IN STOCK</p>	<p>4.5" X 9.1" KIT-KAT TILE</p> <p>OCEAN GLOSSY FROM \$14.99 /SQFT</p>  <p>IN STOCK</p>



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This Week In the 50's



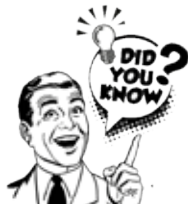
Welcome to **THIS WEEK IN THE 50's** Sponsored by Hilda's Yard opening Feb 19th – March 1st 7:30 at Theatre Tillsonburg. A Hilarious Norm Foster comedy set in the 50's. Come Dressed in your 50's clothing for a retro night out at the theatre. This week's flashback "Car Culture"

Our play Hilda's Yard, opening Feb 19th at Theatre Tillsonburg, features a classic 1950's home in the suburbs. Sam has to commute to his job in the city, a concept newly minted in the 50's. Car Culture takes North America by storm.



DID YOU KNOW?

The 1950's were the Golden Age of the North American Car. Bold and stylish designs combined with new technology like the transistor radio discussed in a previous flash back were the hallmarks of this time. The car not only meant greater mobility, but with the rise of teenagers it meant privacy and freedom. The two would drive an entire industry and created the foundation of what we recognize today.



CAR CULTURE ICONS:

- Styling and design featured panoramic windshields, huge chrome bumpers and tailfins, and bright, two-tone color palettes.
- Amongst the many innovations in a car was the horsepower. Improving the engine created a race between the car manufacturers and the eventual movement to a V8 engine saw the birth of the muscle car.
- Muscle cars of the era included the Oldsmobile Rocket 88, (1950) the Hudson Hornet (1951-54), the Chevy Bel Air (1955- 57) and the Chevy Corvette (1957)
- NASCAR, Hot Rods and drag racing rose in popularity throughout the 50's.
- Highway creation began in earnest. Canada started the Trans Canada highway in 1950 and the US passed their interstate bill in 1957. North America would get paved and connected.
- The car allowed a sense of freedom and independence so youth with disposable income put demands on society for new types of entertainment.
- 1950s drive-in eateries were characterized by carhop service, neon-lit, futuristic designs, and car-centric dining that defined a new boom for fast food businesses.
- Popular spots like A&W, Bob's Big Boy, and local, independent places served burgers, fries and shakes directly to vehicles for about 40-60 cents which translates to \$4.50 - \$7.00 in today's currency.
- Drive-In theatres, reaching their peak boom by 1957, combined car culture with affordable private entertainment all with an aluminum die cast speaker hanging from your window.
- Drive-Ins represented the "atomic age," featuring monster and mutant movies that reflected the anxieties of the time.
- The post war resurgence of the car industry and the rise of teen culture collided to form the foundation of Rock and Roll – our topic next week.

Arrest made following weapons investigation

One individual has been arrested after a weapons investigation in the Town of Tillsonburg.

On Feb. 5, at approximately 6:30 a.m., police received reports of an individual approaching members of the public, asking for money, while brandishing a firearm. No property was lost by the victims and no injuries were reported.

There was an increased police presence on King Street in Tillsonburg while the investigation was underway.

As a result of the investigation, a 23-year-old resident of Tillsonburg has been arrested and charged with the following offences:

- Armed Robbery (two counts)
- Possession of a Weapon for a Dangerous Purpose (three counts)
- Disguise with Intent (two counts)

- Carrying Concealed Weapon (two counts)
 - Use Firearm While Committing Offence (two counts)
 - Fail to Comply with Undertaking
- The accused is currently being held in custody, awaiting a bail hearing.

No other details will be released at this time.

"We recognize that these types of calls are very unsettling in our communities," said Detachment Commander Inspector Tony Hymers. "Our commitment is to continue to react as quickly as possible, as seen today, to safely stop these crimes from continuing. Apprehending suspects and offering support for victims is paramount in helping to keep Oxford County safe and feeling supported."

Fatal accident on Progress Drive

A single motor vehicle collision on Progress Drive in Tillsonburg has claimed one life.

On February 5, 2025, at approximately 3:15 p.m., members of the Oxford Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) detachment, Paramedic Services and Fire Services responded to a single motor vehicle collision on Progress Drive, in the Town of Tillsonburg.

Upon arrival, emergency services lo-

cated a single motor vehicle had left the roadway, with one occupant that had been involved in a collision. The lone occupant was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Progress Drive was closed while members from the West Region OPP Traffic Incident Management and Enforcement Team investigated the collision.

Any person with information or dashcam footage pertaining to the collision should contact the Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

SIU discontinues Tillsonburg investigation

The Deputy Director of the Special Investigations Unit, Stacey O'Brien, has terminated an investigation into the arrest of a 42-year-old man in November in Tillsonburg.

In the morning of Nov. 12, 2025, the man was arrested at his residence during the execution of a search warrant by the Halton Regional Police Service Tactical Unit. During the arrest a struggle ensued. A conducted energy weapon was deployed, followed by the use of empty-hand control techniques to gain control of the man. He was subsequently transported to hospital

and reportedly diagnosed with fractures to his nose.

Based on the SIU's preliminary inquiries, Deputy Director O'Brien was satisfied that the investigation should be discontinued. The man declined to provide an interview to SIU investigators and he did not consent to the release of his medical records. In the absence of a statement, and no evidence of serious injury being identified within the mandate of the SIU, the unit was without jurisdiction to investigate the incident. The file has been closed.

Impaired driver detected on proactive patrol

A driver is facing multiple charges after members of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Oxford Detachment, detected and arrested a dangerous driver in the Town of Tillsonburg.

At approximately 12:20 a.m., on Feb. 1, a member from Oxford OPP detected a vehicle being driven dangerously on Broadway in Tillsonburg.

As a result of the investigation, Christopher VanKasteren, a 37-year-old resident of LaSalette, has been charged with:

- Operation While Impaired
- Failure/Refusal to Comply with Demand
- Dangerous Operation of a Motor Vehicle
- Careless Driving
- Fail to Remain Available

The accused has been released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice, in Woodstock, on March 31.

Impaired driver charged thanks to concerned citizen

Members from the Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), arrested an impaired driver thanks to a call from a concerned citizen.

On Jan. 31, at approximately 5:45 p.m., Oxford OPP responded to a report of a driver who appeared to be intoxicated.

As a result of the investigation, Susana

Rempel, a 28-year-old resident of Tillsonburg, has been charged with Operation While Impaired - Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) 80 plus

The accused has been released from custody and is scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Woodstock on March 17.

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Home sales, prices, down slightly in '25

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Housing sales in the Woodstock Ingersoll and Tillsonburg Area Association of Realtors (WITAAR) area were down slightly in 2025, as were prices.

Derrek de Jonge, a realtor Royal LePage R.E. Wood Realty in Tillsonburg, started as president of the group in December.

Home sales across the board in 2025 was 1,631 units, which was down only three units from 2024's total, according to CREA (The Canadian Real Estate Association) statistics.

"The sales activity was definitely steady," he said. "With headwinds to the economy, it may have dampened sales."

de Jonge said steady was a positive.

"It was steady and resilient compared to some of the worst-case scenarios," he said.

Total sales volume in dollars was down 12 per cent in 2025, as compared to 2024, but residential was only down 3.6 per cent.

"The housing sector was more resilient than the commercial or farming sector," he said.

Within the housing sector, de Jonge pointed to condos as a weakness. Single detached homes are still coming in

with a higher price point.

Farms are still in demand with steady pricing.

"When farms come up, there's still multiple bids," he said.

de Jonge said the story of 2025 was more houses coming on the market, which put downward pressure on price. Across the board, there were 533 units on the market at the end of December, which was a 12.7 per cent increase from a year earlier and the highest number for end of December in a decade. This number is an incredible 44.8 per cent above the five-year average.

"A lot more homes were available, and that gives buyers more choice," he said.

The median number of days on the market increased from 27 in 2024 to 32 last year.

Although there are no official stats, de Jonge said buyers get good value for the dollar in Tillsonburg. Building has slowed in Tillsonburg with more inventory on the market, and single detached homes are remaining in demand.

"Tillsonburg has more approved homes, more active developments in progress," he said.

Woodstock's prices are generally a little higher and Ingersoll hasn't seen a huge change since the wind down of CAMOI.

"That's always a concern if we have a number of job losses in an area, it's not good for the local economy," he

said.

With the average price for WITAAR listings in December at \$627,496, which was down 3.6 per cent from a year earlier, de Jonge more first-time buyers, who may have been sitting on the sidelines for two or three years, are now getting in.

"We've definitely seen quite a bit of activity from first-time home buyers as prices came down and interest rates held steady," he said.

Asked about the negatives for the 2025 market, de Jonge answered, "Economic headwinds are definitely holding the market back. It just keeps people from investing when there is uncertainty. The uncertainty creates pause."

Looking ahead to the coming year, De Jonge said stability in prices the past couple of years will hopefully get more buyers looking to move up.

"I don't think there will be major fluctuations either way, but it will depend on the economic situation and confidence," he said. "If we get a trade deal with the U.S., it will help with confidence."

Speaking to prices in 2026, de Jonge said some models are predicting moderate growth, but again, it depends on the economy.

WITAAR represents more than 280 members across its area, with a wide diversity of specialties ranging from new builds, to commercial, to farms.

Quilters displaying at Station Arts Centre

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Artistry takes many forms, and the latest exhibit at the Station Arts Centre requires the vision of a finished product that an artist has, along with knowledge passed down from former generations.

"Wrapped in Warmth" is an exhibit by the Stationhouse Quilters and Fibre Artists featuring quilts and quilted pieces, which runs from Feb. 6 to 27. The quilts vary from simpler designs to intricate work.

"We are a group of like-minded women who love to quilt and love to play with fabric," said Gale Connor, adding members vary from beginners to the experienced.

The group does not teach quilting and sends those seeking instruction to local business Cherished Pieces, which offers instruction.

"Sometimes people want a second opinion, 'Do you like

this as a border, or this?' We are a second opinion," Connor said.

The group is also a social get-together for those who love fabric and quilting. They meet twice per month on the first and third Thursdays, with the first Thursday being a social gathering and the third for work. The retreats, which are four times per year, involve members setting up on Friday night, then quilting Saturday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Potluck meals are brought in.

"Everybody brings whatever projects they are working on or want to work on, and we just sew away," Connor said.

While her description may conjure up images of the quilting bees of days gone by, the Stationhouse Quilters retreats have a chatter of sewing machines, along with a little socializing, that weren't present in our grandmothers' quilting bees. The process is still extensive, though. Con-

nor said a simple quilt for a bed will take a minimum of 10 hours and involves piecing the top together, then adding the batting and stitching it to the back.

"The more intricate the design, the longer it takes and the smaller the pieces, the longer it takes," she said.

Connor started the group seven years ago.

"I wanted to enjoy quilting with other people, and we had requests at the station, asking if there was a group," she said.

"It's more fun with friends," said member Rosey Bourne.

The group also has a fibre section devoted to crocheting and knitting, but they are not part of this display.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Stationhouse Quilters and Fibre Artists members Rosey Bourne, left, and Gale Connor hang up a smaller piece that will be part of the exhibit *Wrapped in Warmth* at the Station Arts Centre.



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Snowmobilers having an 'exceptional' year

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Asked what kind of year it had been for snowmobiling, Derek Scholten responded, "Exceptional".

The head of public relations for Southern Sno Riders Snowmobile Club, Scholten, said the trails opened three weeks ago on Jan. 23.

"When I joined the club, in '03, we used to average five weeks the trails were open at some time during the season. Then it went to four, it went to three, and even none," he said, adding he hopes there are another two or three weeks left.

The club maintains local snowmobile trails and obtains landowners' permission to cross their property. Snowmobilers using the club's trails need to purchase an Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs permit, which helps offset grooming costs.

The club had its first hot dog day in 10 years on the weekend.

"We would plan it ahead, and then there would be no snow," Scholten said.

With the first event in 10 years, it's hard to imagine how many would attend, especially after years without snow. Scholten said they estimate there were 600 snowmobilers in attendance, with more than 100 parked most times at the warm-up shack where the event was held in Norwich Township.

Although Scholten noted lake effect snow would be more limited with Lake Erie frozen and part of Lake Huron ice-covered, he added, "We've got a great base with the cold week we had."

Snowmobile Safety Week

With Motorized Snowmobile Safety Week running from Feb. 6 to 16, Oxford OPP want to remind snowmobilers that driving too fast for the conditions, impaired driving, and driving on frozen waterways are the leading causes of snowmobile fatalities.

OPP West Region members want to avoid a repeat of the 2024/25 riding season, when five riders lost their lives in fatal motorized snowvehicle collisions. To date, there have been three fatal snowmobile collisions in



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

It's estimated 600 people attended the Southern Sno Riders first hot dog day in 10 years. Held Saturday, the event was at the club warm-up shack in the Township of Norwich.

West Region this year, including one in Oxford County. There have been three fatal snowmobile collisions in the West Region so far in 2026. (Brant County, Oxford County, South Bruce)

OPP reminds snowmobilers to:

- Ride sober.
- Do not ride tired or distracted.
- Consider taking a snowmobile safety course if you are a new or inexperienced rider.
- Adhere to the open OFSC trails as they remain the safest terrain to ride on.
- Treat any frozen waterway as though no ice is safe ice.
- Wear an approved helmet and appropriate clothing.
- Carry a small safety kit that includes waterproof matches, a pocketknife, a compass, whistle, ice picks, and a first aid kit.
- Obey the speed limits and municipal by-laws.
- Let someone know your intended route and keep your cell phone fully charged.

All motorists are reminded that occasionally, snowmobilers cross the roadways. It is everyone's responsibility to stay alert.

For more snowmobile safety information visit www.ofsc.on.ca, www.ontario.ca/snowmobilesafety and www.ontario.ca/document/official-mto-drivers-handbook/off-road-vehicles-snowmobiles

Fair board seeks volunteers to keep a time-honoured tradition alive

ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Correspondent

The Tillsonburg Tri-County Agricultural Society (fair board) is seeking new members to bring fresh ideas and a different vision to the table.

The dedicated group of volunteers is responsible for planning and organizing various events, including parades. There are currently 50 members, but only 12 are actively involved in the fair.

Third vice-president Rosemary Dean has been a member for over 20 years, serving in a variety of roles over the years, including president.

"People are welcome to reach out to us if they're interested in volunteering," Dean said. "There's a lot of pressure on all the people that do it. Setting up is a big job and then there's the takedown and clean up."

Yearly membership is only \$5, and meetings are held monthly. The fair board needs people who can commit to helping with fundraising and organization, and being there for the week before the fair, for the event itself, and the work that is involved afterwards.

"Some people take on a specific piece of it, they have a passion for something, but you need to be a team player," Dean said. "We do whatever we can for the community within our

means, within the budget, and everything goes back into the fair."

Dean also noted that they try to highlight personal achievements and businesses throughout the Tri-County area, representing Oxford, Elgin and Norfolk.

Established in 1854, the Tillsonburg Fair draws crowds every summer. Attendance varies from year to year, from 4,000 to 8,000 people, depending on the weather, and offers attractions and displays to interest and entertain all ages.

"Each of us is so dedicated," Dean said. "The passion we have for the fair - we don't want it to go by the wayside."

Joan Weston, long-time member of the Tillsonburg Tri-County Agricultural Society, recalled the significant number of people who flocked to the fair after pandemic lockdowns had prevented it. It was easy to see how valuable the event was and how much people loved it. She reflected on why the fair is so important.

"The fair represents an unbroken tradition for nearly 170 years of the community having the opportunity to enjoy events and entertainment and keep in touch with our agricultural roots right here in town."

Those interested in joining the fair board as a volunteer can email tillsonburgfair@outlook.com using the subject line "volunteering".



(ANNANDALE HOUSE NHS PHOTO)

The Tillsonburg Fairgrounds, circa 1915. A tradition that has been enjoyed for generations relies on a team of dedicated volunteers.

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Tillsonburg artist featured in Ontario Legislature



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Stella Jurgen's painting *Autumn Leaves*, which depicts Lake Lisgar, will hang in the Ontario Legislature dining room in 2026 after she was successful in a competition. The painting was also the subject of an art class she taught at the Station Arts Centre.

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Not only will a Tillsonburg artist have her art hanging in the Ontario Legislature for 2026, but the town's most noted landmark will be on display as well.

Artist Stella Jurgen's work "Autumn Leaves" was selected to be part of the 2026 Art à la Carte program at the Legislative Assembly of Ontario (Queen's Park). Her work will hang in the legislative dining room for the remainder of the year.

Autumn Leaves depicts Lake Lisgar on a misty fall morning, with a canoe in the foreground. She likes hiking and kayaking on the lake.

"I love watching the leaves turning colour, the warm colours in contrast to the cool colour of the fog," she said.

One other neat fact about Autumn Leaves is that it was the topic painted in a landscape class that Jurgen taught at the Station Arts Centre.

Jurgen entered her painting last August and just found out in late January that she was accepted. She was one of 80 artists who were accepted.

Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman was thrilled to see paintings of his riding in the Legislative dining room.

"It is great to see the work of Oxford-based artist Stella Jurgen displayed in the Queen's Park dining room, where people gather every day," he said. "Featuring her work here is a meaningful way to recognize Oxford's local creativity and the people behind it."

Jurgen was thrilled to learn her art had been accepted.

"I was quite proud of that. I didn't use to paint landscapes until I came here, until Tillsonburg," she said, adding her husband Norm was encouraging her to paint landscapes for several years before she started.

Although relatively new to landscape painting, Jurgen has quickly become known for her depictions of local scenes around Tillsonburg. She painted the mural on the wall at the Tillsonburg Airport and has three pieces on permanent display in the Tillsonburg Town Centre, with more to come in a display to be unveiled this month. Her first work was painting a mural on the library wall.

"I really enjoy capturing the landscape of Tillsonburg," she said.

Although Jurgen is new to landscape painting, she is not new to painting. She was born in Argentina and began painting as a child.

"There was just art and me, and I wanted to draw and paint all the time," she said.

When she was nine, her family moved to Portugal, and she took fine arts at university for a short time, but had to give up her studies when her family moved to Canada.

Eventually, she signed up for a commercial arts course at George Brown College and completed it. She made her living as a graphic designer and continues in that profession.

"My skill has always been in use one way or another," she said. "That's why I became versatile in many fields is because I was creative."

After working in the advertising industry in Toronto, she opened her own business 27 years ago with her husband, a web designer. The company, 17 Designs, did well, completing branding for both large and small companies, and receiving awards for its work along the way.

The couple moved a couple of times in the GTA before settling in Tillsonburg three years ago. The beauty of the Canadian landscape struck her immediately.

"My husband has been saying to me for years, 'Why don't you try painting landscapes?' " she said, explaining her main subject previously was the human figure.

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MUSIC CORNER

Hamilton comedian Eric Johnston brings Son of a Bull tour to Tillsonburg Feb. 21



BEN ADDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Winters can feel joyless when the sun has been in hiding, casting gloom over driveways that are stacked with snow. It can be the kind of season that wears people down, which is why a good laugh matters more than ever. We all know laugh-

ter is the best medicine and that is where comedian Eric Johnston comes in, bringing his 'Son of a Bull' tour to Tillsonburg with the guarantee of many laughs and a much-needed break from the winter blues.

Eric Johnston's current tour marks a new chapter in both his personal life and career. Johnston is a father, husband and seasoned road comic who is now digging deeper than ever while keeping the sharp edge and physical style that has earned him a loyal following across Canada and the United States.

"Son of a Bull is really about where I come from. It's about growing up around strong personalities and a certain work ethic that sticks with you," Johnston explains. "This tour is me looking at what happens

when that mentality meets real adult life. Marriage, becoming a dad, and realizing you do not just outgrow the stuff you were raised with. You carry it forward and hopefully learn how to use it better or at least have a laugh trying to figure it out."

The 2026 tour comes with the simple but telling tagline of 'New Life. Same Bull.' While Johnston's life has evolved the comedy remains bold and unapologetically honest. His material now explores fatherhood, ambition, anxiety and the pressure to be better than the versions of ourselves we grew up with.

"Earlier in my career, a lot of my comedy was about reacting to life. Now it is about being responsible for it. This tour digs into fatherhood, marriage, anxiety and the pressure of trying to be bet-

ter than the version of yourself you grew up watching," Johnston states. "It is still loud and high energy but there is more honesty behind it now. I have got more at stake in every aspect.

Eric Johnston has been featured on CBC, MTV, Netflix, CTV and the Food Network while performing at iconic venues like The Laugh Factory and The House of Blues. Johnston is also the author of the book 'Run with the Bull: Three Generations of Sports & Entertainment' which offers a behind-the-scenes of his journey into comedy and acting while being the son of professional wrestling legend Bullwhip Johnson. Despite those notable credits, Johnston still makes tour stops in smaller towns like Tillsonburg.

"Smaller towns are honest. People show up because they want to laugh, not because it is trendy. You feel that right away. Big cities are exciting and fast, but smaller rooms feel more personal," Johnston says. "It is more like a conversation than a performance. I do not change the act, but I listen more and lean into the moment. Those shows often end up being the ones people talk about long after."

The 'Son of a Bull' tour is not a reinvention for Eric Johnston but more like an evolution.

"Expect a fast, physical, no-nonsense show. Big laughs, real stories and an experience that feels natural instead of forced. I want them to feel like they caught up with an old friend," Johnston exclaims. "I want peo-

ple to leave feeling lighter. Like they laughed hard and recognized themselves in what they heard. If someone walks out thinking they really needed that night, that is a win for me."

The audience can expect a night of comedy that is raw, relatable and relentlessly funny when Eric Johnston returns to Tillsonburg on Saturday, Feb. 21. Doors for the comedy show at Paddy's Underground open at 7 p.m. Reservations and tickets can be purchased directly at The Mill by calling 519-842-1878. The show starts at 8 p.m. with opener Jordan Armenise with \$25 tickets available in advance at the venue and online at www.eventbrite.ca. Follow Eric Johnston on his official website at www.ericjohnston-who.com

UPCOMING SHOWS

FEB. 11 - EUCHRE NIGHT
The Copper Mug - 5:30 p.m.

FEB. 12 - ACE OF WORDS
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 8 p.m.

FEB. 14 - VALENTINE'S KARAOKE
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 8:30 p.m.

FEB. 15 - ARCHIE AND SEAN WRIGHT
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 5 p.m.

FEB. 19 - JAY RAWK
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 8:30 p.m.

FEB. 20 - SAVING AGNES
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 8 p.m.

FEB. 21 - ERIC JOHNSTON COMEDY SHOW W/ JORDAN ARMENISE
Paddy's Underground - \$25 - 7 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

FEB. 21 - RIGHT TURN CLYDE
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 9 p.m.

FEB. 26 - *SOLD OUT* THE FLATLINERS W/ CHUCK COLES
Paddy's Underground - \$50 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

FEB. 27 - SHAYLYN KICKIN' IT COUNTRY
The Copper Mug - No Cover Charge - 8 p.m.

FEB. 28 - IAN BW, THE LEXINGTON CURE AND THE FILTHY RADICALS
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SWOX NEWS



South-West Oxford council briefs

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

Proposed Child Care Centre - Request for Proposal for Expressions of Interest

Council has directed township staff to proceed with issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit expressions of interest from qualified child care operators for the operation of a licensed child care center within the proposed new municipal office, library, and child care facility in Mount Elgin. The municipal office has an anticipated opening target date of January 2028, subject to final design, approvals, and financing.

The inclusion of a licensed child care center within the new facility is intended to

address a recognized service gap in the township and to support the participation of families and the workforce in the community.

Staff are engaging the child care sector early to confirm market interest, to better understand operational requirements and space needs, to obtain information related to fee structures and potential rent, and to support the development of a long-term, sustainable financial model for the facility.

The RFP is seeking expressions of interest and detailed submissions from proponents,

including organizational experience and governance, business and operational model, program philosophy and service delivery approach, understanding of rural child care delivery, proposed fee structures, and proposed rent payable to the township.

The intent of the RFP is not to award a contract at this

stage, but rather to identify potential operating partners, to help inform the detailed design of the child care space, to support the development of a long-term financial plan for the facility, and to confirm demand and service delivery capacity within the community.

Any recommendations arising from the RFP process will be subject to future council

approval, including approval of the final facility design, project financing and a lease agreement with the successful proponent.

Proposals to operate the child care facility must be submitted via email before noon (local time) on Monday, March 23 to Julie Middleton, cao@swox.org.

Changes in recyclings, garbage pick-up

The township has recently begun co-collecting garbage and organics at the same time on a six-day collection cycle, but is no longer collecting recyclable materials. All households in SWOX have been provided with one 45-litre green bin for organics for setting out at the road, along with a seven-litre kitchen container for food scraps. Each bin contains a sorting guide and information sheet for how to set out and sort organics along with samples of acceptable compostable bin liners or bags if residents choose to use these.

With a new provincially mandated recycling system in place and producers now responsible for the recycling of residential waste across the province, SWOX township has contracted this service to Emterra Group. For any concerns about recycling, residents should contact customerareont@emterra.ca or by phone at 1 888 597 – 1541.

The provincial recycling system does not include non-residential, institutional or commercial sources. Oxford County has contracted with Emterra Group to pick these up if the property owners register with the county. There is no fee for this service as it is covered by the tax levy. For those interested, contact Oxford County at 519 539 9800 – 3145.

Ontario Provincial Police are recruiting auxiliary members

Interested in becoming an O.P.P. auxiliary officer? This allows people to gain invaluable insight into the world of law enforcement and to be placed at the heart of one's community's safety and well-being. Involvement allows for support at O.P.P. community events, ride alongs with frontline officers, and boosts resumés with real-world experience and mentoring. Applicants must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident, at least 18 years old, possess a Grade 12 diploma (or equivalent), hold a Valid G driver's license, and pass a security check. Volunteers average 12 hours per month. Applications are accepted online at the OPP Careers website or a local detachments.

Mount Elgin wastewater system upgrades

Engineers are proceeding with Mount Elgin wastewater system upgrades and anticipate construction will begin this summer, pending completion of the remaining engineering designs. The Ministry of the Environment must be formally notified before any work can begin. The project is almost ready to go to tender.

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SWOX NEWS



SWOX Councillor Jim Pickard not seeking re-election in October 2026

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

On the heels of South West Oxford Township (SWOX) Mayor David Mayberry's recent retirement announcement, Councillor Jim Pickard has confirmed he will not be seeking re-election.

A statement by Mayberry in the February 2026 SWOX Talks newsletter states that several members of council (including the mayor) have indicated they will not be running in the October election.

So far, Councillor Jim Pickard is the only councillor to respond to the Tillsonburg Post's query to every councillor.

Pickard represents the Sweaburg area (Ward 5), is the chair of the township's Environment and Energy Innovation Committee, and represents the township on the Rural Economic Development Corporation. A member of the Sweaburg Lions Club, Pickard studied at the University of Guelph and is a retired manager of Farm Credit Canada. A champion of careful budget analysis, Pickard is also well known in his community for being out and stopping to talk to people. First elected in 2011 and acclaimed in 2014, 2018 and 2022, Pickard will be wrapping up 15 years in the role.

Mayberry emphasized that the election is fast approaching and the township needs to proactively consider who in the community may be interested in running for municipal office. He stressed that a deliberate effort is re-

quired to ensure good governance.

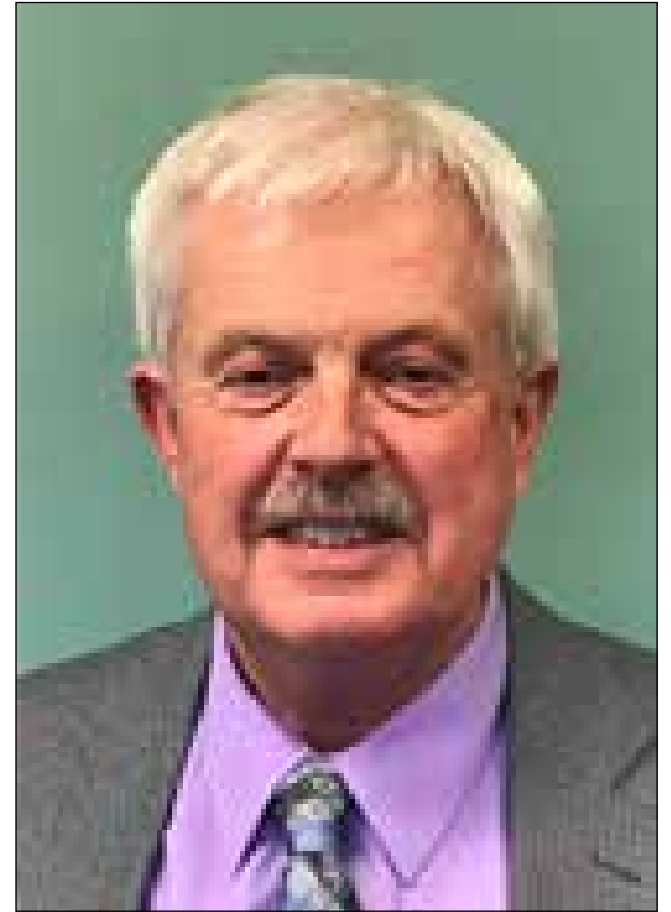
Pickard also questioned what the 2027 council will look like and stressed the importance of actively encouraging community members to engage in local government, noting that change is inevitable and strong leadership is critical.

The township approved new ward boundaries last July, which will impact the municipal election. These boundaries changes will take effect on the day the new council is organized after voting day on Oct. 26. The changes were made to ensure that each ward has a proportionate number of residents and so that every resident's vote carries equal weight. Each councillor will represent a reasonably equal number of constituents as well.

Council is holding two candidate information sessions to assist with the 2026 municipal election. These sessions will cover key topics such as eligibility requirements, the nomination process, important dates and deadlines, as well as the roles and responsibilities of elected officials.

These sessions will also provide staff, Mayberry, Pickard, and any other councillors who announce they will not be seeking re-election, with an opportunity to engage with members of the public who are interested in running for office and to offer insight into what is involved with serving as an elected official at the municipal level.

The sessions will be held on Wednesday, March 4 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Brownsville Fire Station and Monday, March 9 at the Beachville Fire Station. The nomination period opens on May 1 and closes on Aug. 21.



Jim Pickard.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

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SPORTS

Tillsonburg Gemini hockey girls make their point



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Gemini forward Sophia Monsere crashes into Stampede's goalie Brooklyn Smith in front of Parkside's Regan Reene, with Tillsonburg's Brooklyn Malott honing in on the puck. Malott would it in the net, but her 'goal' was immediately waved off.

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

The Tillsonburg Gemini girls' hockey team made their point.

"Finally!" said goalie Asha David following a 0-0 Thames Valley Regional Athletics Southeast split against the St. Thomas Parkside Stampede's Thursday, Feb. 5 at the Memorial Arena.

David was full value for the tie, stopping all of the estimated 20 shots she faced en route to the shutout.

"Asha really holds us together out there," credited Gemini teammate Lainey West. An AA and AAA ringette player headed for Ontario Winter Games in Orillia in that sport, West enjoys making it out to as many hockey games as she can, around the academic responsibilities of her Grade 12 year.

West added an additional transition beyond ringette to hockey on this day, making a guest appearance in goal with 1:48 remaining in the third period to help lock up the goalless draw, and Tillsonburg's first point of the TVRA Southeast season.

"Kind of stopped it with my leg," said West. "Just dove down, tried to play goalie for a second - Asha was getting peppered."

"I'm lower to the ground, it's easier for me to get down there," West added with a laugh.

The first (15-minute) period ended without a goal, as did the second. The third continued without a blemish on the score-sheet, the Gemini unable to capitalize on two two-minute power plays. As the clock wound down, the Stampede's lengthier bench became a factor. A Tillsonburg squad essentially running four defenders and two lines with a spare forward mixed in was increasingly pressured, circling the wagons to a degree in front of their beleaguered netminder.

"I feel bad because at the end of the game, it's all on the goalie," said West. "You've got to help her out a little bit."

"I get so nervous," David admitted, "especially when that red helmet (opponent) comes blazing near me."

A team can't feel bad when it plays its hardest and doesn't come up with a win said West. But after an 0-5 start including two tight, one-goal losses, it was nice to put at least one point into the standings, encouragement for more as the regular season wraps up. It was scheduled to conclude with a Monday, Feb. 9 home date against the Ingersoll DCI Blue Bombers and a Tuesday,



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Tillsonburg defender Lainey West (centre) moves the puck from danger in front of goalie Asha David under pressure from Parkside's Payten Eldred.



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Gemini goalie Asha David makes a successful poke check on Parkside's Payten Eldred.

Feb. 10 road trip to Dorchester.

"Next time, I'm going to take her spot in net and she's going out and scoring some goals," West concluded with a laugh.

"Hat-trick," David smiled.

TVRA basketball and volleyball playoffs were scheduled to begin Tuesday, Feb. 10. The Gemini senior girls' volleyball team and the senior and junior boys' basketball teams are stacked up in a 1:30 p.m. 9 vs. 8 preliminary-round, 3 p.m. 5 vs. 4 quarter-final and 4:30 p.m. 10 vs. 7 preliminary

round triple-header against Woodstock St. Mary's, Woodstock Huron Park and Huron Park, respectively. The Gemini junior girls' volleyball squad was to host Parkside in a 3 p.m. 5 vs. 4 quarter-final Thursday February 12 inside the Glendale Community Gym.

The Gemini girls' curling team is also looking forward to a post-season match, hitting the Ingersoll Curling Club ice Wednesday, Feb. 18 for a TVRA semi-final against an opponent, still to be determined.

BOYS HOCKEY	
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 4	
TILLSONBURG	4
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Battle for top four in Club Oxford B intensifies

JEFF GWYN

Post Contributor

Thirteen points separate the first and second-place teams in Club Oxford's B Division, but with only two points between the next four points it shows how tight the race is for second, third and fourth.

February 2

A Division

Health Hut 5, Fody's 1

Health Hut had pressure all game. They didn't let Fody's get in the zone before turning it back the other way. A solid effort. Fody's were short a few players in this one and couldn't get much going and didn't get many second chances.

Kyle Smith had four points for Health Hut. Kurtis Burton had the goal for Fody's.

ReMax 2, Apple Shack 2

ReMax looked to be in control until the last couple minutes. They had used their speed to keep their momentum all game. Apple Shack staged a late game comeback to earn the point. It was a game where they looked a step behind, but had a solid finish.

Dan Andersson had a goal for ReMax.

Quinn VanBoeckel had a goal for Apple Shack.

B Division

Glass 6, RND 1

Glass found some scoring in this game. They broke through in the second, and didn't let their foot off the gas until the buzzer. RND couldn't get much going as they were chasing Glass all game. Some good chances couldn't get them on the board though.

Devon McDonald had two goals for Glass. Gaige Benish had the goal for RND.

B-Line 3, Carquest 1

B-Line had a good first period where they had some good outlet passes and rushes. They did well to keep the Carquest top guys off the scoresheet. Carquest couldn't get the chances in front in this contest, and ran out of time before curfew to make that push.

Adam Gignac had two points for B-Line. Nate Shearer had a point for Carquest.

Airmount 3, Jeff Prouse Mortgages 3

Airmount had some good rushes and were able to play offensively all game. A

solid effort at both ends. Prouse Mortgages seemed a step behind early, but played better in the second. It was a good effort to earn the point, but a late push couldn't get the win.

Denis Lenane had two points for Airmount. Stephan Coulombe had two goals for Jeff Prouse Mortgages.

Source 4, Royal LePage 2

Source continues to play their game and have fun doing so. They have been finding different chemistry, and it has led to some more scoring chances. Royal LePage had a decent first period but fell off in the second. They have been scoring lately and will need to find that magic again.

Nate Bisschop had three points for Source. Chris Koteles had two points for Royal LePage.

February 5

A Division

Fody's 4, ReMax 2

Fody's had some good breakouts and rushes that kept them going all night. Some good defensive work late kept ReMax from getting in close at the end. ReMax had a few rushes tonight, but couldn't get any sustained pressure in deep. A good push at the end, but they

couldn't find the back of the net.

Shane Balcomb had three points for Fody's. Cory Turner had two points for ReMax.

Health Hut 6, Apple Shack 3

Health Hut came out strong in the second as they had three unanswered to start. They were able to make some solid passes and made some quick shots in this one. Apple Shack had a good first period but were chasing in the second. They played hard to the end but could not get rewarded.

Benson Howey had three assists for Health Hut. Brandon Velda had two points for Apple Shack.

B Division

Royal LePage 3, Jeff Prouse Mortgages 1

Royal LePage found their chances in the second period. They had good pressure down low and were able to get some shots on net. Prouse Mortgages had trouble getting their offense going as the game went on. They had some trouble in the crease that took their momentum away as well.

Jeff Hodgins had two points for Royal LePage. Stephan Coulombe had the goal for Prouse Mortgages.

Petrolia Squires defeat Thunder in game one of playoffs

MICHAEL HOLLY

Post Contributor

The more things change, the more they stay the same. First round of the OEHL playoffs have your Tillsonburg Thunder versus the Petrolia Squires in a best-of-seven tilt.

Game 1 was in Petrolia last Friday. It usually takes three or four games to get a good hate on for the other team, but both teams decided to forgo the games and started right away. Both teams know the other team very well and it was evident from the onset.

Jayne Forslund, from Jaden Vansevant and Hunter Monkhouse, opened the scoring with a screen shot from the point. From there, Squire tender Jakob Knowles stood on his head and shut the Thunder down. The Squires pocketed tow in the first, one in the second, and an empty-net goal in the third. Squire fans were unruly as usual and it made for an exciting game.

The trip home Friday night was as scary as it gets. It took the writer 14 hours to make it back to Tillsonburg including a 2.5 hour rest in a snowbank. The Thunder trainer, grandson, and myself may still be there if not for the heroic efforts of #91 Rob MacLean and #10 Tye Johnson coming through the storm, shovel in hand, and muscles bulging to push us out.

Heroics were not limited to these guys. On Facebook, a lady was wondering who the two guys that came by and pushed her out. These were no other than #13 Braden Roberts and #8 Derek Slaght. Go to the Thunder Facebook page to see the content of her post. I am very proud of my guys. They have battled, giving no quarter, both on the ice and in blinding snow storms.

Game 2 of the series is Tuesday, Feb. 10 at 8:30 in Tillsonburg. Game 3 is in Petrolia Feb. 13 at 8:30 p.m.. Game 4 in Tillsonburg, Feb. 14 at 7:30 p.m.. Come cheer on these heroes!!

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MINOR SPORTS

SCRAPBOOK

(STUART BLOWER PHOTOS)



Tillsonburg Fun2 Martens played Forest in a recent home game. Tillsonburg forwards Brock Boucher (#8), Natalie Wagner (#31), Ramona Koteles (#20) and Addison Northfield (#11) advanced on the Forest net.



It may have only been a practice but these U5 players were giving it their all like it was a Stanley Cup playoff game. Kate MacDonald covers the net while, left to right, Jack Link, Emmett Kersey, Damien Capson and Cash Bilger scramble for the puck.



The U 11 Shaw's Ice Cream Tillsonburg Lightning attempt to clear the puck past their blue line in a game against the Woodstock Wildcats.



Tillsonburg's Eli Hamm, right, tangles with a Six Nations forward in a recent game while defender Grason Coderre provides back-up for Tillsonburg net minder Joey Bisante.



Tillsonburg U16 goaltender Kaylee Thompson prepares for a shot while her defence crew tries to thwart a shot from Dorchester in a recent game.



Tillsonburg Spa Marche U-18 Lightning's goaltender dashes for the puck in a recent game against Wallaceburg.

Rotary youth exchange brings global connections to Tillsonburg

JASON WEILER

Post Contributor

The Rotary Club of Tillsonburg is proudly hosting one of its 2025–2026 Rotary Youth Exchange students, Sota Hashiura of Japan, who has already become an active member of our community. At the same time, Tillsonburg's own 2025–2026 outbound student, Evan Yallop, is representing our town abroad during his exchange year in Germany.

Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE) offers students aged 15–18 an extraordinary opportunity to experience another culture, learn a new language, and grow as global citizens. Since launching its first exchange in 1968, the Tillsonburg Rotary Club has supported more than 90 students through the program.

Sota's year in Tillsonburg

Arriving in late August, Sota will make Tillsonburg his home until late June or early July. In just a few months, he has embraced both Rotary and community life.

This fall, he volunteered at Wings and Wheels, performed in the Glendale Wassail Concert, and joined the Gemini Robotics Team at Glendale High School. He has also taken in major Canadian attractions, including the Nathan Phillips Square tree lighting, Casa Loma, a Toronto Blue Jays game, and a visit to Niagara Falls.

Sota also participated in a Rotary supported GlobalMedic food packing initiative, helping prepare emergency supplies for communities affected by crisis.

Beyond these activities, Sota has also joined the Tillsonburg Curling Club and represented Glendale High School in cross country running, further expanding his connections to local youth and community sports.

A highlight of his exchange so far was a three day winter adventure in Haliburton with other exchange students—an annual Rotary tradition going back a decade. The trip included a visit to a wolf sanctuary, evenings at a lakeside cottage, and an unforgettable two hour dogsledding experience at Winterdance.

Through these experiences, Sota has brought his culture, kindness, and enthusiasm to Tillsonburg—making lasting connections with classmates, host families, and

Rotarians.

Evan's year in Germany

Tillsonburg's 2025–2026 outbound exchange student, Evan Yallop, is spending his exchange year in Germany and has shared reflections on his early months abroad.

Evan describes his experience as “amazing,” filled with new friendships, cultural discoveries, and memorable travels. He has adapted to Germany's school structure, explored historic cities, and even visited Berlin to meet a member of parliament and tour the dome of the Reichstag.

One of Evan's favourite aspects of German life is the train system, which he says makes it easy to explore the country. He has introduced Canadian foods to his host families, made close friends, and embraced the culture—though he admits he still misses poutine.

“I will never forget this experience,” Evan says. “I'm glad I heard about this program and stepped out of my comfort zone.”

Flag flying at the Tillsonburg Rotary Clock Tower

To celebrate the cultural connections formed through Rotary Youth Exchange, the Rotary Club of Tillsonburg will fly national flags at the Rotary Clock Tower downtown:

- Jan. 28–30: The German flag will fly in honour of our outbound exchange student, Evan Yallop.
- February 26–28: The Japanese flag will fly in honour of our inbound exchange student, Sota Hashiura.

How to join the Rotary Youth Exchange journey

Rotary's next outbound exchange cycle begins in late summer 2027, with recruitment opening in the fall of 2026.

Rotary is also actively seeking host families—young couples, retirees, and families willing to welcome an international student like Sota for part of the year. Hosting is flexible, rewarding, and supported by the club every step of the way.

To learn more about applying, hosting, or volunteering, please contact the Rotary Club of Tillsonburg: exchange@rotarytillsonburg.ca



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Japanese exchange student Sota Hashiura toured many sites in Ontario during his visit, including a stop at Niagara Falls.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Evan Yallop enjoyed a sunset at Plesse Castle, a 1000 year old castle close to his host city of Göttingen.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

VALENTINE'S BRUNCH

The Legion was serving its annual Valentine's Brunch on Sunday morning, with scrambled eggs, pancakes, bacon, hash browns, and sausage on the menu, all for only \$15. In addition, the first 100 women received carnations. Brenda Underhill, left, and Beth Boughner were serving.

Weekend Quiz

by Jake Grant

1. What is the highest mountain in Greece?
2. What is a wallaby?
3. The Tower of London is famously "guarded by" which kind of bird?
4. What human organ can regenerate itself?
5. Who won Album of the Year at the 2026 Grammy's?
6. Who did Anne Hathaway marry in 1582?
7. What three headed dog is guardian of the underworld?
8. Which illegal CIA program from the 1950s–1970s secretly experimented with mind control and psychological manipulation?
9. What does NATO stand for?
10. What does the Latin phrase caveat emptor translate to?

This week's answers are found on pg. 26

Oxford MP returns from Conservative convention

LEE GRIFFI

Post Contributor

“The beautiful thing to see was 3,000 people showed up from across the country.”

That’s how Oxford Member of Parliament Arpan Khanna described his top takeaway from the Conservative Party of Canada’s national convention in Calgary last weekend. The riding was well represented with 10 people in attendance as delegates, but the MP said he was encouraged by the diverse coalition of supporters.

“We had folks from different regions, different demographics, backgrounds and faiths. We had blue-collar and trade workers; there was even a lady who had a sign, ‘Boomers for Pierre.’ We also had a lot of young people whom I have not typically seen in the past, and that speaks to Pierre’s leadership to see such a growing blue tent.”

Khanna said he spent a lot of time talking to people from across the country and the issues they brought up were similar.

“They are all facing similar hardships. I was talking to people from BC affected by lumber mills closing down. There is a lot of uncertainty and anxiety over the cost of living, affordability and crime.”

He added people are counting on his party for hope and they want a Conservative government when the next election comes around, and explained the convention was a big success for the party.

“Overall, it was very positive, not what the mainstream media was saying leading up to it. We saw that the grassroots movement is strong and Pierre (Poilievre) received a strong man-



(ARPAN KHANNA PHOTO)

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna was busy at the recent Conservative Party national convention in Calgary where he delivered a speech to the thousands of delegates. He also appeared on CBC and CPAC panels.

date.”

At the convention, delegates held a mandatory leadership review of Pierre Poilievre after the party’s defeat in the 2025 federal election. Under party rules, every leader who has led the party through an election loss must face this review.

Rather than holding a complex contested vote, delegates were simply asked whether they wanted Poilievre to remain as party leader — and the result was strong. He was overwhelmingly endorsed by his party members as 87.4 per cent

of delegates voted in favour of him remaining leader, making him the first Conservative leader since Stephen Harper to secure a second leadership mandate.

The review came after Poilievre led the Conservatives to a fourth consecutive federal election loss against the Liberals. The leader has secured a clear mandate from party delegates to continue leading the party into the next election cycle.

Khanna delivered a six-minute speech at the convention, praising Poilievre and promising to

keep up the fight to overthrow the Liberals at the next vote which some experts believe could come as early as this spring.

“We need to work hard together to share Pierre’s vision for Canada, where homes are affordable, streets are safe, and hard work truly pays off. A Canada that is united, thriving and full of opportunity, where every sacrifice means something.”

He added his number one priority is to ensure Oxford is well represented at Ottawa, despite not being in government.

“I’ve been working on that since day one, whether it’s in Parliament or in the community, listening to people’s concerns and helping thousands of constituents with their issues. I think we had over 5,000 cases resolved for residents last year.”

Khanna said the party is more unified than ever, pointing to Poilievre’s strong support as a benefit when the next writ is dropped. The Oxford MP has a long history with the opposition leader.

“I was his campaign co-chair when he ran for the leadership. I’ve always believed in his vision in terms of getting our country back on track. I’ve had a long history with other elected officials, dating back to the Steven Harper governments, for Jason Kenney and a few others.”

Khanna has also been involved with provincial politics for the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party, and the MP was recently given the title of National Outreach Chair for the federal party and sits on its leadership team.

“We are united in our values and love for our country to make sure we have a strong, self-reliant, sovereign and prosperous nation.”

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JUST CHILLING...

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



Melissa Skillings and her husband were enjoying the frozen surface of Lake Lisgar for recreation. The light snow on the frozen lake was perfect for cross-country skiing.



Lake Lisgar has been popular for ice fishing this year, with many out trying their luck last month to catch one of the multiple species that call the lake home. Zack Cnockaert is seen drilling a new hole after he didn't have success at his first location.



After several winters that required travelling north in order to enjoy their favourite pursuit, snowmobilers have been able to ride the trails closer to home this winter. Wayne and Julia Manley were amongst the several hundred who hit the Southern Snow Riders trails this weekend, including at this spot off Mall Road.



Sledding, tobogganing, and a wide variety of snow vehicles have been put to good use this winter with lots of snow and cold temperatures. Allison, left, and sister Evie Shields enjoyed their time on the hill adjacent to North Broadway Baptist Church on Saturday.



The J.L. Scott McLean Outdoor Recreation Pad and Rink has been a popular place with frigid temperatures to keep the outdoor ice pad in prime condition. Seth McCorkell was one of several young hockey players using the facility to practice his hockey game on the weekend.



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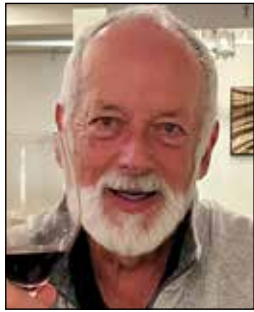


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Two lesser-known features of Lyon, France



**OH,
THE
PLACES
WE'LL
GO!**

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

There are plenty of reasons to enjoy a visit to the French city of Lyon. It's the third-largest city in France, known for its unique "Bouchon" gastronomy, for its history dating back to Roman times and before, and for its once-important role as a centre of the silk trade.

All of these things are still in evidence, today, but I found two other features of Lyon to be equally fascinating – the incredible mosaic murals in the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourviere, and the historic importance of Lyon as a centre of the French Resistance in World War II.

We were in Lyon as a stop on our Viking Rhone River Cruise; Lyon sits at the junction of the Rhone and Saone rivers. Our walking tour showed us a bustling city with a deep and rich history.

But when we visited the Basilica, I was tempted to skip the rest of the tour, and simply stay and savour the incredible mosaics that line the walls. They're not ancient – the gilded mosaics were created from 1872 all the way up to 1964. There are six mosaics, covering a vast, 6,000 square meters, and portraying two over-arching themes arising from the life of Mary the mother of Jesus: Mary and the Church, and Mary and the History of France.

The Basilica itself is awe-inspiring; like its mosaics, the building is not ancient – it was completed in 1896. But it is magnificent.

That cannot be said for the narrow passageways between buildings that honeycomb the old part of Lyon. As our group wandered through some of these passageways, we found little to be impressed with – until we heard to stories told by historian Boris Klein, who presented a lecture on board our Viking longship. His talk was

entitled "Lyon and the Resistance," and the first thing I learned was that those impressive hidden passageways were, in fact, absolutely vital to the underground resistance to the Nazis.

Why? The key reason was a feature we had spotted on our tour – inside these covered passageways were what today we would call community mail boxes. In the days of the Underground, they were perfect drop boxes for clandestine communication – hidden from view of the streets, or anything overhead, they were an ideal place for a member of the Resistance to leave a message, to be collected in secret by a colleague at a later time.

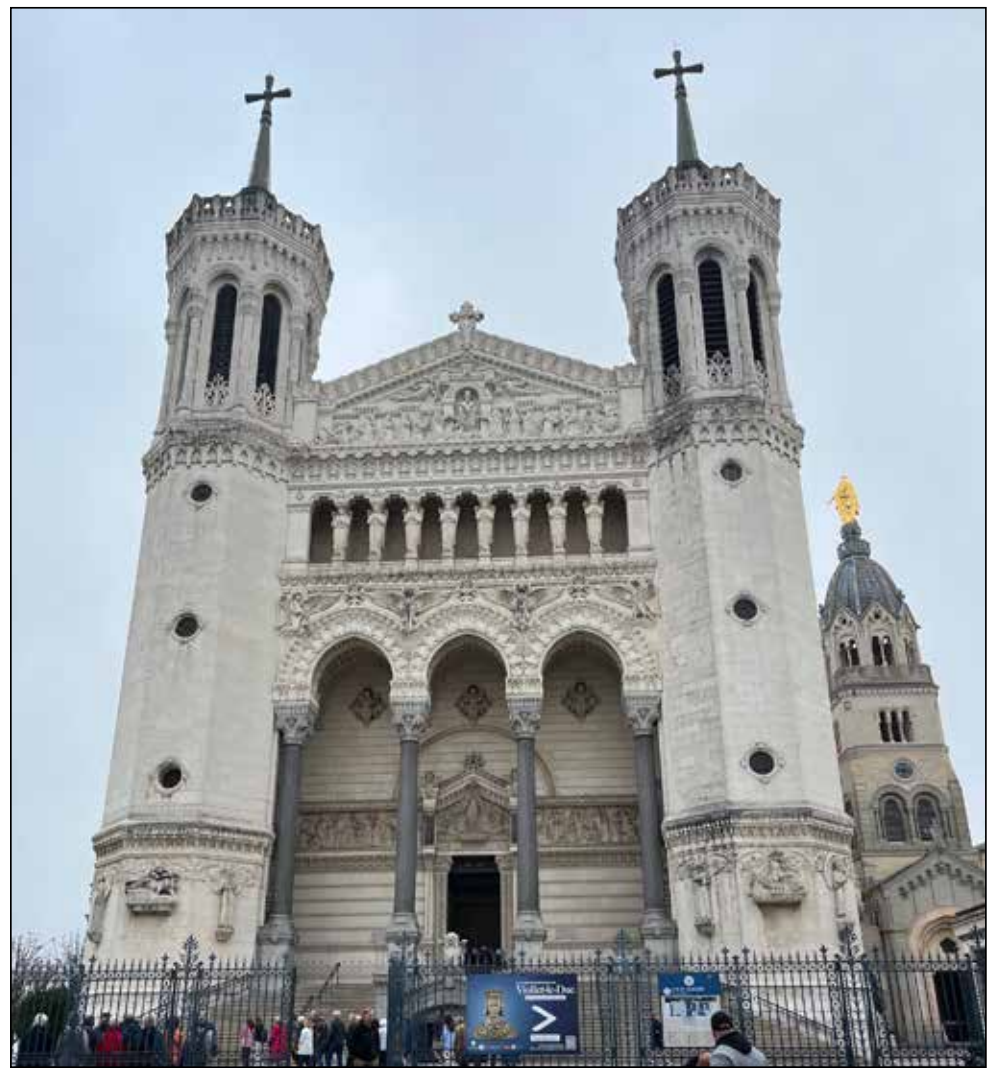
Klein gave us a thumbnail sketch of the circumstances that created the French Resistance. Although in 1939, the French were believed to have the best army in the world, clever German strategy saw France completely conquered in a mere 42 days. The Germans divided France into several parts. Alsace and Moselle were declared to be part of Germany. Northern France was occupied by the Germans; the south, including Lyon were initially occupied, but then became the "Free Zone" or "Vichy Zone" under Marshall Petain, a First World War hero who, by the time of the occupation, had become a collaborator with the Nazi regime.

The French Resistance arose in opposition to the Nazis and their puppets, and Lyon became the centre of the Resistance. And yes, those mailboxes and enclosed passages played a role, but there were lots of other factors, too. Lyon is located relatively close to Switzerland, a neutral country.

Lyon was a centre for trade unions, who joined with anti-Nazi political and religious organizations to oppose the Vichy regime. A common cause united unusual allies: "Jews, Catholic priests, communists, patriots all sat at the same table," said Klein. Of course, they could not operate openly – Petain had set up a French militia that was essentially an arm of the Gestapo.

So, opposition to the Nazis went underground – or more precisely, in Lyon, into the multitude of passageways throughout the old city. By the end of 1940, Lyon was recognized as the centre of the French Resistance.

According to Klein, the Resistance produced anti-Nazi leaflets, provided Jews and others who needed such with fake ID pa-



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Lyon's Basilica of Notre-Dame de Fourviere, home to 6,000 square meters of gilded mosaics.

pers, printed underground newspapers and organized clandestine meetings.

Charles DeGaulle, who was leading the fight against the Nazis from exile in England, sent a man named Jean Moulin to Lyon, where he played the key role in uniting the Resistance as "The Secret Army". Moulin was eventually captured and tortured to death, in 1943. By then, Germany had taken over direct control of the south of France, but at the same time, the Secret Army had taken a more active role in guerilla-style warfare against the occupiers.

On September 3, 1944, Lyon was liberated by Allied forces.

The story of the Resistance movement is in certainly heroic, but Klein noted that after the fact, DeGaulle created a less-than-ac-

curate myth. He told the people of France, "You are a great people who never accepted defeat." In fact, said Klein, a great many French people accepted the presence of the German occupiers, and frequently collaborated with them. Perhaps the most shocking example is that the Vichy police – French officers, not German – sent 75,000 Jews to die in concentration camps.

Klein noted that only in the 1970's or 80's did it become possible to discuss the complicated reality of the Nazi occupation of France.

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



A mosaic commemorating Joan of Arc.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)



One of six astonishing mosaic murals in the basilica.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

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What has lots of eyes, but can't see?
A potato

What has many needles, but doesn't sew?
A Christmas tree

What has hands, but can't clap?
A clock

What has legs, but doesn't walk?
A table

What has one head, one foot and four legs?
A bed

What can you catch, but not throw?
A cold

What kind of band never plays music?
A rubber band

What has many teeth, but can't bite?
A comb

What is cut on a table, but is never eaten?
A deck of cards

SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

Solutions on Page 26

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WORD SEARCH

VALENTINE'S DAY

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

- VALENTINE
- HEART
- LOVE
- ROMANCE
- CHOCOLATE
- FLOWERS
- CARD
- CUPID
- KISSES
- SWEETHEART
- DATE
- CANDY
- ROSES
- AFFECTION
- FRIENDSHIP

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FEBRUARY 17 | 5 - 6:30 PM
St. Paul's United Church, 88 Bidwell St., Tillsonburg
INVITES YOU - YOUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS TO OUR ANNUAL PANCAKE SUPPER ON SHROVE TUESDAY
Adults - \$12, Children under 10 - free. Cash payable at the door. LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE.

FEBRUARY

FEBRUARY 25 | 1:30 - 3 PM
FREE SENIOR DIGITAL LITERACY CLASSES
Tillsonburg & District Multi-Service Centre, 96 Tillson Ave, Tillsonburg, ON
Encompassing Cybersecurity, Facebook, Zoom, Google Maps, YouTube, and Microsoft Suite.

FLAG RAISINGS FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2026

Join us this February to celebrate Black History Month in Oxford County. Commemorate the history of our Black communities and learn how diverse the community has grown. Pan-African Flag raisings and receptions including local historical displays by the Oxford County Archives and various museums and spoken word presentation by Duane Kumala-Thomas will be held in the following communities throughout the month:

FEBRUARY 17 | 10 AM
NORWICH
Norwich Community Centre - 53 Stover Street South
Reception to follow inside the Community Centre's Auditorium.

FEBRUARY 24 | 10 AM
TILLSONBURG
South Broadway Parkette at Oxford St.
Reception to follow at Tillsonburg Public Library (2 Library Lane).

Everyone is welcome. For more information visit instagram: @oxfordroots or <http://reveleddotme.wixstudio.com/oxfordroots>

FEBRUARY 21 | 2 PM
A VELOCPEDE - A WHAT??
The Edison, Vienna & Area Museum, 6209 Plank Rd. Vienna
Join Mr. David Harding as he takes us on a journey from Eden to Port Burwell on an unusual, antiquated piece of railroad equipment. Railroads covered great distances & in the time before motorized vehicles, walking the line for maintenance was a long walk! For further information email: bayhamhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com

MARCH

MARCH 21 | 9:30 AM - 4 PM
OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY OXPEX & OTEX 2026 STAMP SHOW
St. Mary's Catholic High School, 431 Juliana Drive, Woodstock, ON
Free admission and parking. Framed and Judged exhibits, Stamp dealers, youth gift bags, Sales Circuit, draw prizes. Contact: dhfe@silomail.com. Web: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

MARCH 24 | 7 PM
LIFE WORTH LIVING
Woodstock Polish Hall, 878 Dufferin Street, Woodstock
The one-hour film was produced by Woodstock native, Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director of Euthanasia Prevention Coalition and will be followed by a Q & A session with Alex. Admission is free. For more information, please email info@oxfordcountyrighttolife.com

ONGOING CLASSES, CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

OXFORD COUNTY DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM
Appointments are available at Alexandra Hospital Ingersoll and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital and by phone
Are you looking for support with your Diabetes? Our Team of Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and a Social Worker is here to support YOUR goals. We can help with medication adjustments, lifestyle and diet changes, stress management, weight reduction strategies and more. **SELF REFERRALS ARE WELCOME.** Please call 519-485-9611 to book an appointment. Let's work together!

MONDAYS | 9 - 11:30 AM
OTTER VALLEY TAI CHI
St. John's Anglican Church, 46 Ridout St. W., Tillsonburg
New Monday morning classes have begun. Spots still available: 9:00 - 10:30 am
Introduction, 10:30 - 11:30 am Foundations.
Enjoy gentle exercise with others as you work to improve flexibility, balance and stamina. Call 519-688-9779, email ottervalley@canadiantaichiacademy.org, visit canadiantaichiacademy.org.

MONDAYS | 7 - 9 PM
MODERN SQUARE DANCING IS FOR YOU!
Thames Valley Dance Club
Looking for something to do in the evening or something new to try? Modern square dancing is a great way to learn something new, have fun, meet new friends, relieve stress, and get some exercise! All you need is comfortable shoes and casual clothing. No experience or partner is required and anyone over the age of 12 is

welcome (children from 12-15 with an adult, please). The 2025-2026 season has started at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall, 108 Wonham St. S. Ingersoll. The first night is free, and after that the cost is \$7.50 per person each Monday, paid monthly at the start of the month. For more information, contact Julie at 519-535-3314.

2ND TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 2 - 4 PM
4TH TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 7 - 9 PM
OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY
Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7
If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection. Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com. Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 7 - 9 PM
SATURDAYS | 10 AM - 12 PM
LEARN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU (BJJ)
North Broadway Baptist Church
Thanks to donor support, we've been able to purchase mats and uniforms, and our instructors generously volunteer their time. This isn't a business—any donations go straight back into the program to help buy more uniforms, mats, and equipment. If it's within your means, a \$20 monthly donation helps support the program, but if not, classes are completely free. **Classes are open to anyone 14 and older.** If you'd like to try a class, please arrive about 15 minutes early to sign waivers and get fitted for a uniform. Information can be found at: <https://www.northbroadwaychurch.ca/nbmfa>, <https://www.facebook.com/northbroadwaymfa>, <https://www.instagram.com/northbroadwaymfa/>
Inquires can be made at: nbmfa@northbroadwaychurch.ca

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM
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FRIDAYS | 1 PM
INTERESTED IN BRIDGE?
JOIN US AT THE TILLSONBURG DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB
Tillsonburg Senior Centre - 45 Hardy Ave, Tillsonburg
Don't have a partner? Come anyway and we will match you up with someone. For more information, visit their Facebook page: TburgBridge.

1ST AND 3RD TUES. OF MONTH

TILLSONBURG LIONS

The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their dinner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Community Centre. If you are interested in giving back to your Community contact Jim at 519 409 0876 for more information.....all are welcome.

1ST WED. OF MONTH | 7 PM
WAGNER MEMORIAL TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526 - MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING
The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON
Not a member? Contact us to join. For More Information Call, the Legion 519-443-5588. www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP AT ONE OF OUR EVENTS? WE WELCOME YOU!
The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON
You do not need to be a member to Volunteer, Just contact the legion and leave your name and number and purpose of your call. Someone will get back to you as to where you might be needed. Students and Adults welcome.
Open hours. Wed.-Fri. 3 pm-10 pm, Sat. 1 pm-10 pm, Sun. 1 pm-6 pm. For More Information call, the Legion at 519-443-5588 or teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

VON OXFORD GRIEF CARE: FREE MONTHLY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
Register at: oxford.griefsupport@von.ca or 519-539-1231 Ext 6299 or 6296

TILLSONBURG

WHEN: 2nd Tuesday of every month
WHERE: VON Oxford Office 24 Brock St. W., Tillsonburg
TIME: 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

INGERSOLL

WHEN: 4th Tuesday of every month
WHERE: Ingersoll Public Library 130 Oxford St., Ingersoll
TIME: 10:30 a.m. - 12 Noon

WOODSTOCK

WHEN: 3rd Saturday of every month
WHERE: Sakura House Hospice 715180 Oxford Rd.4, Woodstock
TIME: 10:30 a.m. - 12 Noon

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OBITUARY

WALTER ACHIEL HOMICK

APRIL 3, 1950 - FEBRUARY 3, 2026



Passed away suddenly, at the Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital, on Tuesday, February 3, 2026, with his loving wife Loraine and family by his side, Walter Achiel Homick, of Goshen Road, RR2 Tillsonburg, at the age of 75. A lifelong resident of Tillsonburg, Walter is predeceased by his parents Frank Homick (2000) and Yvonne (Goossens) Homick (2016). Over his working

years, Walt raised angus cattle. He enjoyed cards, hunting, hockey and was proud to be a member of the Norwich Merchants Ontario Jr. D Championship team (1969-1970). Walter is the much-loved husband of 54 years, of Loraine (nee Van Daele) Homick. Loved father and father-in-law of: Chad (Angela); Darryl (Jennifer); Stephanie (Chris) Grimo; Devin (Patricia). Proud and loving grandfather of eleven grandchildren, whom he adored. Dear brother and brother-in-law of: Elaine Swinimer (Arthur); and Michael Homick (Paul). Survived by several nieces, nephews and cousins.

A public visitation was held on Saturday February 7, 2026 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Home Chapel, 262 Broadway, Tillsonburg. A private family gathering and memorial service has taken place. Friends, neighbours and relatives are invited to share favourite memories, photos, personal condolences, order flowers or contribute memorial donations to the LHSF "Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre" (London, ON) or the "Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital" or to any charity of your choice, via Walter's online tribute page at www.verhoevefuneralhomes.com or by contacting the Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Homes- Burial and Cremation Services Inc., Tillsonburg (519) 842-4238.

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Mount Olympus
2. A kangaroo
3. Ravens
4. The liver
5. Bad Bunny
6. William Shakespeare
7. Cerberus
8. MKUltra
9. North Atlantic Treaty Organization
10. Buyer beware

SUDOKU

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



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