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(LORIE YANTZI PHOTO)

A small gaggle of geese spent some time on the Nith River in New Hamburg recently, walking on thin ice and waiting for the ice to break up as spring approaches.

## 100 Women Who Care Wilmot contribute \$10,000 to New Dundee batting-cage upgrades

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

With their latest \$10,000 donation, 100 Women Who Care Wilmot are supporting ball players in New Dundee and throughout Wilmot Township, including those who play with Wilmot Thunder Softball.

At the organization's first meeting of the year Feb. 19, each of the 100 members listened to presentations from several local organizations in need of financial support. By the end of those presentations, they voted on

which organization and project they wanted to support with their \$100 donations – a collective impact of \$10,000.

"Our women group voted to support Wilmot Thunder Softball," 100 Women Who Care Wilmot co-chair Angie Hallman said. "When they did their presentation, they talked about how what they would like the funds for is to add a pitching machine to the New Dundee ball diamonds because there isn't one there – there is a batting cage but there isn't an actual pitching machine.

... And one of the other things is they're going to add lighting, which is phenomenal."

The project being undertaken by Wilmot Thunder Softball will not only provide an enhanced space for players with the sports organization to hone their skills later into the evening and after dark in New Dundee, it will also improve recreational infrastructure that can be enjoyed by everyone in the community and elsewhere in Wilmot.

"This contribution will provide children with opportunities to develop their skills,

*Continued on page 2*

## EZT budget likely to be approved

### No delegations at last week's public meeting

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Barring a major course change, East Zorra-Tavistock Township's 2025 budget will be passed this week with a 6.95 per cent increase for ratepayers.

EZT's next regular council meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 19 at 7 p.m. where the document is expected to receive final approval. Last week's regular council meeting included the opportunity for residents to have their say on the document. No one signed up to delegate and there was no one in attendance looking to ask questions or comment.

"We are now in a public meeting to discuss the 2025 budget. Does any member of the public wish to address council regarding this budget? Not seeing any, we will reconvene and close the public meeting," said Mayor Phil Schaefer.

All council agendas, minutes and recorded livestreams are available on the township's website but there was no specific communication to the public regarding the budget process through social media or email.

"Firstly, the township does post an agenda summary on social media a day or two prior to the meeting. Unfortunately, the summary for the latest meeting was not posted, and I apologize for the oversight," Schaefer said.

In fact, four of the last seven EZT council meetings were not previewed on social

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# 100 Women Who Care Wilmot contribute \$10,000 to New Dundee batting-cage upgrades

Continued from page 1

build confidence and foster a love for the game,” said Wilmot Thunder executive Ryan Roth in a press release. “These funds will help add a pitching machine at the batting cages in New Dundee, replace machines at other venues and install lighting, ensuring a safe and reliable space for athletes to practice even after sunset. This generosity helps create a more inclusive, well-equipped environment for young athletes.”

Similar to its brother organization, 100 Men of Wilmot Who Give a Damn, 100 Women Who Care Wilmot hosts quarterly meetings where members each donate \$100 to a local organization selected by the group as a whole. Each member’s \$100 donation plays a crucial role in providing resources that benefit youth in the community.

Hallman said this is the first local minor-sports organization she can remember that has received funding support from 100 Women Who Care Wilmot.

The next 100 Women Who Care Wilmot meeting is scheduled for May 21 with meetings on Aug. 20 and Nov. 19 to follow. For more information and to join as a member, visit [www.100womenwilmot.ca](http://www.100womenwilmot.ca).



100 Women Who Care Wilmot presented a cheque for \$10,000 to representatives from Wilmot Thunder Softball in support of their efforts to improve the batting cages in New Dundee and elsewhere in Wilmot township.

(PHOTO COURTESY OF 100 WOMEN WHO CARE WILMOT)



## Tavistock Assistance Program ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

March 25th @ 7:00 pm

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# EZT budget likely to be approved

Continued from page 1

media. Schaefer said while he can't explain the lack of engagement by residents, he welcomes the public to make their voices heard.

"Obviously, more resident engagement is better than less engagement. I cannot speculate on why no public delegations were requested. As you are aware, the meetings are now livestreamed, so physical presence is not required to follow the meeting."

From a staff viewpoint, CAO Karen DePrest explained the township has never made it a practice to launch social-media campaigns regarding the budget process.

"Instead, staff prepare a budget timeline report annually that lays out the dates and timelines for presentation, special meetings and public meetings related to the budget. This year, there were two council reports specifically providing dates and timelines."

DePrest added there is no requirement in the Municipal Act as to how the budget process is conducted, but Section 290 of the act lays out what and how the budget is prepared.

"In fact, by holding the public meeting as an opportunity for ratepayers to comment and provide feedback, the township is going beyond its statutory requirements. All municipal council meetings are open to the public and, as the mayor indicated with EZT's most recent move toward livestreaming, recording and hybrid participation, our meetings are fully accessible to be participated in, attended by, or simply viewed at any time by any member of public who wishes to know about the business of their township not only at budget time but throughout the year."

The township currently has three-plus

staff members who are responsible for communicating information as part of their other tasks. The Gazette asked each elected official in EZT for their thoughts on if ratepayers could be better informed on issues having major implications on ratepayers. No one responded by press time.

The mayor explained the feedback he has received to date has been mixed.

"I have spoken to people regarding this year's budget. Some were not in favour of a tax increase, any tax increase for that matter. Some were content with the fact that the township is planning for the future by setting aside funds for our future plans and that, above all else, we remain in a strong financial position."

The Gazette asked Schaefer if he felt the timing was right for EZT to look at hiring someone to assist with external communications to keep the public better informed.

"I think our team does a good job of communicating. No system is perfect. As you have been advocating, we could consider expanding our staffing to include communications staff, with a significant corresponding cost to the taxpayer. Whether we have a dedicated communications team or have existing staff handle it, one element that is essential is fair and unbiased media coverage."

The budget includes some money to begin the planning stage for a new Hickson Fire Hall proposed to be built in 2026. Deputy mayor Brad Smith said he's been getting some pushback on the proposal from residents.

"My comment to the constituent is we've pushed this off long enough. I'm confident this is a good thing for our community. I'm confident there is a dollar value available in selling the old building at the end of the day."



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# EZT council shelves funding request from TCHI

## Non-profit owners of Tavistock medical office have lofty fundraising goal of \$500,000

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI) is looking to raise \$500,000 for much-needed renovations to the village's medical centre but came away empty-handed after last week's East Zorra-Tavistock (EZT) Township council meeting.

The non-profit group owns and operates the building but is not involved in the day-to-day activities of the tenants, who are the physicians. In the end, council voted to receive the open-ended funding request as information and took no action on the donation ask. TCHI board chair Frank Meconi detailed the many upgrades needed at the facility, including the need to have it fully accessible, but didn't offer a specific funding amount for TCHI's request.

"The rooms there aren't accessible for wheelchairs. The doors are too narrow. To say we are going to be able to afford to update all the rooms ... (is) not going to happen because it's an expensive ticket so we are going to tackle a few rooms at the present time."

Meconi added the centre's aging examination-room beds need to be replaced to make them accessible.

"They aren't cheap. Anything medically related does not come with a small price tag. It will be a start on making the clinic more accessible for everybody."

The bathroom in the waiting room area is also in need of an automatic door, and he explained some of the aging infrastructure must be upgraded. Meconi said the group is using a phased-in approach.



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

**Tavistock Community Health Inc. is looking to raise \$500,000 for much-needed upgrades to the building, including making it more accessible. Board chair Frank Meconi recently asked East Zorra-Tavistock Township for a donation but went away empty-handed.**

"Renovation plans are complete and you will soon see changes happening at the clinic. While the renovations were being finalized, the building generator failed when the power was interrupted in the fall of 2024. Parts were no longer available. The generator had to be replaced and will now allow the clinic to keep its vital and expensive vaccines and medicines at the required temperatures and power the entire facility to allow the doctors and staff to carry on business when hydro is interrupted."

The rooftop HVAC unit is 30 years old, eight years past its best-before date and

parts are no longer available.

"Unlike the furnace in a home that could be replaced as soon as the next day, it will take two-and-a-half to three months for a replacement unit for the clinic to be delivered and installed. It has been ordered," Meconi said.

A new roof is also imminent and while TCHI has some reserves, they will be depleted to start the renovation and pay for the generator and HVAC unit.

"We need to replace the reserves for the future," added Meconi.

Deputy mayor Brad Smith asked if the township donated back in 2002 when

TCHI was formed and took over the building's ownership from the physicians there at the time, thanks in large part to a successful fundraising campaign. That answer could not be provided by Meconi or staff.

Township CAO Karen DePrest said EZT has not been in the business of handing out community grants for several years.

"The township's practice of not making donations on behalf of ratepayers to charitable organizations or fundraising events is longstanding. I don't know if it dates back to 2002, but I can look into that to see whether, historically, we've ever done that."

DePrest added before and during her time at EZT, the township has taken the approach that council let ratepayers decide on their own where they want their donations to go.

"I definitely appreciate TCHI coming forward," said Coun. Steven Van Wyk. "If we were going to look at donating taxpayer money, I think that is a larger discussion to have. Do we want to be doing that as a council and how much do we want to set aside? I think that's a larger discussion if we want to go down that road."

DePrest noted EZT previously ran a grant program with a value in the neighbourhood of \$6,000.

"It was strictly for charitable operating expenses. We were in the process of eliminating it when I started here in 2019."

She pointed out that if council was to pledge the entire \$500,000 to TCHI, the impact would be an additional 6.43 per cent tax increase on top of the proposed 6.95 per cent.

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Continued from page 4

The formation of TCHI to purchase the building over 20 years ago was a response to difficulties recruiting new physicians to the practice since any new doctor would have to lay out money to become a part of the team. Meconi explained that being able to offer a more modern building is key to future recruitment.

"There are four family doctors in the clinic who have approximately 5,700 patients. In their search for another doctor, (they) are telling our board that a more up-to-date, modern and accessible facility would go a long way in attracting a new physician to the clinic," Meconi said. "A new family doctor could add approximately 1,000-1,500 patients from the community and area."

Mayor Phil Schaefer asked, point blank, what TCHI was specifically asking for.

"A very generous donation," said Meconi. Schaefer asked if there was a specific dollar figure in mind.

"We could name it the East Zorra-Tavistock Medical Centre if you wanted to write a cheque for \$500,000," said Meconi. "We would give you naming rights for a set period of years. I didn't come prepared with an amount, it's whatever you feel is representative of the township."

TCHI has a pair of fundraisers scheduled to date. One is a charity barbeque on June 13 and the other a golf tournament at River Vally near St. Marys on June 19. Meconi added a brochure asking the community for help will be distributed to residents of Tavistock and the surrounding area in the near future.

"That's how we are hoping to raise the bulk of the money, through the generous support of commercial businesses and individuals," Meconi said.

When TCHI purchased the building in 2002, they managed to fundraise a total of \$1.4 million from corporate and individual sponsors.

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# Annual Wellesley township Backyard BBQ to return to Bill Gies Recreation Centre

GALEN SIMMONS

*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

Though there is a desire among Wellesley councillors to host the township's annual Backyard BBQ community event in a different community in the township each year, event logistics has landed this year's Backyard BBQ back at the township's new recreation complex in the Village of Wellesley.

At their March 11 council meeting, councillors voted to host the event at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre, also known as the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex, which was the venue for the annual community summer event combined with a grand-opening ceremony for the recreation complex itself last June. For this year's event, township staff presented a number of other venue options, each with their own limitations.

"There are notable restrictions to hosting an event this size at some of the township-owned recreation facilities – facilities on a septic system or facilities with limited

parking," deputy clerk Amy Harron told council. "We did look at the township administration office; there are also some restrictions around parking and kitchen facilities and indoor space, and items that create additional expense including portable-toilet rentals, table-and-chair rentals, and fencing to secure items like our fuel system and our generator."

Prior to last year's event at the new recreation complex, the Backyard BBQ in 2023, 2022, 2019 and 2018, as well as the Canada 150 celebrations in 2017, was held at the Wellesley township office in Crosshill. While that facility was considered for this year's event, it was deemed not to have sufficient parking, indoor space in case of rain or washrooms, among other issues.

Other venues considered included the Linwood, St. Clements and Hawkesville community centres, however they too were listed as having limitations with either parking, accessibility, indoor space and washrooms, or a combination of all

three. In Linwood, the community centre would also not be able to host fireworks and in St. Clements, Harron said a larger number of residents would be impacted by the noise associated with a fireworks display and live music.

"The way I see it is that it moves from community to community," Coun. Derek Brick said. "I think what we had in Wellesley last year was really good; we had a lot of people who were in the community that could walk down and be part of it. I think the ones we've had at the township office are good, but they're maybe a little inaccessible for some people. So, my support would be to rotate it from community to community over a three-year basis."

"I actually thought that moving it from community to community would be the best option, but after looking at (the staff report), I kind of think it makes sense to keep it at the Wellesley rec complex just for ease and also for cost because you don't have to rent anything," Coun. Lori Sebben said.

Ultimately, the rest of council sided with Sebben on hosting the 2025 Backyard BBQ at the Wellesley recreation complex but asked staff to poll those who attend this year's event to determine what their preferred venue might be for future years.

Councillors also discussed what the food at this year's event should be. Harron presented two options – either simple barbecue food like hamburgers and hotdogs provided at a lower cost with support from local service clubs, or the more expensive option for attendees, food trucks. While the 2023 and 2022 Backyard BBQ events included food trucks, last year's event was a cash barbecue and that was council's preference for this year's event.

Harron and township CAO Rik Louwagie said staff will take council's direction and begin planning for the event in earnest. This year's Backyard BBQ is being planned for Friday, June 20. More details will be released as they become available.

## Oxford County raises the cost of garbage to \$3 per bag beginning Jan. 1, 2026

LEE GRIFFI

*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

Oxford County council turned down a one-dollar hike in the cost of a bag of garbage at its last regular meeting, but it was back on this week's agenda thanks to a motion by South-West Oxford Mayor David Mayberry.

Council voted to increase the cost of putting a bag of garbage on the curb to \$3, a 50 per-cent increase. The recorded vote was 7-3 and the increase takes effect Jan. 1, 2026.

East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor and county councillor Phil Schaefer and councillors Bernia Martin, Katie Grigg, Brian Petrie, Mark Peterson, Mayberry and Jim Palmer voted in favour of the motion. Jerry Acchione, Connie Lauder and Chris Parker opposed it. Lauder replaced Deb Tait while Parker sat in for Tillsonburg Mayor Deb Gilvesy. Grigg took the spot normally held by Warden Marcus Ryan. All three regular councillors were away for the March break.

Schaefer voted against the original motion that would have seen a \$1 increase in May, but this time around, he backed it.

"I'll support the increase to \$3 at the present time, but I think we may be exhausting the public's eagerness to accept further increases. We can't reward people's efforts to cut down on the number of bags they put out by charging them an ever-increasing amount for the ones they must put out."

Revenue through the bag-tag program has only increased by 5.5 per cent over the



(GRANT HAVEN MEDIA PHOTO)

**Placing a bag of garbage on the curb anywhere in Oxford County will cost \$3 per bag beginning Jan. 1, 2026. County council approved the increase by a 7-3 recorded vote. East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor Phil Schaefer was one of the seven councillors to vote in favour of the move.**

last five years despite a 10 per-cent rise in the number of households in Oxford County. Schaefer said it's a sign people are reducing the amount of garbage they send to the landfill.

"The argument has been made that when we start the organic collection, a resident ... will have reduced bag-tag usage and even with the higher price, their costs may not increase at all. But if our bag tag revenue flattens or even goes down because of this, we end up in the same position we

are now."

Schaefer said to reduce the number of tags purchased, people may start to use larger garbage bags and fill them right to the top. He added many residents simply won't be able to reduce the number of tags they use.

"We have to think of these people as well. I personally believe it's inevitable the time will come where we will need a hybrid system of bag tags and the (tax) levy to pay for waste, but I don't think

this is the time. The reason I say that is we are at a time when our reserves are being depleted and the cost of organic recycling will be hitting the levy in two years."

The green-bin program will start in the City of Woodstock and Township of South-West Oxford in early 2026, but not until May of 2027 in the other Oxford municipalities of Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra-Tavistock, Norwich, Ingersoll, Tillsonburg and Zorra.

County staff presented a report at the previous council meeting that forecasted a continued deficit in the bag tag program if rates were not increased. The end result would have been an increase in the tax levy of close to two per cent.

Acchione, the mayor of Woodstock who also sits on county council, said he would rather see the county move to a hybrid system to encourage people to use one bag to recycle more in addition to utilizing the upcoming green-bin system.

"I think it is a burden on everyone. Those who abuse and use the system will ultimately pay for it. I would consider a \$3 bag tag if we had one or two bags untagged. I don't want to use the word free as I realize there is no free system."

He added the cost to municipalities to deal with illegal dumping might take a jump once the fee increase takes effect.

"It is only going to get worse. I'd like to think that if people could but a bag out with no tag, it would save staff a lot of time, save the taxpayer a lot of money. For those reasons, I won't support any increase at this time."



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# Perth County council continues whittling away at draft 2025 budget

## Council asks staff to bring back \$284,000 in proposed cuts to reduce tax rate to 10 per cent

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Though they couldn't come up with much in the way of cuts to the draft 2025 budget on their own, several Perth County councillors have asked staff to bring back at least \$284,000 in potential line-item cuts to bring the proposed tax increase down from just over 11 per cent to 10 per cent.

At the March 6 Perth County council meeting, staff presented a report with answers to questions about the draft budget councillors asked at the last county council meeting or submitted to staff since then. The intent of the report was to identify further cuts to the budget to make the overall impact on county ratepayers more affordable.

"I feel that there are some areas that can be lowered; I'm not looking to kick things down the road," Coun. Rhonda Ehgoetz said. "I'm looking to have our budget a little closer to some of the actuals. One of them I'll pick on ... it's in planning. Our technical services doubled (from last year); it went from \$22,000 to \$44,000. Why? Does it have to be that high? Another one is in the clerk's (budget); professional development went from \$8,000 to \$13,000. Why? Do we all have to go to the conferences? Do we have to have 10 of us there standing in front of the minister? I don't think we do."

"Those are the kinds of things I'm more looking for to be closer to our actual (costs in 2023). ... There's nothing to say we are going to kick it down the road. If we are going to take it out of the budget, it doesn't mean it's going to automatically come back the following year. ... As a business owner ... I don't have someone to hand off that I need an extra \$10,000 next year. ... I have to figure out how do that myself ... to

make that money. I find it far too easy here to come up with the figures and just hand it off to the taxpayer. Not everybody can afford this. There are an awful lot of people who cannot afford this repeat adding on and adding on and adding on."

At the beginning of the budget discussion March 6, the draft budget had a proposed levy increase of 13.11 per cent which, inclusive of 1.77 per cent growth to the county taxbase last year, meant the proposed tax rate was 11.34 per cent. For the owner of an average MPAC-assessed home in the county with a 2016 value of \$282,000, that would mean an increase by \$103.32 to the county portion of their annual property tax bill.

Ehgoetz, who is also mayor of Perth East, argued the county tax-rate increase on top of lower-tier tax-rate increases is making life harder for property owners in the county. In Perth East, for example, where the average assessed home is valued at \$321,000, the owner would see an increase in their lower-tier tax rate by 4.85 per cent or just over \$69 for the year, while their county taxes would go up by nearly \$118. With an education tax rate of about 16 per cent in Perth East, that property owner would see their tax bill increase by a total of just over \$187.

In an effort to try and reduce the county's part of that increase, Ehgoetz recommended several cuts of line items in the 2025 CAO budget including a new administrative assistant to the CAO at a cost of just over \$52,000, a process review and efficiency projects at a cost of \$20,000, the development of a communications strategy at a cost of \$30,000 and another \$30,000 for corporate communications.

Of her four suggestions, only the removal of the corporate-communications line item received support from the majority of council, resulting in a decrease to the

proposed tax rate by 0.07 per cent, from 11.34 per cent to 11.27 per cent.

Coun. Bob Wilhelm also recommended the removal of \$75,000 in facility audits from the 2025 capital budget, which council did support. However, because capital projects are funded through reserves, grants and funding sources outside of the tax levy, it did not impact the overall tax rate for 2025.

While Ehgoetz's motion to have staff bring back a report outlining potential further cuts to the draft budget with the goal of getting the tax rate down to 10 per cent was ultimately successful, several councillors expressed frustration with the notion of whittling down that percentage to what might be perceived as a more-palatable number for residents.

"I think we have a habit of getting fixated on percentages all the time," Coun. Walter McKenzie said. "Percentage is peanuts; look at the dollar value. ... You've got to compare apples to apples, I think. We can certainly look at neighbouring municipalities, (one of which) has an increase of 3.63 per cent, which works out to \$130.48 per household (this year). Another municipality was a 6.03 per-cent increase. It works out to \$309 per household. At 11.3 per cent, it's \$103, so you've got to compare numbers. I think percentages is very misleading. You look at the dollar value and then make your decision from there."

While Coun. Hugh McDermid said he'd like to see the tax rate reduced to 10 per cent for the sake of the taxpayers, he cautioned council around the dangers of kicking budget items down the road, and said council doesn't want to become the next Wilmot Township, which began budget deliberations for this year at a whopping 51 per-cent levy increase to tackle an out-of-control, long-term infrastructure deficit.

"I believe in, fundamentally, an

organization that fulfills its responsibilities and is effective and efficient," Coun. Todd Kasenberg added. "Sometimes, those two 'E' words kind of conflict with each other because we can imagine a larger spend and a bigger scope of services. I think, fundamentally here, we have to remind ourselves that we're a commissioned government that has responsibilities, many of which are set out by provincial regulation and statute. For us to be saying, 'Oh, I want it to be 10 per cent,' or, 'I want it to be two per cent,' this is ... not a particularly valuable exercise. ... Would it make a big difference just for the sake of finding a round number?"

"To me, that's not the point. The point is we must deliver a certain package of services, and some of them we don't have to deliver. When you talk about \$284,000 ... you could easily take that out of economic development because it's not a statutory service, but none of us have a strong desire to do that. We can look at little bits and pieces here and there, some of which are not relevant to even the levy impact because it's from the capital side of the ledger. We can continue to lean and, in some cases, starve the statutory services, but I'm not in favour of that. ... Setting some kind of target that is sort of picked out of the air because somebody likes 10 instead of 11 or 12 doesn't make any sense to me."

County CAO Lori Wolfe said staff will bring a report with potential cuts to the draft budget at county council's next meeting on March 20. Wolfe also specified the report will include dollar values for each potential cut in addition to the percentage impact on the levy, and staff will indicate whether each potential cut would be permanent or if that line item would reappear in a future budget.

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# Perth County Paramedic Service meets all response-time targets in 2024

GALEN SIMMONS

*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

For the first time since 2020, the Perth County Paramedic Service met all of its ambulance response-time targets in 2024.

At the March 6 Perth County council meeting, paramedic services chief Mike Adair presented the paramedic service's annual update, which included statistics on ambulance response times in the county across all six categories of calls for assistance, which include vital signs absent (VSA) and all five levels of the Canadian Triage Acuity Scale (CTAS): resuscitation (CTAS1), emergent (CTAS2), urgent (CTAS3), less urgent (CTAS4) and non-urgent (CTAS5).

"The response-time performance plan is a provincial mandate that all municipalities have," Adair said. "Since I've been here, we haven't changed any of our targets in the last five years. This year, we met all of our targets with our new deployment plan with, also, one of our busiest years we've had. Now, having said that, there's always a caveat. You'll see in the VSA category and CTAS1, there's higher fluctuations, and we would expect that because the sample size is so low, it depends on where those calls are."

"We do our best but we have a rural

system, so it's going to take longer to get ambulances to rural calls than sometimes to the urban calls."

According to last year's statistics, Perth County Paramedic Service's 2024 response-time targets are as follows:

- paramedics responded to 54 per cent of VSA calls within six minutes (the target is to respond to 51 per cent of VSA calls within six minutes);
- they responded to 71 per cent of resuscitation calls within eight minutes (the target is 70 per cent);
- they responded to 83 per cent of emergent calls within 10 minutes (the target is 75 per cent);
- they responded to 93 per cent of urgent calls within 14 minutes (the target is 75 per cent); and
- they responded 98 per cent of both less-urgent and non-urgent calls within 20 minutes (the target for both is 75 per cent).

In 2023, the paramedic service only responded to 46 per cent of VSA calls within six minutes; in 2022, they responded to 49 per cent of VSA calls within six minutes; and in 2021, they responded to 47 per cent of VSA calls within that time, missing the target in each of the previous three years. In 2021, the paramedic service also missed

its target for resuscitation calls, responding to just 62 per cent of those calls within eight minutes.

According to Adair's report to council, Perth County Paramedic Service does not yet have access to local fire-department data. As firefighters are often first on scene for calls involving sudden cardiac arrest or VSA, Adair indicated the paramedic service is working with local fire services on a data-sharing agreement to better reflect true VSA response times.

Thanks in part to a program launched late last year in partnership with the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance aimed at reducing offload delay, the average time between a patient's arrival at hospital and when paramedics fully transfer patient care to hospital staff went down in 2024 after it increased steadily in 2021, 2022 and 2023.

"Offload delay is something that we continue to focus on, as council is aware," Adair said. "We have implemented an offload-delay program that's funded through the provincial government and we've re-applied for further funding for the next year because we feel that it's working. ... It was implemented in December (2024)."

"... We have noticed that throughout last year, collectively, our hospitals have

provided a quicker turnaround for ambulances than in the past, and at our rural hospitals, like in St. Marys and Listowel, we saw a slight increase in terms of how long our ambulances were at those facilities, and we will continue work on that and make sure we are as quick as possible."

The Perth County Paramedic Service's target for transferring a patient to a hospital's care after arrival at an emergency department is 30 minutes. In 2024, the Perth County Paramedic Service spent the equivalent of 25 12-hour shifts waiting at St. Marys and Listowel hospitals beyond the 30-minute target – up from the equivalent of 15 12-hour shifts in 2023. The paramedic service spent an equivalent of 59 12-hour shifts at the Stratford General Hospital beyond the 30-minute target during 2024, down from the equivalent of 77 12-hours shifts in 2023.

In total last year, the paramedic service responded to 11,555 calls for service. Over the past two years, Perth County Paramedic Service has experienced a 6.8 per cent increase in call volume. Recent changes made to the service's deployment plan resulted in a decrease by 32 per cent in standby vehicle movement – approximately 44,800 kilometres – while maintaining response times.

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Visit [wrcf.ca/news/si-grant-streams](https://wrcf.ca/news/si-grant-streams) for more information and to apply.

**Applications close: March 31, 2025**

**Note:** Only one application per organization will be considered across the three WRCF grant streams.



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# Gather 25 unites millions in worship, including those at East Zorra Mennonite Church

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A worldwide gathering of churches at the beginning of March called Gather 25 brought together more than 7 million people from 225 countries together online in a historic event of prayer, worship and community.

East Zorra Mennonite Church was among the 21,000 gathering groups that participated in the global event, which aimed to highlight how faith is transforming lives across continents.

From every part of the world, Christians joined together for worship, repentance and commissioning,

demonstrating the power of collective faith.

### A historic global moment

According to East Zorra event organizer Amy Yantzi, the gathering was a milestone for the church.

“For the first time, technology and AI enabled a monumental achievement,” said Yantzi. “There were live sessions from across the world – including the United States, New Zealand, Malaysia, Romania, Rwanda, the United Kingdom and Peru – with words translated into eight different languages in real time, extending the reach of Gather 25 far beyond physical borders.”

Despite challenging weather conditions, many gathered at East Zorra Mennonite Church, beginning the event with a community-prepared breakfast. Throughout the day, participants took part in musical and creative activities, played board games and enjoyed a potluck dinner.

### A full 25 hours of worship

The youth at East Zorra participated in the entire 25-hour experience, watching hours of worship from around the world. Some even fell asleep in the church pews under the glow of the live broadcast stream.

Younger children joined in by dancing in the aisles to worship music and creating a paper chain that wrapped around the entire sanctuary, symbolizing how they are all connected by God’s love.

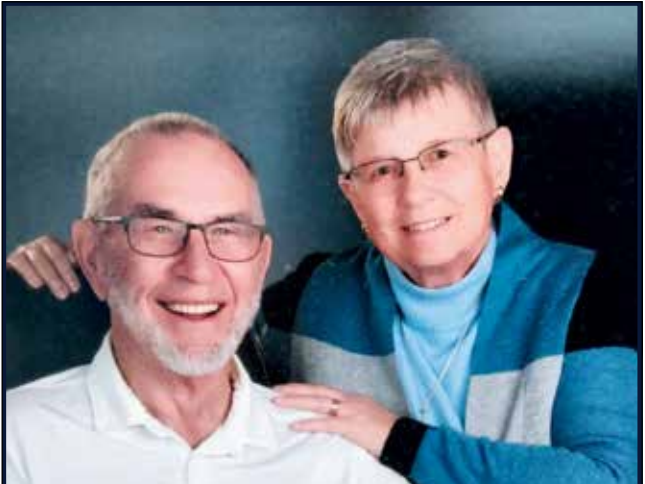


(GARY WEST PHOTOS)  
Above, musical groups at East Zorra Mennonite Church sing and praise the Lord during the Gather 25 event held recently at the church.



Left, the Gather 25 list of events for the East Zorra church members who participated in the global gathering during the first weekend of March.

## ANNIVERSARY



*Happy 60th  
Wedding Anniversary*  
to  
**Bill and Betty DeHaan**  
in Morningside New Hamburg  
March 12, 1965

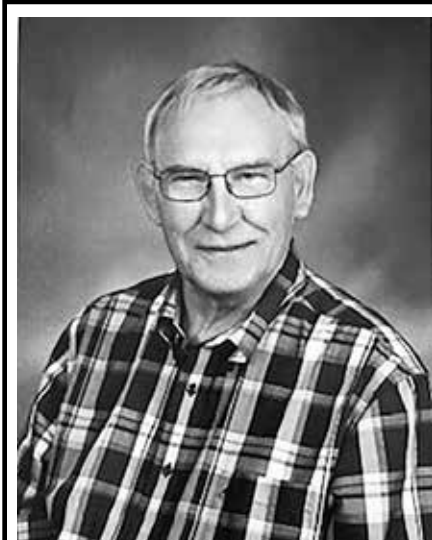
## The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

*By Stewart & Sydney Grant*

1. What movie won Best Picture at the 2025 Oscars?
2. What is the birthstone for March?
3. Earth’s Inner core is composed of what two substances?
4. Why were taxes introduced in Canada in 1917?
5. What year did Australia become a nation?
6. What is the main ingredient in traditional Italian pesto sauce?
7. In basketball, how many points is a standard shot worth within the arc?
8. What is a baby kangaroo called?
9. What was the shortest war in history?
10. What day is St. Patrick’s day?

Answers found on the classified page

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REMEMBERED ALWAYS.  
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SOMETIMES WITH A SMILE  
SOMETIMES WITH LAUGHTER  
BUT ALWAYS REMEMBERED  
AND FOREVER LOVED.

*Mom (Carol Merner)*



# The Old Gazettes

By Sydney Grant

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

**March 4-11, 2015, Edition (10 years ago)**

The National Kitchen and Bath Association (NKBA) presented Debbie Hammer Designs of Tavistock with two awards for interior design at their annual gala in Toronto on Feb. 21, 2015. Hammer received top honours for "Best Budget Kitchen" and second place for "Small Kitchen" during the event at the International Centre. Eighteen awards were handed out for categories including small, medium and large kitchens and baths, as well as contemporary, traditional and transitional designs.

About 25 Grade 3 students at Tavistock Public School received their very own dictionary last Thursday afternoon from the Tavistock Rotary Club. Rotary Paul Harris and fellow Eva McLaren handed out the books and sat with the students to explain the work of the Rotary Club locally and internationally. The object of the Rotary Dictionary Project is to provide third-grade students with a dictionary of their very own that will serve them at least through elementary and middle school.

Four outstanding local cheesemakers have garnered nominations for this year's prestigious Canadian Cheese Grand Prix. Local entrants, among hundreds of competitors from across Canada, are Bright Brand Cheese & Butter, Gunn's Hill Artisan Cheese, Local Dairy Products and Mountainoak Cheese Ltd. Cheesemakers from Canada's east to west coasts submitted 268 cheeses in 27 categories for the ninth-annual competition, with 81 finalists chosen for the April 22, 2015 Gala of Champions in Toronto.

**March 6-13, 1985, Edition (40 years ago)**

Fred and Frances Currah, formerly of Sebringville, have taken over as managers of the Arlington Hotel on Woodstock Street North in Tavistock. The changeover was made official on March 1. The owners, Roy Schleuter and Doris Sittler, who operated the motor hotel for the past four years, have returned to St. Jacobs' Dominion Hotel.

Meaning the love of the circus, Cirque Alexander, clown troupe extraordinaire, performed for nearly 100 local youngsters in the Tavistock library hall on Monday, March 11. The one-man, half-hour show was filled to the brim with laughter and merriment as Alexander (Paul Hooson) tempted his audience with foolish ideas, yet amazed them with seemingly impossible tricks.

Fire destroyed a one-and-a-half-storey barn at the farm of Barry Raymer at RR 1, Bright, early last Tuesday morning, March 5. Four fire departments responded to the call at Lot 20, Concession 16, of East Zorra-Tavistock township. A neighbour spotted the flames on his way to work and alerted the Raymer family. Hickson volunteer firemen were summoned around 5:25 a.m. and, in turn, called for assistance from Innerkip, Tavistock and Plattsville departments for water and pump capacity.

**March 5-12, 1975, Edition (50 years ago)**

At a meeting last week, the Metric Committee of the Oxford Board of Education decided the metric measurements should be incorporated into the primary schools starting September 1975. The committee wishes to drop the Imperial System completely as it will only be in use for the next two or three years. The county mathematics curriculum is already based on the assumption that measurement in the early grades will be metric, and this was approved last fall.

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# The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

## U13 Wolverines unbeaten through six playoff games

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

*thewtgazette@gmail.com*

The U13 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines have been making steady strides this season, earning an undefeated 6-0 record in the playoffs so far and securing a well-earned spot in the next round of the playoffs.

Their latest success came on March 7 and 8 with back-to-back victories, a 4-1 win followed by a dominant 10-0 performance, showcasing the team's growing confidence and cohesion.

This achievement follows a challenging start, when the team recorded just one win in their first eight games. Now, through perseverance and teamwork, the Wolverines have shown how dedication can turn a season around.

Head coach Kevin Hall reflected on their progress.

"I am incredibly proud of how far these girls have come," Hall told the Gazette. "We started off slow, but every practice, every game and every challenge has helped us grow into a stronger, more cohesive team."

A key part of their story is the rapid development of players new to the sport. Notably, goalie Maddy Potvin, who had never played hockey before, let alone taken on the demanding role in net, has stepped up with determination, embodying the team's commitment to learning and improvement.

Beyond the ice, the Wolverines have embraced innovative training methods, including a home shooting challenge that has helped refine their skills and boost confidence. Their dedication is evident not only in their performance but also in the

supportive environment they've built. The players encourage one another, fostering camaraderie and resilience that extend beyond the game.

Guided by their team mantra to be "fierce," the Wolverines remain focused on finishing the season strong. As the playoffs continue, they hope to build on their momentum while inspiring their community and future players with their effort and determination.

## MINOR SPORTS SCOREBOARD

### March 5 - U18 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines defeat Grand River Mustangs 2-0

A strong effort by Cheyenne Forler in between the pipes, aided by a good defensive effort, helped the Wolverines end a mini slump with a shutout win. Julie Baptie sniped the game's first goal off the rush before Carley Hall buried an insurance marker on a nifty cross-ice pass from Alex Dubrick.

### March 5 - U13 B New Hamburg Huskies defeat South Oxford Storm 5-2

### March 6 - U13 B New Hamburg Huskies defeat South Oxford Storm 4-0

### March 6 - U12 Minor A New Hamburg Huskies defeat St. Thomas Jr. Stars 2-1

Goaltender Chase Thomas made 31 saves, the last of which being a jaw-dropping glove stop with three seconds left to preserve the win. Elliott Parsons and Reid Margettes scored the Huskies' goals, while Jackson Barber and Colton Bailey were great defensively, neutralizing the Jr. Stars' high-end offensive talents.

### March 6 - U18 New Hamburg Jr. Firebirds defeat Norfolk Knights 7-0

### March 7 - U13 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines defeat Woodstock Wildcats 4-1

Natalie Freitag had one of her best games of the season and was rewarded with two goals and an assist. Aubrey Tottenham posted a goal and an assist, while Alenka Puklicz had one goal and Zizipho Roth tallied two assists. The Wolverines also turned in a strong, teamwide defensive effort.

### March 7 - U13 Rep Tavistock Titans defeat Norfolk Knights 3-2

Leading goal scorer Brandon Bast got the Titans on the board, while rookie forward Mason Schwarz potted the team's second goal of the game. In overtime, a shot by Bast popped into the air and Greyson Gillespie batted it out of mid-air and into the net for the game-winner. Anna Bast had an assist and was praised for her tireless work ethic and penalty-killing. Gillespie, Garrett Bell and Declan Koch also had helpers.

### March 8 - U15 B Wilmot Wolverines (Van Den Berge) defeat Ayr Rockets 9-1

In a win that clinched first place in their group, the Wolverines got well-balanced scoring with eight different goal scorers. Grace Henderson led the way with a pair of goals, including the game-winner, with individual tallies from Lily Beavis, Morgan Boertien, Sydney Elrick, MacKenzie Hallman, Kyla Kuntz and Marissa Myers. Ava Hackbart turned in a strong goaltending performance to secure the victory.

### March 8 - U18 BB Wilmot Wolverines defeat Waterloo Ravens 1-0

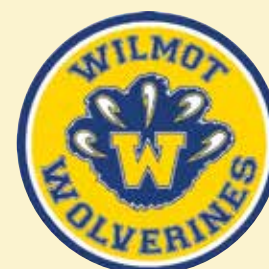
In the second half of a double-header, the Wolverines battled through exhaustion for a one-goal shutout victory. Hailey Brett scored the game-winning goal on a beauty shot from the point off a faceoff with 13 seconds left in the third period. Chloe Chan earned the shutout in goal.

### March 8 - U15 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines defeat Cambridge Roadrunners 2-0

Hayden Tottenham, who has enjoyed a season of positive development, opened the scoring with the eventual game-winning goal. Lillian Tonin, who has also made big strides in her first year of hockey, had the assist. Tonin also fired the game-winner in a 3-0 win on March 9. The ever-calm Melanie Wilson buried on a breakaway, and goaltender Kiera DeMarco made several stellar stops to secure the shutout.

### March 8 - U13 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines defeat Twin Centre Hericanes 10-0

### March 9 - U15 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines defeat Cambridge Roadrunners 3-0





# PJHL Roundup: Applejacks split first two, Firebirds up one

LEE GRIFFI

*Gazette Correspondent*

Brandon Abbot was one of the top goalies in the Provincial Junior Hockey League's (PJHL) Doherty Division during the regular season. The Waterloo native has raised his game in the postseason and, in doing so, is giving Wellesley a chance to win every night.

The Applejacks swept the Dorchester Dolphins in the first round and have split the first two games in a semi-final series with regular-season champion Norwich. Abbot has played every minute for Wellesley in the playoffs, posting a 1.81 goals-against average and a .947 save percentage.

"Beyond the stats, it is his leadership that cannot be fully measured until the result of the game concludes," said head coach Derek Lebold. "He is vocal when he needs to be in the dressing room and his word carries a lot of weight with the boys given his pedigree. It's also his willingness to battle for these guys. You can't look at the way he plays and leads by example and not want to do everything in your power to

bring your best to the table to help him pull out wins on any given night."

Another highlight for the Applejacks has been the play of Connor Doerbecker, who leads the team in scoring with six goals and a pair of assists. The Wellesley native scored twice in Game 2's 4-2 win on home ice with both markers coming in the third period. The first tied the game and the second was the game-winner. Luke Schofield and Kian Harron also scored for the Applejacks.

Lebold said the key for Doerbecker is shooting the puck.

"He has an elite shot and knows how to use it in different situations and areas on the ice. The more he gets that shot off, the more confidence will follow and continue to build. He is another guy that our group feeds off of with his energy and high level of play, and I look forward to seeing that continue."

The Applejacks are playing their best hockey of the season and are averaging four goals per game after a regular season where they scored just over three. Lebold said his guys are focused.

"The boys have battled a lot of adversity

throughout the past couple of months and these last two games were no exception," said Lebold. "We have a lot of resilience within our room right now and that is a very important component come play-off time."

The Merchants took Game 1 by a 2-1 count. Game 3 goes March 13 in Norwich and Game 4 is set for March 15 in Wellesley.

**Firebirds take series lead over Navy Vets**

New Hamburg took a 2-1 series lead over Woodstock thanks to a 4-2 home-ice victory Tuesday night.

Goaltending was a big factor in Game 3 as New Hamburg put Josh Jacklin between the pipes and the move paid off as the Listowel native kicked out 46 of the 48 shots he faced.

"He battled all night. We had a slow start and didn't play well in the first period, but he kept us in it," said head coach Shane Gerber.

Owen Fischer continued his torrid scoring pace in the postseason with three goals. The Firebirds' captain now has seven goals and nine assists, good for a tie for

seventh in PJHL playoff scoring. Antonio Pasqualino also scored for New Hamburg, his sixth.

Game 4 is back in Woodstock and the Olympic-sized ice at Southwood Arena. Gerber said his team is very aware of the advantage the Navy Vets have playing at home.

"It's been a totally different series. With Tavistock, it was very tight checking and there wasn't much room. Woodstock is a great skating team and they're just flying out there," he said. "They know how to play on that ice surface and we need to be aware of where we are out there."

He added while the team's play has been solid overall, he thinks he can get more out of them.

"We're getting results, but I still think there is some room to grow. I'm hoping they'll find that next gear," Gerber said. "They're going to need to at some point but they've answered every time. It's a good group of kids; they all get along and it stays pretty positive and that'll get you through some tough times."

## Dundee Country Club celebrates 55 years of golf and community

JOSH STEPHENS

*Gazette Contributor*

On July 13, Dundee Country Club will celebrate a major milestone – exactly five and a half decades of quality golf with a wealth of enjoyment to go along with it.

Recognized as one of the best golf courses in the region, Dundee has successfully balanced a welcoming atmosphere with a pristine golfing experience.

"Dundee is in the industry of fun. We want people to feel comfortable. It's always a great day at Dundee," said general manager Dan Schiller.

Founded during the golf course boom of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Dundee was constructed around the same time as Conestoga Golf Club – both resembling Westmount Golf and Country Club, but without the exclusivity. In 1970, Tony Matlock and 49 other investors each put up \$4,500, raising a total of \$225,000 to fund the purchase of land and construction of the course. This sum was also adequate to purchase all other necessary equipment needed for the club.

Throughout the years, Dundee has made several key adjustments to its course. Hole 16, which originally featured a pond that collected water drained from a nearby farmer's field, was modified in 2017.

"We had to add rocks to hold water and now fill it by hand," superintendent Ashley Binkle said. "The split tongue of Hole 4 was removed due to maintenance challenges and replaced with a nursery green, improving the course's playability."

In addition to course changes, Dundee has undergone significant, non-golf-related

upgrades within the past 55 years. Binkle helped design and construct the wedding terrace, which overlooks the scenic pond



**Dundee Country Club's lush fairways and scenic landscape have welcomed golfers for 55 years, offering a blend of challenge and charm for players of all levels.**

and features the Equinox fountain with a backdrop of willow trees. The serene venue hosts between 10 and 25 weddings each year. A recently renovated patio overlooking the 10th hole also provides a tranquil spot for golfers and guests alike.

The most recent recreation addition to the club is a high-tech golf simulator studio, transforming one of the former

banquet halls into a space with four professional simulators.

"If it's raining, you can still come in

the club has fostered growth, especially among juniors.

"We really encourage the juniors. ... Golf teaches etiquette and manners," Binkle said.

Post-pandemic, the club has seen a rise in new golfers.

"A lot of the same faces and a lot of new. A lot of new friendships were made," Schiller said.

Many local school and university golf teams have entrusted Dundee to host their tryout process – just one example of the more than 20 tournaments held each season.

Looking to the future, Schiller envisions Dundee continuing to evolve in the same manner as the past 55 years, with ongoing enhancements and new features to improve the golfing experience. Binkle highlighted the importance of the course as a sanctuary for local wildlife, providing a safe haven for species such as turtles, foxes, coyotes, insects and various bird species.

They are committed to furthering their efforts to protect and nurture the region's wildlife. Improvements are constantly being introduced to the patrons of Dundee Country Club and this will remain the case for the foreseeable future.

Dundee Country Club remains a vital part of the community, offering a place for families and golf enthusiasts to connect.

"We want your community to be involved with our community," Binkle said.

Whether a new or experienced golfer, or someone who just wants to enjoy the beautiful surroundings, Dundee has something for everyone.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)



# Maple Tap Farm wins Elmira Maple Syrup Festival's Producer of the Year

GARY WEST

*Gazette Correspondent*

Maple Tap Farm, located north of New Dundee in Wilmot Township, has once again been recognized for producing award-winning maple syrup.

For the second consecutive year, Jennifer and Andrew Sallans have been named the Producer of the Year at the Elmira Maple Syrup Festival. The Wilmot Township couple remains humbled by the honour, having now won the prestigious award four times since 2016.

While in the midst of tapping their trees and running pipelines through their maple bush, the Sallans were informed of their latest win. When asked what sets their maple syrup apart, Jennifer Sallan explained the product is judged on colour, clarity, sugar content and that signature "pure" maple flavour.

Maple syrup production at their New Dundee-area farm dates back to 1969, when Jennifer Sallans' grandfather first started tapping trees. Now in its third generation, the farm's legacy of excellence continues.

Andrew Sallans' late father, Wally, passed down his knowledge of maple-syrup

production, having learned the craft from his own father. This strong family tradition highlights the importance of family farms in Waterloo Region and beyond.

A growing operation

Maple Tap Farm taps 4,000 trees across four different sugar bushes. With a highly efficient boiler system, they also custom-boil sap for two neighbouring maple producers, processing an additional 1,500 trees.

While many in the industry are concerned about tariffs, Andrew Sallans says their syrup is sold locally in Ontario. Prices this year are \$20 per litre for smaller containers and \$3.50 per pound in large barrels.

To fuel their boiler and evaporator, the couple burns 18 bush cords of wood and recycles three tractor-trailer loads of used-hardwood skids.

Open house invitation

Jennifer and Andrew Sallans invite the public to their open house on March 15 and 16 to sample and take home some of their award-winning maple syrup.

- Address: 1654 Queen St., New Dundee (near the New Dundee Golf Course)
- Website: [www.mapletapfarm.ca](http://www.mapletapfarm.ca)



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

The team behind Maple Tap Farm. Pictured from left are Jackson Cober, a Grade 12 co-op student from Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School, working alongside owners Jennifer and Andrew Sallans.



The maple syrup shack where the "Maple Tap" story began three generations ago on the Sallans farm, north of New Dundee.



Whether you prefer light, medium, or dark syrup in glass bottles, Maple Tap Farm is the place to visit year-round.

## The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

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# Honderich family marks 200 years in Wilmot Township

GARY WEST

*Gazette Correspondent*

The Honderich family is celebrating 200 years in Wilmot Township, now part of The Region of Waterloo, tracing their roots back to 1825.

As one of the earliest families to settle in the area, the Honderichs have played a significant role in shaping the local farming community.

This writer's first encounter with the Honderich family was with Cameron and Dorothy Honderich and their four children – Catherine, Marilyn, David and Virginia – on their picturesque Willow Creek Jersey Farm on Bleams Road, east of New Hamburg.

However, this story is about the family's longstanding history, beginning with Christian and Margaret (Gingerich) Honderich, who arrived in Canada from Germany in the summer of 1825. Christian's goal was to build a habitable cabin in the newly surveyed Wilmot Township before winter.

Margaret's brother, Jacob W. Gingerich, accompanied the Honderichs to Canada. According to family tradition, Jacob S. Gingerich's wife, Catherine, was Christian Honderich's sister. Their eldest child was born during the voyage across the Atlantic on July 12, 1825. While it is assumed the extended family traveled together, a passenger list confirming the journey has not yet been found.

Upon arriving in Wilmot Township, Christian Honderich wasted no time in securing a land claim and constructing a cabin. On Dec. 22, 1825, his wife, Margaret, gave birth to their first child, believed to be the first white male born

in the township.

Christian claimed Lot 16, North Bleams Road, and by 1830, he had completed the necessary settlement duties to qualify for a land patent for the front 50 acres. In 1831, he became one of the first settlers to acquire the land and, in 1835, entered an agreement with King's College – now the University of Toronto – to purchase the remaining 150 acres. The final deed was issued in 1854 after his last payment was made in full.

Christian, Margaret and their daughter, Elizabeth, are buried in the Geiger Cemetery – now known as Wilmot Mennonite Cemetery – across the road from their original farm on Bleams Road.

## A legacy that continues

Many descendants can trace their lineage back to Christian and Margaret Honderich, with family names such as Roth, Bender, Steinman, Zehr, Litwiller, Richter, Yost, Seigner, Hofstetter, Shantz, Schwartzentruber, Brenneman, Ropp, Yantzi, Jantzi, Jutzi, Gascho, Schmidt and Nafziger. But one name that has remained constant for two centuries is Honderich.

To commemorate the family's 200-year history, a Honderich family reunion will take place on Saturday, May 3 at Shantz Mennonite Church, north of Baden, located at 2473 Erb's Rd.

Family members who trace their roots back to the Honderich lineage are encouraged to attend.

For more information, contact Anne Honderich at [adhonderich@gmail.com](mailto:adhonderich@gmail.com) or Marilyn McCaig (Honderich) at [mjmccaig@icloud.com](mailto:mjmccaig@icloud.com).



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

A photo of Willow Creek Jersey Farm as it stands today. Christian and Margaret Honderich arrived on this land in 1825, becoming the first farming settlers in Wilmot Township.



The Honderich homestead, which replaced the original log cabin built by Christian Honderich in 1825. It stands next to a continuously flowing creek under willow trees, inspiring the farm's name, Willow Creek.



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**DEADLINE - FRIDAY, MARCH 21ST**



# Let's Tree Wilmot celebrates fifth birthday

MARLENE KNEZEVICH

*Chair, Let's Tree Wilmot*

Let's Tree Wilmot (LTW) has come a long way from its first meeting on Wednesday, March 11, 2020, the evening the COVID-19 pandemic was pronounced by the World Health Organization (WHO).

We had a COVID pause, but with lots of support from the community, we were able to fund and complete our first planting Oct. 24 at Scott Park, New Hamburg. The Nith Valley Ecoboosters (NVEB) was instrumental in getting LTW off the ground. LTW became a project of Garden Wilmot because they had insurance, charitable status and tree planting fit their mandate.

Since then, various sponsors have funded the planting of trees in Wilmot Township parks and on municipal property. The Township of Wilmot's park's department has been true partners. We have planted trees in every Wilmot settlement that has parks. Three years ago, LTW was awarded a \$160,000 grant through the 2 Billion Tree Natural Resources Canada Capacity Building program. This allowed us to support the township with planting and maintaining more trees. The township does not have the resources to fully support tree planting and maintenance. Billy, a used Ram Truck, was purchased and outfitted with water tank and pump. Since 2020, we have planted 4,639 native trees, grown 2,000 seedlings in our nursery bed and, by the end of 2024, we were watering



(IMAGE COURTESY OF LET'S TREE WILMOT)

**Let's Tree Wilmot is celebrating its fifth birthday!**

2,600 trees.

Education is just as important and we have listed many resources on our website, created videos on several topics posted on our YouTube Channel, offered tree-pruning workshops, forest walks, a booth at the Canada Day celebration and presented talks in the community. We had renowned author Doug Tallamy come and talk about Nature's Last Hope, which is every one of us.

By the time you are reading this article, LTW hopes to have received a new Federal Canadian Municipalities Funding

grant. Plans are underway for planting in New Hamburg and Mannheim this year.

What are our goals for the long term? We wish to continue to increase the native tree canopy of Wilmot Township. Soon, our public lands will be fully planted so the focus will be on private lands. Many Wilmot landowners have already planted trees to increase wildlife habitats and to leave a legacy. Why focus on private land? Most of the property in Wilmot is owned privately. Excluding farmland, we have large, rural properties and the smaller, urban properties that all offer excellent opportunities to plant more native trees, large

and small.

Doug Tallamy has an excellent concept, the Homegrown National Park.

"Our National Parks, no matter how grand in scale, are too small and separated from one another to preserve (native) species to the levels needed. Thus, the concept for Homegrown National Park, a bottom-up call-to-action to restore habitat where we live and work and, to a lesser extent, where we farm and graze, extending national parks to our yards and communities."

Let's strive to make Wilmot Township a park. A greener township will create connected wildlife-habitat corridors, increase biodiversity, offer more green space to enjoy and benefit our health, provide cooling and improve water management among many more benefits. Wilmot will become more beautiful.

We have been collaborating with owners to increase their tree canopies and also wetlands. This includes working with Ducks Unlimited. The largest project is the Nithview Floodplain, New Hamburg, owned by Tri-County Mennonite Homes. The owners cover the costs and we provide expertise and volunteers. There are grants available, too, to help out landowners.

Email us at [letstreewilmot@gmail.com](mailto:letstreewilmot@gmail.com) for more information. We have a Tree Pruning Workshop on Saturday, March 30 in Mannheim. Registration is required. Go to our events page at [LetsTreeWilmot.ca](http://LetsTreeWilmot.ca).

Have a tree-mendous spring!



## NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

**TAKE NOTICE** that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of East Zorra - Tavistock will hold a public meeting on the 2nd day of April, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. in order to consider proposed updates to the Building By-law under Section 7 of the Building Code Act. The Meeting will be held in Council Chambers at the Township Administration Building at 89 Loveys Street, Hickson, Ontario.

**PURPOSE AND EFFECT** – The Township of East Zorra-Tavistock is proposing to amend the costs of the building permit fees following a review of the current permit fees and the costs associated with providing service to enforce the Building Code Act, as amended, with regards to issuance of building permits through Section 7. The effect will be to increase portions of the existing fee structure and introduce new fees.

Information will be provided at the meeting on the estimated costs of enforcing and administering the Building Code Act, the amount of the proposed fee(s) and the rationale for changing (and/or imposing) fees. To obtain a copy of the proposed Building Permit Fees Increase, please refer to the agenda package for the April 2nd, 2025 Public Meeting, found on our website at <https://www.ezt.ca/en/township-office/agendas-and-minutes.aspx>. The agenda package will be available online no later than 4:30pm on March 28th, 2025.

Any person may attend the public meeting and/or make written or verbal representation either in support of or in opposition to the proposed fees.

Dated at the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock this 11th day of March 2025

Meaghan Vader, Clerk  
Township of East Zorra-Tavistock  
PO Box 100, 89 Loveys Street, Hickson, ON, N0J 1L0  
Telephone: (519) 462-2697 x225 Fax: (519) 462-2961  
Email: [mvader@ezt.ca](mailto:mvader@ezt.ca)



## TAVISTOCK COMMUNITY HEALTH INC.

**Tavistock Community Health Inc.**

**Notice of Annual General Meeting**

**Wednesday, April 9, 2025**

**Tavistock Men's Club**

**78 Woodstock St. N., Tavistock**

**7:00 pm**

A \$5.00 Membership Fee entitles you to a vote.

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# New Hamburg Legion continues to honour local veterans

## NEW HAMBURG LEGION

Gazette Contributor

The New Hamburg Legion is continuing its effort to recognize veterans who stepped forward from the safety of their homes and families to serve in the military, travel to other continents and fight against the wars of dictators.

Just as we stand for peace and democracy today, they did then, showing the world what it means to be Canadian.

A collection of these names will be entered into the Royal Canadian Legion Ontario Command's Military Service Recognition Book 12, preserving their service history for future generations. Documenting their participation in the military ensures their contributions are acknowledged and remembered as part of Canada's legacy.

The Legion is still gathering names of veterans for this historical record and invites families to participate.

Veterans to be included in Book 12:

- ABTHORPE, Francis F.
- ALDRED, Rayburn W.
- ALDWORTH, Roy S.
- ANGER, Edward R.
- ARMSTRONG, Leslie R.
- ARMSTRONG, Jack W.
- BACKMAN, Douglas B.
- BAIRD, John J.
- BAKER, Douglas
- BAKER, Gordon
- BECKER, Sheldon E.
- BECKLEY, Clifford N.
- BECKER, Robert E.
- BERGEY, Delton A.
- BOWMAN, Claude O.
- BORHO, William F.
- BRADLEY, Ernest
- BROWN, William F.
- CARROLL, Stanley
- CARTER, Reginald C.
- CHAPMAN, Gilbert G.
- CHAPPELL, Arthur
- CHEESEMAN, Syd A.
- CLARK, William J.

- CLEMENTS, Bob A.
- CLIFFORD, John W.
- CLUGSTON, Harold
- COCKERTON, Ward H.
- COLLEY, Henry O.
- COOK, Norman
- COPELAND, James
- CORNEY, Frederick
- CORNISH, James
- DEQUIRE, Leo
- DELONG, Orville G.
- DWYER, James E.
- EVERTS, Albert M.
- FAULKNER, John M.
- FERGUSON, Edwin J.
- FINK, Austin E.
- FINK, Walter W.
- FLEMING, Murray A.
- FOOTE, Robert G.
- FOSTY, Edward
- FOX, Frederick W.
- FRITZ, Carl E.
- GARDNER, Walter V.
- GARDNER, Norman W.

- GILFILIAN, Jeff
- GINGRICH, Oliver L.
- GLENDINNING, William G.
- GODFREY, Clifford
- GRANT, James A.
- GRUNDENBERGER, Harry W.
- HAGEY, Ralph
- HAIRE, Robert
- HALE, Richard A.
- HALL, Arthur W.
- HALL, Kathleen M.
- HALL, Thomas R.
- HAMILTON, Lloyd R.
- HARTMAN, Howard E.
- HEAD, Lorne W.
- HELM, Gerald F.
- HERGOTT, Wilfred J.

Families interested in submitting a veteran's name or sharing their story are encouraged to contact New Hamburg Legion Military Service Recognition Book coordinator Bob Berg at [rwberg@gmail.com](mailto:rwberg@gmail.com) or 519-745-0212 for more information.

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# Anderson family receives prestigious Jersey Master Breeder Award

GARY WEST

*Gazette Correspondent*

A dairy farm family in Perth County has received the prestigious Master Breeder Award for their registered Jersey herd from Jersey Canada, the national breed association.

Brian and Wendy Anderson, along with their daughter, Heather, and her husband, Dennis Peters, and their children, Hailey and Elliott, operate Athlone Farms in South Easthope Township, between Tavistock and Stratford. Their herd, known as the Braeview Jerseys, is milked using a recently installed robotic-milking system. The family also milks a herd of registered Holsteins.

The Andersons were thrilled to receive the call from Jersey Canada informing them of the award.

Brian Anderson has built an impressive resumé over the years. A graduate of the University of Guelph in 1977, he was drafted by the CFL's Toronto Argonauts that same year. His contributions to agriculture and community organizations are extensive.

He served as a director for the Perth County Junior Farmers and was its president in 1982. He was also secretary of the Perth County Dairy Producers Committee from 1984-1989 and a director of the Perth County Holstein Club in the 1990s, later becoming president of the Perth County

Holstein Breeders' Association in 1994.

More recently, Brian Anderson represented Perth County on the Gencor artificial insemination board and was elected president of both Gencor and Gencor Foods.

In addition to his agricultural leadership, Brian Anderson has been actively involved in his community. He was chair of the board at St. John's United Church in Stratford in 1999 and sang in the church choir. He has also been a 4-H leader with the Stratford Dairy Calf Club – now the Perth Southeast Dairy Club – since 1993 and has served on the Western Ontario 4-H Dairy Show committee.

In 2022, Brian Anderson received the Perth County 4-H Keith McLagan Award for continued leadership and, in 2023, the 4-H Ontario Arbour Award from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs.

Beyond farming, Anderson is an avid curling coach, volunteering his time with the Little Rocks curling program at the Stratford Country Club. He is also a certified competitive curling coach.

The Anderson family will officially receive the Master Breeder Award at the Jersey Canada National Convention and Annual Meeting in Orangeville, Dufferin County, on March 29. The event will be presided over by George Van Kampen, a Jersey breeder from Shelburne.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

The Anderson family sits in their barn in front of one of their Jerseys, which seems more interested in eating than posing for a picture. Pictured, Wendy Anderson is seated with her husband, Brian Anderson. Standing from left to right are son-in-law and partner Dennis Peters, Elliott Peters, Heather Peters and Hailey Peters.



Brian Anderson receives the 4-H Arbour Award for his outstanding contributions to local 4-H, presented by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Pictured from left are son Alex Anderson, Wendy Anderson, grandson Elliott, Brian Anderson and Amber Anderson, while Harvey, the family farm dog, tries to get in on the action.



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SHOW US YOUR WILMOT



(PHOTO COURTESY OF SHOW US YOUR WILMOT)  
This photo taken by Paul Mackie of a “momentary sunrise over New Hamburg” taken from Shade Street was recently shared to the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook page.

Vintage Views



(PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TAVISTOCK AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY)  
Pictured in this historic photo is the parlor of a Tavistock home circa 1890. Note the very high, papered ceiling, the wood stove, fresh flowers and stiff poses typical of photos with long exposures. The shadow behind the woman indicates the light came from behind the camera, so photographer John Lemp Jr. probably used flash powder on a fireproof holder.

Gazette Puzzles

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# Excitement is brewing at Huron Earth

## HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



This columnist is sending a supersized, soon-to-be springtime shoutout to Huron Earth for being a lovely, local holistic brand focused on supporting health in the community.

After a two-month hiatus, girl boss extraordinaire Natalie Kohlruss is “kicking into full gear,” as she put it. Her brand offers an extensive line of products boosting overall wellness inside and out. All the products are handcrafted with herbs grown with heaps of love on the family’s one-acre property. Her stunning summertime garden is a lovely array of wildflowers and herbs from echinacea to chamomile to milk thistle and goldenrod.

Mother Nature offers a wide variety of medicinal herbs to support strength, vitality and replenish physical and mental wellbeing. Locals may have met Kohlruss, as she spends summer weekends as a vendor at the Stratford Sunday Market. Whether in favour of tinctures or salves, tea leaves or body-boosting butters, Huron Earth is high-quality artisan products for the whole family.

Kohlruss is busy preparing her sensational seedlings for the upcoming season, and a full list will be available by the end of

April. May 4 marks the date for the first market event of the season. Home gardeners can also purchase their favourite seedlings online or at the family’s property.

The focus for 2025 will be to expand the variety of available seedlings, hosting more workshops and my favourite, pick-your-own herb night. Kohlruss is hoping to empower individuals to grow their own herbs and make their own herbal products. By offering a one-of-a-kind experience with a hands-on approach, people can aim to eliminate big-box shopping and harmful conventional items used daily. This holistic nutritionist loves the idea of being self-sufficient.

With spring and summertime cold and flu season on my radar, I am putting ImmuniTea in the spotlight. The tea is a blend of stinging nettle, narrowleaf echinacea, enfurter calendula and locally grown elderberries and cinnamon. The combination is high in polyphenols and antioxidants, synergistically supporting immunity.

Save the date. Huron Earth will be hosting their seventh annual Unplug and Restore Retreat the weekend of June 20-22. Escape for two nights to the peace and serenity of local countryside at

Hidden Acres Retreat Centre in New Hamburg. This year’s theme is Histamine Intolerance: A Hidden Culprit behind Chronic Symptoms. The retreat includes five workshops, five guest speakers, experts in their field each bringing their own flair. Histamine intolerance may be the root cause of slews of symptoms connected to other organ systems.

The weekend will offer an opportunity to seek answers. Other topics include herbal identification, wilderness first aid and traditional tea tasting. Enjoy hiking, swimming and fun team sports or sit fireside enjoying the evening sunset. Don’t delay. To book a spot, visit [huron-earth.square.site](http://huron-earth.square.site) or email [huronearthkw@gmail.com](mailto:huronearthkw@gmail.com).

Love local and support small business. Huron Earth is available online. An assortment of Huron Earth items are available at Pfennings Organic and More in St. Agatha and at Got it Made in Stratford.



(CONTRIBUTED IMAGES)

Natalie Kohlruss is the girlboss behind the local, holistic health-and-wellness business, Huron Earth.

Right, Huron Earth is hosting its seventh-annual Unplug and Restore Retreat June 20-22 at Hidden Acres in New Hamburg.

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# Bunnies, stallions and a sweet, secret recipe

## OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



When I thought about Vienna, Austria, the first things that came to mind were Mozart, waltzing, heavy baroque architecture and a strange obsession with coffee and pastries.

What I didn't think about were bunnies and horses. Bunnies were the first residents of Austria's capital city we encountered after disembarking from our river-cruise home away from home, the Viking Var.

There is a berm between the Danube docks and the city streets, and that berm is highly populated with extremely cute, small rabbits. To be honest, I think we smiled more as we strolled the paths along the berm than at any other time in the city – although we did, indeed, enjoy our visit to Vienna.

And horses? You may remember Vienna is home to the Spanish Riding School and its white, Lipizanner stallions. A walking tour through the heart of Vienna included a visit to the stables, but before that, we were delighted when several of the majestic horses with uniformed riders cantered by within an arm's length of us on a busy Vienna street.

So, between the bunnies and the stallions, we'd already had a pretty good day before we even started to soak in the majesty, the music and the obsession with cake that is Vienna.

Many visitors come to Vienna just for the music. After all, this city was home to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Joseph Haydn, and was also a frequent host to Beethoven, Schubert, Strauss and many more classical composers.

The city's claim to musical fame is never subtle; as you walk around Vienna, you will inevitably encounter dozens – literally – of Mozart look-alikes, all selling tickets to one of the innumerable concerts performed on a daily basis. Some are great, some perhaps not so much. It's helpful to get some local guidance on this. If you happen to be on a river cruise, like our great Viking experience, an excellent concert will be one of the special excursions offered to its guests.

A side note: you may not even

have to leave the ship. On our cruise, one of the onboard evening features was an excellent performance of classical and operatic music by a talented quartet of local musicians. That became a unique experience when I was recruited to act as the love interest of one of the female singers. I was required to be silent but react appropriately to her declarations of love and eventual abandonment of me. I am not sure I have yet recovered from the emotional trauma.

While great musicians definitely made their mark on Vienna, there is no doubt the city, today, owes almost everything to a European dynasty – the Hapsburgs. The Hapsburgs ruled over a central and eastern European empire for 650 years, from the 13th century to the end of World War I.

A fun fact: Danube expert Isis-Sybille Frisch told us the family carried the aristocratic designation "Von Hapsburg" but was forced to drop it when bearing an aristocratic name was made illegal at the conclusion of World War I. Hapsburg descendants continue to have influence throughout Europe, including in the United Kingdom, where King Charles is a direct descendant.

Frisch underlined the importance of the Hapsburg legacy when she said, "In Vienna, there's no escaping them!"

That's especially evident when it comes to the architecture of the city – the imposing baroque buildings come from an era in the Hapsburgs' history beginning around 1699, when the

Hapsburgs defeated the Ottoman empire. Frisch told us the end of that war freed up financial resources, which were immediately put to use creating landmarks like the Hofburg palace in Vienna's inner city and the sprawling Schönbrunn Palace, enlarged to its present enormity by the famed Empress Maria Theresa in 1750.

The building didn't stop with baroque; there are remarkable examples of neo-Renaissance and Gothic-Romanesque creations as well – none of them small or delicate. This is a city whose masters intended to make a statement and make it big.

But there is a more relaxed side to Vienna and that brings us back to the coffee and cakes. Vienna's café society has flourished for more than 300 years. The cafés serve a selection of coffees that even Starbucks might envy, but the real stars of the show are the pastries – apfelstrudel, Linzer Torte and especially that amazing Viennese culinary creation, Sachertorte, invented by Franz Sacher in 1832.

The Sachertorte recipe is still a carefully guarded secret. If you search for the recipe online, the official Sacher website will only supply an "approximate recipe," which includes chocolate, vanilla, eggs, butter, sugar and apricot jam. You might produce something approximating Sachertorte, but it won't be the real thing – Franz Sacher's heirs make sure of that.

For the real deal, you'll just have to go to Vienna and relax in a café where locals read newspapers, sip coffee and perhaps enjoy a string quartet before heading out to walk the imposing streets of one of Europe's architectural masterpieces.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The quayside in Vienna boasts an unexpected group of bunnies!



An impromptu encounter with Lipizanner stallions as they cantered down busy Vienna streets.



Viennese architecture was clearly designed to be imposing, and it is.



The sombre Holocaust memorial in Vienna.



The Hofburg Palace in the city centre.



# Tundra swan migration is an incredible journey

## SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO OUTDOORS

By Jeff Helsdon



The mysteries and splendour of spring migration never cease to amaze me.

Seeing clouds of ducks darken the sky as they lift off the water leaves me in awe each time I witness it. On a quiet day, the whirring of the wings of a large flock can be heard from a few kilometres away. But, while this en-masse spectacle is a sight for the eyes and ears to behold, the voyage of tundra swans is more magnificent.

Tundra or whistling swans are slightly smaller than Canada's other native swan, the trumpeter swan. Both tundra and whistling swan apply to the swans that migrate through Southwestern On-

tario and have interesting stories behind them.

The term whistling swan was first coined by Meriweather Lewis of the famed Lewis and Clark duo that explored the American west for the whistling noise made by the bird's wings while in flight. More than 220 years later, that name stuck, as well as the term "whistler," which I have heard some locals use.

Tundra swan is a more recent name that was given to the whistling swan and also encompasses the Eurasian Bewick's swan. Both are now considered the same species. They are not to be confused with the invasive mute swan, which is native to Eurasia.

Tundra swans can be seen in both the spring and fall. In Southwestern Ontario, the birds first appear in the Long Point area, but spread out slowly in smaller groups, gradually moving north as the snow recedes and waste agriculture crops become available to feed on. This provides a longer-lasting opportunity for viewing.

Swans congregate at the Aylmer Wildlife Management Area where viewing platforms are constructed. It's not uncommon to see flocks of these birds feeding on fields outside Tillsonburg or flying overhead while driving country roads.

Then, as temperatures warm, the swans edge northwest, often stopping in Lambton County before heading across Michigan and Wisconsin, the prairie provinces and then turn their migration north beyond the tree line.

The migration of tundra swans is an incredible journey. The majority of the birds winter around Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, North Carolina and Virginia. Taking wing in late winter, their

6,000-kilometre journey into the high Arctic begins. In this case, high Arctic means at the top of the Canadian mainland along the Arctic Ocean in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut and Quebec. Often, this journey takes two to three months.

After reaching their breeding grounds, the swans mate, rear their young and then start the journey south again in September.

Breeding in the high Arctic where there aren't a lot of people, little was known about the migration routes until about 25 years ago. The few tidbits about the route and timing was derived from observation of birds with neck collars with numbers and letters.

That changed when Dr. Scott Petrie started at the now-defunct Long Point Waterfowl. He used satellite transmitters to gain insight into the tundra swan's voyage, its timing, layover points and end destinations.

As an area reporter, I wrote several stories on this research, gaining insight into these birds. Tundra swans were captured with

rocket nets, weighed, sexed and other criteria recorded before a satellite transmitter was surgically implemented and the bird released.

This was an expensive process and Petrie appealed to the community to help by sponsoring a swan. I was part of the Long Point and Area Fish and Game Club when members decided to support the cause, fondly naming our bird Harriette after longtime president Harry Stark. The public could log onto a web site to watch the journey of the swans.

Seeing one of these birds up close and personal was an experience I will never forget. At 1.2 to 1.4 metres in length, the tundra swan is not a small bird. It's wingspan is over two meters, or seven feet.

Each time I see a tundra swan, I fondly recall how fortunate I was to see these birds up close and gain insight into their incredible journey.

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



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# D&D Homestyle Cuisine and Café celebrates 10 years serving wholesome food to Tavistock and area

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

One of downtown Tavistock's staple businesses celebrated its 10th anniversary this week and the outpouring of community support for its owners, the Sparling family was, to say the least, heartwarming.

D&D Homestyle Cuisine and Café has been as consistent as the traffic at the town's five-corner intersection where it is located, and has been serving up great food in-store and through its catering side for a decade.

"It was always a dream to own my own café. It was a big jump to move from the corporate world, but we felt that the timing was right to make a life change," said Doug Sparling, who owns and operates the business with his wife Diane Sparling.

He added surviving and flourishing in the business for so long hasn't been easy and it took a lot of hard work.

"We are proud that we have lasted in the restaurant world for 10 years. We have had hiccups along the way but have worked through them. We have tried to be creative; we hosted Valentine's dinners, St. Patrick's Day meals and takeout, boxed dinners to help with business."

Doug Sparling said he and his family are thankful for all the support they have received from the community and added serving quality food made from scratch has been the key to success.

"We feel the way you make a business successful is by providing quality using locally sourced, unprocessed products. We survived the pandemic by following the rules the government set out and by making internal changes in order to stay in business."

Doug Sparling added they were overwhelmed with Tuesday's attendance and all the well-wishes received.



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

Owners Doug and Diane Sparling celebrated the 10th anniversary of D&D Homestyle Cuisine and Café this week. Guests were treated to free cake to mark the milestone of the business located in the heart of Tavistock.

"It warms our hearts to be part of such a great community that shares in our 10-year milestone."

Along with a packed house of loyal customers on Tuesday, Doug Sparling said he wanted to thank his family and friends for supporting them, which makes it even more difficult to move towards retirement.

"The day would not have been a success without the help of our staff member, Wren, our friends, Donna, Keith, and

the Church family who stepped in to help at lunch. A special thank you to Sara for decorating our cakes. We know this day would not have been possible without God's guidance throughout the last 10 years. We have enjoyed a successful run, however we are at the age where we would like to slow down and semi-retire. We had to make the difficult decision to put our business up for sale. We will be faithfully serving our customers until the business

changes hands."

If there is anyone out there who hasn't been to D&D for a while, they should make their way over now to enjoy their favourite breakfast, sandwich, soup or prepared meal. I know I told my son to come on down and get a Blair sandwich before they're gone. The Blair is named after Doug and Diane Sparling's son.

The Sparlings will be missed after they retire.

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## COMMUNITY CALENDAR - MARCH/APRIL 2025



### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19

**Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships**  
**12:00 p.m.**

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by March 14 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.  
*Wilmot Rec Complex*  
1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden

**East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting**  
**7:00 p.m.**

*Council Chambers*  
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

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### WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

**Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships**  
**12:00 p.m.**

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by March 21 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.  
*Linwood Community Centre*  
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

### SUNDAY, MARCH 30

**Tree Pruning with Mike Yost**  
**1:30 - 3:30 pm**

Free workshop will cover all aspects of tree pruning. For details and registration go to [letstreewilmot.ca/events](http://letstreewilmot.ca/events).  
*Mannheim Community Center*  
1467 Mannheim Road

### TUESDAY, APRIL 1

**Getting Off Gas - Electrify Your Home**  
**7:00 p.m.**

A free webinar hosted by the Nith Valley EcoBoosters and Reep Green Solutions. For more information check out [nveco-boosters.com](http://nveco-boosters.com)  
*This is a virtual event*

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

**East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting**  
**9:00 a.m.**

*Council Chambers*  
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

### TUESDAY, APRIL 8

**Wellesley Council meeting**  
**6:45 p.m.**

*Council chambers*  
4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

**Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships**  
**12:00 p.m.**

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by April 4 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.  
*Wellesley Recreation Complex, 1401 Queen's Bush Rd., Wellesley*

**Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI) Annual Meeting**  
**7:00 pm**

For more info contact chairman Frank Meconi; [fameconi@rogers.com](mailto:fameconi@rogers.com)  
*Tavistock Men's Club Hall*  
78 Woodstock St N, Tavistock

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 16

**Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships**  
**12:00 p.m.**

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by April 11 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.  
*Wilmot Rec Complex*  
1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 23

**Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships**  
**12:00 p.m.**

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by April 18 by calling 519-664-1900 or toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.  
*Linwood Community Centre, 5279 Ament Line, Linwood*

### MONDAY, APRIL 28

**Wilmot Council meeting**  
**7-11 p.m.**

*Council chambers*  
60 Snyder's Road West Baden



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  - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
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## Weekly Quiz Answers

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Anora                 | 7. 2 points           |
| 2. Aquamarine            | 8. Joey               |
| 3. Solid Iron and Nickel | 9. Anglo-Zanzibar War |
| 4. To finance WW1        | 1896 (38mins)         |
| 5. 1901                  | 10. March 17th        |
| 6. Basil                 |                       |



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