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(DIANE DANEN PHOTO)

Dancers from "Pantera" perform traditional Ukrainian dances in folk costumes at the unity celebration in New Hamburg.

A day of celebration at Ukrainian-Canadian event in New Hamburg

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

Grassroots Response to the Ukrainian Crisis hosted a Ukrainian-Canadian Unity event in New Hamburg on Saturday, Sept. 20.

The event was held to celebrate the opening of a new guest house for Ukrainian newcomers, the unveiling of the Community

Unity Mural and the launch of the book, *Voices Across Time*. Around 80 people attended the celebration, including Ukrainian families, community members, volunteers and local supporters.

The area's newest guest house, located on Huron Street in New Hamburg, is the 11th of its kind in the Waterloo Region. The guest homes offer temporary housing to

Ukrainian families who are new to Canada, giving them a safe place to stay while they search for jobs and permanent housing. So far, 20 families have stayed in these guest homes.

For many Ukrainian newcomers, adjusting to life in Canada is very difficult, often arriving without jobs or much support.

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Oxford County conducting a forensic investigation after cyber attack

Municipality remains tight-lipped about "technical incident"

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Oxford County has released a few more details regarding what is now being called a "cybersecurity incident," but very few details are known.

"Last week, we shared that Oxford County was responding to a technical incident relating to its information system," said a Monday afternoon press release. "We shared this update ahead of full information to be as open as possible, as early as possible, with residents and partners."

The county's communications department has confirmed the following details:

- Oxford County was subject to a cybersecurity incident. As soon as information technology (IT) staff identified unexpected activity, they worked to prevent any further unauthorized activity.

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Community rallies for Ukrainian families at unity celebration

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Since they are not officially registered as refugees, they do not receive the same level of government assistance. As a result, many families struggle to find stable housing and employment, and some even consider returning to Ukraine because they feel they have no other choice.

Grassroots Response, a non-profit organization, was founded in Wilmot Township by Stephanie Good of Petersburg to help newcomers from Ukraine. The organization began in 2022 as a volunteer effort and has since grown to support more than 4,500 Ukrainian newcomers in the region, thanks to the efforts of hundreds of dedicated volunteers.

Olga Strasburger, who arrived in Canada in September 2023, is one of those newcomers. Strasburger stayed with a host family in Kitchener until she was able to rent her own apartment. Though she could afford an apartment, she couldn't afford furniture or other necessities.

"I am very thankful for the kindness I have experienced," Strasburger said. "Everything I have in my apartment is from the generous donations of Canadians."

When Strasburger first arrived in the area, she volunteered with Grassroots Response. After four months, Goertz offered her a position and Strasburger is now part of the Grassroots Response staff, working as the marketing and donor relations coordinator. The organization has four paid staff

members, all newcomers from Ukraine. Goertz and her family continue to volunteer their time and remain very involved in the daily running of the organization.

The guest house in New Hamburg has been generously donated rent-free by Marie and Greg Voisin and their family. The Voisin family has been supporting Grassroots Response for the past three years. They continue to be active donors and volunteers with the organization. Strasburger described Marie Voisin warmly, saying, "She's your neighbour, she's a very good person."

The Ukrainian-Canadian Unity event was a joyful celebration. Guests enjoyed a free barbecue provided by the New Hamburg Lions Club, great supporters of the Grassroots Response.

Local Ukrainian vendors sold crafts, handmade products and Ukrainian treats, while Ukrainian dancers performed and even offered a short dance class to those who wanted to try something new.

A special highlight of the event was the unveiling of a new Community Unity Mural created by Ukrainian artist Viktoriia Makarova, who lives in the guest house in New Hamburg with her mother and newborn baby, Ava. Guests attending the event were invited to join in painting the unity mural.

Grassroots Response is inviting service groups, churches and community



(DIANE DANEN PHOTOS)

Members of the Grassroots Response Team in traditional Ukrainian attire pose for a group photo at the unity celebration.

organizations, as well as groups of friends or families, to take part in painting the mural. The Community Unity Mural can be seen at 225 Huron St. in New Hamburg. Anyone who would like to participate in creating the mural can contact Strasburger at 519-778-6400 to arrange a time.

The Ukrainian-Canadian Unity celebration also marked the launch of the Voices Across Time project. The project aims to unite communities by preserving immigration experiences through stories, strengthening identity, reconnecting with previous generations and supporting newly arrived Ukrainians.

Voices Across Time is a collection of personal stories from Ukrainians displaced by war, alongside reflections from Canadians with Ukrainian roots. Their stories offer inspiration and hope to newly arrived Ukrainians, providing powerful examples of the resilience it takes to build a new life in Canada. Copies of the book are available to purchase.

Though the Grassroots Response team does not have a permanent office, its dedicated staff and volunteers continue their important work. The four staff members currently work from home or meet in community spaces in Kitchener and guest houses throughout the region. They hope to secure a dedicated workspace in the future.

Grassroots Response is currently looking for people to serve on its board of directors, as volunteers and donors. Grassroots continues to rely on donations and community support. Strasburger shared how deeply grateful the organization is for the incredible support and generosity shown by the local community.

Anyone interested in helping by donating furniture, food, money, offering a meeting space or guest house, or purchasing the book *Voices Across Time* is encouraged to get in touch by emailing info@grassroots-response.ca or by visiting the Grassroots Response website.



The Ukrainian dance group Pantera entertained the crowd with traditional performances at the unity celebration in New Hamburg.



Guests at the Ukrainian-Canadian Unity Celebration enjoy hotdogs grilled by the New Hamburg Lions Club.

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Oxford County responds to cyber incident

Continued from page 1

- The county engaged third-party cybersecurity experts to assist with containment, remediation and to conduct a forensic investigation.
- In addition to the measures in place before this incident, the county is working with third-party cybersecurity experts to introduce additional security measures as needed to mitigate potential future harm to its system.
- At this time, all systems are operating normally and there are no changes to the service provided to the public.

“Our focus from the start has been, and will continue to be, determining whether and to what extent information within our systems may be compromised,” said



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

London-based technology expert Carmi Levy said municipalities are routinely victims of ransomware attacks and said, so far, Oxford County is still able to use all of its IT systems.

incidents elsewhere.

“They’re sharing what they can share as they can share it. They have effectively set expectations that this will be an ongoing, longer-term event, and further information will be released as it becomes known, as appropriate. This is to be expected and suggests county officials are leveraging both internal-systems expertise and guidance from third-party organizations and specialists who have been engaged to manage this crisis.”

“We ask for your patience as we continue to respond to this incident. We are committed to providing you with as much information as we can, as we are able,” added Ryan, who explained municipalities are frequent targets of cyberattacks. “Please be aware that our full response to this incident may occur over months, not days. As with any type of investigation, there will be details we cannot publicly share without compromising the investigation and our response to it.”

The City of Hamilton was hit by a ransomware attack in 2024. Hackers demanded about \$18.5 million, but the city refused to pay. Instead, most systems were restored from backups as staff worked alongside cybersecurity experts and law enforcement.

Many city services and systems were disrupted, including online payment systems, transit and telephone lines, accounts payable, licensing and permit applications, and vendor payments. Emergency services, water/wastewater treatment and curbside collection were not affected. By mid-2025, the cost to the city was about \$18.3 million for the immediate response, system recovery and external expert support.

Levy explained, at least so far, the impact on the county is less pronounced than in other attacks.

“Oxford County has been able to maintain ongoing normal operations of all

Continued on page 4

Warden Marcus Ryan. “We operate with a high degree of caution and awareness when it comes to cybersecurity. It is disappointing for us to share this news, and we acknowledge the concern it may cause for our residents and partners.”

The Gazette reached out to Carmi Levy, a well-known London-based technology expert, for his thoughts on the situation. He explained when governments, organizations, or other public-facing entities fall victim to a cybercrime, they often find themselves forced to strike a balance between informing their stakeholders of what has happened and not tipping off the attackers or otherwise worsening an already challenging situation.

“It’s a bit like walking a high wire because there’s a very fine line between just enough and too much. The harsh reality of the immediate aftermath of a cyberattack is the county may not necessarily know all the specific details of how the event played out, what caused it, what’s impacted, what isn’t, what’s safe to continue using and what needs to be sidelined while the investigation continues.”

He added the recovery often involves days, weeks, or even months of painstaking detective work to fully understand the breadth and depth of the attack and build an appropriate recovery strategy that balances safety, cost and risk minimization.

“This effort requires the input of a wide range of competencies, which the county may or may not already have on staff. And as they work with newly engaged third-party specialists to investigate and recover, they’re challenged with continuing to maintain an optimal level of service to residents even while the crisis is unfolding. It’s akin to rebuilding an airplane while in flight, and it is a tremendously difficult balancing act to pull off, hence it’s often understandable why not every last detail is necessarily shared either early on, or at all.”

Levy said the county is not deliberately withholding information from residents, adding its communications approach follows cybersecurity best practices developed through a growing number of similar

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Shakespeare families walk for Parkinson's research

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Two Shakespeare couples and their families have been doing their part for years to raise money for Parkinson's research.

Each summer, Stratford's Upper Queen's Park hosts the annual Walk for Parkinson's, drawing teams from across Perth County and beyond. Thousands of dollars are collected every year through the hard work of walkers and the generosity of local sponsors.

This year, Team Kathy Schafer and Team Ron Harrison once again took part, raising thousands of dollars from relatives, friends and neighbours. Both families said they are motivated by the need to support the many people across the province who live with Parkinson's.

Parkinson's disease is a complex brain condition, and every journey with the disease is different. More than 110,000 Canadians are living with Parkinson's, a progressive movement disorder of the nervous system. Events like Stratford's annual walk give families hope that the money raised will one day contribute to a cure or improved treatments.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Shakespeare's Ron Harrison, front centre, walks every year with his family in support of Parkinson's research. With him are, from left, Amanda Harrison, Ron Harrison and Britt Harrison. In back is Ron's brother, Rod Harrison. Ron says his partner, Barb, and his children are his biggest supporters.

County systems targeted in cybersecurity event

Continued from page 3

systems compared to other governments that have had to shut down critical systems such as websites, payment portals and even library lending platforms for months at a time. In some cases, systems were not recoverable and had to be rebuilt from scratch. So far, their systems operations do not seem to be affected, which is a major relief for residents."

Levy added the county has likely activated an all-hands response to the crisis. In such situations, victims often establish a war room to bring together key stakeholders, including county staff and

third-party experts, in a single coordinated space.

"They'll likely be working closely together to understand how the attack happened, where the critical vulnerabilities could have been, how the attack is impacting operations, accounts and data, and what steps need to be taken in the near, mid and longer-term to close off those areas of weakness and move toward a final resolution."

The county's best-case scenario is that no resident information was stolen and that the root cause of the attack is identified and addressed with enhanced

security measures to reduce the risk of future incidents. Levy said the worst-case scenario is far worse.

"Residents' data is breached and they are faced with the prospect of personal information, potentially including government-issued identification, financial information and usernames and passwords falling into the hands of criminals who would then use it themselves to amplify future attacks, or sell it to other criminals who would use it for similar purposes."

He added in the hands of criminals, personalized data can be used to craft sophisticated, customized phishing messages

that mimic those originating from legitimate organizations. Authentication data can be used to attempt to break into other accounts. The data can also be shared with or sold to other criminals anywhere in the world.

"This is a risk that doesn't simply disappear once the headlines surrounding this particular attack fade. The risks persist over time and, in fact, grow as future attacks add to the pile of breached data available on the open internet and dark web."

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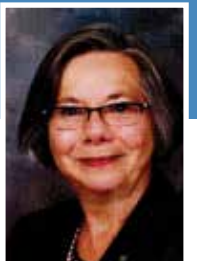
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EZT council approves controversial Janelle Drive trail

Recreation option approved despite residents’ opposition

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Residents of Janelle Drive in Tavistock will soon have an official walking/maintenance trail behind their properties. In speaking with affected residents, none of the 20 affected homeowners told the Gazette they were in favour of the recreational trail, however no residents spoke on the topic at the East Zorra-Tavistock (EZT) council meeting last week. Two members of council voted against the trail, including Mayor Phil Schaefer, who explained he appreciated the need and is supportive of walking trails, but felt the Janelle Drive location doesn’t meet the necessary criteria. “If our intent is to ensure the proper functioning of this infrastructure, and I believe it is, I don’t think it’s ideal to open the gates to widespread public access, which could interfere with that. Having it run behind established homes is an issue,” he said. Schaefer admitted privacy is never guaranteed but added it is something that should be cherished. “I appreciate staff’s forward-thinking on this. They are simply offering something that we told them is a priority, and they are providing that for us. This location, however, to me, does not meet the best location for a walking trail, so I will not be supporting this motion.” The 2025 budget line for the installed fencing was \$50,000, but the actual cost is closer to \$30,000. Ward one Coun. Steven Van Wyk didn’t explain why he voted in favour but said the trail would not cost taxpayers any money going forward. The only other member of council to vote against the trail was Ward one Coun. Scott Zehr, who said he appreciated the input from affected residents. “I know some have commented how nicely the fence has been built, even if they disagreed with it. ... Though I appreciate the idea brought forward by staff, I feel there may be some better, more suitable trail locations in our community, and I’d like to see staff investigate some of them

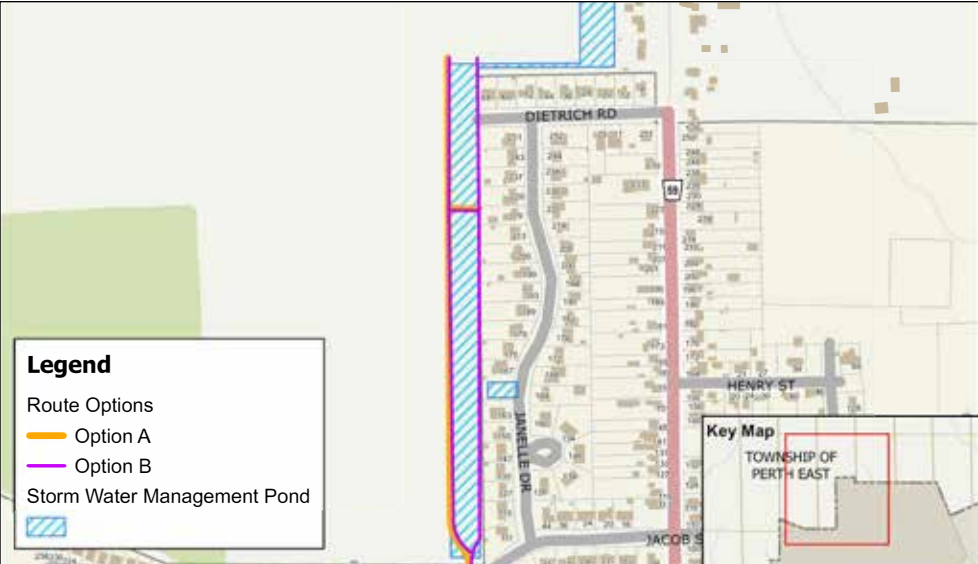
and return to council.” One of residents’ biggest concerns was the loss of privacy caused by people walking beyond their backyards. Ward three Coun. Matthew Gillespie said his personal experience leads him to believe residents won’t feel any discomfort. His family home in Innerkip backs onto a greenspace that, for 20 years, was “nothing more than a wet piece of grass.” He added about 10 years ago, a paved walking trail was installed. “(It) has seen an increase in usage tenfold, and I have never felt privacy (was an issue) or that I can’t continue to do things in my backyard as I always have. ... I appreciate the people who have bought homes that back onto these empty greenspaces, but to say they can never be used for anything but an empty space, especially in a small community, is a disservice to the community,” Gillespie said. Deputy mayor Brad Smith said he visited the site twice before the vote. He noted that his own home backs onto the Hickson ballpark, and that he had no expectation of privacy when he moved there, even though the recreation facilities were not yet in place. “When you back onto a public greenspace, your expectation of privacy might change over time,” he said. While none of the affected residents presented to council in person, one homeowner sent a letter to the township expressing her concerns. “I will not be able to attend the meeting on Sept. 17 when the trail and fence plans are discussed, as we will be away at that time,” said Janelle Drive resident Jeanne Bender. “As to the comment that it could be a social experience and a chance to visit with people, I would suggest that I enjoy doing my visiting in the front yard, where the street is, and not my back yard, which is my sanctuary, my peaceful, private space.” Bender was responding to a comment made by Brad Smith at a previous council meeting. “It is inconsiderate to take that from us. If people are infringing on township

land, then you address the problem with them, and if they continue, you fine them. You do not punish all the back yards on Janelle Drive because you don’t want to single out those individuals. I suspect that trail users would find it much more interesting to see what is going on in backyards than the weeds in a ditch and corn growing in a field.” Bender was referring to a recent statement made by Mayor Phil Schaefer that the storm ponds were being fenced off because some residents infringed on township land. “It seems to me there are little trees to keep you cool, and where are you travelling to, the length of the street and back, some trail,” Bender continued. “I believe fines should be issued for people who violate the rules instead. Fifty-thousand dollars is a ridiculous amount of taxpayer money to waste on this project. Please think this over carefully, as it affects many people.” The Gazette visited the trail site several times, and the trees can barely be seen as a result of other native plants and weeds growing to the same height. Many of the 100 trees also appear to be in poor health. The township’s public works manager, Tom Lightfoot, said he had hoped to look at the trees before press time, but was unable to do so. “I can say the trees were part of our roadside tree order. Typically, we purchase trees that are between four and six feet tall,” said Lightfoot. “They are bare-root trees when we get them from the supplier. We find the first couple of years, the trees build their root systems, and then we start to notice tree growth. The smaller trees are more economical, allowing us to purchase and plant more trees.” One of the biggest complaints from affected residents was the lack of proper consultation by the township. Brad Smith admitted the township could have done a better job communicating with residents but did not offer an apology to them. He did, however, suggest EZT staff should be apologized to. “For the residents to confront and belittle



(TOWNSHIP OF EAST ZORRA-TAVISTOCK PHOTO) Innerkip resident and ward three Coun. Matthew Gillespie voted in favour of the new trail, saying privacy won’t be impacted.

employees of this township is unacceptable, especially when they are not in their working environment,” the deputy mayor said. “Staff work and live in our township and deserve respect. I feel an apology is in order from the offending person or persons.” He added just because residents pay taxes, it does not give them the right to disrespect EZT employees. Zehr agreed with Brad Smith, noting that some comments have suggested certain staff are not acting in the best interests of taxpayers. “These comments, in my opinion, are unfair and uncalled for. ... I hope our residents who have been unkind and have been mistreating our staff might take a step back and consider their actions and their comments going forward.” Zehr added the democratic process allows room to disagree, but it should be done respectfully. “I do have concerns with those who have not,” he added. Once the trail was approved, council’s next order of business was to choose one of two options for the path presented by staff. The approved option will see the trail placed further away from backyards on Janelle Drive.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF THE TOWNSHIP OF EAST ZORRA-TAVISTOCK) East Zorra-Tavistock council approved an alternative option for the new trail, meaning it will be established further away from Janelle Drive backyards compared to the original plan.



(LEE GRIFFIPHOTO) Residents on Janelle Drive in Tavistock have this fence five feet from their backyards. East Zorra-Tavistock Township Council has also passed a motion to turn the cut grass area past dry stormwater ponds into an official walking trail.

Where your poppy dollars go: A community of remembrance and support

SCOTT DUNSTALL

Gazette Correspondent

Every fall, Canadians wear a poppy close to their hearts as a small symbol that carries enormous meaning.

In New Hamburg, that symbol takes the form of action, thanks to the volunteers and supporters behind the annual Poppy Campaign led by The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 New Hamburg.

Last year, the community once again showed its generosity, helping the Legion raise over \$38,000 through local donations. These funds support a wide range of initiatives that reflect the campaign's enduring mission: to honour veterans, support their families and invest in the wellbeing of the community they helped protect.

Throughout Wilmot and Wellesley, volunteers placed poppy boxes in local businesses and mailed thousands of letters to households and organizations. Local schools also participated, with teachers incorporating poppy-themed educational materials in their classrooms and encouraging students to participate in the annual Youth Education Poster and Literary Contest by submitting poems, posters and essays that explore remembrance and service. Those works go on display at the New Hamburg Legion until the Remembrance season concludes. Winning entries from each category are displayed at the New Hamburg Legion and entered into the broader Legion contests at the provincial and national levels.

A portion of the funds raised supports national and regional veteran initiatives, but the majority remains right here in our community, funding critical causes such as:

- Military Resource Centre
- Ontario Command Bursary
- Leave the Streets Behind: Aiding homeless veterans and their families
- Ontario Command Charity Foundation
- Youth Education Poster and Literary



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 New Hamburg Poppy Chair Gary Bender presents a check to the Air Cadet 822 Tutor Squadron. To the left is Warrant Officer first Class James Murdoch and to the right, Squadron Capt. Gibbons.

Contest

- New Hamburg Legion Veterans Dinner
- Veterans Widow Support
- Veterans Service Dog Training
- Parkwood Veterans Comfort Fund
- Stratford, St. Marys and Grand River Hospitals (veterans and community enhancements)
- 822 Air Cadet Tutor Squadron

The Poppy Campaign closes each year at midnight on Nov. 10. This past year was particularly moving with the participation of the 822 Air Cadet Tutor Squadron not only assisting with the Poppy program but also standing vigil at the New Hamburg Cenotaph overnight on Nov. 10, 2024. Community members dropped by through

the night offering support, donuts and coffee. The Legion served as the rest and recoup zone.

The entire Remembrance season culminates with a service and parade leading to the New Dundee Cenotaph the week before Nov. 11, complete with Legion Colour Party and local dignitaries. Then on an even larger scale on Nov. 11, another parade leads from the New Hamburg Cenotaph to the New Hamburg Arena where the same colour party and dignitaries participate with contributions from the New Hamburg Band and the Waterloo-Oxford Choir. From the youngest student to the most senior veteran, the spirit of service and remembrance is alive and well in our communities.

The Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 New Hamburg extends heartfelt thanks to every donor, volunteer, student, teacher and cadet who played a role in last year's campaign. Your support ensures that our veterans are never forgotten — and that their legacy continues to strengthen our community.

A look at Canadians' service and sacrifice

Canada in World War I (1914-1918)

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New Hamburg Legion's lead-up to Remembrance season is already well underway

Legion volunteers work countless hours to prepare for Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Day

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Though they don't talk about it much, the amount of work that goes into planning the annual Poppy Campaign and Remembrance Day ceremony for Wilmot Township by volunteers at the New Hamburg Legion is above and beyond what one might think.

Each year, Remembrance season officially begins on the last Friday of October which, this year, falls on Oct. 31, the day Wilmot Township will raise the Poppy Flag and the day poppy boxes start appearing on the front counters at local businesses, schools and institutions.

"On Oct. 31, there will be people going all over to deliver the boxes to the retail outlets, schools and other places in town," said Bob Berg, the Legion's Poppy Campaign chair.

"There's 96 boxes," added Gail McMullen, a member of the Legion poppy committee. "And then we take 8,200 mailers to the four post offices ... in Wilmot and Wellesley."

But before that happens, Legion volunteers work over the course of two months, starting in August, to ensure poppy boxes go to the right places and thousands of envelopes are stuffed with mailers inviting locals in Wilmot and Wellesley townships to donate to the annual fundraising campaign in support of the local Legion and the veterans it serves.

As poppy chair, Berg is responsible for digging out last year's leftover poppies, ordering new ones and contacting each of the businesses, schools and institutions that receive them to confirm the number of poppies they need this year. That includes both the regular poppy pins that have become a symbol of Remembrance over the years, as well as poppy stickers for younger students.

Then, the team of five volunteers works to fill each poppy box, meticulously



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

New Hamburg Legion poppy committee members Ross Eichler, Bob Berg and Gail McMullen pack poppy boxes at the Legion.

ensuring each poppy is face up so those who go to grab one don't get pricked. Those volunteers are also responsible for stuffing envelopes with the mailers, which can take as long as four to five hours, if not more, over the course of a Sunday afternoon.

Between packing the boxes, delivering those boxes locally, monitoring them regularly throughout Remembrance season to ensure the change compartments don't get too full and the poppies aren't depleted, and then picking up those boxes and

carefully tallying the money raised from each location after the campaign ends, the volunteers devote countless hours all in the name of honouring, remembering and supporting our veterans.

As for the Remembrance Day event itself, which begins at the New Hamburg cenotaph and continues with the official service at the New Hamburg Arena on Nov. 11, the Legion volunteers work closely with Wilmot Township staff, volunteers, police and fire officials, and all of the local and regional dignitaries who will be involved, to have each detail in order – from the parade route and the layout of

the stage and chairs inside the arena to the luncheon at the Legion afterwards – so everyone is where they need to be at 11 a.m. when the bugler plays "Last Post."

And for all that work, the Legion volunteers ask only one thing.

"Wear a poppy," Berg said. "That's all we're asking for."

Berg and his poppy committee are still looking for volunteers to help with setup and takedown for this year's Remembrance Day event. Anyone interested in helping can contact Berg at rwberg@gmail.com for more information.





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Oxford County paramedic system under strain

Warden wants to hear creative thinking from paramedic staff

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Ambulance response times are increasing in the county, and Oxford County is considering how best to respond to the growing demand.

As the county's population continues to grow in both rural and urban areas, officials say new strategies and resources may be necessary to ensure timely emergency care for residents. East Zorra-Tavistock and Zorra have the poorest response times in the county, mainly due to the fact the two towns have seen high population growth.

"Tavistock and Thamesford used to be called small settlements, but they are pretty well-established areas where historically there haven't been ambulance stations," said Oxford Paramedic Chief Ryan Hall. "We have had them where

the majority of the calls are, which is Woodstock, Tillsonburg and Ingersoll."

Norwich and Drumbo also have stations and there is another station just north of Embro. Hall said the growth in the rural areas is expected to continue.

"With long-term-care beds being opened in Tavistock and the former Maple Leaf property in Thamesford being zoned for residential development, that's going to make it even worse," he added.

Hall explained rural areas received a few calls every month 20 years ago, but now 15-20 per month is the norm.

"It has crept up quite slowly, but we are at that threshold now where it makes sense to respond to these areas from a closer location."

County Coun. Bernia Martin asked Hall if the paramedic service has the capacity to respond appropriately to the rise in call numbers.

"If we were one big urban centre, we would have some capacity. Our issue is where our calls are now happening more often is further from where we have ambulances stationed," Hall responded. "We can add all the resources in Woodstock, but the laws of physics prevent us from responding to Tavistock and Thamesford at the same time as we would in Woodstock."

Deputy warden and Ingersoll Mayor Brian Petrie asked Hall whether the 2026 budget would include measures to address diminishing response times. Hall said he is reviewing the redeployment of resources and will bring forward options for council's consideration.

East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor Phil Schaefer said he has discussed with Hall where an ambulance station could be located in the township. Hall noted similar talks have taken place with Zorra.

"If we did have an ambulance resource, would we be able to partner with you in your firehalls to actively house one? That's something we are considering," Hall said.

Hall added having conversations with neighbouring municipalities is also on the table.

"Let's talk with Perth about a joint facility, joint response structure or some sort of partnership."

Oxford County Warden and Zorra Township Mayor Marcus Ryan offered a different take on the issue. He said some decisions need to be made.

"In the short-term, I think it's almost inevitable we will have to add paramedics and possibly an ambulance. Other than that, there is nothing we can do that is quick. I don't love that, but it's not a surprise."

He added that in the medium to long term, council needs to have serious conversations both amongst itself and with residents about response times, noting the solution isn't necessarily about bricks and mortar.

"We don't really care where the ambulances are supposedly parked because the reality is they are hardly ever parked there. In the previous term of council, we received a report on response times, where are the ambulances and where does it make sense for them to be. The reality is, you can have a building where an ambulance gets parked, but it's only there for shift changes."

Ryan added an ambulance is likely going to or from one of the three Oxford County hospitals when a 911 call is made.

"In the case of Zorra Township, they



aren't sitting around in the Highland yard north of Embro with their feet up waiting for a call. So, it doesn't really matter where the ambulance hall is, but it matters what the response time is. I say that because council needs to start asking for things from our staff, and I think they are ready to give it to us."

He said council wants to know what can give residents the best response times, regardless of where the buildings are and where the ambulances are.

"What is the system that does that? I think to a large extent, we kind of have that now, or pretty close. We need to potentially be willing to partner with Perth, Brant and Middlesex. We partner with them already, but I think we need to explore that partnership more to say is it possible for residents on both sides of those borders to get better response times if we are willing to be more collaborative, look at different systems and not be so wedded to having an ambulance parked in my community."

Ryan added council works best when it doesn't demand a particular solution, but when it says they want a particular service level.

"What's the service look like that gets residents the fastest ambulance response time. Who do we need to partner with and what do we need to consider doing? We can, and I think we will probably need to, throw money at the problem short-term," he said.

Ryan added living in rural areas has its advantages, but also its disadvantages when it comes to emergency services.

"I live on a gravel road. I don't have sidewalks or streetlights. To me, those are features. I like that. The other part of living rural is, yeah, it's going to take longer for an ambulance, as well as police and fire, to get to me. That's part of the deal."



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Wellesley Lions Club holds successful rubber duck race

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The ever-popular Wellesley Lions Club Duck Race drew a large crowd again this year, with 1,500 toy rubber ducks released past the dam on a sunny, late-summer afternoon.

More than 300 residents gathered to watch and cheer on the colourful race. Participants sponsored ducks for \$5 each, or five for \$20, with numbers carefully tracked by Lions Club officials. Lion Blair Cressman said the event has become a fun way for families to get involved while raising funds to support local projects.

"It's also a great fundraiser for the Lions, who in turn sponsor many events, especially for youth in the Wellesley area," he said.

Traditionally held in June, this year's race was postponed to September due to heavy spring rains — a change that proved successful given the strong turnout.

There were plenty of prizes for lucky duck sponsors. First place and \$1,000 went to the Heiz family of Wellesley. Second place and \$250 went to MP Tim Louis, while Anne-Marie Vander Maas collected \$100 for third place.

A special children's race was also held for ages 12 and under, with prizes donated by TLC Pet Foods of New Hamburg. Grace Savich won first, followed by Helen Miller in second and James Billings in third.

The Lions expressed appreciation for the support of Wellesley Township, the Grand River Conservation Authority, Leis Feeds, the Wellesley Lounge, Schmidt's Bulk Pantry and TLC Pet Foods.

The fourth annual Wellesley Lions Duck Race is scheduled for the first Saturday in June 2026.



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF WELLESLEY LIONS CLUB)

Sponsored ducks float downstream from the dam in Wellesley as hundreds of spectators watch and cheer for their entries.



Young helpers in hip waders corral ducks at the finish line while families captured the fun on camera.



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**80 QUEEN STREET,
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MLS#X12373567 PRICE \$749,900

This well-maintained 3-bedroom, 1.5-bath bungalow offers comfort, charm, and small-town living with all amenities nearby. Set on a landscaped lot with mature trees, it features inviting living spaces, a partially finished basement, and a Generac automatic generator. Enjoy privacy and greenery while being just a short walk to shops, the school, and parks, with Stratford, Woodstock, and KW only a short drive away.



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MLS#X12154485 PRICE \$464,900

A rare 3-bedroom, 2-bath condo on the main floor. Offering 1,238 sq. ft. of open-concept living, this well-maintained unit features in-suite laundry, 4 appliances, and sliders to a private patio. The building provides controlled entry, elevator, exercise room, community space with kitchen, sauna, and lobby. Enjoy a carefree lifestyle with immediate possession available—call to view today!



74 ADAM STREET, TAVISTOCK

MLS#X12148689 PRICE \$549,900

ATTENTION ONE-CAR FAMILIES - This 3+1 bedroom raised bungalow semi is within walking distance to the school, parks, arena, splash pad, and shopping. Features include an eat-in kitchen with sliders to a side porch, spacious living room, 4-pc bath, and a finished basement with family room, extra bedroom, 3-pc bath, and laundry. Former garage now provides handy storage. Situated on a deep 30x183 ft lot, this home is perfect for first-time buyers or families—book your viewing today!



2 DIAMONDRIIDGE COURT, ST. MARYS

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Community Players bring *A Christmas Carol* to New Hamburg stage

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Gazette Reporter

The Community Players of New Hamburg are back for their winter season with the classic, *A Christmas Carol*, managed by artistic director Brooke Gamble, director Ryan Dunham and assistant director Rachel Conway.

Tickets go on sale Sept. 27 at 9 a.m. There will be nine performances throughout the season, and organizers expect them to sell out quickly.

The play is based on Charles Dickens' 1843 novella and adapted by John Mortimer. It follows Ebenezer Scrooge's transformation from a miserly old man to one filled with generosity and Christmas spirit.

A Christmas Carol is one of the most frequently performed plays during the holiday season worldwide, staged by both professional theatres and community groups.

This adaptation is said to strike a balance between the classic and the modern.

"This is a really interesting perspective on the show," Dunham said. "It's a combination of the classic setting and imagery but using more approachable language. This version is a nice balance of modern language, but still true to the time period."

The New Hamburg community centre will be transformed into a theatre, which Dunham says will be like stepping into a professional venue.

"Basically, we take a normal everyday community hall and turn it into a theatre. We design a stage, bring in bleachers and when you're in it, you will think this is a professional theatre. But a week later, there are people playing bocce in the same space."

Each season, hundreds of volunteers of all ages work side by side to produce musicals and plays with the Community

Players of New Hamburg, and this year is no different.

"What's so exciting to me is that we have seasoned professionals who have been in their 20th show, and others who are in their first or second performance ever," Dunham said.

For those looking to get involved, auditions and volunteer opportunities are posted on the group's website.

"Getting involved with Community Players of New Hamburg has been great," said Dunham. "I initially got involved after seeing *Anne of Green Gables* there and then I auditioned a year later. A lot of people have full-time jobs and they do this because they love it. It's a really great group of people."

For more than four decades, the Community Players of New Hamburg have been bringing people together to create live, high-quality, family-friendly



theatre.

Tickets and more information are available at www.thecommunityplayers.com.



(PHOTOS BY HILARY GAULD, ONE FOR THE WALL STUDIO)

Tiny Tim (Elanor Woodworth) and Scrooge (Mark Starratt).



Spirit of Christmas Past (Isla Straeten), Scrooge (Mark Starratt), Spirit of Christmas Future (Nathan Woodworth) and Spirit of Christmas Present (Randy Streich).



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Sprucedale students run for a good cause at Terry Fox Run

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

The spirit of Terry Fox was alive and well at Sprucedale Public School in Shakespeare on Friday, Sept. 19, as students laced up their shoes for the annual Terry Fox Run.

This year's event carried extra meaning for the students. One of Sprucedale's own, Carter Kuchma, a Grade 2 student, was recently diagnosed with cancer, making the cause feel especially close to home. Before the run began, students gathered for an assembly where they learned how every dollar raised supports cancer research and

helps people just like Carter.

A video about Terry Fox's incredible journey across Canada reminded everyone of his courage and determination. After the assembly, students joined their spirit teams to begin the first lap of the run together.

Students continued at their own pace, walking or running as many laps as they could. Team captains kept count and, by the end, some teams had logged over 100 laps.

"It was a beautiful, positive day," said principal Lisa Cairncross. "It was great to see Sprucedale students working together for such an important cause."



Every Sprucedale student wrote a note of encouragement or drew a picture to be displayed on a banner that was created for Grade 2 student Carter Kuchma.



(DIANE DANEN PHOTO)

Sprucedale students join their spirit teams for the first lap of the Terry Fox Run.

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Tavistock Optimist Club members hold another successful wing night

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Close to 300 hungry chicken wing fans turned out for the Tavistock Optimist Club's annual Wing Stag last week, held under sunny skies.

A total of 720 pounds of all-you-can-eat wings were served in mild, hot and honey garlic flavours, alongside the club's well-loved French fries.

Many Optimist members spent a full day preparing and working in the club's cooking trailer for the 11th annual event. This year's stag was the fourth-highest attended since the tradition began in 2013, when 155 people were served.

Wing Night chair and organizer Eric Bender said all proceeds will support community projects and go toward improvements at Optimist Park.

Longtime member Ken Meadows of Harmony was the lucky winner of the 50/50 draw.

Club president Jesse Weicker thanked the community for its ongoing support of the Optimists' activities.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Volunteers kept the Tavistock Optimist fry wagon running smoothly during last week's annual Wing Night as close to 300 people enjoyed food and fellowship at the Tavistock Pavilion.

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Back shed from Brunk property in Tavistock demolished to make way for future plans

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

There was plenty of activity Monday morning on Decew Street in Tavistock as Streicker Excavation of Brunner tore down the aging back storage shed of the former Brunk property.

For decades, the building's front store was home to Brunk's TV and Appliances, a busy hub for area homeowners. But following the passing of longtime proprietor Howard Brunk, the property was sold to Tavistock developer Steve "Goldie" Ramseyer.

After clearing away material from both the store and the storage shed, Ramseyer confirmed plans are underway for refurbishment of the main building.

Among the surprises inside the shed were four vehicles, left for years under layers of dirt and dust. Two were beyond repair and disposed of, but the other two were in remarkably good condition. One has since been sold to a Stratford collector, while Ramseyer kept the other for himself.

"That's just Goldie," said one friend. "He works hard and he's lucky enough to turn up something special."



Among the relics found in the shed was this low-mileage Ford LTD Country Squire station wagon, complete with wood veneer siding and red leather seats. Ramseyer has given the car new life.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

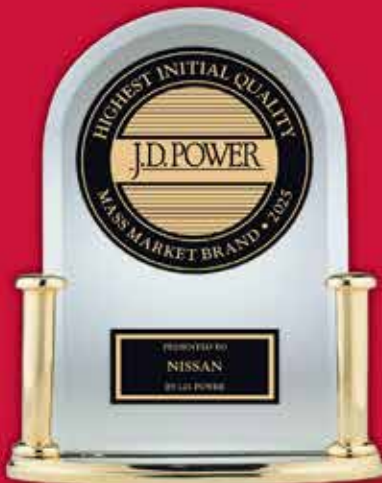
The back shed of the former Brunk's TV and Appliance building on Decew Street in Tavistock came down this week. New owner Steve "Goldie" Ramseyer has plans for the main building's future.



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Baden teen talks entrepreneurship and his photo booth business, Tanorama

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Gazette Reporter

Corbin Tan is a 19-year-old entrepreneur based in Baden. After completing his first year in university with straight As in biology, Tan felt there was something different he was meant to pursue, which led him toward a new career in entrepreneurship.

While growing up, Tan watched his father build businesses around his love for music. From running company offering music lessons to starting Tan Music Academy and Services, which focused on teaching music theory, Tan saw firsthand the benefits of starting and managing a company — and he felt this was the path meant for him.

“It was just simply because I wanted to change paths,” said Tan. “I knew I wanted to be an entrepreneur and I wanted to start

a business of my own, so that’s what I set out to do.”

His father, whom Tan always looked up to, showed him that pursuing a career he loves is key to freedom in everyday life.

“I really look up to him,” said Tan. “I come from a family of five, and I’ve always had a present father and a present mother in my life because my dad had his own business and that really showed me the possibilities of someday owning my own business, too.”

Looking for a business opportunity that was affordable to start and valuable to the Baden community, Tan found inspiration at events he attended.

“I had attended a few events where there were photo booths and I thought, ‘These are amazing, why aren’t these available at all events?’” he said. “I started to do some research and realized there is a market for

photo booths, so I went headfirst into it.”

His business, Tanorama — a play on his name and the word “panorama” — offers luxury, open-air and 360-degree booth rentals for weddings, corporate events, school functions and private celebrations. The focus is on creating high-quality, fun and memorable experiences for clients.

“I always loved photography, especially print photography,” Tan said. “I know there are so many people who take so many photos on their phone, but they basically never see them again after they take the picture. I thought the idea of printing out photos was almost novel and such a great keepsake.”

With Tanorama’s open-air setups, instead of stepping inside a small, enclosed booth, people pose in front of the kiosk with a backdrop or open space behind

them. This allows for larger group photos and more flexibility.

“We use newer technology than your typical classic photo booth,” said Tan. “It’s an open-air space, almost like a kiosk where people have lots of room to set up and take great pictures together.”

In the end, Tan said the business is about more than just financial success — it’s about learning and growing, no matter where it leads.

“I want to prove that it’s possible,” he said. “I’m only going to fail if I give up.”

Tanorama offers a self-service photo station that feels more interactive, letting people capture full-body shots or large group selfies — perfect for weddings, parties, or corporate functions.

For more information or bookings, visit www.tanorama.ca.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Corbin Tan operates his Tanorama open-air photo booth while a guest poses for pictures at a recent birthday party.

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Wellesley planning to disband local recreation service boards in favour of one advisory committee

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The council for the Township of Wellesley is looking to disband local recreation service boards in communities across the township in favour of establishing a single recreation advisory committee that, if approved, would advise council on all things related to recreation and leisure services.

At council's committee of the whole meeting Aug. 16, councillors voted in favour of formally disbanding all recreation service boards, with the exception of the still-active Hawkesville recreation board, in favour of a nine-member advisory committee comprising representation from council, each of the township's four wards and the township's three Lions Clubs.

"For the last number of years, as the current recreation service boards became inactive, staff began to look at the options for the future of how these board will serve council," said Wellesley director of recreation Danny Roth. "When we looked at the current terms of reference for the boards, the last update that could be found was done in 2003. So, with the current active boards down to one and the last update to the bylaw done in 2003, that's when

we determined that new terms of reference and a new committee would be the recommendation.

"... The committee would be an advisory committee rather than a fundraising committee. The Lions Clubs' ... expertise is fundraising."

According to Roth's report, a single recreation advisory committee will serve as a formal mechanism for community input, providing advice on programs, facilities, policies, special events and partnerships with staff serving as non-voting support.

The creation of a recreation advisory committee, Roth explained in his report, provides a stronger, more strategic model for recreation planning. While there are challenges in transitioning from long-established service boards, the benefits of streamlined decision-making, broader representation and alignment with strategic planning outweigh the risks. With clear communication and a structured implementation plan, the committee could serve to enhance recreation service delivery and support community wellbeing across the township.

As part of the transition, any funds currently held in recreation service board accounts would remain in their respective accounts and continue to be directed

toward recreation purposes within those communities. Going forward, fundraising for community projects would be undertaken by each community's local Lions Club.

However, since the Hawkesville Recreation Service Board is still an active and effective fundraising team, supporting events and other recreational activities in that community, councillors approved an option proposed by Roth to allow the board to remain active until the end of next year, before which council and the members of the service board will evaluate the effectiveness of the new advisory committee and determine whether the Hawkesville recreation service board will remain active or if it, too, will be disbanded with its roles and responsibilities split between the advisory committee and the Paradise and District Lions Club, which serves an area that includes Hawkesville.

"I'm a big believer of 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it,'" Hawkesville recreation service board chair Bob Caskanette told councillors at the Sept. 16 committee of the whole meeting. "Currently, it seems things are going quite well in Hawkesville on the fundraising side. We get a lot of engagement in our events. I know Danny (Roth) mentioned that the Lions Club may

then take over that fundraising initiative within this community. Maybe that could be a good thing; I don't know.

"Full transparency, I don't recall ever seeing any of the Lions out at any of our events. Maybe they have been there and just haven't identified themselves, but I'm a little hesitant if that will be a positive change or what that would actually look like. Again, I think the way things are going seems to be very well, and it would be our preference, certainly, to continue with that if possible."

Once the advisory committee is approved by council and established in the new year, Caskanette will serve as an additional member of the recreation advisory committee until December 2026 to assist with its evaluation by staff and council and provide input on behalf of the Hawkesville board.

As there will be a municipal election next October, the current council will have an opportunity to review how the recreation advisory committee is functioning beforehand so current councillors can have input on whether the Hawkesville service board should remain active after December 2026 – or if it should be disbanded – before a new council is sworn in.

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Milverton Fall Fair another well-attended event in Perth East

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Directors with the Milverton Agricultural Society were pleased with the strong turnout at this year's 162nd Milverton Fall Fair.

The 2025 theme was "Farm Gate to Dinner Plate," and the fair kicked off with a beef barbecue hosted by Perth County Beef Farmers at the Milverton Agri Centre.

The Milverton Fair Ambassador competition included three age categories this year: mini (ages nine to 11), junior (12-15), and senior (18+). A fun fact highlighted by organizers was that Milverton has produced more winners of the CNE

Ambassador of the Fairs competition than any of Ontario's 210 agricultural societies.

Admission was by donation and families enjoyed a wide range of activities, including the baby show, sweetheart and Little Mister competitions, inflatables, a pedal tractor pull, harvest plate bingo, line dancing, the farm toy table, Ag. craft corner, virtual farming videos, and a kiddie crop play area.

In keeping with the agricultural theme, live animals were featured on the fairgrounds. TLC Alpacas of Mitchell and JC Cattle Company of Milverton brought alpacas and Speckled Park beef cattle, with products available for purchase.



Sully Minor took home first prize in the 41-60-pound class of the pedal tractor pull.



Perth-Wellington MP John Nater helps with food distribution at the beef barbecue kickoff.



(GARY WEST AND HELEN DOWD PHOTOS)

From left, Ainsley LeBlanc, District 8 Ambassador; Dayna Egli, Milverton Junior Fair Ambassador; Evelynne Streicher, Sweetheart; Jake Woodrow, Little Mister; Elisha MacGregor, Milverton Fair Ambassador; and Lexi Johnston, CNE Fair Ambassador. Missing is Max Mueller, Mini Fair Ambassador.



For more than 60 years, Elvey Brodhagen has entered items in the Milverton Fall Fair. At age 87, he is pictured with, from left, Michele Duskocy, vice-president and Homecraft chair; Angela Schneider, treasurer; and Helen Dowd, president of the Milverton Agricultural Society.



Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae passes out beef at the fair's opening barbecue.

Two combines make quick work of 100 acres of soybeans near Shakespeare

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Two large combines — a red Case IH and a green John Deere — teamed up with a grain buggy to harvest a 100-acre soybean field in South Easthope Township, south of Shakespeare, last week.

Neighbours Scott and Bob Dietrich and Rob Danen worked together on the Chris Danen farm. Within a day of the soybeans being harvested, the field was already seeded with winter wheat, taking advantage of the dry, sunny weather.

Once that wheat reaches maturity next July, it will be harvested and the crop-rotation cycle will continue with a likely application of manure for corn the following year.

Dairy farms in Perth County typically rotate alfalfa, corn, soybeans and wheat, along with manure applications, to help ensure strong yields year after year.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Two combines make quick work of 100 acres of soybeans on the Chris Danen farm south of Shakespeare last week. Area farmers report yields between 47 and 53 bushels per acre — smaller than usual beans, but acceptable given the dry season.

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STRATFORD NISSAN



Wilmot Agricultural Society hosts Education Day on local dairy farm

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Wilmot Agricultural Society held its annual Education Day last week at the Hogendoorn dairy farm near St. Agatha, welcoming Grade 4 students from across Wilmot Township.

The program, which used to be held at the New Hamburg fairgrounds, was moved to the farm this year to give students a first-hand look at local agriculture.

Students rotated through stations focused on dairy farming, nutrition, water conservation, horses and tack, and farm equipment. They also rolled up their

sleeves to plant seeds in the farm's soil.

The event was supported by partners including Waterloo Dairy Educators, AgScape, the Grand River Conservation Authority and the New Hamburg Optimist Club. Sponsors such as the Waterloo County Federation of Agriculture, Waterloo Dairy Producers Committee, Farm Credit Canada, Herrle's Farm Market, Mountainoak Cheese, Cressman Meats and others made the day free for schools.

Teachers and parents praised the program for giving children a clear picture of where food comes from and the important role farms play in the community.



(STEPHANIE SZUSZ PHOTO)

Waterloo County Dairy Educator Sandy Martin quizzes Grade 4 students about milk production during Education Day at the Hogendoorn farm near St. Agatha.

Education program in Wellesley Township another success

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Grades 3 and 4 students from schools in Wellesley Township, along with local homeschool groups, took part in a hands-on dairy education program recently.

The event featured veterinarians, dairy farmers and agricultural professionals

from across the township. The program is organized each year by the North Easthope-Wellesley Agricultural Society to help students understand where their milk and other dairy products come from, including yogurt, butter, sour cream and cheese.

Though a few of the children already live on dairy farms, they were just as

eager to learn at the various education stations. Volunteers from the Waterloo Dairy Committee and the agricultural society guided students through interactive sessions.

This year's program was held at the farm of Jim Demerling, whose modern facility provided a clean and safe learning environment. Organizers plan for about 200

students to attend each year.

The Wellesley-North Easthope Agricultural Society thanks Jones Feed Mill, Brenland Dairy Farms, Milverton-Wellesley Vet Clinic, Waterloo County Dairy Educators, Dortman Brothers, Waterloo County Dairy Producer Committee and all volunteers who made the day possible.



(KAREN PILECKI PHOTOS)

Kasja Bowman, with Dharma the Holstein cow, explains to students what cows eat, how often they are milked and how much milk they can produce in a day.



Wellesley veterinarian Dr. Jeff Sommers describes how calves are born and raised, while Luna the calf waits in the background. He explained calves are fed until they calve at about 22-24 months of age and begin producing milk.



Local dairy farmer Brad Brenneman shows students the milking machine his family has used for generations in Waterloo County, while Dharma eats contentedly in the background.

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Grace and Hickson United Churches join together in worship

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The members of Grace United Church in Tavistock and Hickson United Church came together in

celebration Sunday, marking the uniting of the two congregations.

Rev. Marilyn Arthur, minister at Grace, said the congregation was “very happy and full of joy” to welcome the Hickson members as part of

their church family.

The Hickson congregation was received with applause as the union was made official, bringing the two church families together under one roof.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Bill Brown, board chair at Grace United Church, and Nancy Weicker, board chair at Hickson United Church, joined in lighting the Christ Candle in the sanctuary, symbolizing the two churches coming together as one. Behind them is Rev. Marilyn Arthur with the Grace choir, directed by Marilyne Nystrom.

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**ANSWERS FOUND ON
THE CLASSIFIED PAGE**

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz By Jake Grant

1. What is the capital of China?
2. Which TV show follows the lives of the Bluth family?
3. What device uses sunlight to tell time?
4. What kind of food is an olive?
5. What is the outer layer of a tooth called?
6. What is Beyoncé’s last name?
7. Where does “the Muffin Man” live, according to the nursery rhyme?
8. When the stock market is performing well, it’s called a ____ market?
9. Charlie Kirk was assassinated in what state?
10. Who does Meghan Markle play in “Suits?”

Answers found on the classified page

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.

September 23-30, 2015, Edition (10 years ago)

East Zorra-Tavistock Coun. Jeremy Smith always felt it necessary to participate in the annual Terry Fox Run in his own municipality. So, when Stacy Roth initiated the first Tavistock Terry Fox Run three years ago, Smith was the event's biggest supporter. Each year, he has raised the most funds individually, and each year his support has increased. "The first year was about \$750," Smith noted, and "last year about \$1,650." This year he was reaching higher and gathered \$2,050 for the cause. "When Terry Fox began to run that ribbon of highway back in 1980, he had the belief that he could convert an improbable dream into a reality. It's that inspiration that echoes 35 years later and just one reason why I'm participating," Smith said.

"I had a crush on him. You'd think I'd remember his name," said Ruth (Berg) Finkelstein as she studied two photographs taken in Tavistock many years ago. The first was her Grade 1 class photo of 1939 that included every student in the school. She is sitting in the front row and recalls Ms. Loth as her teacher. The second was a photo taken in Tavistock in 1948. It was the year of the Tavistock Centenary and four churches combined to form a massed choir at the Sunday service in Queen's Park. Years and distance have a way of erasing the names of these childhood friends. Pictures on the other hand can bring back a moment in time, the people and the voices. Finkelstein, who now lives in California, was in Tavistock recently to visit with cousins in the area and tour her hometown. She dropped by the Gazette office to donate the two photographs to the Tavistock and District Historical Society.

The seventh-annual Oxford cross-country Milk Run was held once again at the farm of Larry and Julie Schwartzentruber, just west of Hickson on Tuesday, Sept. 22, 2015. About 650 students from 18 Oxford County public schools across the Thames Valley District School Board participated in six age categories for both boys and girls.

September 25 - October 2, 1985, Edition (40 years ago)

Shakespeare residents found themselves without electrical power Wednesday morning after a truck struck and downed a hydro pole at the main intersection of Highway 7 and 8 and Highway 59. A large boom of a stone crusher which was overhanging the cab of a

truck owned by Cox Construction Ltd. of Guelph struck the hydro pole on the southeast corner of the intersection as the driver was making a turn into the east bound lane of Highway 7 and 8. The pole brought down electrical wires and cables as well as traffic lights and a streetlight. The driver, however, was not injured and there was no damage to the vehicle. Damage to property was estimated at about \$3,000.

Walk your best friend for those who need one. You and your dog are invited to participate in the 1985 first-ever National Walk-A-Dog-A-Thon, a special fundraising event for Canine Vision Canada. The CNC is a national training facility for guide dogs and visually impaired Canadians located in Oakville. The 10-kilometre walk will take place on Sunday, Oct. 6 at 10 a.m. CNC trains and supplies guide dogs for the blind at no cost to their new owners. They also accommodate and board the people at no charge during their own training period with their dogs. This year, Ralston Purina is the national corporate sponsor for the walks being held in every province, including 25 in Ontario. The goal is \$30,000.

The Tavistock and District Tennis Club has completed their tournaments for the 1985 season. Club president Ron Ashcroft was quite pleased with the participation and work of his staff this summer. In the junior boys' singles competition, Mike Haase received the trophy donated by Jim Mitchell Antiques, Shakespeare. Haase defeated Jason Zehr 6-0 and Jaysen Cole 6-2 for the title. In junior girls' singles, Sheri Hyde won the round robin event over Tara Trachsel 6-1, and Susan Ramseyer 6-3. Hyde received the Shakespeare Café trophy.

September 24 - October 1, 1975, Edition (50 years ago)

The club's biggest venture, Bavarian Night, on Friday, Sept. 26, will be a highlight of this year's activities. The arena looked quite attractive with its banners and streamers to the hundreds of guests from a wide area. Among them were a group of Japanese people visiting in the area, and Mr. Oktoberfest, himself, from Kitchener. The melodious music of the Concordia band left nothing to be desired, as proven by the crowd on the spacious dance floor down the middle of the arena.

Crossing guard Brenda Brenner commenced work at the five corners in the centre of the village Monday morning, and Idella Schwantz at the William and Woodstock streets corner. Police Chief Peter instructed Brenner on the proper way to stop traffic and watch the children on the crosswalk.

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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

PJHL Roundup: Applejacks top Braves in OT

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

Wellesley won its second-straight Doherty Division game thanks to a 3-2 overtime victory in Tavistock on Friday night.

Kian Harron scored the game-winner two minutes and 40 seconds into the extra period, his first of the season, on a setup from Spencer Davidson and Jake L'Heurux. The Braves had a 2-1 lead late in the second period on goals from Carter Otto and Even Palubeski before Tyler Chadwick tied it up with 30 seconds left in the frame.

Tavistock general manager Brent Lange said Wellesley is a quality team, but the result could have easily been different.

"We hit some posts and missed an opportunity in overtime to put it away. They turned around and scored a nice goal to win on a three-on-two rush. I said after the game I'd like to play them again in a couple of weeks or a month when we have our whole lineup hopefully together."

The Braves have allowed just three goals against in the first three games of the season, something Lange admitted is a major improvement.

"Blake Richard (Richy) and Andrew Torchia (Torch) have played great between the pipes. Richy has been a rock as advertised and that is why we brought him in for this season and next. Torch played very good as well for his first-ever junior game last weekend. I know he would want the first two goals he let in the other weekend back. Both were weird flutter pucks that banked off players and bounced onto Paris

players' sticks or right beside them for a tap in. But he held the fort the rest of the way and did great."

Lange also credited solid team defence for the team's start, including all players sacrificing their bodies to help.

"A massive credit to our entire lineup. I don't have the exact number of blocked shots in front of me, but I'd think 30-40 or more shots have been blocked in the first three games. Ryan McKellar, Marc Dionne and Carson Bernhardt are usually blocking three to five or more shots a game each, along with all our other players who also have blocked a bunch."

Discipline is another area where Tavistock needs to improve on to contend this season, and so far, they have the fewest penalties in the Doherty Division.

"This group is a pretty close bunch already, so that helps to keep guys in check and held accountable. If they take a bad penalty, they will hear about it," Lange said.

Thirteen players have tallied at least one point to date, something Lange said means each line is making a solid contribution.

"We love the balanced attack and we have four lines that contribute in different ways and give us four different looks. We will have good depth up front and on the back end this year. I'm excited to keep going and see where we will be in a month or two from now, but we also know our division will be good and tight, and we cannot take a night off or we will get burned."

The Braves don't have their full lineup iced yet, thanks to some early season injuries, but local defenceman Keaton Bartlett

is expected back within two weeks.

"That will be a huge boost to our back-end and take some of the load off a couple guys back there that have logged 25 plus minutes or more a game. We have a couple of forwards that should be back soon as well. It's only September and nothing is won in September. So, one game at a time," he added.

Wellesley won its third-straight game in a row on home ice Saturday, a 7-3 drubbing over Woodstock. Ian Speiran led the

Applejacks with three goals while Lincoln Walsh added a pair. Wellesley led 3-2 after 20 minutes and 4-2 after 40.

New Hamburg earned its first win of the season with a dominating 5-0 win on home ice in front of 350 fans for its home opener. Jayden Fischer led the attack with two goals and an assist with Kayden Livingston, Owen Bruder and Jayden Jacobs adding two points apiece. Deklan Jermol stopped all 32 shots he faced to earn the shutout.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTOS)

Tavistock Braves' forward Nicholas Hambly drives the net for a scoring chance while Wellesley Applejacks' defenceman Riley Noble gets back to defend the play, and Applejacks' goaltender Logan MacMillan makes the save. The Applejacks picked up a 3-2 overtime win over the Braves on Friday, Sept. 19.



Riley Noble skates with the puck for the Wellesley Applejacks during their game against the Tavistock Braves on Sept. 19. Kian Harron scored the overtime winner for the Applejacks. Luke Schofield and Tyler Chadwick also scored for Wellesley, while Evan Palubeski and Carter Otto scored for Tavistock.

Braves test their fitness at Built Fitness



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Members of the Tavistock Braves dropped by Built Fitness on Saturday for baseline fitness testing. Keaton Bartlett and captain Marc Dionne were among the players taking part. The team also held a successful pork barbecue fundraiser. Next action for the team is Friday night when they host Hespeler.

Wellesley council approves permanent camera system for livestreaming of Applejacks games at Wellesley Recreation Complex

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Township of Wellesley will likely approve the installation of a permanent camera system at the Wellesley Recreation Complex for the livestreaming of Wellesley Applejacks games after a streaming deal was reached between the Applejacks, the Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) and NBC Sportsengine last year.

At Wellesley council's Sept. 16 committee of the whole meeting, councillors supported the notion of the PJHL installing a permanent camera for livestreaming Applejacks Junior C home games. According to township recreation director Danny Roth's report to council, as a member club, the Wellesley Applejacks are required to participate in this streaming

initiative.

While the Applejacks complied with the agreement last year with the use of non-permanent cameras that were removed from the recreation complex after every game, for this year, the Applejacks and the PJHL are requesting township approval to install a permanent camera system at the recreation complex. That agreement with the township and the Applejacks, Roth explained, requires certain protections against the potential for livestreaming outside of Applejacks games.

"This (agreement with the township) has to do with neighbouring communities where streaming was happening outside of scheduled events, so the patrons in the community centres didn't know they were being recorded and this was being streamed over the internet," Roth said.

"That's why we had to put in some protection clauses into this agreement that permitted township staff to be able to shut down the stream if there was any breach."

Last summer, livestreaming cameras at the Waterloo Memorial Recreation Complex and two arenas in Kitchener – the Lions Arena and Grand River Arena – were left on and streaming while summer camps were using the spaces, meaning campers could be seen online, raising privacy concerns and resulting in an investigation into the matter.

Prior to Wellesley council approving this agreement, the township will have a lawyer review it – at the Applejacks' expense – to ensure it protects against any potential breach of privacy similar to those in Kitchener and Waterloo.

"The legal review; do you have any

idea how long that may take?" asked Bob Caskanette, a member of the Applejacks board of directors, at the Sept. 16 meeting. "I ask because obviously our regular season has now started, so it would be good to expedite this as much as we can."

"I'm sure you know with lawyers, it's very, very hard to pin down a time, but we will ask for an expedited review and I imagine we will be able to get that in fairly short order," Wellesley CAO Rik Louwagie responded.

By having councillors approve the agreement in principle, pending legal review, at the Sept. 16 meeting, the Applejacks can now begin planning and installing the camera system, however no streaming will be permitted until the agreement is vetted and formally approved by council.

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Excavation continues beside Shakespeare Variety

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Excavation work is underway beside Shakespeare Variety as part of a major project to improve the village's drinking water.

Perth East deputy mayor Hugh McDermid explained the work stems from a provincial change in 2018 that lowered the allowable level of arsenic in water from 0.025 mg/L to 0.010 mg/L. In August 2019, Shakespeare's water tested between 0.0126 mg/L and 0.0108 mg/L, slightly exceeding the new limit.

After consultations with the Ministry of Conservation and Parks and health officials, BM Ross and Associates launched an environmental assessment in March 2020 to determine options. On Feb. 4, 2025, Perth East council approved the current design.

Exterra Construction of Kitchener was awarded the \$3.61-million contract, with completion targeted for April 28, 2026.

McDermid encouraged residents seeking more information to review the Feb. 4, 2025, council meeting minutes on the Perth East website or contact him directly at 519-274-9113.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

North Easthope's Bell Trucking was busy last week removing soil and creating a large excavation beside Shakespeare Variety, north of Highway 7 and 8. The project will reduce arsenic levels in the village's drinking water to meet provincial standards.

For more than 160 years, Indigenous children were forced into Indian Residential Schools.

September 30 is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation,
a day to learn about the 150,000 childhoods lost to
Canada's Indian Residential School system.

ontario.ca/LearnTheLegacy
Paid for by the Government of Ontario

Ontario 

Corn silage and soybean competition winners announced

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Corn silage and soybean harvest is well underway on farms across Perth, Oxford and Waterloo counties, with the Tavistock Agricultural Society announcing the winners of its annual crop competition.

The society introduced the program years ago to recognize farmers who enter their crops at planting to be judged at harvest by crop specialists. Earlier this year, the alfalfa hay competition drew more than 15 entries, with Rob and Andrew Danen of Line 29, west of Sebastopol, taking first place.

Last week, judges walked the fields of

corn silage and soybean entries before declaring the winners.

The Danen family, farming on Line 33 (Pork Street), was awarded first place for corn silage. Judges described their crop as “picture perfect,” citing excellent population, no skips or misses in planting, weed-free fields, strong stalks, large cobs filled to the tips and no signs of disease or insect damage.

In the soybean category, the Brenneman family of the 11th Line in East Zorra was named the winner. Their crop was praised for an exceptional number of pods per plant, zero weed pressure and large, healthy beans.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)
Farmers across Oxford, Perth and Waterloo counties are busy harvesting corn silage for dairy, beef, sheep and goat operations.



The Danen family’s award-winning field of corn silage is shown during harvest, with feed being packed into the farm’s bunk silos. This crop won first place in the Tavistock Agricultural Society’s annual competition.

Gazette Puzzles

ORANGE SHIRT DAY

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Ceremony Community Every Child Matters Healing Indigenous	Orange Shirt Day Reconciliation Remember Resilience Respect	Sharing Spirit Survivors Tradition Truth
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How am I supposed to eat healthy when I'm on the road for work all the time?

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



Question: I try to eat healthy, but I am on the road with my job, and sometimes fast food is the only option. Help me make better choices please!

In today's fast-paced world, meal prep is the best course of action by far, but not always possible. Fast food is just that, a quick answer to a rumbling tummy before "hangry" sets in. In the world of overprocessed, high-sodium, high-sugar, pesticides, GMOs and nutrient-free foods, choose the best alternative no matter what.

This nutritionist loves letting her taste buds travel the world, but consistently eating nutrient-dense foods and maintaining

healthy blood sugar is key to overall health, long-term.

Let's start with the Standard American Diet (SAD); quite literally the sad menu most people dine on daily. Soup and sandwich chains are comfort foods without the home-chef kitchen chaos. Stick to broth-based soups chocked full of garden goodness and skip the croutons, crackers, croissants and bougie bread bowls.

Take a pass on the dollop of cheese or sour cream. Flat bread, whole grain, seed or sourdough breads instead of over-processed white breads are a good start. Take a pass on all mayo-based spreads, butter, margarine or

ketchup, choosing mustard or Dijon instead. Go for rotisserie or grilled meat over processed lunchbox favorites. Say no to plastic-wrapped cheese slices; instead, super-stack raw veggies and sprouts sky high. On salads, stick to the same guidelines. The dressing can be your biggest downfall. Choose a teaspoon of olive oil, if possible, unlimited vinegar and a squeeze of lemon to boost flavour.

Is fried chicken a favourite? Choose white meat only, remove the skin and choose biscuits or fries in a smaller portion. Pass on potato salad, creamy coleslaw and gravy.

Sushi lovers load up on sashimi, not sushi. Fish is a powerful source of protein without the sugar-spike of white rice. Go easy on the rolls, choosing avocado, raw, colourful veggies and fish-filled options without all the cream cheese, kewpie sauce and breaded meats. Stay away from the glow-in-the-dark, green, sugar-stocked seaweed salad. Japanese foods are fabulously flavourful with the dunk-in soy sauce, touch of wasabi and

holistic herb ginger. Look for purple, black or brown rice for body-boosting benefits.

Middle Eastern street food, shawarma in particular, is a popular pick and this health advocate's go-to. What's not to love about the thinly sliced, marinated meat slow-roasted and typically served in a pita? Served salad style is sensational, on top a rainbow of raw veggies such as red cabbage, tomatoes, cucumber and onions, topped with pickles. Top with a touch of toum, swap the garlic sauce for tahini, a sesame-seed paste chock full of iron, vitamin E, and plant protein. Hummus is heaps of health as well thanks to chickpeas and tahini.

The gyro, a Greek dish is strikingly similar to the shawarma but using only tzatziki sauce to top the wrap, is also a great pick. Follow the same healthy foodie rules. All sauces are hidden calories and potentially contain highly inflammatory seed oils. Carb crazy is not the way to go. Choose the pita? Pass on potatoes and rice.

Pizza is the ultimate

grab-and-go, takeout and Skip the Dishes go-to. Choose thin crust, of course, and grilled chicken breast, steak or ground beef trumps deli style salami slices. Load up on veggies, not ooey gooey cheese. Ditch dipping in garlic sauce.

Mexican is a must for many. Choose corn tacos with plant or meat-based options over wraps overstuffed with melted cheese, beans, rice and meat. Salsa and guacamole over sour cream is super!

There are so many countries we could travel to with our eat-on-the-go passport of the world, but I'm quite confident you all have the idea!

On a final fit and fabulous note, forget all fountain drinks, even diet and juice drinks. Water is wondrous.

After reading this writer's healthy hacks and you decide to kick my advice to the curb, my final, all-star advice is to order the kids' meals or take half home.

Happy and healthy eating is always the way to go! Fuel the flow and feel fabulous!

In Another Life

CHLOE BOSHART

Submitted to the Gazette

This poem was written by Chloe Boshart of Baden in memory of her brother and submitted to the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette for publication.

In another life, Chase's curls are still lit by the sun. Brown, untamed, almost an afro, they were a crown he never asked for but always carried. His hair defied gravity, defied rules, defied hands that couldn't resist reaching toward it. To touch it was to touch something alive, something that laughed and loved. His curls were not just his hair, they were the banner of his boyhood, the halo of his mischief, the stubbornness of his spirit made visible.

We are still in Drumbo, where the farmhouse leans with time and memory. The winters are sharp, but our home is filled with hot chocolate and blankets pulled too tight. Summers roar with dirt bikes and four-wheelers, the hum of engines beneath our feet, our laughter rising above the fields. His curls would escape his helmet every time, as though they, too, wanted to taste the wind.

The shack: boys only, still bars its door, and Briar and I still glare at it with envy. Yet the forest always redeemed us; forts blooming out of branches, games stitched together by imagination. Chase's curls caught twigs and sunlight alike, as if the forest itself wanted to claim him.

Briar remembers waking at dawn

beside him, coaxing a reluctant flame back to life. Two children crouched close, guarding a secret fire, their hair smelling of smoke and sleep. His curls, unruly even then, bent toward her as if to share the secret itself.

But the truth that haunts me is this: I knew him best when we were young. That is the Chase I hold forever. The boy with dark eyes that welcomed everyone, a smile so warm it felt like home, and hair that refused to bow to any order but its own. Childhood is the photograph I press to my chest, the only place where he is still whole.

In another life, he grows older. His curls silver at the temples but never lose their defiance. Children of his own tug at them, laugh when they spring back against their fingers. We would sit together in some ordinary kitchen, mugs of coffee cooling, and I would still see him. Not a memory, but a man, curls unruly as ever.

Instead, I am left with absence. I am left chanting LLC, as though three letters can summon him back. I am left remembering a red Infiniti instead of waving to him through its open window. I am left missing him more than language can bear. And yet, language is what I have, so I keep writing him back into being.

One thing I know without falter: the word step does not belong before brother. It never has. Chase was never half, never conditional, never a footnote. He is my brother.



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History, hurting and healing

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



As soon as I was born, I was taken from my birth mother and put into foster care. Three months after I was born, I was taken to the home of Rose and Ralph Knowles, who adopted me.

And right now, I can hear you ask, “What the heck does this have to do with travel?”

My answer: I have always known those facts about my life – although only in the past few years have I discovered the identity of my birth mother and met seven siblings I never knew about. But knowing that I had been given up for adoption has always been part of my life, and has shaped who I am.

“But,” you say, “remember the travel part?”

Yes. One of the most impactful destinations I have ever visited is the National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada, in Portage la Prairie, Man. This is not a destination that entertains; it’s one that informs, educates, enlightens and changes you from the inside out.

I have often heard people wonder why Indigenous people seem so focused on residential schools. It is not rare to hear the phrase, “That was in the past. Can we just move on?”

And that’s where my birth story connects, for me, at least, because those circumstances have been a real, living part of me all my life and my story of loss is pretty insignificant compared to the tragedies that residential schools brought upon thousands of Indigenous Canadians.

And their story is not ancient history. Touring the Residential

School Museum, we were reminded the last residential school closed only 29 years ago! Most of you reading this were adults while the government of Canada and a number of churches were still operating institutions that were founded, according to the deputy superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs, “to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada.” Residential schools were intended as a means to steal the identity of all Indigenous Canadians to “assimilate” each and every one, in the words of Prime Minister Sir John A. McDonald.

Compare those stated intentions with the mission statement of today’s Residential School Museum: “A place where people can learn, share, heal and move forward.” The museum and its staff are committed to that process.

Our guide was Farah Houle. She led us through small rooms in the museum – which was once the Portage la Prairie Indian Residential School founded in 1916 and in operation until 1988. Each room contains exhibits that reveal the unfolding history – often synonymous with “unfolding tragedy” – of the people of the First Nations.

I learned that from the 1800s until 1951, residents on reserves were required to have an official government permit simply to leave the reserve. I learned that the massacre of buffalo was not just a ridiculous blood sport, but an organized effort to cause the extinction of native people.

I saw pictures of kids being transported in cattle trucks from their homes to residential schools. Houle described the rounding up of

native kids as “pick and go.”

One display case held three straps of different weights, all used to administer punishment by school officials. The least heavy was for children eight years and younger. The many reasons for such punishment included speaking their native language or talking to a sibling. In fact, our guide said, “If you spoke your language, you got a pin through your tongue.”

“They were taught not to love each other,” Houle said, which laid the foundation for very troubled lives.

A very telling display is found in the dining room exhibit, where the table for priests and nuns was laden with fish, meat, fruit and vegetables, while the children got oatmeal and, added Houle, “They had to eat it even if there were bugs in it.”

Perhaps the most shocking exhibit is a simple, empty baby’s crib. Houle explained this exhibit is in memory of babies born to young girls in the school, babies fathered by priests and teachers, babies who were then murdered to hide the evidence and whose bodies were incinerated.

What is truly amazing about the museum is, in spite of the horrors on display, there is an overriding invitation to find hope. But first, we need to learn, then to heal, only then to move forward. The exhibits include artworks that capture both suffering and joy.

We thought the best example of the need to know the past to move to a positive present was our guide herself.

“I was raised by a residential school survivor and I wondered why he didn’t say, ‘I love you,’ ” she said. “Now, I know why.”

“People need to know what happened. I’m going to continue to tell the story of those who never made it home alive.”

And while Houle said that part of the story is “how religion was forced on the children,” she also shared that she continues to be a practicing Christian – to me, an incredible, living example of forgiveness and faith.

Clearly, the Residential School Museum is not a destination you will visit if you’re looking for entertainment, but this is a place that will change your life more than a thousand visits to Canada’s Wonderland. And, as a guy who has discovered how one’s personal, childhood history impacts the rest of your life, I could not recommend it more highly.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

Farah Houle, our guide at the National Indigenous Residential School Museum of Canada.



The empty baby crib is in memory of all the babies born – and disposed of – in Canadian residential schools.



The sculpture “Healing Shoes” by Genevieve Lavasseur features ceramic shoes made from mud from four residential school sites in Manitoba. There are 152 shoes – one for every year from the signing of the first treaty to the year the artist created the work, intended “to honour lives lost and lived” at the institutions.



An exhibit depicting the stark conditions faced by the children forced to live in residential schools.

Stone Pillar Farm Stand a family affair

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

Just east of Tavistock, along Line 29, is the Stone Pillar Farm Stand, a small roadside stop run by the Lapointe family.

What began with Mackenzie Lapointe selling farm-fresh eggs has grown into a

true family affair. Her husband, Travis, and their three young boys have all found their own ways to contribute.

Today, the stand offers more than just eggs. Campfire wood is neatly bagged and ready to go thanks to the boys' help. Jameson, the eldest, has even launched a

small venture of his own, selling kindling he proudly splits himself. His younger brothers, Brooks and Theo, pitch in by gathering and washing pumpkins planted earlier in the spring by mom and dad.

During the growing season, Mackenzie Lapointe adds her creative touch with

fresh-cut flower bouquets and sunflowers.

Anyone driving along Line 29 should keep an eye out for the Stone Pillar Farm Stand, just before the Perth-Oxford Line. It's more than a roadside stop, it's a simple yet heartwarming example of what can grow when a family works together.



(MACKENZIE LAPOINTE PHOTOS)

Jameson, seven, pets Tucker while Brooks, fur, and Theo, two, hold ornamental pumpkins.



The Lapointe boys show off their pumpkin harvest.



Brooks and Theo wash pumpkins while their dog, Scout, supervises.

Glenholme Jerseys shine at Ancaster championship show

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Jersey Championship Show in Ancaster brought out some of the best Jersey herds in southwestern Ontario last week — especially from the Tavistock area.

Glenholme Jerseys returned home with a haul of red rosettes and banners, including grand champion, best udder of show and first-prize breeders herd.

The Ruta and Mellow families, who have been showing quality Jerseys for more than a century, continue to impress with

the calibre of their herd. The family moved their operation from the Bolton area to a farm near Punkeydoodles Corners a few years ago, where the counties of Oxford, Perth and Waterloo meet.

Bob Mellow, who recently turned 90, expressed gratitude that his son Bruce, daughter Carol and grandson Curtis are carrying on the tradition of showing Jerseys. Glenholme has also exhibited its cattle at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair for decades and hopes to return this year, further putting the Tavistock area on the map for excellence in Jerseys.



The grand, reserve and honourable-mention champions at the recent Ancaster championship show. The grand champion, far right, was Glenholme Gunman Alexa TW. Reserve went to Bridon Farms of Paris with Bridon Air Angela, while Willow Creek Jerseys of Hagersville took honourable mention with Willow Creek BB Tess.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Three homebred Jersey cows made up the winning breeders herd for Glenholme Jerseys near Tavistock. Grandfather Bob Mellow is at the far right, behind his daughter, Carol Ruta.



Junior champions included, from right, Golden CC Deandra for Golden Jerseys of Mildmay with first 4-H for Kyla Lewis; reserve for Bridon ACC Sliver of Paris; and honourable mention for Paullor Premier Sweetness, for Paul and Lorraine Franken near Clinton.

Toy tractor treasures amaze NEAT Club members

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Members of the North Easthope Antique Tractor (NEAT) Club enjoyed a special invitation following their weekly breakfast at Schmidtsville Restaurant in Wellesley.

Two local residents, neighbours Calvin Schmidt and Delmer Jantzi, opened their homes to showcase their massive toy tractor collections. Club members were left in awe at the thousands of miniature tractors, combines and pieces of farm equipment displayed neatly on shelves in both men's basements.

Schmidt, who also collects full-sized Allis Chalmers tractors, proudly displayed hundreds of toy Allis Chalmers models along with other makes. Jantzi's collection included rare toy combines and early farm machinery replicas, many of which visitors had never seen before.

In addition, Jantzi displayed some of the earliest washing machines, including hand-cranked, wooden-tub models with ringer rollers. Visitors agreed wash day in decades past must have been far more work compared to today's automated machines.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Members of the North Easthope Antique Tractor (NEAT) Club pause in the basement of Calvin and Darlene Schmidt's Wellesley home to admire his vast toy tractor collection. From left are Norman Roes, Murray McGonigle, John Schyff, Calvin Schmidt, Gerald Zehr, Ralph Swartzentruber, Ralph Cressman, Gid Jantzi and Ken Erb.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Breslau Train Show

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Manufacturers; vendors; four free hobby seminars; operating layouts; LEGO train display. Food service. Ample free parking. Cash only Admission: Children under 12 Free, General - \$6.00, NMRA members - \$4.00.
Breslau Community Centre,
100 Andover Drive, Breslau

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Wilmot Council meeting

7-11 p.m.
Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road West Baden

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Wellesley Council meeting

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

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting

9 a.m.
Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4

Tree planting Nithview Floodplain, New Hamburg

9 a.m. - 12 noon
Be part of a major ecological restoration project in the floodplain & hillside. Details/registration <https://letstreewilmot.ca/events>
Parking: 30 Neville St., NH

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5

Tavistock Fall Gun Show

8 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Admission: \$5 (children 5 and under free). The kitchen will be open with food, coffee, etc
Tavistock District Memorial Hall
3 Adam St., Tavistock

MONDAY, OCTOBER 6

Garden Wilmot's Garden Talk

7 p.m.
Creating Fall Decor with Martina Reckl. Free.
Wilmot Rec Complex, Room A
1291 Nafziger Rd., Baden

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Perth East council meeting

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

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7 CON'T

Ostomy Support Group Meeting

7:00 p.m.
Speaker - Lisa Harper from the United Way. 211 and how it assists us day-to-day. Social time and snacks. Everyone welcome. (519)273-4327
93 Morgan St., Stratford

STAMP CLUB

Oxford Philatelic Society

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2-4pm) and 4th Tuesday (7-9pm)
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Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com
Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>
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Wednesday Night Euchre at the New

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Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
65 Boulee St., New Hamburg

FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES

Tavistock Seniors Activities

Pickleball Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon, 12-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052
Cards Monday, Wednesday afternoon 1-4, euchre, crib (bring board), etc. Just drop in to play, good to bring someone. Contact: Bob Routly 519-301-2118
Shuffleboard @ arena, Wednesday 12:30-4 and Thursday 10-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052.
VON Smart Seniors Exercise, Tuesday and Thursday morning 9 - 10; Village Manor 10:25 - 11:25. Contact: 519-539-1231 x 6285
Tavistock Memorial Hall
1 Adam St. Tavistock ON

The
Wilmot-Tavistock
Gazette

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

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW:

- The Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:
 - Coming Events Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst
 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
 - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - \$35 + hst

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

Weekly Quiz Answers

1. Beijing
2. Arrested Development
3. Sundial
4. A fruit
5. Enamel
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9. Utah
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