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VOLUME 3 • ISSUE 8

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Woodstock Police chief hanging up his hat

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After nearly 30 years of distinguished service, the Woodstock Police Service (WPS) Board has announced the retirement of Chief Rod Wilkinson, marking the end of a career dedicated to public safety, leadership, and community service.

“Chief Wilkinson began his policing career in 1997 and quickly rose through the ranks, demonstrating exceptional skill and commitment in every role,” according to a news release from the force’s Police Services Board. “His early years included major crime investigations as a Detective Constable in the Criminal Investigations Branch, where he oversaw complex cases and homicides, developing a reputation for investigative excellence.”

Wilkinson held numerous leadership positions, including Uniform Road Supervisor, Staff Sergeant, Inspector of Operations and Deputy Chief of Police. He managed uniform patrols, supervised civilian staff, led high-risk incident responses, and oversaw the Ontario Sex Offender Registry. His strategic planning and operational leadership were instrumental in shaping the current organization’s approach to modern policing.

Wilkinson explained he had nothing but positive words to say about his experience in Woodstock.

“Looking back, I am proud of what we have accomplished together. With the support of an excellent and forward-thinking administrative team that continually pushed for innovation and meaningful change, we added many new sworn and civilian positions, enhancing the department’s capacity to serve our community.”

CONTINUED TO PAGE 5



CANADA'S OUTDOOR FARM SHOW ANOTHER SUCCESS

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

Hungry visitors were welcomed with meals prepared by Lions Clubs from across Oxford County at this year's Farm Show. Story on page 9.

CAMI employees facing another extensive layoff

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

It's another hit for the Oxford County labour force and employees at Ingersoll's CAMI manufacturing plant.

General Motors has informed the union at its CAMI Assembly Plant in Ingersoll that production will resume this fall — but at a much slower pace than originally planned.

Unifor Local 88 Chairperson Mike Van Boekel said the plant has been shut down since May, when the last round of layoffs was announced, and workers have been waiting

for clarity on when operations would restart.

“Staff are coming back around Nov. 17 with one shift but at a slower line speed. Out of roughly 1050 production people, we have 400 coming back.”

Van Boekel added the hope was always to return to work with two full shifts or at least a single strong one, but the demand still isn't there for the product.

“Sales are getting better every month, but they just aren't there yet.”

CAMI manufactures two versions of the BrightDrop Zevo electric delivery vehicle. Production started in 2022 following a \$1 billion retooling of the plant.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



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Local union boss cites several factors including Trump tariffs

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

He explained there are several reasons for the product’s slow sales, including a lack of charging stations.

“Infrastructure for one needs to be expanded significantly across North America. Compared to Europe, we have a much bigger country, and that would be the number one driving force, but it’s got a long way to go.”

He added the shenanigans going on south of the border have also played a role in the auto industry’s slowdown in Canada.

“Trump is not helping the situation at all, especially with the tariffs. It’s tough enough trying to sell the vehicles, and now he’s slapping duty on them every time they cross the border, which is approximately 90 per cent of all vehicle sales. Taking away all the EV stuff and just the uncertainty is a killer.”

A recent report by an American consultant stated the 25 per cent tariffs imposed on Canadian vehicles sold south of the border will add more than US\$15,000 to the price of a BrightDrop van. Currently, it sells for more than \$70,000 in the U.S.

Van Boekel noted that both Ontario’s Premier and the Prime Minister have expressed full support for the CAMI plant and its BrightDrop electric vehicles.

“We met with Ford face-to-face and had a good talk with him. He’s fully supportive and I know our president has been talking to Carney. He can help us because Canada Post is looking for thousands of these vehicles, but our first order went to the States, which is ridiculous.”

The federal government provided some seed money to General Motors to get the plant up and running with the new delivery vehicles, something not lost on Van Boekel.

“That money came from taxpayers. I do believe the vehicles are extremely good, and they only need to be charged once a day. They can do the deliveries, go back, charge it, and be ready the next morning. They are a very good fit in the market. We just need more of them out



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

there.”
Van Boekel explained there will be a negative effect on the local economy with 600 people remaining on the sidelines.
“It’s terrible for them, for their families. Laid-off people don’t spend money. There is a ripple effect everywhere, from Tim Hortons to gas stations to buying houses. Everything will slow right down. This is hundreds and hundreds of families, mostly from the Oxford and Middle-

sex areas.”
He added some of his members are partners or married, meaning each breadwinner will not be returning to work.
“That makes it really tough and they are worried. There are jobs out there, but not a lot of good-paying ones. We do have an action centre at our local hall for retraining and resume writing, stuff like that.”
Despite the bad news coming from the

automaker, Van Boekel
“I can’t really fault them too much. They put huge dollars into the main plant and the battery plant, and they thought it would take off a lot faster than it has. Every month is better but not to the point we had hoped or needed. We would like another investment to try to get another vehicle in here.”
As of press time, GM Canada had not released a statement.



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Local MP critical of federal Liberals' lack of bail reform

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Hundreds of constituents showed up for a free breakfast at Oxford Member of Parliament Arpan Khanna's constituency office on Saturday, where crime and bail reform were the hot topics.

Khanna, who is preparing to introduce a Private Member's Bill to tighten Canada's bail rules, accused the Liberals of running a "smoke-and-mirrors" campaign throughout the summer.

"We've been seeing a lot of photo ops, a lot of announcements and talking points over the last six months of this so-called new government, but we haven't seen a lot of action. We're not seeing any actual legislation released."

He added if the Carney Liberals were serious about real changes to bail reform, they would have brought it forward during the first six weeks of Parliament following the election.

"After the pressure (the Conservative Party) put on and Canadians, to be honest, even today we had 400 people show up and everyone talked about crime here in Oxford County."

Khanna referred to recent crimes, including the tragic death of a young boy shot to death while in bed in North York.

"When I hear about an eight-year-old lying in his mom's arms, the safest place in the world is in bed with your mom, and he was shot and killed by a stray bullet, we have a problem. When a 71-year-old grandma is at the grocery store and stabbed to death, we have a problem. When we have broad daylight shootings, we have a problem."

He added he isn't buying the idea that the Liberals have the wherewithal to fix the problem they started.

"The people who started the fire, the arsonists themselves, now say they are sorry and can fix the fire they created. They burnt the house down. In 2018, Bill C-75 was brought in by the Liberals, which caused this crisis."

Khanna explained judges are required by law to impose the least restrictive bail conditions and release those accused at the earliest opportunity, something his bill addresses.

"You're going to see some of those things reversed, give the police the tools they need and judges will have some



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna hosted hundreds of constituents on Saturday for a free pancake breakfast. Khanna said the number one topic on people's minds was bail reform and crime.

clarity in the Criminal Code to actually lock up repeat violent offenders who are terrorizing communities across the country."

At a press conference in Mississauga on Friday, Prime Minister Mark Carney announced his government will be introducing legislation this fall to overhaul Canada's bail system. The proposed reforms aim to implement stricter rules to ensure violent and repeat offenders remain in custody, rather than being released shortly after arrest, allow for consecutive sentencing for the most serious crimes, address cases involving serious offences such as gun violence, break-ins, and car thefts and emphasize that "people accused of violent crimes should not be in and out of jail within days", ensuring they face appropriate consequences.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford, who met with Carney ahead of the announcement, is advocating for more mandatory minimum sentences and tighter measures under the Youth Criminal Justice Act. Ford said, "When someone is charged with a heinous crime, they must remain in custody. People have had enough."

The MP says police across the country are fed up with a system that sees officers risk their lives to make arrests, only to watch offenders walk free and return to the streets

within days, sometimes sooner.

"Very demoralizing. I have travelled now from coast to coast to coast and met with law enforcement, Premiers, MLAs, victim advocacy groups, social workers, and crown attorneys, and it is demoralizing for everybody."

Khanna said police in Woodstock told him they are catching the same criminals over and over again. He added the same 15 people in Kelowna committed over 1500 crimes in a single year.

"We have very efficient criminals who have chosen a lifestyle of crime. It's our job to keep Canadians safe. We need to implement minimum mandatory sentences for those trafficking in drugs and involved in organized crime are locked up. We need to end the violence."

He explained the number one job for a government is to keep its citizens safe, whether they are at a park or at home.

"It has to change, and we will make sure we put the government's feet to the fire when Parliament resumes next week."

Carney made a point last week to mention Canada needs more effective policing, although he didn't mention any specifics. Khanna suggested more effective bail laws are the key.

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



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Wilkinson ending long career in law enforcement

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Under his leadership, the force also introduced body-worn cameras to increase transparency and accountability, added electric bikes and drones to improve operational flexibility, and upgraded its fleet with new vehicles.

“We also successfully navigated the complexities of the Community Safety and Policing Act, strengthening our position and ensuring organizational integrity during a critical time.”

He added that, after much reflection, he has decided to step away from his professional role permanently to focus on personal priorities.

“This has been a meaningful chapter in my life, and I’m deeply grateful for the support, friendships, and experiences I’ve had along the way. Thank you to everyone who has been part of the journey.”

Wilkinson served 17 years as a mem-

ber and supervisor of the Emergency Response Unit (ERU), where he led tactical operations and managed high-risk incidents. His calm leadership and tactical expertise were critical in safeguarding both officers and the public. Wilkinson’s long-standing commitment to the ERU exemplified his courage, discipline, and unwavering dedication to frontline service.

Woodstock Police Service Chair Ken Whiteford praised Wilkinson, saying he deserves heartfelt thanks for his exceptional leadership over the past three years and for his decades of dedicated service to WPS.

“His commitment, courage, and guidance have left a lasting impact on both the department and our community,” Whiteford added. “He has displayed integrity, accountability and a fair and consistent approach to policing while



Chief Rod Wilkinson. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

enhancing community safety in such a way as to reflect the expectations of the Woodstock Community. May his legacy be the inspiration that he has provided to present and future uniform and civilian WPS staff. The board wishes him all the best in his retirement.”

Wilkinson served on several community boards, including the Canadian Mental Health Association of Oxford, the Oxford Local Immigration Partnership, the Children’s Aid Society, and the Chamber of Commerce.

“Throughout his career, Chief Wilkinson pursued extensive professional development, completing advances training in tactical operations, crisis intervention, leadership, and major incident command. His dedication to life-long learning and mentorship has left a lasting impact on the Woodstock Police Service,” added the news release.

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VON Oxford's Healing Hands helping children navigate grief with creativity

EMILY STEWART
Echo Correspondent

After recognizing a need for support programs for grieving children and youth, Victoria Order of Nurses (VON) Oxford is introducing a new program involving creativity as a way of processing grief.

VON Oxford began its Healing Hands grief support group for children and youth aged six to 17 years old, who will be in smaller groups based on age. Healing Hands provides learning, discussion, and creative expression opportunities for children as they navigate their grief.

Healing Hands came together with facilitator Keisha Robinson, a current student at King's University College in London, Ont., working towards a double major in child and youth studies and thanatology. Her education makes her want to work with children who are grieving in

some way or another.

"As I'm doing papers and essays and reading all of the things that I have to do for my education, it occurred to me that Oxford County and the surrounding areas are lacking child support for grief," Robinson said.

One of Robinson's courses outlined how arts and crafts and other creative activities help someone grieving. While on practicum at VON Sakura House, she approached Angela Wildfong, supportive care coordinator in bereavement services, about her vision for a program involving creative activities for children and youth to process their grief through education, discussion, and creative expression. Facilitators Karen Edwards and Abby Webster are also part of Healing Hands.

Robinson spent the last four months coming up with activities for the program. For example, the Growing Through Grief



(Left to right) Healing Hands coordinator Angela Wildfong with facilitators Keisha Robinson and Karen Edwards. Abby Webster, absent from the photo, is another Healing Hands facilitator.



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session, based on grief counsellor Lois Tonkins' grief model, involves the children painting their own terracotta pots and putting in a baby succulent. Tonkins work demonstrates that while grief never goes away, life around it continues to grow, just like a plant outgrows its pot.

"I feel that a lot of grief can come out through expression when it's physical," Robinson said. "It's hard for children to sometimes get the words to describe how they're feeling, but it might come out better on paper or on a canvas, or just in the way that they express themselves artistically."

Wildfong said that those part of Healing Hands can come in monthly, compared to other children and youth programs run by VON where they have to be at all sessions in an eight-week program, for example.

"Sometimes, kids are really busy and they don't have time to commit to that, but if we're looking at once a month, they can do that and it offers a consistent outlet for them and a safe place for them to come in and address their grief," Wildfong said.

Each session runs on the second, third, and fourth Monday of the month from 6 to 8 p.m. at Woodstock VON on 550 Ingersoll Ave. There's a new theme every month beginning with understanding grief, followed by recognizing emotions, developing coping skills, building resilience, and learning to self-care with activities surrounding each theme.

It's free to participate in Healing Hands but every child must be registered. To register, either call 519-539-1231 ext. 6299 or send an email to angela.wildfong@von.ca.

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. Who is known as the father of ethics?	6. GO Transit was founded in what year?
2. What tower was the first to be struck by terrorists on 9/11?	7. What river did George Washington cross to attack the Hessian mercenaries?
3. How many Super Bowl wins do the Buffalo Bills have?	8. Ultrasonic waves have frequencies that are above how many Hz?
4. Klondike Gold Rush national historical park is found in what US city?	9. What is the farthest planet from the sun in our solar system?
5. Mick Jagger is the lead singer of what band?	10. What red creature starred in Sesame Street?

This week's answers are found on pg. 30

Woodstock walk raises money for Parkinson's

Roth Park was filled with energy, encouragement, and community spirit as participants gathered for the annual Walk for Parkinson's on Sept. 7. Families, friends, and supporters came together along the park's scenic pathways to raise awareness and funds in support of Parkinson Society Southwestern Ontario. The event highlighted the power of community in action, with walkers of all ages taking part to honour loved ones, celebrate hope,

and contribute to programs that support those living with Parkinson's disease. Many participants carried signs and wore team shirts to show their support, while volunteers kept the day running smoothly with smiles, encouragement, and direction along the route. Donations collected through the Walk will go toward vital research, education, and local services that directly benefit individuals and families impacted by Parkinson's. "The Walk

is about more than fundraising—it's about connection and showing that no one faces Parkinson's alone," said organizers. "We are grateful to every participant, volunteer, and donor who made this day such a success." The Woodstock Walk was one of several community walks held across Southwestern Ontario, each reinforcing the collective effort to improve lives and work toward a future without Parkinson's.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Smiles and team spirit filled the air as everyone posed for a group photo ahead of the walk.



Lloyd and Al, dedicated volunteers, stood alongside coordinators Robin and Robyn to ensure every participant felt welcomed.



The walk became a family affair as relatives of Terry and Sally came out in their Team Grandpa Terry shirts to show their support.



Members of the Schut family joined the walk, adding their steps to the community effort.

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Woodstock Police briefs

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Foot patrol leads to arrests

Woodstock Police officers conducted a proactive foot patrol in the downtown core on Friday, Sept. 5, and it paid off.

Three people were arrested for possession of a controlled substance under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act, and seven Provincial Offence Notices were issued for “engaging in a prohibited activity” under the Trespass to Property Act. Officers also addressed abandoned property and other safety concerns.

“These patrols are part of our ongoing efforts to reduce open-air drug use, support community well-being, and maintain a safe and welcoming downtown for residents, businesses, and visitors,” said a police press release.

Two arrested, fentanyl seized in Woodstock drug investigation

The Woodstock Police Service Drugs and Intelligence Unit has laid multiple charges after a drug trafficking investigation led to two arrests last week.

On August 26, 2025, investigators arrested two men near Blossom Park Road in connection with the trafficking and production of controlled substances.

Officers seized suspected fentanyl (or carfentanil), cocaine with an estimated street value of \$5,600, prescription pills, drug production materials, and Canadi-

an currency. Approximately 15.2 grams of the suspected fentanyl/carfentanil will undergo further analysis due to its extreme potency and potentially lethal effects.

A 28-year-old man from Chatham and a 25-year-old man from Etobicoke have been jointly charged with:

- Two counts of possession of a Schedule I substance for the purpose of trafficking
- Possession of a Schedule I substance

In addition:

- The 28-year-old faces charges of possession of a Schedule I substance and possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000.
- The 25-year-old faces two additional counts of possession of a Schedule I substance and possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000.

Both accused were held for a bail hearing.

August statistics

Police have decided to release monthly crime statistics to the public.

In August, the Woodstock Police Service responded to 2,193 occurrences, made 129 arrests, and recorded 174 foot-patrol hours.

A total of 267 charges were laid, including 152 Criminal Code charges, 75 Highway Traffic Act charges, and 14 Controlled Drugs and Substances Act charges.



(WOODSTOCK POLICE SERVICE PHOTO)
Woodstock Police arrested two men and took illicit drugs off the streets following a recent drug investigation.

Woodstock man charged with sex offences

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A three-year investigation has resulted in a city man being charged with sexual offences in connection with alleged on-line communication with a Nova Scotia female.

West Hants RCMP responded to a report in November 2022 that a girl had received concerning messages and sexually explicit material from an unknown person through a social media platform.

The story was first reported by journalist Steve Bruce of the Annapolis Valley Register in Nova Scotia.

“Members of the Nova Scotia RCMP

digital forensics unit analyzed the content on the teen’s phone. West Hants RCMP then took steps to digitally trace the source of the communications, leading investigators to suspect they came from a 29-year-old man in Woodstock, Ont.,” read the story.

With assistance from the Woodstock Police Service and the RCMP’s Transnational Serious and Organized Crime Unit in Kitchener, investigators executed a search warrant at a residence in Woodstock. Police seized electronic devices, which were taken to Nova Scotia for forensic examination as part of the ongoing investigation.

As a result of the investigation, Sebas-

tien Vienneau, a 29-year-old Woodstock resident, was charged on May 29 with three offences: luring a child under the age of 18 for the purpose of committing a sexual offence, indecent communications, and making sexually explicit material available to a child. A Canada-wide warrant was issued for Vienneau’s arrest in August.

Investigators travelled to Ontario on Aug. 25 and arrested Vienneau. Police allege the offences were committed on Nov. 12, 2022. The RCMP said the investigation is ongoing and more charges are anticipated.

“Vienneau made his first appearance in Kentville provincial court Aug. 28. A

bail hearing was scheduled for Sept. 2 but was adjourned until Sept. 5 to give the defence time to perfect a release plan. Judge Angela Caseley placed a publication ban on the identity of the complainant and ordered Vienneau to have no contact with her,” added the story.

“This investigation serves as an excellent example of the teamwork among units and agencies that is so often required to uncover the facts of a matter, identify a suspect and lay the appropriate charges,” said Sgt. Tim Doyle of West Hants RCMP in a recent news release.

“It also reflects the required tenacity of investigators.”

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Annual farm show draws thousands again

Canada's Outdoor Farm Show turned Woodstock and area into the hub of Canadian agriculture from September 9 to 11, welcoming over 36,000 attendees and more than 650 exhibitors to its sprawling 100-acre site. For three days, visitors explored the latest in ag technology, innovation, and practices, from large-scale equipment demonstrations to hands-on livestock exhibits and crop plot comparisons. Farmers, producers, and agronomists from across Canada and beyond gathered to exchange ideas, discover solutions, and witness firsthand the tools shaping the future of farming. One of the highlights of the show was the live equipment demonstrations, where tractors, planters, and precision technology were put to the test in real field conditions. These practical displays gave farmers a valuable look at how innovations can be integrated into their own operations. Livestock Central once again proved to be a busy destination, offering producers a one-stop resource for

learning about animal care, management practices, and industry-leading tools. Experts and exhibitors were on hand to share the latest insights and showcase new approaches to livestock production. Crop plots also drew strong interest, featuring side-by-side comparisons of corn, soybeans, and wheat grown under different conditions and management systems. Agronomists and crop specialists engaged directly with farmers, discussing everything from sustainability practices to yield-boosting strategies. Beyond the exhibits, the show created valuable networking opportunities through special events, including educational breakfasts and social gatherings that brought the farming community together. After more than 30 years, Canada's Outdoor Farm Show continues to be Ontario's largest outdoor farm event, a place where agricultural innovation comes alive and the farming community celebrates its shared commitment to progress.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Farmers gathered around live equipment demonstrations and shared ideas on improving output and farm practices.



From equipment to livestock, there was much to explore at this year's event.

Ontario Provincial Police briefs

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Damaged stop sign in Norwich Township sparks safety warning from OPP

Oxford OPP are investigating after a stop sign was found damaged and partially blocking a live lane in Norwich Township early Saturday morning.

Police were called just before 5 a.m. to the intersection of Norwich Road and Oxford Road 13, after a member of the public spotted the sign and immediately reported it.

"It is unclear if the sign was removed due to a collision or due to mischief," said Constable Randi Crawford. "The

removal or damage to a stop sign must be reported immediately to reduce the risk of serious harm or death."

Police are reminding drivers that collisions involving damage to private, municipal, or highway property must be reported.

"I would also like to remind people that removing a stop sign is no joke," Crawford added. "In severe cases, if removal of a stop sign causes serious injury or death, an individual can face serious criminal charges."

Anyone with information or video surveillance from the area is asked to contact Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Anonymous tips can be submitted through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or ontariocrimestoppers.ca



The food tents were a popular stop for many attendees.

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OFA Viewpoint: Keeping farmers' voices heard in tariff and trade challenges

DREW SPOELSTRA

President, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

To say that there's been a lot going on in the world over the last eight months would be an understatement. We've come through both a provincial and a federal election here at home, which have brought changes. Drought and wildfires have made headlines and caused stress and challenges for those affected.

The biggest development, however, has been the arrival of a new administration south of the border, which, in short order, has turned long-standing world relationships upside down, upended supply chains and created an unpredictable global tariff and trade situation that continues to remain fluid.

Since March, Canada has been dealing with a variety of tariffs at various levels on our exports to the United States, including steel, aluminum, automotive, energy and products not covered under the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA).

In response, Canada placed reciprocal duties on approximately \$60 billion worth of U.S. goods in March. On September 1, Canada exempted CUSMA-compliant U.S. products from its retaliatory tariffs, covering \$30 billion worth of U.S. goods, but tariffs remain in place on imports of U.S. steel, aluminum, and autos.

An August 1 deadline for our two countries to reach a new deal on tariffs has come and gone with no new announcements – except executive orders upping U.S. tariffs on non-CUSMA-compliant Canadian goods to 35% and adding a 50% tariff on some copper imports.

In many ways, the agriculture and agri-food sector has been spared – so far – the direct hit that some other industries have taken in this trade war, but as with everything else in dealing with the new reality south of the border, that could change in a heartbeat.

And that doesn't mean there haven't been impacts felt right across our sector,

from high prices for equipment parts to tariffs on cans for processing tomatoes and floral packaging.

Additionally, Canadian pork and canola producers are dealing with steep tariffs from China on their exports. China is one of the biggest buyers of both commodities, and canola growers in particular are calling on the federal government for immediate supports as well as expanding our domestic processing capacity and diversifying export markets.

And with CUSMA renegotiation yet to come as the current agreement expires next year, the future is far from clear.

I'm the President of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), and we've heard first-hand from local farm leaders at two roundtables we hosted this summer as well as at our regional

meetings currently underway across the province that tariffs and trade continue to be a top concern.

In addition to meeting with our members, we also work closely with leaders of other agricultural organizations and stay in regular contact with our national counterparts at the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

To put it simply, we're continuing to work on many fronts to understand and find solutions for the impacts and challenges on the agriculture sector – as well as for the new opportunities this may present.

These include developing targeted support programs and better risk management solutions for farmers, investing in agriculture's productive capacity, supporting buy local initiatives, expanding export markets and supporting home-grown solutions.

We welcome efforts to build stronger relationships with other countries around the world and we're encouraged by announcements of investments into infrastructure like ports, roads, bridges and energy that will help make it easier to get our goods to market.

We're advocating with government to



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

make sure they're aware of the needs of a sector that contributes more than \$50 billion to the Ontario economy every year, employs over 870,000 people, and exports more than \$26 billion in goods annually.

Removing or reducing interprovincial trade barriers also continues to be a significant topic and some meaningful progress has been made over the last several months. Ontario passed the Free Trade and Labour Mobility in Canada Act in June and OFA has provided comments to the regulation development process under this act, which is now underway.

The legislation now permits direct-to-consumer alcohol sales from any province that provides reciprocal treatment to Ontario products, which is a significant shift from previous law restricting alcohol shipments across provincial borders.

The legislation also enhances labour mobility by recognizing skilled trades and medical professionals certified elsewhere in Canada.

Agriculture is an incredibly diverse sector – more than 200 different products are grown, raised and produced in Ontario alone – which often also makes solutions complex. As governments of all levels nation-wide tackle this important file, we continue to work to make sure agriculture is at the table when discussions and consultations are taking place.

The team attending the 2025 American Farm Bureau Federation for meetings and discussions on the evolving trade and tariff situation.

From left to right: Brodie Berrigan (Senior Director of Government Relations and Farm Policy, Canadian Federation of Agriculture), Cathy Lennon (General Manager, OFA), Drew Spoelstra (President, OFA), Keith Currie (President, CFA), Curtis Hemming (Director of Stakeholder Relations, Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan) and Todd Lewis (was the President of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan at the time of the photo, but is now a member of the Senate of Canada).

At the end of the day, Ontario's farmers are resilient and adaptable, but we can't face these challenges alone. Strong partnerships with government, industry, and consumers are essential to ensure our sector remains competitive, sustainable, and positioned for growth.

As trade realities continue to shift, OFA will keep pushing for policies that protect farm businesses, open new market opportunities, and strengthen the infrastructure that supports our entire food system. Agriculture is more than an economic driver—it's the foundation of our communities and our way of life, and we're committed to making sure it remains strong for generations to come.



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Terry Fox Run alive and well in Woodstock

The Woodstock community came together at Scott's NoFrills last Saturday morning to support the Metres of Memories initiative, part of this year's Terry Fox Run. From 9 a.m. to noon, residents purchased personalized tribute signs to honor loved ones who had battled cancer—whether they had lost the fight, survived, or were still living with the disease. For a suggested donation of \$20, each name was placed on a sign that would later line the run route every 50 metres, creating a trail of remembrance and encouragement. The result promised to be a mosaic of memories stretching through Southside Park on Run Day, September 14. The program, launched in Woodstock in 2014 by com-

munity leaders Nancy Yates and Shelly Harpell, was inspired by a similar initiative in Barrie. Over the years, it grew into a heartfelt tradition, blending fundraising with deeply personal tributes. "The signs became more than just markers," reflected Yates. "They told stories of courage, love, and resilience. Seeing them along the route moved both runners and families, reminding us why Terry's legacy endures." The event marked an important opportunity for residents to contribute and share the names of those they wished to honour. For many, it was a chance not only to support cancer research but also to celebrate the lives of friends and family in a tangible, visible way.

(RON YUZARK PHOTO)



Nancy Yates and Shelly Harpell connected with residents as they gathered donations through the sale of personalized tribute signs.

Human remains found in SWOX

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Oxford OPP is investigating after human remains were found on a property along Beachville Road in South-West Oxford Township.

Police were called to the scene around 2:45 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 1. The remains have since been confirmed as human.

Constable Randi Crawford said there is no indication of a broader threat to public safety.

"Police continue to investigate and are monitoring the situation. Residents in the area can expect to see an increased police

presence," Crawford said.

The investigation is being led by the Oxford OPP Crime Unit under the direction of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch, with assistance from the Office of the Chief Coroner, the Ontario Forensic Pathology Service, and OPP Forensic Identification Services.

Authorities have not yet released information on the identity of the individual or the cause of death.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Anonymous tips can be submitted through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at ontariocrimestoppers.ca

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Third Kids Market at Drumbo Fair featuring all kinds of artisan products made by kids

EMILY STEWART

Echo Correspondent

For the third year in a row at the Drumbo Fair, you can pick up crochet crafts, watercolour paint bookmarks, and other artisan products all made by kids.

The Kids Market will return to the 175th Drumbo Fair from Sept. 21 between 1 and 3 p.m. The market will feature a variety of creative works such as ceramic butterflies, beaded jewellery, Reisen letter keychains, and slime. The Kids Market is still hoping more vendors come on board from Oxford County and surrounding areas.

"There's lots of stuff for people to see, and these kids, they often dabble in little things, so you'll see some paintings," said organizer Ellise Mackie. "You might see some sketches that they've made. You might see some clay figurines. You might see some crochet stuff, Reisen letters. It's a little bit of everything, but it's all kid-created."

The Kids Market at the Drumbo Fair began after the Rising Star competition for young performers was cancelled at the Western Fair and eventually the smaller fairs. The fair committee was impressed with the young talent and brought it back.

Mackie said that whether the young entrepreneur is raising money to cover their own medical costs or to channel their feelings through art, the business opportunity has made a difference in the youth.

"There's other kids who started a business and then the business you've seen over the years morph into something else, and as their interests change, so does their product and as they get bigger their products get more refined and you have some who are really nervous or are neurodiverse and they've got their own things coming on, and they come to something like this and they just shine," she said. "It's an opportunity for the kids to just really showcase what makes them special and talk about why their product is special and how it represents them."

Drumbo's Pizza Pizza will be bringing a free lunch to all the young entrepreneurs. Tables are free, but the children will still need to pay \$12 to enter the fair. Mackie suggests



bringing cash for all the vendors in the market, even if some of the kid-trepreneurs take cards. All products are under \$20.

"Although it's appropriate for kids and adults, a lot of the customers who go in are kids. They get really excited about the slime, or to get a little crocheted creature to get the key-chain to put on their backpack or something like that, or a bookmark to put in their book," Mackie said. "It really is for everyone, but it's very much a celebration about the kids and what they can do and encouraging them to do the work."

For more information or to register, send an email to drumbokidsmarket@gmail.com.



(PHOTOS SUBMITTED BY ELLISE MACKIE)

The third annual Kids Market returns to the Drumbo Fair on Sept. 21. Vendors part of the market include Braeden's Butterflies, Yarn + Hook, K-Man's Reading Buddies, and Lou's Keyphabits.

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CEDARVIEW

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo SPORTS

U15 Strikers fundraiser drives shared \$2,500 charitable donation

JEFF TRIBE

Echo Correspondent

The Woodstock FC U15 Strikers soccer team combined social awareness and responsibility with a Middlesex-Elgin District Soccer League (MEDSL) Tier II league championship this season.

"It's an important part of character building," said coach Kevin Clarke of a \$2,500 team donation split between the Children's Health Foundation (CHF) and Ronald McDonald House Charities Southwestern Ontario (RMHCSO).

The U15 Strikers had a great summer season on the pitch, celebrating a three-year progression beginning in the MEDSL's third tier. In 2023, the team's core group took the Tier III league cup and attendant promotion into the second division. Last season, the then U14 Strikers finished second in that loop, taking another significant step forward in 2025 with a 10-1-2 won-lost-tied record including a positive goal differential of 22 (35 for, 13 against) and 32 points, five ahead of second-place Strathroy United.

The fact Woodstock FC topped the division in scoring and fewest goals allowed was underscored by Bella Wilson's league-leading six shutouts in net and Sydney Haw's 13 goals.

"We just work well together," said centre-midfielder and captain Haven Mulloy-Huehn of on and off-field 'chemistry' leading to success. "It took a while and a lot of team progress."

She expects an elevated level of play in



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

The Woodstock FC U15 Strikers combined soccer and personal development this season. In conjunction with an Elgin-Middlesex District Soccer League Tier II league cup, the team raised and donated \$2,500 to London Sick Kids Hospital and Ronald McDonald House. Cheques for \$1,250 were passed over on Sept. 3 at Cowan Park to representatives from both organizations.

Tier I next season but believes the Strikers will be up for the challenge.

"I think the way our team is, we'll have good attitudes, positive energy and will do well."

In conjunction with soccer development,

the team's coaching staff (Clarke, assistant Brooklyne Gillespie and manager Mac Robinson) felt it was important to add an element of social awareness. The team has been supported by a much-appreciated group of community sponsors, elevating its competitive abilities through equipment

purchase and enhanced ability to attend tournaments.

A bottle drive in support of charity was chosen as one way to highlight the concept of giving back.

"They're older, going into Grade 10," Clarke explained.

The search for appropriate recipients was directed by the personal experience of one of the team's members and her family, served by London Sick Kids Hospital and Ronald McDonald House in that city.

Community support built around the drive when word got out about the U15 Strikers' initiative and its backstory, said Clarke. Other teams, local restaurants, businesses, and sponsors contributed to the effort.

"And a cash top-up from the club itself," added Robinson.

It was 'messy' collecting beer bottles and cans, said Clarke, but the girls got into the spirit of an eminently worthwhile cause.

"It was a good feeling," said Mulloy-Huehn of what became a \$2,500 donation split between the two entities. Cheques for \$1,250 were handed over to representatives from each before a practice/mentoring session on Sept. 3 at Cowan Park's Palleck Orthodontics Field.

"The community came together for this," credited Sharon O'Leary of RMHCSO, emphasizing the 'team' aspect reflected both in the U15 Strikers and all those contributing. "We can't all be an island in a sense."

"It's always cool to see the impact, especially from young people in the community," added Maysee McLean of the CHF. "The fact they chose to give back was incredible."



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

The Woodstock FC U14 Strikers captured an A.C. Douglas tournament championship for the second season in a row. Entering its 63rd year, the Niagara Falls-based tournament and festival is the longest-running such event in Ontario. The Strikers finished well atop their Silver Group B division with a 4-1-0 won-lost-tied record against Stoney Creek Salfleet, South Simcoe United, Puslinch Predators, Vaughan Azurri, and the Native Sons Ultra. Woodstock FC scored 11 goals while giving up just one, its 12 points double that of second-place Stoney Creek and South Simcoe's six apiece.

Navy Vets kick off regular season this weekend



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Navy Vets alumni Justin Elms (left) is the team's new head coach, while Jordan Thomson (centre) is returning as captain. Tillsonburg native Tyler Bouck (right) will return between the pipes after becoming the franchise career shutouts leader last season.

LEE GRIFFI, *Editor*

With notes from JIM TAYLOR

The Woodstock Navy Vets open the 2025-26 Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) season Friday night at home against the Wellesley Applejacks. They also host Norwich on Sunday for an afternoon matinee at 1:45 p.m.

The Vets are coming off a 27-win season, good for third place in the tough Doherty Division, where they eventually lost to the New Hamburg Firebirds in five games in a division semi-final series.

Navy Vet alumnus Justin Elms takes over as the team's new head coach after three seasons as an assistant. He'll be joined by a staff stacked with alumni: Chris Thompson, Chris Jensen, Chris Nauts, and goalie coach Keaghan Brett. Darren Young steps in as the team's new general manager.

Local veteran defencemen Jordan Thomson is returning as captain, while Charley Barnes and Connor Stanley have been named alternate captains.

Beachville native Nolan Brett is returning after leading the team in assists last season. He has been a perennial

scoring leader with the Vets over the past four seasons and hard-working Connor Stanley is back for his third season. Other returning forwards include locals Rhylan Warford and Gavin Birmingham, Brodie Kearns from Brantford and Kitchener native Tate McKenna. Barnes was named the PJHL Doherty Division Top Defenceman last season, while Thomson and Matthew Meyer return to anchor the blueline.

Tillsonburg goalie Tyler Bouck is back and is expected to shoulder most of the goaltending duties. He is the franchise leader in shutouts and was among the top five in all goaltending statistical categories last season with a 2.48 goals against average, a .929 save percentage and a pair of shutouts. 16-year-old Woodstock native Kobe Nadalin has been signed as a backup goalie. He played last season with the U16 AAA Kitchener Rangers organization.

The Vets have bolstered their defence with four off-season signings. Newmarket native Michael Lee from OJHL Oakville Blades, Ottawa native Will McGregor from the USPHL Elmira, Colin Shaw from Brantford, and locals Nathan Crane and Ethan Markle.

Up front, the team has added experienced scorers, including Owen Ireton from the Greater Ontario Hockey League's Ayr Centennials, where he amassed 57 points in 48 games. Logan Yovetich comes in from the Ontario Junior Hockey League's Oakville Blades, Cooper Vickerman from PJHL Georgina Ice, Liam Gorman from PJHL Tavistock Braves, and Dailen Fousek from PJHL Port Hope Panthers. Woodstock has also signed local rookies Kingston McPherson and Austin Doolittle, as well as Rashaad Eichenberg from Brantford.

Among those not returning this year is Davin Gray. The team's leading scorer for the past three seasons was traded to the Thamesford Trojans. Other potential overagers have found new homes - Kyle Caron with Hespeler and Braeden Tyler with Paris. Defenceman Michael Vermeersch and forward Ethan Pearce were traded to Aylmer.

Five players graduated from the Vets following the 2024-25 season. Forwards Lucas Balanca, Diego Sabino, and Thomas Guidolin, as well as defencemen Chris Coulter and Logan Pace-Roth have all ended their careers due to age following the 2024-25 season.

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September declared Terry Fox Month in Woodstock

EMILY STEWART

Echo Correspondent

Ahead of Woodstock's annual Terry Fox Run, the City of Woodstock declared September Terry Fox Month, and community members gathered together to see the raising of a flag that said "Terry Fox Lives Here."

The flag was raised and flown in front of Terry Fox Run volunteers and supporters at Museum Square on Aug. 29. The flag raising came after Woodstock Mayor Jerry Acchione declared September 2025 as Terry Fox Month during a council meeting on Aug. 14. John Versaevel, co-chair of the Terry Fox Run Woodstock chapter, picked the flag because of the city's support for the movement.

"Woodstock has always supported the Terry Fox Movement really well," said Versaevel. "Having the mayor proclaim the month as Terry Fox Month is excellent because I want it a lot to be centered on Terry and just the run, but all that Terry has accomplished, and I think we've gotten there."

About 9,000 schools in 600 communities across Canada and more than 30 countries worldwide participate in Terry Fox Runs held in September. The event raises money for cancer research to continue Fox's legacy. As of Sept. 7, the Woodstock event had raised \$17,636.

Versaevel has been with the organization for several years and has served as one of its co-chairs for a decade, with this year marking his final term. The movement holds deep personal significance for him for many reasons.

"I can't think of anybody who hasn't been



(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

Ernie Hardeman MPP, Woodstock Mayor Jerry Acchione and Terry Fox Run Co-Chairs John and Steve with volunteers and supporters raising the Terry Fox Flag for September 14th Run

touched by cancer," he said. "Plus, the fact in 1980 I saw the effect that Terry's run had in the country, and it brought out the better nature of just about everybody and reflected the really good qualities of Canadians."

He added that thanks to research and advances in medical treatments over the years, there are better outlooks for those diagnosed with cancer compared to decades ago.

"When I was a kid, if someone said, 'you've got cancer,' it was a death warrant. Now, it

comes down to more and more people being able to be put into remission or being able to live with cancer for more than six months."

The 45th annual Terry Fox Run in Woodstock will take place on Sept. 14 at Southside Park, with hundreds of participants of all abilities doing 2.5, 5, or 10 kilometres.

"You can walk it, bike it, roll it, stroll it, whatever," Versaevel said.

Registration begins at 9 a.m., with the run/walk kicking off at 10 a.m. The Woodstock

Navy Vets will also be collecting donations at their season-opening game on Sept. 12. Additionally, Terry Fox Run t-shirts were available for sale at the Woodstock Farmers' Market on Aug. 30 and Sept. 6.

This year, signs were placed alongside the route as part of the Metre of Memories dedicated to family and friends who battled cancer.

More information about the Terry Fox Run, including registration and donation, is available at <https://run.terryfox.ca/92841>.



Public Consultation Centre

Class Environmental Assessment Study for Clarke Road Improvements and Widening, Town of Ingersoll

The Town of Ingersoll is initiating a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) Study that will evaluate a range of alternative roadway improvements to Clarke Road from Oxford Road 119 (Harris Street) in the west and extending approximately 730 m to the east. This project is taking place in the Town of Ingersoll, Oxford County (refer to the included Study Area map).

Upon completion of the study, a Project File Report (PFR) documenting the process will be available for public comment for a period of at least 30 calendar days.

We are interested in hearing from you!

A Public Consultation Centre (PCC) will be held to present the problem/opportunity statement, alternative solutions, and to gather further input on the project. The PCC will be held at the following time and location:



Thursday, September 25, 2025
Drop in: 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.



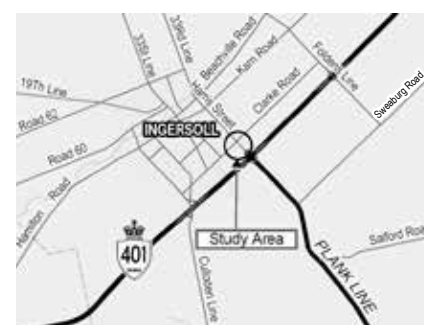
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For further information on this project, please visit
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Public meeting

Oxford Road 119 (Harris Street) and Clarke Road intersection improvements and Oxford Road 119 widening in Ingersoll

Oxford County is initiating a Harmonized Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) Study that will consider a range of alternative improvements to the Oxford Road 119 (Harris Street) and Clarke Road intersection, as well as the widening of Oxford Road 119 from Clarke Road to Highway 401. This project is taking place in the Town of Ingersoll, Oxford County.



Public meeting

Consultation with stakeholders is a key component of the Class EA study process and input will be sought throughout the project. A Public Consultation Centre (PCC) will be held to allow the public to view preliminary study materials and plans and discuss the project with Public Works Engineering staff and the design team.



Thursday, September 25, 2025

Drop in: 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.



Ingersoll Town Hall, Council Chamber
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For more info, visit www.oxfordcounty.ca/speakup

Healthy living featured at holistic fair



Tracy, Vanessa (Organizer), Elizabeth and Allan gathered around Vanessa’s display, chatting while selecting unique items to take home.



Carrie and Tammie welcomed guests to explore the many unique pieces featured at their My Angels Closet booth.

The Oxford Auditorium at the Woodstock Fairgrounds was transformed into a hub of wellness, positivity, and community during the Holistic Healing Fair on Sept. 6. Visitors discovered a wide range of resources and experiences designed to inspire healthier living and mindful connections. Since its beginnings in 2016, the Holistic Healing Fair has grown into a celebrated Ontario-wide initiative, and the Woodstock event carried that spirit forward. Attendees explored over one hundred past and present wellness offerings, from eco-friendly living solutions to mental health support networks, all while enjoying a welcoming and uplifting atmosphere. The fair featured something for

everyone—energy healing sessions, crystals and essential oils, tarot and psychic readings, handmade jewelry, and practical workshops that encouraged self-care and balance. “The Holistic Healing Fair is about more than shopping—it’s about connection,” said organizers. “Woodstock showed once again how a community can come together to share knowledge, support one another, and create an environment filled with good energy.” With a legacy of hosting over 100 fairs across Ontario, the Holistic Healing Fair continues to build momentum by uniting communities with tools, resources, and inspiration to help them live their best lives.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Guests wandered the aisles, pausing to admire the wellness-inspired displays.

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SEPTEMBER 25, 2025

STARTING AT 9:00 AM

\$5.00 Per Person

Retiree's meeting to follow

AGENDA

Important Information – Guest speaker Suzanne Godin partner Brown, Beattie, O'Donovan

Topic: Unifor wills and power of attorney presentation and question period to follow
This topic affects everyone. These documents require updates to remain current.
Please plan to attend

Nomination and Election of One (1) Alternate Delegate to Area Council

ROUTINE BUSINESS

Doug Steele
Unifor Local 636
Retired Workers Chapter
Chairperson
DS/cmcope343

Susan Veenstra
Unifor Local 636
Retired Workers Chapter
Recording Secretary



This position is the
safest for a sleeping
infant.

Answer: On their back



English: Protect
Spanish: Proteger
Italian: Proteggere
French: Protéger
German: Beschützen

Creative Colouring

Colour in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.

PCAREIIF

EHTET

EBAHT

AFECs

Y Y M O N

Answer: Baby Safety Month

CANADA



HISTORY

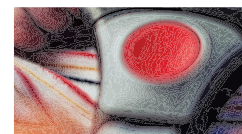
1896

The Winnipeg Victorias win their first Stanley Cup by defeating the Montreal Victorias two goals to zero at Montreal's Victoria Skating Rink.



OUTLET

a point in a wiring system where electricity can be accessed



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Answer: Car seat latch

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Woodstock musician releasing second studio album

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Former Woodstock native turned Toronto-based singer-songwriter Cory Stewart is releasing a new album titled 'Take All My Toys And Go,' described as a bold, unfiltered collection that turns heartbreak, fractured friendships, and self-discovery into a sharply crafted pop confessional.

The new album arrives Sept. 19, while vinyl pre-orders launched Sept. 2 through Dead Dog Records in Toronto, Stewart's favourite local shop.

"A collection of songs about being hurt, growing, and then learning from the hurt."

Those were the words Cory Stewart used when the Echo asked him to describe the new album in one sentence. He added his first album, released during the pandemic, was focused on grief, after he had lost his best friend following a stage four stomach cancer diagnosis.

"She was diagnosed in February of that year, and by April, she had passed away. Because of the pandemic we couldn't go to the hospital. This album is more about picking up the pieces. I did a tour in the US in 2022 and there are some stories about the struggles with that because touring these days is no easy feat."

Stewart said it wasn't easy to come out ahead once the costs of travel, hotels and other expenses are factored in.

"If you are an Indie artist, you aren't charging more

than 15 bucks a ticket, so the money doesn't add up. There was a lot of stress, friendships broken, and all of these experiences culminated in writing these songs over the past three years and putting it together with my producer, Gavin Bradley."

Bradley is a highly decorated artist and producer, working with the likes of Nelly Furtado, Tori Amos, Jane Siberry, Serena Ryder, Jacksoul and The Philosophers Kings. He is also a Juno Award winner. Stewart added he's looking forward to seeing the new album in a pressed version.

"This is the first time I have an album on vinyl. My last album was on CD, but we are going to vinyl because people are going back to it, which is a thrill because I am such a big fan. It makes you actually listen to an entire album, not just skip through songs which is what the TikTok generation has turned our lives into these days."

Stewart has not performed in Woodstock since moving to Toronto, but when asked if he was open to the idea of a gig in the Friendly City, he didn't rule it out.

"If people would come, I would do it in a heartbeat. As a kid, I did so many shows there as a member of various theatre groups, including Woodstock Little Theatre, as it was called back then. I would love to."

Stewart still considers Woodstock home, and the last time he was here was in July to visit his grandparents. His father owns Corcoran Auto Sales on Dundas Street, and his grandfather,

Trevor John Slater, served as Woodstock's mayor for one year in 1966. Before that, he spent three years as an alderman.

The 41-year-old holds down a regular job outside his music career, and he explained that at this stage in his life, he is making the type of music he wants to make.

"Music has been such a driving force in my life. It's something I have been involved with since I was a kid. I started training with the Royal Conservatory of Music (one of the most respected music institutions in the world) and worked with a boys' choir in London, and through that, I was able to go to Europe and do lots of things."

Stewart didn't start professionally releasing and recording his own music until 2018 with the release of an EP called '7 Different Sides,' a theatrical pop project exploring LGBTQ+ themes such as self-acceptance and empowerment. His debut album, TOV, was released in 2021 and was a 17-track album divided into three emotional arcs—betrayal, heartbreak, and survival. It was named after his late best friend, Tovah Natalie. The album reached #9 on iTunes Pop charts and received critical praise. He also opened for Boy George in Montreal following the EP release.

Stewart is holding two events to release the new album. The first at Dead Dog Records on Church Street in Toronto on Sept. 18 and the second at The Record Works in Woodstock on Sept. 25 at

7 p.m. Stewart's hometown release celebration, with an in-store signing and vinyl copies available. Free tickets are available on Eventbrite by searching Take All My Toys And Go Listening Party in Woodstock.

Stewart said he's always nervous before any musical event and expects to be at Record Works.

"I'm the type of person where my mind always wonders to the worst possible outcome. You prepare yourself for that, so if it happens, you aren't completely devastated. I know I have family coming, I know I have some old friends coming, and I'm excited to see everyone. Part of doing these listening parties, and specifically in Woodstock, is an excuse to see all of these people and force them to buy my album," he joked.

"I am nervous, but Woodstock has been so supportive, and I am so grateful. Heart FM, for example, has always played my music. Just the community itself, it wasn't always that way for me when I was younger, because I did grow up gay. It was a tough time and I think



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Woodstock native Cory Stewart is releasing his second album on vinyl. His Friendly City release party is set for Sept. 25 at Record Works on Dundas Street.

culturally we weren't there."

He added that times have changed with the formation of Oxford Pride and a greater acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community.

Stewart's debut album, TOV, delivered sleek, genre-blending pop that climbed to number nine on the iTunes charts and landed him on stages with icons

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Record-breaking turnout for Ingersoll's final 'Cops and Rodders' Cruise Night

KYRAH SMITH

Echo Contributor

Ingersoll's Cheese and Agricultural Museum hosted the final Cops and Rodders Cruise Night of the season on Sept. 9. Retro music blared, getting guests and car enthusiasts in the mood as they checked out a stunning lineup of hot rods.

The event, which ran from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m., was free to attend and attracted a record-breaking crowd. More than 100 vehicles were on display, ranging from nostalgic classics like a 1959 Ford Fairlane 500 Galaxie, 1933 Ford Window Coupe, 1977 Chrysler Cordoba, and 1972 Ford Pinto. Some cars featured serious modifications and upgrades, showcasing their owners' personalities, while others maintained a more traditional and timeless look. A se-

lection of modern vehicles was also on display for guests to appreciate.

"This is friggin' fabulous for us," remarked John McKim of the Cops and Rodders team. "This is a record for us since we took it over around four years ago, starting with 15 to 18 cars, to what we have here now," he added.

Attendees were able to grab food from local vendor PB's Fries or enjoy a frozen treat from Candy Licious. The Royal Canadian Legion also offered guests a barbecue option. A 50/50 draw added a bit of extra excitement for those in attendance. I visited the show with my father, and it definitely brought back some memories from his childhood. He pointed out several cars his cousin once owned and even recognized a few of the first vehicles my grandfather drove, which was very cool to see.



(KYRAH SMITH PHOTOS)

Dozens of vintage vehicles were on hand for the event, the final one of the season.

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Route to the Past – Battle of Britain Bravery Remembered

SCOTT GILLIES

Contributor

“What General Weygand has called the Battle of France is over. I expect that the Battle of Britain is about to begin.”

In early July of 1940, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill addressed the nation with these most prophetic words.

French officials had been forced to sign terms of capitulation with Adolf Hitler and his Nazi hoards. The German juggernaut had steamrolled across Belgium, Holland and France within a matter of weeks. Following the miracle of Dunkirk when thousands of British troops had been successfully evacuated from France to English soil, virtually all of Europe had fallen under Axis control. England stood alone as an isolated fortress against this tyranny.

Hitler knew that his troops would have to capture England in order to win the war but in order to accomplish that task they had to cross the English Channel – that body of water which Shakespeare had described as “a moat defensive... against the envy of less happier lands.” (Richard II). But in order to cross that moat, the Germans had to first wrest control of the skies from the Royal Air Force.

Churchill went on to warn his people that “upon this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization. Upon it depends our own British life, and the long continuity of our institutions and our Empire. The whole fury and might of the enemy must very soon be turned on us.”

The symbolism of Shakespeare’s words were not chosen lightly, for any student of The Bard would recognize and recall other lines and other patriotic references from the play Richard II. “... This royal throne of kings, this scepter’d isle, This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars (the God of War), This other Eden, demi-paradise. This fortress built by Nature for herself against infection and the hand of war. This happy breed of men, this little world, this precious stone set in the silver sea...”

The truth of Churchill’s predictions came crashing home on July 10, 1940, when 120 Luftwaffe bombers and fighter planes headed for the English coastline. The onslaught of this large assembly of enemy aircraft was stoically met by only a handful of brave RAF pilots flying just seven Hurricanes and eight Spitfires! Remarkably, after a snapping and snarl-

ing dogfight, the Germans withdrew with only a few of their bombs finding its intended target.

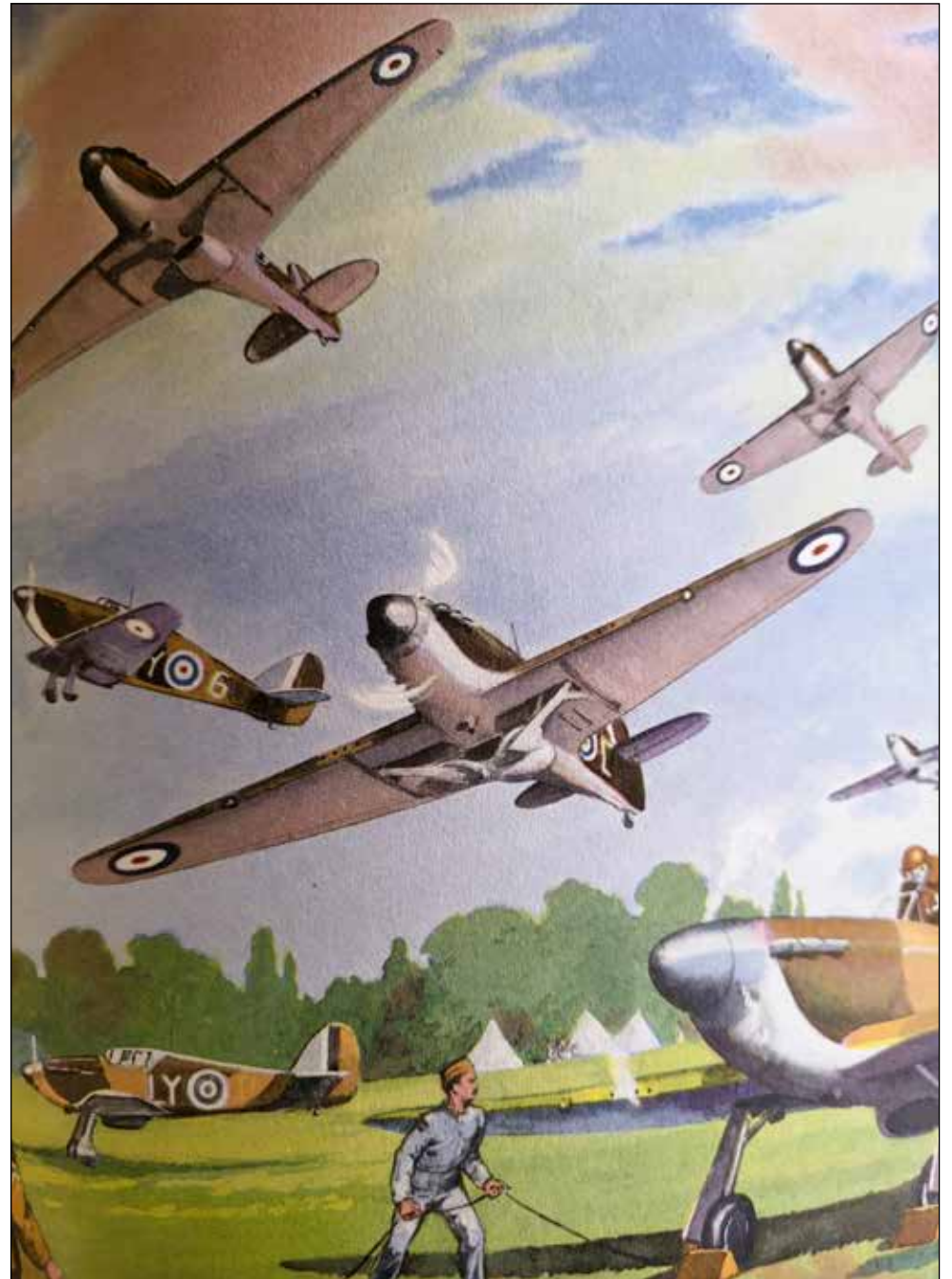
However, over the next four months the Luftwaffe flew hundreds of more sorties out of occupied Europe, and each wave after wave of Goering’s goons were met by indefatigable handfuls of committed young Allied airmen. Many of them paid the ultimate sacrifice for freedom.

Among those fighting on behalf of Britain were members of the 242 Squadron of the Royal Air Force. Many of its members were Canadians who flew under the command of that legless wonder and ace fighter pilot, Squadron Leader Douglas Bader.

No doubt, tales of heroic deeds performed by men of the 242nd and other RAF Squadrons inspired young men from Ingersoll, Woodstock and Oxford County to enlist in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Among these young men who earned their wings and then the wings of angels were Flight Lieutenants Jack Griffin Lee and Charles Lambert; Flying Officers Keith Mabee, and Leslie Scourfield, and Flight Sergeants Robet Douglas, Reg Stone, John Gayfer, William Wade and Bruce Winders, to name but a few.

Leslie Rowland Scourfield, as in Scourfield Drive off Bell Street in Ingersoll, trained at the air base in Pennfield New Brunswick. Part of 419 Squadron, he was killed in action on October 15, 1942. Fellow Ingersoll native Jack Lee, son of Edward and Ethel Less, had also trained at the same station. He received a Distinguished Flying Cross and was cited as having “completed numerous operations against the enemy in the course of which he has invariably displayed the utmost fortitude, courage and devotion to duty”. Lee was shot down in 1944 and is buried in Denmark.

The Battle of Britain continued unabated throughout the summer months of 1940. Eighty-five years ago, from August 24th until September 6th, German bombers and fighters had continuously attacked London and English air bases both day and night, with devastating effect. By the 15th of September, however it was clear that the British defences had worked, and Churchill’s description that “never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few” caught the imagination of the public and inspired them to face what challenges lay before them. “Whatever the cost may be.”



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Hurricanes Scramble - Artistic rendering by Barry Bart, from War in the Air, by John Walker, Random House Publishing 1941

In Ingersoll, this famous battle that changed the face of history has been commemorated almost every year since it first took place, with a parade into the Ingersoll Rural Cemetery. Everyone is invited to attend the brief ceremony on

Sunday September 21, 2025. The parade, led by the Ingersoll Pipe Band, will kick off from Pemberton Street at 1:30pm.

Will you be one of the many to honour the few?

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Riddles

I have keys but open no doors. I have space but no room. You can enter, but you can't go outside. What am I?
Keyboard

I'm light as a feather, yet no one can hold me for long. What am I?
Breath

I speak without a mouth and hear without ears. I have no body, but I come alive with wind. What am I?
Echo

I'm always hungry, I must always be fed. The finger I touch will soon turn red. What am I?
Fire

I run but never walk, I have a bed but never sleep. What am I?
River

The more you take, the more you leave behind. What am I?
Footsteps

I have a ring but no finger. I get answered but I never speak. What am I?
Telephone

I'm full of holes but still hold water. What am I?
Sponge

I fly without wings, I cry without eyes. Wherever I go, darkness flies. What am I?
Cloud

I can be cracked, made, told, and played. What am I?
Joke

Sudoku

by PeterS 2025

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

Solutions on page 30

Featured Pet



RANGER
Ranger is a happy, healthy, full of energy 2 year old Shih-Poo, with a very distinct personality.

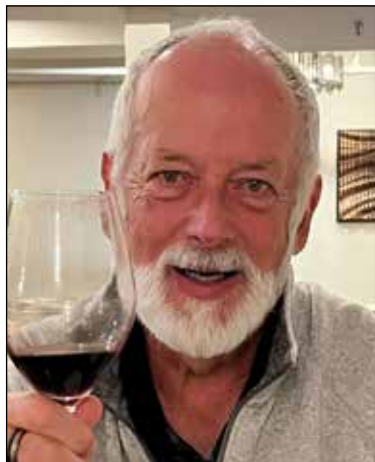
Nominate your pet to be a Featured Pet by emailing info@theecho.ca

Word Search

MUSIC & INSTRUMENTS

U	K	U	L	E	L	E	E	U	X	C	B	U	T	J	N	T	J	G	B	GUITAR
C	Y	H	X	T	R	O	M	B	O	N	E	X	X	E	P	I	A	A	Y	PIANO
L	A	F	F	B	H	A	F	R	K	H	A	R	P	S	E	I	X	G	N	VIOLIN
A	K	R	P	D	E	Y	L	W	P	X	V	G	C	G	A	Q	P	P	F	DRUMS
R	B	E	N	T	B	Z	H	R	K	U	Z	H	Q	U	Q	Q	S	W	M	TRUMPET
I	K	A	P	R	M	T	A	J	V	K	K	M	P	I	U	R	W	R	I	FLUTE
N	T	F	R	U	S	K	J	E	W	E	R	L	Z	T	L	T	U	H	C	SAXOPHONE
E	O	I	P	M	A	B	L	M	T	X	N	L	S	A	P	U	I	R	R	CELLO
T	R	X	E	P	X	H	S	F	I	K	O	K	L	R	E	T	K	L	O	CLARINET
V	O	I	V	E	O	U	R	I	R	H	T	Y	T	R	W	H	Z	P	P	HARP
T	J	R	W	T	P	V	S	S	J	U	E	Y	D	N	U	Y	X	F	H	BASS
T	H	H	E	U	H	A	X	D	F	P	D	B	A	N	J	O	N	X	O	TROMBONE
T	Z	S	S	S	O	H	Z	J	C	I	F	L	U	T	E	O	R	O	N	BANJO
H	N	S	H	P	N	M	D	J	Z	A	G	F	K	T	W	S	T	A	E	UKULELE
T	I	J	W	H	E	H	D	C	S	N	Q	R	Z	I	S	J	X	J	L	MICROPHONE
C	W	I	B	V	G	P	X	E	L	O	C	O	N	J	L	Z	Y	Z	L	
H	N	T	C	N	G	F	Z	L	S	K	Z	E	C	G	T	I	O	B	R	
E	K	V	I	O	L	I	N	L	R	E	T	C	D	I	Z	O	V	A	V	
I	K	I	P	R	P	I	O	O	K	S	V	K	W	W	H	H	M	S	U	
R	N	B	Z	Y	I	P	D	R	U	M	S	F	G	V	L	S	N	S	S	

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Getting behind the scenes with the Blue Jays



PAUL KNOWLES

Echo Contributor

Once upon a time, long ago and sometimes far away, I was given a dream assignment: write a book about players on the Toronto Blue Jays. It was published right at the start of regular season, 1986, and it featured chapters about Jesse Barfield, Lloyd Moseby, Tony Fernandez, Willie Upshaw, Mark Eichhorn, and Kelly Gruber, among others.

I was sent to Dunedin for a week in spring training, where I got to know all these terrific athletes – and frankly, terrific people. Then back to Toronto for the weeks prior to season opening.

The book, “Home Run: The Personal Profiles of Champion

Athletes,” went into two printings. The foreword to the book was contributed by Gary Carter. Like I said, a dream job.

And why, other than sentimental nostalgia, did I bring this up today? That’s because of a tour we did a couple of weeks ago – a tour of the new parts of the renovated Rogers Centre, home of today’s Blue Jays.

See, when I was hanging out with the Blue Jays, their home was Exhibition Stadium, open to the elements, terrible seating, and occasional pre-game snow removal challenges.

Not so, today. Rogers Centre (which those of us of a certain age will always call “Skydome”) is a state-of-the-art sports stadium. We joined a pre-game tour of the place, and by and large, it was a pretty interesting experience. Tours are run all season long, several times a day. It’s not wildly expensive – the “classic tour” costs \$40 adults, \$30 seniors, \$25 kids, although you can also spring for a “pre-game tour” at twice that price, which is longer and includes batting practice, or an “ultimate pre-game tour” with a price tag well into three figures. We were hosted by Destination Toronto on the pre-game tour.

As Blue Jays fans know, Rogers Centre has just undergone

some major renovations. A venue that once was home to other sports apart from baseball, it is now a dedicated space, for baseball (and concerts) only. So the designers were able to change the configurations of the ballpark, and make – so they claim, I think accurately – all of the seats more suited to watching a ball game.

Now, to tell you the truth, I am of two minds about the pre-game tour. There’s a lot of good stuff, for sure. We got to see, up close, the Jays’ World Series Championship trophies. In the same room are housed the Gold Glove trophies of Vladimir Guerrero Jr., José Berriós, Vernon Wells, Devon White, Tony Fernandez and Jesse Barfield.

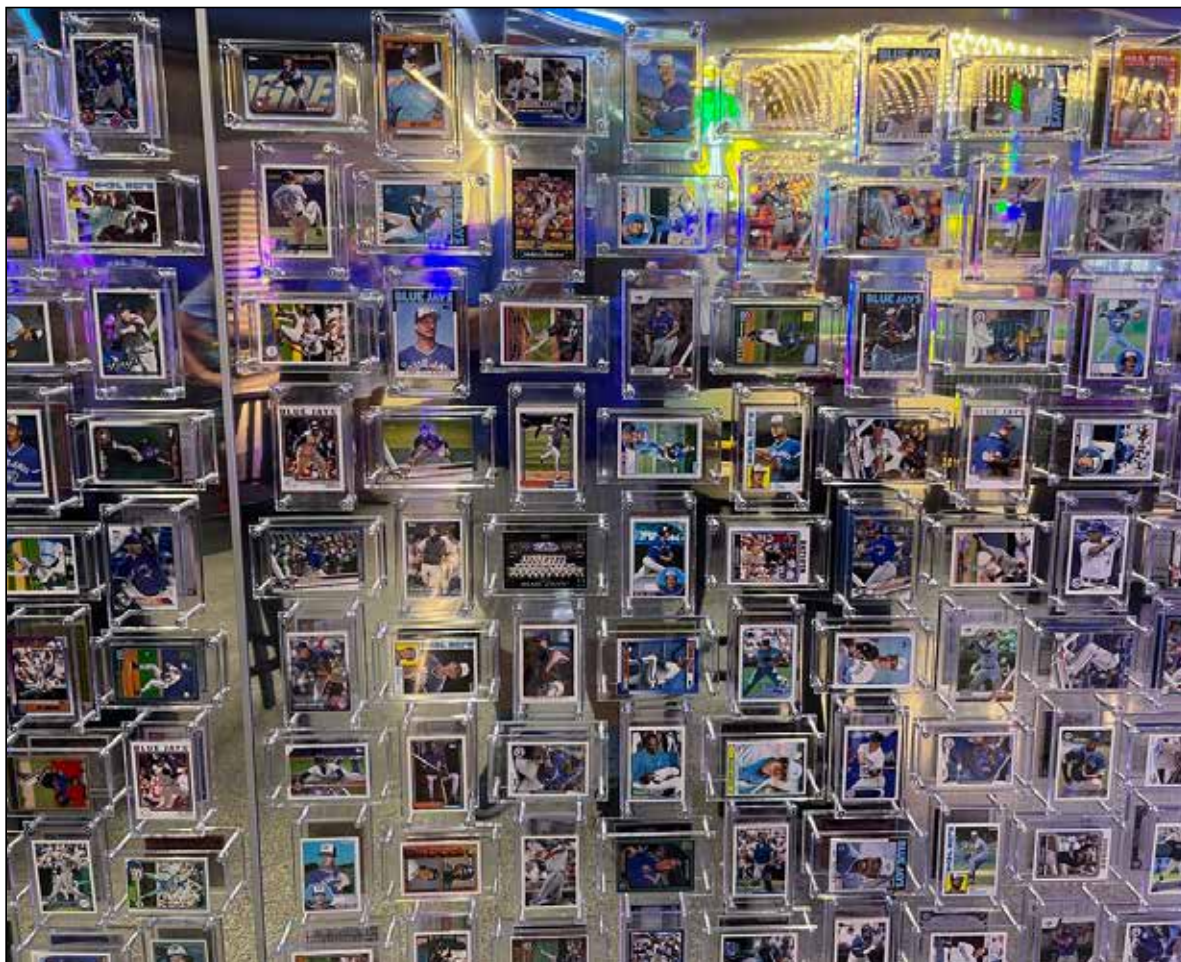
That’s the good news. The bad news, for the average fan, is that these key bits of memorabilia are kept in the Rogers Banner Club, accessible only to folks who have TD Premium Access. Or, to people like us, on a tour.

And that pattern was repeated throughout the tour. We saw the much-touted new wall of Blue Jay baseball cards, but it’s in the Heinz 328 Club (named for the foul pole on the first base side of the park; it’s located 328 feet from home plate, and the base of the pole is right in the wall of the club). The 328 Club is also



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Gold Gloves won by Blue Jays: from top, left to right, Vladimir Guerrero Jr., José Berriós, Devon White, Vernon Wells, Tony Fernandez, Jesse Barfield.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The wall of baseball cards in the Heinz 328 Club.

an “exclusive” venue, open only to members who have paid extra for the privilege.

The tour takes visitors to a few other similar locations, including a very high-end corporate box. You get to see a lot of photos of famous players, and plenty of memorabilia, but at the same time, the tour gets to feel a little like a sales job: “You, too, could enjoy these amenities, at a price.”

For us, the highlight of the tour was to be on the field – although carefully corralled behind a rope – to watch Blue Jays batting practice. And while we were there, the batters up were Vlado, Bo Bichette, George Springer and Daulton Varsho. For true Jays fans, that experience was probably worth the price of admission.

We also had tickets to the game – good seats, but not in a special section. We discovered that once in the stadium for a pre-game tour (for which you also must have game tickets), you can’t leave between the tour and the game. But again, some good news – it was Loo-

nie Dog night, so dining out wasn’t wildly expensive. And, the Jays won, a tightly contested and exciting game.

So, bottom line – is the tour worth the money? For die-hard Jays fans, I would say, Yes. The chance to get behind the scenes and see trophies, photos, and other memorabilia (including a bat used by José Bautista in the famous bat-flipping game) is somewhere near priceless to the dedicated lover of all things Jays.

And I must confess, I did get a bit nostalgic for those days when I could actually sit in the Exhibition Park Jays’ dugout before a game, and wander on the field with Tony, Lloyd and Jesse. But for a guy now long disconnected from the team, the tour and the game were highly enjoyable experiences in their own right.

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.

COMING EVENTS

The Oxford Basketball Officials Association in partnership with the Oxford Attack Basketball Club will be presenting an EXHIBITION BASKETBALL GAME BETWEEN THE FANSHAWE FALCONS AND THE MCMASTER MARAUDERS WOMEN'S TEAMS at St Mary's High School in Woodstock Sunday September 21 at 2:00pm. Admission: Adults \$10.00 and Youth \$5.00. Net proceeds to the Canadian Cancer Society. For more information, please email oxfordbasketballofficials@gmail.com

SACRED HEART PARISH EUCHRE Henderson Hall, 133 John Street Ingersoll. Tuesday, September 16, start at 1 p.m. Tuesday, September 30, start at 1 p.m. We invite everyone to join us for a Euchre afternoon. Refreshments provided. For more info call or text Martha 519-320-0785

TILLSONBURG FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION IS HOSTING ANNUAL STEAK BBQ FUNDRAISER Saturday September 13: Meal is served from 4 to 8 p.m. Lions Auditorium, 45 Hardy Ave, Tillsonburg \$30.00 per person Children under 12- Free Hotdogs Tickets Available through one of the local Firefighters or email dvan.occ@gmail.com

CANADIAN HARVARD AIRCRAFT ASSOCIATION OPEN HOUSE & FLY DAYS Sept 13 – Wings & Wheels All event dates take place from 9am to 4pm Tillsonburg Regional Airport Join us for our Open House & Fly Days during our special 40th anniversary season. These monthly family-friendly outdoor events are always FREE and offer the opportunity to see our collection of Harvard aircraft up close, tour our hangars, explore restoration projects, purchase souvenirs, and best of all, purchase a flight! Pre-booking your flight experience is recommended by contacting crewflights@harvards.com.

MT ELGIN UNITED CHURCH IS HOSTING A REBA MCINTYRE, SHANIA TWAIN, GARTH BROOKS - TRIBUTE SHOW Sunday, eptember 21st: 2-4 p.m. Mount Elgin Community Centre Come out relax and enjoy some great music. Tickets are \$30.00 and may be purchased by calling Dawne 519-421-6836 or Joanne 519-485-1988.

HURON PARK BAPTIST CHURCH SENIORS LUNCH September 25 – Noon Please call 519-421-4722 for more information and to register.

The Ingersoll Rotary Club is proud to host: THE 2025 INTERNATIONAL SOFTBALL CONGRESS (ISC) MEN'S FASTBALL TOURNAMENT in Ingersoll September 26-28 at Victoria and Garnet Elliott Parks. Games begin 7 p.m., Friday.

See some of the best league teams vying for a berth into next year's World's ISC Championship Tournament in Kitchener, Ontario in August 2026. At press time, registered teams are Georgian Bay, Sebringville, Saugeen, St. Thomas, Puslinch, Wiarton, Waterdown, Jarvis, Walton and Kitchener.

DOORS WIDE OPEN St. David's United Church Woodstock Saturday September 27 from 11 - 2:00 pm We invite our community to come check us out and chat with some local groups that are part of our church community. The Optimist Club of Oxford County will be hosting a BBQ.

The Woodstock and Innerkip Lion Clubs host: PET VALU 40TH WALK FOR DOG GUIDES: BRIGHT FUTURES, COUNTLESS POSSIBILITIES Come and join the local Lions Clubs as we celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides, theme Bright Futures, Countless Possibilities. www.walkfordogguides.com **The walk this year will be held at the Pavillion (beside the playground/ Sea Cadets building) in Southside Park in Woodstock, Ontario on Saturday, September 27. Registration is at 10 a.m., Walk starts at 10:30 a.m.** Bring your family, friends, and sociable dogs. Fun for the whole family. Please contact Jennifer and Tatum "dog guide" at jharrington743@gmail.com for more information.

Hearts for Ethiopia Hosts: A WALK IN THEIR SHOES Register today for Hearts for Ethiopia's A Walk in Their Shoes! This meaningful community event is happening soon on **Saturday, October 18 in Woodstock**, and individuals and teams are encouraged to sign up today at www.heartsforethiopia.com. A Walk in Their Shoes invites participants to step into the daily experiences of women and children in Ethiopia, while raising vital funds to support those living in extreme poverty. The event features a family-friendly walk, interactive education, a silent auction, an Ethiopian Merkato, refreshments, and opportunities to learn how the money raised will change the lives of women and children in Ethiopia.

REVEREND MARK CURTIS WITH HIS MUSICAL SERMON, "SONGS MY FATHER SANG TO ME" Saturday, October 18, starting at 2 p.m. Old St Paul's Anglican Church, 723 Dundas Woodstock, Ontario Come visit our historic church to worship with this talented priest and singer-songwriter. Good will offerings only. All are welcome. Refreshments will follow.

LET'S FALL INTO COUNTRY MUSIC WITH THE INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE Every other Friday: 1 to 4 p.m. Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St., Ingersoll Join us. Walk ins welcome. Qualifications, love 50-70's country music, perform, listen, dance, and enjoy. **September 19, October 3, 17 & 31, November 14 & 28, and December 5.**

16TH ANNUAL TREATS & TREASURES EVENT November 8, 9am-3pm Maranatha Christian Reformed Church 735 Frontenac Cres., Woodstock (Just off Juliana near the new hospital!) Lots of variety! Returning vendors and "newbies"! You don't want to miss this event!! Free admission!! Free coffee! Vendors in front foyer, the east and west hallways, the youth room and the gym!! ?s: contact church at 519-539-5301 or organizer 519-536-0493

FAMILY FUN DAY @ EMMANUEL REFORMED CHURCH 170 Clarke St. Woodstock, ON November 22: 11 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Penny Sale - Silent Auction - Bake Sale Games for all Ages Delicious Soup - Chili - Hot Dogs - Buns Yummy Desserts - Drinks FREE ADMISSION - EVERYONE WELCOME

MONTHLY VON BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC Last Tuesday of every Month: 10 a.m. to Noon Ingersoll Pharmasave 19 King St. E., Ingersoll

TILLSONBURG DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB Interested in Bridge? Join us every Friday at the Tillsonburg Duplicate Bridge Club at 1 p.m. at The Senior Centre. Don't have a partner? Come anyway and we will match you up with someone. For more information, visit their Facebook page: TburgBridge.

THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF OXFORD COUNTY The Optimists bring out the best in Youth, Community, and Themselves. If anyone is interested in coming out to meet us and learn more about us please email brenda7621@outlook.com

REPAIR CAFÉ - TOSS IT? NO WAY! 1st Saturday of each month: 9 a.m. to Noon St. John's Church 685860 Oxford Highway 2, Eastwood, ON N4S 7V9 St. John's, Eastwood, now affiliated with Repair Café International (look for us at repaircafe.org). Meets the first Saturday of every month 9am to noon at St. John's Church 685860 Oxford Highway 2, Eastwood, ON N4S 7V9. Repairs made to clothing, linens, household items, toys, musical instruments etc. Save money, learn how to make your own repairs. Volunteers welcome. Payment by donation.

COPING WITH GRIEF & LOSS 8-week grief support group starts Monday, September 29: 6-8 p.m. Ingersoll Services for Seniors, 250 Ingersoll St. South, Ingersoll Space is limited. Pre-registration required. Cost \$20 for members, \$25 non-members. Group led by trained facilitators and focuses on coping and living with loss. To register, contact Compassionate Grief Support at 519-866-3016 or email faye@compassionategriefsupport.ca.

GRIEF SUPPORT FOR MAID RELATED LOSS This monthly in-person grief support group

for loss related to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) offers a compassionate, safe space to explore this unique loss. **The group will meet the 4th Wednesday of the month from 1-2:30 p.m. at the Thamesford Library, 165 Dundas St., Thamesford.** The group is free of charge. Pre-registration is requested. The next meeting is Wednesday, September 24th. To register or inquire about an evening group, contact 519-866-3016 or email faye@compassionategriefsupport.ca.

PEER SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS Third Wednesday of each month: 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. 21 Wellington St., Woodstock (Virtual options available) PCMH is a peer support program providing support to parents and caregivers across Ontario with lived experience raising children and youth with mental health challenges. For more information, please visit family.cmho.org or oxfordcounty@pcmh.ca. We are also on Facebook: Parents for Children's Mental Health ~ Oxford County

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:** 6:30PM-8:00PM **INGERSOLL WHEN:** 4th Tuesday of every month **WHERE:** Ingersoll Public Library 130 Oxford St., Ingersoll **TIME:** 10:30AM –12:00Noon **WOODSTOCK WHEN:** 3rd Saturday of every month **WHERE:** Sakura House Hospice 715180 Oxford Rd.4, Woodstock **TIME:** 10:30AM-12:00 Noon

THE LIONS CLUB OF WOODSTOCK The Lions Club of Woodstock has been serving the community and Oxford County with kindness and generosity since 1931. The Lions always place the needs of neighbours and communities first. Through the dedication and hard work of our volunteer members, we are serving those in need together. If you are interested in becoming a member or simply wish to learn more by attending one of our monthly meetings, please email Steve Iorio at steveiorio4@gmail.com for more information.

COLOURING THROUGH GRIEF Caring Hearts Support Network: St. David's United Church, 190 Springbank Ave., Woodstock ON Third Wednesday monthly. One time fee of \$15. Registration is required. Call 519-536-3370. Check out website www.caringheartssupportnetwork.com

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2 to 4 p.m.) and 4th Tuesday (7 to 9 p.m.) September to May Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7 If you have never belonged to a stamp club,

COMING EVENTS

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>

OXFORD COUNTY BRANCH OF ONTARIO ANCESTORS

Are you looking to start a summer pastime? Are you interested in your family history? Oxford Branch has an extensive collection of family history and genealogical resources that can help you. **Come visit our Resource Centre at 82 Light Street, Courthouse Square, Woodstock. We are open Tuesdays to Thursdays 10:00 am to 4:00 pm** where volunteers are ready to help you get started or help you research for missing information. You can also connect with us on the web at <https://oxford.ogs.on.ca>. We are dedicated to supporting and promoting genealogical research in Oxford County. Hope to see you through the summer!

OXFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY FALL SPEAKER SERIES

Industrial Woodstock – Timberland Machines Limited Wednesday, September 24: 6:30 p.m.

Location: Woodstock Museum NHS

Special Guest Speaker Wes Magill – Join Wes as he takes us through the history of “Industrial Woodstock” including Timberland Machines Limited and Timberjack Inc., founded by his father Weston A. Magill, Vernon B. King and Bob Symons – the undisputed “industrial kingpins” of Woodstock. Free Event, Donations Welcome!

CONDEMNED: WOODSTOCK’S WICKED PAST Wednesday, October 29: 6:30 p.m.

Location: To be announced.

Special Guest Jennie Grevers - Uncover the gripping stories behind the executions that shaped Woodstock and Oxford County’s past. Dive into the fascinating historical accounts from people who faced the gallows and learn how their lives – and deaths impacted our community. Join us for an evening filled with dramatic tales, historical insight, and a deeper understanding of Woodstock and Oxford’s most somber chapter. Free Event, Donations Welcome!

OXFORD GOES TO WAR

Wednesday, November 26: 6:30 p.m.

Location: To be announced.

Special Presentation by Scott Gillies, Chair OxHS. Free event, Donations welcome!

OXHS - BOARD MEMBER CURRENT VACANCY

The Oxford Historical Society celebrates, shares and commemorates the County’s stories of its people, places and events in history. We are currently looking for a volunteer Board member to fill a current vacancy. Consider getting involved behind the scenes. For more information, please email us at info@oxhs.ca.

BEACHVILLE LEGION EVENTS: 434852 ZorraLine, Beachville

EUCHRE: THURSDAYS - 7 p.m.

DARTS: FRIDAYS - 8 p.m.

FREE POOL

BLUEGRASS AND OLD TIME COUNTRY JAM

September 13: 1-4 p.m.

Come jam (acoustic only) or come to listen.

6 WEEK SESSION GENTLE CHAIR YOGA

September 17: 7-8 p.m.

STEAK BBQ

September 20: starts 5 p.m.

519-423-6363 to order

SIGN UP FOR MEN’S DART LEAGUE

September 22 and 29: 7 p.m.

Commencing Oct 20, 4-6 players per team

LINE DANCING

Starting September 25: 7-8 p.m.

For 7 weeks

INTRO TO BALLROOM DANCING

Starting September 25: 8:15-9:15 p.m.

For 6 weeks. No partner required.

KARAOKE

September 27: 7-11 p.m.

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION

BRANCH 55 EVENTS:

642 Dundas St, Woodstock

DARTS

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday nights.

SHUFFLEBOARD LEAGUE IS BACK

1:30 p.m. Every Thursday.

MEAT DRAW

September 13: 3 p.m.

LASAGNA & CAESAR SALAD DINNER

September 28: 5-6 p.m.

Pre-Order no later and pay by September 23. For more information please contact the office 519-537-3112 or canteen 519-539-3401.

PRIVATE FUNCTION ON SEPTEMBER 19

Canteen not open. Office is open.

SERVICE OFFICER VISIT

September 24: 10 a.m.

Please be here if you need to see her.

CHARLIE DALGARNO 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

September 20: 2-4 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT SATURDAY NIGHTS

September 13 - DJ Wolfeman 7-11 p.m.

September 20 - Steve Beach & James Anthony 7-11 p.m.

September 27 - Private Function - Canteen Closed.

DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK BIA IMPORTANT DATES:

DOWNTOWN WOODSTOCK SHOPPING NIGHT

September 25, October 23, November 27, December 18: 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Our monthly shopping event, Woodstock Shopping Night, typically occurs every 4th Thursday of the month. Participating stores stay open late until 8 pm to facilitate late-night shopping. Enjoy a great night out in downtown Woodstock with extended store hours & exciting specials.

CHRISTMAS IN THE SQUARE

December 12/13 & December 19/20

Get ready for a festive family adventure in Downtown Woodstock! Join us for free festive fun in Museum Square; expect smiles, laughter, and a jolly good time. Bring the kids and snap a free photo with Santa at his house. Take the opportunity to do some last minute shopping for your loved ones at the wonderful downtown businesses.

SOUTH GATE CENTRE EVENTS:

www.southgatectr.com or 519-539-9817

FALLSVIEW CASINO

Friday, September 19: 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

South Gate Centre Bus Trip

Members pricing and non-members pricing.

BLUE JAYS VS. TAMPA BAY

Saturday, September 27: 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

South Gate Centre Bus Trip

Members pricing and non-members pricing.

CEDARVIEW RETIREMENT HOME EVENTS:

511 Finkle St, Woodstock

BE OUR GUEST TEA PARTY

BEAUTY & THE BEAST FAMILY EVENT

Sunday, September 21: 2:30-4 p.m.

Call to RSVP at 519-602-0282

Come in your Princess Dresses

Accepting non perishable food items for food bank. FREE Event

PINK OUT PARTY FOR BREAST CANCER

AWARENESS MONTH

EDUARD KLASSEN ON THE HARP

Thursday, October 16: 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Call to RSVP at 519-602-0282

Wear Pink! Accepting non persihable food items for the food bank.

FREE event

EUCHRE TOURNAMENT

Sunday October 26: 2-4:00 p.m., followed by dinner

Call to RSVP at 519-602-0282

Accepting non perishable food items for the food bank. FREE event

SOCK HOP DANCE

Saturday November 15: 7:30-9:30 p.m.

DJ Frankie. Call to RSVP at 519-602-0282

Accepting non perishable food items for the food bank. FREE event

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday December 6: 1-4 p.m.

Accepting non perishable food items for the food bank

FREE event

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Revamped tourism website makes it even easier to “Tour Oxford”

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Oxford Tourism is attempting to make planning a trip to Oxford County easier with the newly revamped Tour Oxford website.

This refreshed platform supports Oxford County’s 5-Year Tourism Plan and is designed to enhance visitor information services while meeting the growing demand for tourism resources and business support.

“With a modern, responsive design, the website offers a seamless experience for visitors and improved tools for local tourism operators,” a press release said.

Meredith Maywood is the county’s Tourism Manager, and the new site has several new and exciting features.

“A few that come to mind, first of all, is a more user-friendly navigation. We can quickly get you to things to do, trip itineraries, but the entire site also has a great feature where you can filter listings. You can see items just in a particular community, or if people have a certain amenity they are looking for. If you needed a pet-friendly patio at a restaurant, for example. It is customized for people to find the information they are looking for.”

She explained the new site has been a tre-

mendous amount of work, but it has been a team effort from start to finish, and Oxford companies are now able to showcase themselves.

“Businesses can actually go online and quickly edit and maintain their content. The site isn’t just aimed at the consumer but also at the businesses. For example, people can easily go online and submit events and add offers.”

2025 is just year one of the five-year plan, and Maywood said Tourism Oxford is well on the way to successfully implementing the initiative.

“It’s been a very successful year in checking off some of those tasks to be completed. The website is a great example of one, and it was a priority for us this year. We are also working on the ‘Your Next Stop’ routes that we have in market now and the other ones we are hoping to wrap up and market for the fall for Ingersoll and Tillsonburg.”

Oxford County has been a growing tourist destination over the last several years, and another benefit of the new website is the ability to track visitor inquiries more efficiently. Maywood added the county is an up-and-coming hot spot for tourism dollars.

“At the end of the year I’ll be able to give

some overall numbers. This week, we had a call from someone wanting to bring a group of 50 people into the area in September. We were featured in Blog TO earlier in the year and our inbox exploded over two days.”

She added how consumers plan vacations and getaways is changing, and they are now ready to provide the necessary planning information.

“We now have a website that is ready for you to build your trip and share a link with your friends. Or, if you want to give a trip idea hint to somebody to take you out, you can use it for that as well.”

One of Tourism Oxford’s key target audiences is urban residents looking for an escape from the hustle and bustle of Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener, or London.

“As much as Woodstock is a city, it’s still small by metropolitan standards. People love what we have to offer. There are a lot of unique businesses, stories, culture and history to explore.”

The organization has also launched a program in Woodstock called Retro Rewind, where the goal is to get people to explore businesses in the Friendly City.

“We’re celebrating the fact we have some long-term businesses, even one back to the

1800s, and there are three themes. ‘Retro Vibes’ are businesses offering a unique nostalgic offering. For example, wandering through three floors of antiques, flipping through vinyl, and maybe getting a fresh cut at a local barbershop with vintage décor in the store. From an old school tailor on Dundas Street to a jeweler, checking out a museum and the local history with some walking tours.”

Maywood added customers can also go back to the future and check out some new and modern businesses that are bringing something fresh to downtown Woodstock.

“There’s so much to check out downtown, and I’m excited for it. There is a lot of enthusiasm there.”

More information is available on the Tourism Oxford website under the ‘Explore’ tab by clicking ‘Your Next Stop.’

Potential tourists can explore an events calendar to see what’s happening across Oxford and access personalized trip planning through a concierge service that highlights everything from hidden gems to must-see attractions. Businesses are able to update photos, details, and seasonal offers and access resources to make sure their information reaches visitors.

Anyone interested can learn more at www.tourismoxford.ca.



SATURDAY, OCT. 4, 2025
12 – 5 P.M.
MUSEUM SQUARE

FALL INTO FUN AT FALL FEST!

Join us for a vibrant day of family-friendly autumn and Halloween-themed activities, entertainment, treats and more.

www.cityofwoodstock.ca/fallfest





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Toronto's waterfront is being revitalized to become a year-round destination. It's going to be the perfect place for family-friendly fun and one-of-a-kind memories.

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Help shape our fall and winter programming

Share your ideas and you could WIN!

We want to hear from you, Oxford County!



Ox on the Run is planning their Fall and Winter schedule, and we want your input on:

- The programs and services you want to see
- Where to visit and the best times to stop



You could WIN a \$25 Tim Hortons gift card for participating



Take the survey online until September 26 at www.ocl.net/our-services/ox-on-the-run

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5	8	4	3	9	7	6	1	2

QUIZ ANSWERS

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- North Tower
- Zero
- Seattle
- The Rolling Stones
- 1967
- The Delaware River
- 20,000hz
- Neptune
- Elmo

Visit us online at theecho.ca

OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, September 27th
from 10am-2pm
70 King Edward Street, Paris

Join us to enjoy our community and refreshments.
Discover our care options, short-term stay programs and community centre.

We look forward to seeing you!



70 King Edward Street, Paris
queensviewrc.ca 226-457-0682





CLASSIFIEDS

BAD GOLF OXFORD CHAMPIONSHIP

"Beginner And Disabled"

Sun October 5: 1 p.m.:

STONEHAVEN Golf {after churches}

\$25 ENTRY FORM @

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FREE Putting school @ 12:30 FREE SNACKS

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FOR RENT

Newly renovated 1 bedroom apartment, upstairs unit. Located in Tavistock. If interested call 519-801-5454.

HOUSE FOR SALE

Lovely move in ready bungalow in the west end of picturesque St. Mary's. 72 Carrall Street.

This property features a large corner lot, 2 main floor bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a partially finished basement with 2 additional rooms, plus a family/rec room. Single detached garage.

Go to Kiji Ad ID 1724804443 or Facebook Marketplace, search "72 Carrall Street" for all of the details and photos.

Must see! Contact 519-570-6931 or kristafrancisishere@hotmail.com.

HIRING



The Contract Framing Group is hiring for various positions. We are looking for a part-time shop person to repair/maintain tools, equipment & small deliveries, as well as full-time wall-panel workers to work in pre fab shop, and full-time job site labourers. We offer a competitive wage and benefit package.

Email jason@contractframing.ca or call 519-273-4600.

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Martin's Nursery, 42661 Orangehill Road, Wroxeter (1 concession north of Wroxeter on Belmore Line)



Contribute to your local community newspaper! Send articles, sports or event recaps, and photos to info@theecho.ca

GROW WITH US

Truck and Backhoe Operator Seasonal, winter plow operators (6)

Competition 2025-86

Drumbo, Embro, Springford & Woodstock Patrols

Temporary full-time, Monday to Friday, 3:00 p.m. – 11:30 p.m.

\$31.10/hour

This role includes maintaining culverts, roads, roadsides and safety devices, and performing winter control activities including snow plow operation. Valid Class D license with Z endorsement is required.



Apply by September 23, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Resumes are only accepted via email at hr@oxfordcounty.ca. Include the competition number and patrol location(s) in the subject line.

Roads Lead Hand opportunities may be available. Please note in your application if you are interested in filling this role.



To view the full job description and qualifications, please visit:

www.oxfordcounty.ca/careers

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Woodstock

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