

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

Serving New Hamburg, Tavistock, Baden, Wellesley, New Dundee, St. Agatha, Shakespeare, Petersburg, Hickson, Punkeydoodle's Corner and area

Miracles happen in our community, because of you

 **Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre**
Your Community Support Hub

175 Waterloo St., New Hamburg • (519) 662-2731 • wilmotwellesleyrc.ca

SINCE 1895

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025

FREE



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Santa, warm and cheerful, closed out the Shakespeare Men's Club parade on Saturday, December 13 atop the final float. He joked his reindeer were "putting on more miles than ever this year." Full story and more photos on page 8.

2026 Oxford County budget passes with more than 5% tax hike

Heated debate and recorded votes highlighted last week's meeting

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Oxford County council approved the 2026 business plan and budget last week, passing a total budget of \$406.1 million

which includes a \$278.2 million operating budget and \$127.9 million in capital projects.

The amount of money collected through taxation will be \$96.7 million,

resulting in a \$77 increase or 5.3 per-cent for residents in the townships, including East Zorra-Tavistock. Homeowners in Woodstock will see a 5.2 per-cent increase or \$69. The dollar figures are based

Continued on page 2

A sit-down with the mayor of Wilmot Township

Salonen reflects on the year that was and what's come

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

"2025 has been a year."

That was the response from Mayor Natasha Salonen when asked about the highs and lows of the past year as head of council.

"I am very excited about the momentum we are leaving 2025 with. We now have our new CAO that council unanimously voted in. We have Jeff Wilmer with us for the upcoming budget in early 2026. Working with KPMG, working with our staff, getting that ship course-correcting; some of the things we found throughout the year have been positive."

Salonen used her Strong Mayor Powers to hire the consulting group to come up with the township's draft budget due in large part to a staff shortage in the finance department after several years of turnover.

Wilmot recently received a report from StrategyCorp, one of Canada's top government affairs, communications and management consulting advisory firm. It provides services like government relations, strategic communications and management consulting.

The report found there were gaps in institutional knowledge, data availability and poor staff morale. Council was also told the township's most recent financial information return (FIR) submission, a mandatory annual report municipalities must submit to the Ministry of

Continued on page 3

Merry Christmas

Wishing you a joyful holiday season filled with warmth, happiness and cherished moments with loved ones. May the coming year bring you peace, prosperity and plenty of reasons to smile!



**SOUTH
EASTHOPE**
MUTUAL INSURANCE

FARM • HOME • AUTO • BUSINESS

1-800-263-9987

www.southeasthope.com

Oxford County approves \$406M 2026 budget with 5.3% tax hike

Continued from page 1

on an average assessment of \$281,377.

The document was approved after a marathon meeting that saw seven councillors put forward 23 motions. Some were to add money to the budget but most were to take money out, mainly in the area of new full-time equivalents (FTEs) staff positions being created at the county level. Each motion was decided by a recorded vote.

Several of the motions resulted in some heated debate including one put forward by Ingersoll Mayor Brian Petrie to hire a full-time grant coordinator position with a budget hit of just over \$100,000 for nine months of 2026.

"I think it will be positive and a great resource to help not only our advocacy work that has already brought in more money ... but also to help our area municipalities to notify them of grants that are available," said Petrie.

Coun. Deb Gilvesy, also Tillsonburg mayor, said she isn't confident there will be enough work for a full-time role.

"When you are writing grants, you are still going to have to get your departments involved. If it's a grant for housing, we would have to get the director's team involved to provide information. Finance is

going to have their hands on every single grant. I have faith in the current staff to know how to fill out grant applications."

Woodstock Mayor and Coun. Jerry Acchione said the position falls in the nice-to-have category but isn't needed given today's affordability crisis.

"This is a hope and a prayer. We hope this person is going to bring in enough money. That is the definition of a nice to have. We have been tasked to tighten our belts. I don't understand what we're doing here all the time looking at these positions and hoping."

Petrie said he was a little shocked at the "Republican statements" from those opposed to his motion and added other municipalities are benefitting from hiring a similar role.

"There are many grants I know staff have to write and having to do that without a coordinated activity makes it more difficult to be able to put those in and make sure we are successful. ... The success rate is way higher and you have the ability to bring in way more money to the municipality so we don't have to tax residents."

The motion was ultimately passed by a vote of six to four.

The total FTE increase for 2026 is 19.7. Of that, 17.1 will be funded through the library levy, general levy, user fees and recoveries, and a 50/50 cost-shared provincial grant supporting paramedic services. The remaining 2.6 FTEs are funded through other grants.

The Gazette reached out to EZT Mayor and county Coun. Phil Schaefer once the budget was passed. He explained Oxford County provides many critical services like paramedics, housing, water and wastewater, just to name a few.

"All these critical services are experiencing increases in demand and consequently increases in funding requirements. Council provided a responsible budget to address these increased needs, and many needs from other departments, with a modest tax increase."

He added 23 amendments to budget were tabled by members of council, and council robustly debated them to produce the approved budget.

"One of the things this budget provided was a plan to improve the ambulance-response times in the northern part of the county, with funding for an additional ambulance and paramedics. The increased demand for all our services is occurring at a time of many challenges in our local economy, and that fact was not lost on council."

Schaefer, who did not put forward any amendments of his own, said there were many differences of opinion expressed during the budget debate, but each member

demonstrated their desire to act in the best interests of all Oxford County residents.

Coun. Deb Tait, who holds the elected role of Woodstock city/county councillor, put forward 11 of the 23 motions, all but one of which was to remove new hires from the budget. Two of her motions passed.

Tait, along with Acchione and Gilvesy voted against the budget. Schaefer was one of seven members of council to vote in favour.

"I voted against the county budget as it is out of control," said Tait. "At the start of this term of council, there were 627 FTEs. Passing this last budget, county council has now added over 100 new positions just this term. The sunshine list for 2024 was \$22 million for the county."

She added the economy is in dire straits and the increases in taxes the past three years is not sustainable or responsible governance for those who put their trust in their elected officials.

"With these increases year after year, it's making life extremely difficult for the citizens of Oxford County," Tait said. "I question what is it we doing for the taxpayer with all these increases? Coun. Bernia Martin (also a Woodstock city/county councillor) mentioned a number of times during the meeting when adding more staff about life/work balance. That is a slap in the face for all those working in the private sector and not only do they have to work whatever hours is required,

Continued on page 3



Oak Grove Cheese
Factory Limited
Since 1879

Factory Fresh To Your Table

Over 20 cheese varieties available in our factory

Cheese Trays for Entertaining
Homemade Cheese Balls

Monday to Friday 9 am to 3 pm • Saturday 9 am to 1 pm
Closed Sundays

www.oakgrovecheese.ca | 29 Bleams Road West, New Hamburg | 519-662-1212

FULL MECHANICAL SERVICES & TIRES FOR ALL VEHICLES

ALIGNMENT

SUSPENSION

OIL CHANGES

BRAKES

LICENSED VEHICLE
INSPECTION STATION


PASSENGER & LIGHT TRUCK

FARM TIRES

HEAVY TRUCK

LAWN & GARDEN

CAMPERS, RV'S,
ATV'S & MORE




Service, Repair and Tires.

1413 Gingerich Road, Baden
519.662.4990 | oktire.com



*"Wishing you a
Joyous Christmas Season"*

From all of our families to yours we wish you a
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Stewart, Stacey, Warren & Bernice



BECHTHOLD
HOME IMPROVEMENTS

519-634-5852
www.bechtholdhome.com

Wilmot mayor sees momentum and course correction after turbulent 2025

Continued from page 1

Municipal Affairs and Housing, was last done in 2022.

"Those are all in and we are in compliance again and we are headed in a great direction with really good momentum out of 2025 to make 2026 a great year to continue building on the financial foundation we have been working hard to correct," she said.

Salonen said the goal is to put Wilmot in a much better financial position than she and the other rookie members of council found it three years ago by the end of their term next year. She added government works slowly, even when it's working well, and it takes time to make improvements.

"Like with most roles, there's a learning curve and we had an entirely new council walking into a lot of things we, nor the general public, really had any concept of. It has taken time to get things done and I am not about brining in change for the sake of change. I am about understanding what's going on and where things can be improved or corrected, then going in with a plan."

Salonen admitted there has been some bumps in the road for the township over the past three years but added it takes time to get the right staff in the right positions to make progress.

"I am confident we are there. Some of the new hires as well as internal promotions that have happened are positive and speak to all of us moving in the right direction for the organization to better serve the community and, to some extent, the level of expectation people have always had."

The mayor added it was a relief to conclude the Prime Ministers Path consultations and plan, though she isn't able to talk about any future moves by the advisory committee due to her mother's involvement. She said another win for the township is a website refresh she credited to staff.

"Our communications staff person, Brett O'Reilly, has been working on a complete website transformation which officially went live in September. We have had a lot of people pleased with how much easier it is to find things on our website and improving customer service for people using our online presence."

She added all council members wanted to improve communication with the public and the website has allowed the township



(PHOTO COURTESY OF WILMOT TOWNSHIP)

Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen speaks about the past year at council, highlighting progress made behind the scenes and priorities heading into 2026.

to take a big step in that direction. When asked what items weren't accomplished in 2025, Salonen said providing direct messaging to the public has been a bit of a challenge with council's support person on maternity leave.

"That has made resources for council a bit harder but that is something we want to continue to work on and improve. There are only so many hours in the day and these positions are not even part-time for councillors, they're really a small job in terms of compensation and general expectations, but the public and the community continue to have more needs."

Salonen expects the communications department to be fully staffed later in 2026 and added council has approved a few subdivisions leading to the hope for shovels in the ground to start responsible growth in the township.

"That would help with our tax base and some of the proposal have great options for different income levels to be able to attain home ownership in the community. Affordability is key in keeping our younger folks who want to stay and continue to be a part of the township. Allowing them to be able to enter the housing market is very important."

She added council is waiting on final design plans in the hope developments will progress next year.

facilities review, ambulance investment and paramedic staffing to maintain response times, and the launch of a traffic management and road safety service to respond to increasing community concerns about speeding and road safety were also in the budget.

As part of Oxford County's legislated requirement to provide annual funding to Southwestern Public Health, \$5 million coming from the tax levy represents an increase of 8.5 per cent over 2025.

Continued from page 2

but not all have a full pension or benefits on top of that."

In a press release, the county said the 2026 budget places strong emphasis on health care and housing. Key investments include \$400,000 for a homelessness support services fund and an increase of \$600,000 annually for needs across the housing continuum, from \$3 million to \$3.6 million.

Paramedic services deployment and

SOURCE FLOORING

UP TO 75% OFF

BOXING WEEK DEALS

RIGHT NOW!

99¢ /SF <small>STARTING FROM</small> LAMINATE 12MM CLICK	\$139 /SF <small>STARTING FROM</small> CLICK VINYL PAD ATTACHED
99¢ /SF <small>STARTING FROM</small> BACKSPLASH STONE & GLASS	\$159 /SF <small>STARTING FROM</small> 12" X 24" PORCELAIN TILE
\$299 /SF <small>STARTING FROM</small> HARDWOOD 3/4" THICK ENG.	\$49⁹⁹ EACH <small>STARTING FROM</small> VINYL STAIR TREADS & RISER
99¢ /LF <small>STARTING FROM</small> BASEBOARDS MANY STYLES	\$99 <small>STARTING FROM</small> 7x10 AREA RUGS PLUS NO TAX OVER 1000 IN STOCK!

BUY IT TODAY... TAKE IT TODAY!

SOURCE FLOORING

SHOP ONLINE 24/7
[SOURCEFLOORING.COM](https://sourceflooring.com)

1362 VICTORIA STREET NORTH KITCHENER
MONDAY-FRIDAY 8AM-8PM SATURDAY 9-6 SUNDAY 10-5

Grassroots group unhappy with 2026 Oxford budget

Stand4Oxford claims some council members are out of touch

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A community group representing county residents delegated to Oxford County council during last week's budget meeting, asking for a zero per-cent property tax hike.

Along with a presentation outlining the reasons why, Stand4Oxford presented council with a petition signed by 1,300 people.

"Our most recent campaign, Enough is Enough, began speaking with our friends and neighbours in all eight municipalities of Oxford about affordability and taxation," said spokesperson Marie Russell during her delegation to council. "What we've heard from people is they're overwhelmed, they're anxious and are expecting better from all levels of government."

Russell added affordability isn't just a political buzzword but also a Canadian crisis and added holding the line at a zero per-cent tax increase isn't unrealistic. She did not lay blame on county staff or elected officials for today's cost of living, but she did point a finger at the province for a lack of funding.

"It's important to acknowledge the difficult position municipalities have been placed in by the ongoing provincial downloading, and Oxford is no exception. Housing, long-term care, ambulance services and infrastructure demands continue to land at your feet with insufficient funds to address those needs."

Despite the group's support for incurring

additional expenses at the municipal level, Russell revealed three requests to council during the budget process.

"We are asking staff to categorize all budget lines as core, important or deferrable, and we ask that council communicate clearly to residents which projects are discretionary and which are essential so people can understand where their tax dollars are truly going."

Stand4Oxford also asked the county to develop and implement a standard practice where municipalities and residents receive clear breakdowns of cost drivers in a public, plain-language summary.

"Showing core versus non-core spending, year-over-year changes, mandated versus optional services and major cost drivers; this kind of public budget documentation is increasingly common across Ontario and it greatly improves public understanding," said Russell.

The group's third request concerns Oxford County's involvement in the Partners for Climate Protection (PCP) program, a Canadian climate-action initiative that supports local governments in planning and implementing measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and address climate change.

"We ask that staff produce a climate budget summary and that they publish a report linking PCP milestones and budget allocations."

East Zorra-Tavistock (Ezt) Mayor Phil Schaefer responded to the presentation and said achieving a zero goal on any deliverable isn't easy.

"The county has a zero-waste target, a zero-poverty target. I think we

maybe all acknowledge it will be difficult ever to get there, but we should always be going in that direction."

He added councillors put forward a combined 23 motions to decrease the tax hike.

"That tells me there is some engagement, there is some thought in not just taking numbers and saying, 'If that's what it's gotta be, then that's what it's gotta be.' Just a warning, though, it's not going to get to zero but I think we will head in a prudent direction."

Russell's presentation was made before council debated the budget and approved a five per-cent levy increase. Stand4Oxford released a statement following the meeting.

"Stand4Oxford is deeply disappointed by council's refusal once again to rein in spending and provide real relief to Oxford County taxpayers. While a few councillors – Mayor Acchione, Mayor Gilvesy and Coun. Tait – showed genuine appreciation for residents' concerns, the majority chose the same familiar path of higher costs, more consultants and little acknowledgement of the financial pressures facing families, seniors and local businesses."

The three above-mentioned councillors voted against the final budget document. The statement added residents came to council in good faith, offering constructive solutions and asking for responsible stewardship during a time when many are struggling.

"Council's decision signals a disconnect from the realities in our community, and people are noticing."

The group also made it quite clear 2026 is an election year at the municipal level and advocated for change.

"Oxford County deserves leaders who



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

Signs like this one can be seen across Oxford County as the group, Stand4Oxford, continues to lobby area municipalities for zero-tax-increase budgets.

listen, who lead with transparency and who put the public interest ahead of bureaucratic expansion. Stand4Oxford will continue to engage, inform and mobilize residents who expect better from their elected representatives. The message from the community is growing louder. We are paying attention," the statement added.

Stand4Oxford's vision statement said it "brings together engaged residents to support local governance that reflects the priorities, values and needs of our community. We encourage transparency, responsible budgeting and active participation in decisions that affect the future of Oxford County."

Russell concluded her presentation with a plea for members of council to take to heart.

"We are just coming today, with all due respect, asking you to do what we are doing in each and every one of our households. Thank you."

**GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA**
*Restoring small-town
journalism, one community
at a time!*

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

Publisher

 Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com
Editor

 Galen Simmons • galen@granthaven.com
EZT/Oxford Reporter

 Lee Griffi • leegriffi@rogers.com
Wilmot/Wellesley Reporter

 Amanda Modaragamage • amandajanevriter@gmail.com
Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries

 Erin Parsons • thewtgazette@gmail.com
Business Development

 Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com
Billing Administrator

 Cindy Boakes • boakescindy1576@gmail.com
Administrative Assistant

 Wendy Lamond • wendylamond74@gmail.com
Contributors

Gary West, Diane Danen, Mercedes Kay Gold, Julia Paul

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2

thewtgazette@gmail.com | 519.655.2341 | granthaven.com

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


CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR SAUERKRAUT SALES

TAVISTOCK MENS CLUB

 At Mens Club building (rear)
78 Woodstock St N, Tavistock, ON

**Wednesday, December 10th & 17th from 4-6 pm
and Saturday, Dec. 13th & 20th from 11-2 pm**

2 1/2 lb bag @ \$5.00 per bag

 Call (519) 655-3573 or email
info@tavistockmensclub.ca for further details
tavistockmensclub.ca

**Proudly serving
Wilmot township and
area for over 25 years**
**Call the Snow Pros
519-662-6198 treefellar@netflash.net**
**Now Accepting New Clients Call me for a quote
Residential / Commercial / Retail**

**MERRY
Christmas
FROM THE BICKLE FAMILY**

GIFT BASKETS AVAILABLE

**Varieties available: Russets, Empire,
Red Delicious, Honeycrisp, Gala, Spartan,
McIntosh, Mutsu, Ambrosia and Idareds**

 Wellesley Apple Cider, Fresh local produce,
Honey, Jams and Pickles

Kintore Coffee and Deep Purple Lavender

HOURS: Monday - Saturday - 9 am - 5 pm
**We will be closed from Dec 24th at 1:00 pm and
we will be reopening on Jan 2nd at 9:00 am.**
**Call 519-462-2259 or 519-462-2947
596633 County Rd 59, 3 miles south of Tavistock**
**READ YOUR LOCAL NEWS
ON OUR WEBSITE AT:
[GRANTHAVEN.COM/
WILMOT-TAVISTOCK-GAZETTE](http://GRANTHAVEN.COM/WILMOT-TAVISTOCK-GAZETTE)**

OPP officer tickets float driver after Tavistock Santa Claus parade

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The annual Tavistock Santa Claus Parade once again delighted families on Saturday, Nov. 29, but an incident following the event has left one participant with a sour aftertaste.

"We have participated in the Tavistock parade for over 30 years," said Scott Wagler, a New Hamburg resident and owner of Josslin Insurance, a chain with eight locations, including Tavistock, New Hamburg and Wellesley.

"Just like normal, we set up in the marshalling area (on Janelle Drive) and put our float together. We had participants from the office, their kids, and participated in the parade. We are a family business and we like our people to be involved."

Josslin has participated in hundreds of parades over the years, but what followed was out of the ordinary for Wagler – an OPP cruiser pulled him over while he was returning to the marshalling area.

"I'm turning, checking my mirror and

I see the OPP behind me with lights on. I pulled over on Jacob Street. The officer came up and asked why I didn't pull over for him."

Wagler said he pulled over immediately upon seeing the flashing lights and was informed by the officer that he was no longer part of the parade and was therefore required to follow the Highway Traffic Act. He was issued a ticket for having a passenger under the age of 16 without a seatbelt. At the time of the incident, four children were riding in the Ford F-150 truck bed with their mothers, and the parade was still in progress.

Along with the \$240 ticket, Wagler said the officer and his partner scolded him and others.

"I got accused of not caring about safety and about the kids that I had in the back of the truck. The mothers were also accused of not giving two hoots about the safety of the kids. The officer told me he was the only one who cared about their safety."

Wagler, an insurance broker, said the ticket will have an impact on his rates and

added he is still trying to figure out what the officer was trying to accomplish, and is puzzled as to why he was pulled over.

"He told them he wasn't going to tolerate this kind of stuff post-parade. I told him I wasn't doing anything that I wasn't doing five minutes ago. I'm driving 10 km/hr or less and I care about my people and I am always concerned about safety."

Ironically, as Wagler and his team were being ticketed, he said several other pickup trucks with people in the bed drove by.

"(The officer) said he only had time to deal with me. He also gave me what looked like a ticket, but it was actually a warning for not stopping for an emergency vehicle. It would have been a \$490 fine. To me, it's a scare tactic. I didn't take him on a police chase and I pulled over as soon as I saw him."

Wagler said he participated in Listowel's Christmas parade later in the day without any police involvement. He added he will likely fight the ticket in court.

"It's not wrong. What's on the ticket is true. I don't know if I will have any

success, but it's more of a principle thing, not about the money. It's more about what are we trying to do with small-town Ontario Santa Claus parades? Are we trying to promote them, hurt them?"

Wagler added that the officer tracked down members of the Tavistock Men's Club, the parade organizers, and told them it was their fault the ticket was issued.

Despite his frustration at what occurred following the parade, he said the police still have his full support for the difficult job they do.

"I am not trying to tarnish the OPP. There is a huge need for community policing, and I support the tough job the men and women on the force do. We all care about safety but I am trying to understand what the goal of the OPP was in this case and generally with small-town parades."

The Gazette reached out to Oxford OPP for comment. While OPP confirmed the ticket was issued, a spokesperson would not comment further.



(SCOTT WAGLER PHOTO)

The Josslin Insurance float Scott Wagler was driving was pulled over by a member of the Oxford OPP just after leaving the Nov. 29 parade route in Tavistock. Wagler was issued a \$240 ticket for having children under 16 in his pickup truck bed.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Participants in the Josslin float were photographed before heading out on the parade route.

RELIABLE FUEL & PROPANE DELIVERY 24/7

CORE FUELS LTD.
Red Cap
PROPANE LTD.



Quality products and great service at a fair price.

219 Lorne Ave. E.
Stratford, ON N5A 6S4
519-272-0090

6976 Wellington Rd 7
Alma, ON N0B1A0
519-513-4514

165 Avenue Rd
Cambridge, ON N1R 7Z1
519-622-3720

Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from our families to yours!



Kathryn Ritsma, Andrew Phillips, Matthew Orchard, Ryan Bagnell, Cate McCorquodale, James Burns, Michelle Jowett, Lovleen Khosa, Natalie Carr

**MONTEITH
RITSMA LAW OFFICES
PHILLIPS**

18 Hope Street East
(519) 655-2900
www.tavistocklawyers.com

Shakespeare rallies around Kuchma family after son's leukemia diagnosis

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The spirit of giving runs deep in the village of Shakespeare, and this Christmas season that generosity has been directed toward a family facing one of the hardest challenges of their lives.

In September, Tyler and Diane Kuchma learned their seven-year-old son, Carter, had been diagnosed with leukemia. The news spread quickly through the tightknit community, and friends, neighbours and local service clubs immediately stepped forward to help.

A diagnosis like this once carried far grimmer expectations, but years of research and treatment advances have dramatically improved outcomes for children. Still, the disruption to family life is enormous. Carter

requires ongoing chemotherapy treatments, and Tyler Kuchma is staying home with him until he is well enough to return to school. Diane Kuchma continues her work with a local school board, but the family faces frequent hospital trips and the many added expenses that come with them.

After the village's Santa Claus parade, Shakespeare Optimist Club treasurer Jeff Skubowius presented the Kuchma family with a cheque for \$4,400 – funds raised through the club and matched by local beef farmer Ed Jeffrey of nearby Harmony, who donated his winnings from a recent Optimist draw.

Support has poured in from across the community. The Shakespeare Men's Club contributed nearly \$7,000 from its October Halloween Dance

fundraiser. The Shakespeare Community Athletic Association has stepped up as well, along with members of Shakespeare Presbyterian Church.

The Kuchmas – including daughters Natalie, 13, and Hailey, nine – say they are overwhelmed by the kindness shown to them.

"There are not enough words to express how we feel," the family said. "We thank everyone for all the love and support that has been shown to us and to Carter. The generosity in our community will never be forgotten."

Carter, who misses his friends and classmates at Sprucedale Public School, remains in good spirits. With a bright smile, he says he hopes to be back at school soon, feeling strong and happy once again.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Diane Kuchma with daughters Natalie, 13, and Hailey, nine, along with Carter, seven, their friendly family dog, Cali, and Shakespeare Optimist Club treasurer Jeff Skubowius. The snowman behind them – built by Carter and his dad on a rare good-weather day – has been appropriately named Frosty, bringing some cheer during a difficult journey.

Jantzi Plumbing Inc.

May your light shine bright this Christmas season, as we reflect the message of Christmas.

From the Jantzi Plumbing Family to you, we extend our warmest thoughts and best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

1426 Hutchison Road Wellesley | 519-656-3030 jantziplumbing.ca

The best of wishes to you and yours for a wonderful holiday season.

Merry Christmas

Thank you for your continued patronage!

Roth

RENOVATION & REPAIR
SNOW REMOVAL

Paul Roth, Chris Roth
Our Families & Staff

merry Christmas
& HAPPY HOLIDAYS

FROM
Tavistock Family
Dentistry

WE ACCEPT THE CDCP
NOW AVAILABLE TO ALL CANADIANS

IN CLINIC
WHITENING ONLY \$299

CONTACT US TODAY

TAVISTOCK
FAMILY DENTISTRY

(519) 512-9961
55 Woodstock St. N. Tavistock, ON
info@tavistockfamilydentistry.ca

FLEXIBLE PAYMENT PLANS
DIRECT INSURANCE BILLING
EMERGENCY CARE
CARE FOR ALL AGES



O Holy Night

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from our Home to Yours!
Thank you for your patronage

HOLIDAY HOURS
 Wednesday December 24 – 7:00 – 12:00
 Thursday, December 25 to Saturday, December 27 – closed
 Wednesday December 31 – 7:00 – 12:00
 Thursday, January 1 – closed

Wellesley Home Centre



Home
 hardware
 building centre

Building Materials | Rentals | Flooring
 2196 Gerber Road, Box 10 Wellesley, ON | (519) 656-2010
www.homehardware.ca



WISHING YOU A

Merry Christmas

AND ALL THE BEST IN 2026!



**BOUCHER &
JONES
FUELS**



FROM OUR HOMES TO YOURS, Happy Holidays

THE GREATEST GIFT OF ALL IS TO SPEND
 CHRISTMAS WITH THE ONES YOU LOVE




**Tri-County
Mennonite Homes**

Shakespeare Men's Club parade brings winter cheer to the village

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Santa Claus had a busy week touring through local communities, and Shakespeare was no exception as residents gathered for the annual Men's Club Santa Claus Parade.

With snow on the ground and festive spirits high, crowds lined the side streets to welcome the jolly gift giver as his sleigh made its way through the village.

Many families travelled from outside the community to join children and grandchildren who call the area home, turning the parade into a joyful multigenerational celebration. Holiday music, colourful floats and plenty of familiar faces helped kick off the Christmas season in true small-town style.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Members of the Shakespeare Community Athletic Association (SCAA) filled their float with soccer balls, baseball gloves and bats, celebrating last summer's programs and building momentum for the year ahead. In the back row from left are Paul Bender (president), Amelia and Zach Hergott (helpers), Cathy Glaab and Terri Reis. In the front from left are Amy Taylor, Patty Fleming and Deb Bell.



The Grinch made an appearance atop Shawn Glaab's decorated snowplow.

To Our Community.....

We Wish You a Wonderful Christmas Season
& Blessings in the New Year To Come.

*Our Hope is for each and everyone of you much Love & Peace in 2026.
Feel free to reach out for support. We care for you.*

COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS

of Woolwich, Wellesley and Wilmot

1-855-664-1900

**23 Church Street
New Hamburg
519-662-9526**

**929 Arthur Street South
Elmira
519-664-1900**

Helping seniors and adults with unique needs to live independently in the community



Perth-Wellington MP John Nater and MPP Matthew Rae were pleased to take part and connect with residents during the parade.



The Shakespeare Opt-Mrs floated through with a festive display of wrapped gifts under the tree, continuing their long-standing tradition of community involvement.



Linton Window and Door staff walked the route dressed as – what else – a window and a door, joking that they were keeping warm with all the energy from the crowd. They planned to head straight to Innerkip for the evening parade.




Reis Construction rolled through with a handcrafted model home built onto a golf cart, carrying important family members along for the ride.




The Shakespeare Optimist Club featured a moving St. Nick and snowman on their float. Longtime member and past president Murray McTavish once again helped lead the creative design.

IN THIS HOLY SEASON



May the light of His love shine down upon you and your family during this season of enlightenment and may the true meaning of the yuletide reside with you at Christmas.



Bob, Sherri and Lacey



by PeterS 2025

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

ANSWERS FOUND ON THE CLASSIFIED PAGE

CHRISTMAS QUIZ

1. Where does Santa live?
2. How many reindeer does Santa have?
3. In the classic song, “Frosty the Snowman,” what made Frosty come to life?
4. Which fairy tale were the first gingerbread houses inspired by?
5. Which popular phrase was made popular by Ebenezer Scrooge in “A Christmas Carol”?
6. Who catches the Grinch stealing?
7. Buddy the Elf sticks to the four main food groups, what are they?
8. What is the color of the berries on mistletoe?
9. Where was Jesus laid after he was born?
10. What is the day after Christmas called?

Answers found on classified page

More bad news following Oxford County cyber attack

Personal and private information compromised for users of some services

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Oxford County is advising the public that personal and private information collected by some programs and services was compromised as part of the county's cyber incident discovered in September 2025.

In a press release, the county said it has been conducting a comprehensive review of current and archived files and records to determine who was impacted and what types of personal information were accessed. While this work continues, the county is advising the public that personal information was accessed or acquired from some programs and services:

- Social housing and social assistance programs between 2020 and 2025, including Ontario Works, licensed child-care service providers and child-care fee subsidy applications.
- Housing funding programs between 2022 and 2025, such as the Home Ownership Program, My Second Unit, or the Residential Repair Program.
- Job applicants who were selected for an interview at Oxford County.

Tech expert Carmi Levy said it's no surprise the county is dealing with this latest development.

"This particular event in Oxford County follows a

well-worn trajectory we have seen in other municipalities. It often takes time for the victims to do a full forensic analysis to better understand whether data was compromised as part of the attack and, more importantly, what data was included."

Levy said there is now a better indication of what the impact was and the county has released a comprehensive list of the types of information, the dates, as well as the effected platforms and services.

"At the very least, those individuals whose data was included can begin taking appropriate cautions."

The county is providing complimentary credit monitoring services to eligible individuals whose personal information was accessed or acquired in the county's September 2025 cyber incident.

"If a resident believes they may have been impacted, based on the information outlined in the notice on our website, they should contact privacy@oxfordcounty.ca and provide their name (first and last) and the name of the program and/or service they applied for, to inquire about their eligibility," said county CAO Ben Addley.

Levy explained it can take days, weeks, or in this case, months, to fully understand the extent of the damage done and then to build an appropriate communication plan around it.

"There's no indication the perpetrators of this attack were providing any additional pressure on the county, but what is more likely the case is it took the county this long to figure out what happened and to figure out how to tell everyone what happened."

Levy said anyone affected by the newest release of data breach victims needs to take it very seriously and take the appropriate steps to protect themselves.

"It is a very dangerous assumption to assume this data is not highly personal and highly damaging in the wrong hands. They should be acting to reduce their risk going forward. You can not afford to not take this seriously."

He added information such as driver's license, health card, other government-issued identification and even information contained in a job application are highly

damaging in the hands of a criminal.

"When the data is out there, it isn't just being used by those who stole it, it is also being sold to other criminals who will use it in subsequent identity thefts and financial attacks. The risk is significant and can not be underestimated."

Anyone who's personal health-care information may have been accessed will receive direct notification from Oxford County by mail. The municipality has reported the latest incident to Ontario's Information and Privacy Commissioner as required by law and is fully cooperating with the office's investigation into it.

Oxford County Warden Marcus Ryan said it is not the update he had hoped to deliver to the community.

"We appreciate the trust and confidence our residents and partners place in us every day, and we are working to maintain that trust by responding to this incident as fully and in as forthcoming a way as we can."


He added through each step of the investigation, the county's focus has been on people.

"Getting information to our residents and employees as quickly as we can and supporting those affected as we learn more," he said.

As required by privacy legislation, a formal notice with full details about the kind of information accessed has been publicly posted to www.oxfordcounty.ca/notices and www.oxfordcounty.ca/it-incident-updates. Anyone who is part of these programs but does not have access to email can get a printed copy by calling 1-800-755-0394.

Oxford County announced a technical incident relating to its information system on Sept. 10. It was confirmed to be a cybersecurity incident on Sept. 22 through the course of the county's ongoing forensic investigation, which was undertaken with the support of third-party cybersecurity experts.

On Sept. 24, Oxford County informed the public it had reason to believe the personal information of current and former employees may have been compromised as a result of the cyber incident.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



This time of year reminds us of the things that truly matter—community connection, cherished family moments, and the simple joy of coming together. The greatest wealth lies in these experiences and the memories we create together.

May your holidays be restful and bright, and may the New Year bring renewed health and prosperity to all.

Andrew Raymer, BBA, CFP® CIM®
Senior Wealth Advisor

Ryan Husk, BBA, RIS
Senior Wealth Advisor

RAYMERFINANCIAL.COM

iA Private Wealth is a trademark and business name under which iA Private Wealth Inc. operates

Season's Greetings



As another year comes rushing in, we're grateful to be part of this fine community. Thank you to all of our friends and clients who make us feel so welcome here.
We wish you health, happiness, peace and prosperity!

Contact Colleen Zehr sczehr@execulink.com
519-640-9747

Colleen's T.L.C.

Services for Seniors by a Certified Personal Support Worker



Merry Christmas



BENDER CONTRACTING INC.

massel's marine

38 Milton Street New Hamburg
(519) 662-1650 (866) 627-7357
www.masselsmarine.com

Factory Trained Technicians ~ Accessories ~ Service to all Makes
Shrink Wrap & Winter Storage ~ In House Financing

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
GRANTHAVEN.COM/WILMOT-TAVISTOCK-GAZETTE

Santa and Mrs. Claus bring Christmas cheer to Hickson gathering

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Hickson's firefighters, township staff and local families bundled up against the cold last week to welcome Santa and Mrs. Claus for a festive evening beside the East Zorra-Tavistock (EZT) municipal building.

The event drew a large crowd from the village and surrounding farm community, all eager to celebrate the season together.

Flashing lights from fire trucks and police vehicles lit up the parking lot, joined by a brightly decorated John Deere sprayer and a festively trimmed road grader. Despite the chilly weather, a steady stream of children lined up to sit on Santa's knee, share their Christmas wishes and receive a treat from Mrs. Claus.

Neighbouring families chatted over free hot dogs and hot chocolate, served up as part of EZT's 50th anniversary celebrations. Mayor Phil Schaefer and a team of helpers once again took charge of the grill, handing out all-beef hot dogs to anyone who stopped by to warm up and say hello.

The gathering offered a cheerful kickoff to the Christmas season in Hickson, with firefighters, township staff and residents all contributing to the festive spirit.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Santa and Mrs. Claus were joined by "Peanut," a four-year-old Dalmatian fire dog, as children gathered to share their Christmas wishes during Hickson's holiday celebration.



East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor Phil Schaefer tended the barbecue, serving hot dogs alongside Santa and Mrs. Claus in the municipal parking lot.



"Sparky" (Mac Alexander), the fire safety mascot, chats with Hickson firefighters Chris Ward and Nathan Brenneman during the meet-and-greet.



The Val and Brad Smith (deputy mayor) family is joined by Santa and Mrs. Claus as grandchildren Preslee and Kinslee Richardson enjoy the evening's festivities.



With you in mind at Christmastime!

As we join you and your family in celebrating the birth of our Saviour, we recall the many generous folks we've had the privilege to serve this year, and know that we are truly blessed.

Wishing you glad tidings and a holiday that is as special as you are.

Thank you for your patronage. We look forward to helping you with your projects in the coming year!

Merry Christmas!

~ Randy, Alea, Jelene and Joellah



MERRY
Christmas
& HAPPY NEW YEAR



SIDER
PLUMBING & MECHANICAL INC.

**LOCAL FAMILY OWNED BUSINESS
RESIDENTIAL & COMMERCIAL**

**24/7 Service Plumbing
and water conditioning**

519-748-1694

Serving Waterloo Region since 1983

Enbridge providing Wilmot Fire Department with training support

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Enbridge Gas Ontario is helping the Wilmot Fire Department purchase fire-fighting training materials through Safe Community Project Assist.

The program, with the Fire Marshal's Public Fire Safety Council (FMPFSC), supplements existing training for Ontario volunteer and composite fire departments.

"Safety is at the heart of everything we do at Enbridge Gas – it's one of our core values we live by," said Enbridge advisor of municipal stakeholder and engagement Desirée Swance in a press release. "We're proud to support Ontario firefighters with emergency response training that helps them strengthen their skills, stay prepared and continue protecting the vibrant communities they serve."

This year's \$125,000 investment from Enbridge Gas will be shared by 25 Ontario fire departments, including the Wilmot Fire Department. Funds are used to purchase educational materials to assist in training firefighters in life-saving techniques.

Wilmot Fire Chief Rod Leeson said the \$5,000 gift will be used to purchase training manuals.

"For example, one of the manuals cost \$120 each. We need to replace 10 of one

Continued on page 13



(PHOTO COURTESY OF WILMOT TOWNSHIP)

Wilmot Township Mayor Natasha Salonen joined Desirée Swance, advisor of municipal and stakeholder affairs with Enbridge Gas, Wilmot Fire Chief Rod Leeson and Wilmot Fire Department chief training officer Justin Zielman to celebrate a donation from Enbridge Gas Ontario. The funds will be used to purchase firefighting training materials through Safe Community Project Assist.



2026 NISSAN ROGUE S

Lease from **0.9%** For 36 months O.A.C.





LIMITED TIME OFFER

FREE DASHCAM WITH EVERY NEW VEHICLE PURCHASE



Stratford NISSAN

2001 Ontario Street, Stratford ON

519.273.3119

www.stratfordnissan.com

STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thurs. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00

PARTS AND SERVICE: Mon.-Sat. 8:00-5:00. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE, OUR SERVICE DEPT IS NOW OPEN ON SATURDAYS

STRATFORD NISSAN



Continued from page 12

manual which is used to train our recruit firefighters to achieve mandatory provincial certification. On top of that, we require updated training materials for company officers, technical rescue and various other topics.”

He explained training is crucial to a fire department, ensuring firefighters have the skills, confidence and safety knowledge to respond effectively and protect lives and property. It also allows the department to spend money elsewhere.

“The donation diverts valuable tax dollars to other areas of the fire department budget making it much easier to purchase these valuable resources and maintain an appropriate budget to fund fire department operations.

Leeson said training in the fire service is continually evolving with new science, new techniques, new standards and new equipment.

“All of which continue to challenge our training program and firefighters to maintain and keep up to date,” he said.

Since the launch of Safe Community Project Assist in 2012, 394 grants have been provided to Ontario fire departments for additional firefighter training.

“Fire departments across Ontario train

every single day and that is why it is important for them to have access to the right materials to keep their members and the public safe. Safe Community Project Assist helps departments afford these essential training tools and supports the ongoing learning that keeps the fire service safe,” said Ontario Fire Marshal and chair of the FMPFSC Jon Pegg in the press release.

Leeson also wants to make sure the public is aware of a new and important change to the Ontario Fire Code on Jan. 1, 2026.

“Carbon monoxide (CO) alarms will be mandatory on every level of a home and near all sleeping areas in residences with fuel-burning appliances, fireplaces, or attached garages, extending protection to homes with outdoor furnaces and adding requirements for multi-unit buildings, with homeowners and landlords responsible for compliance before the deadline to prevent CO poisoning.”

The Wilmot Fire Department has three fire stations with 80 volunteer firefighters serving a population of approximately 22,000 residents.

The FMPFSC was established in 1993 with a mission to help create a world where no one is hurt by fire.



As others close their doors, we're opening more to welcome you in.

Raymond James Ltd. is Canada's largest independent wealth management firm with 170 branches across Canada and growing.

We help with investments, wealth planning, insurance and trust services.

Locally represented by:

Jack Tchabushnig
Associate Financial Advisor,
Associate Investment Advisor

Tchabushnig Wealth Group

RAYMOND JAMES®

519.883.6066 • twealthgroup.ca

© 2025 Raymond James Ltd.

All rights reserved. Raymond James Ltd. is an indirect wholly-owned subsidiary of Raymond James Financial, Inc., regulated by the Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization (CIRO) and is a member of the Canadian Investor Protection Fund.



Merry Christmas
&
Happy Holidays



Wilmot Township Council and staff wish you a wonderful holiday season!

Township facilities will be closed for Christmas and New Years as noted below.

Administration Complex

December 24 | Closed at 12 noon

December 25 & 26 | Closed

December 31 | Closed at 12 noon

January 1 | Closed

Castle Kilbride

December 24, 25 & 26 | Closed

December 31 & January 1 | Closed

Wilmot Recreation Complex

December 24 | Closed at 3:30 pm

December 25 & 26 | Closed

December 31 | Closed at 3:30 pm

January 1 | Closed



519-634-8444 | wilmot.ca |

Four injured following horse-and-buggy collision in Perth East, near Wellesley



(PHOTO COURTESY OF PERTH COUNTY OPP)

Perth County OPP and other area emergency services responded to a collision between a horse and buggy and motor vehicle that sent all four occupants of the buggy to hospital with serious injuries.

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

thewtgazette@gmail.com

Four people are injured following a collision involving a motor vehicle and horse and buggy in the Township of Perth East, Perth County OPP said in a press release.

On Dec. 15, the Perth County OPP along with Perth County Paramedic Services, the Perth East Fire Department and Waterloo Regional Police Service responded to a motor-vehicle collision on Perth Road 116 near Perth Line 72, a short distance from Wellesley.

Just before 4:30 p.m., police say a vehicle struck a horse and buggy carrying four passengers. All passengers of the buggy sustained serious injuries and were transported to a local trauma centre. One

of the passengers was later transported by Ornge Air Ambulance to another trauma centre for life-threatening injuries. The driver of the motor vehicle was uninjured.

Perth Road 116 was temporarily closed as the OPP traffic incident management enforcement (TIME) team assisted with the investigation. Police have cleared the area and the road has since been reopened.

This investigation remains ongoing. The Perth County OPP is requesting anyone who may have witnessed this collision or has dashcam footage to call 1-888-310-1122. Should anyone wish to remain anonymous, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or ontariocrimestoppers.ca where they may be eligible to receive a cash reward of up to \$2,000.

ACTION HEALTHCARE
SALES • SERVICE • RENTALS

Keeping You Independent
MERRY
Christmas
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

<p>ST MARYS 566 Queen St. E. St Marys, ON N4X 1A4 Phone: 519-284-4348 Toll Free: 1-833-645-5287</p>	<p>STRATFORD 305 Romeo St. S. Stratford, ON N5A 4T8 Phone: 519-271-6700 www.actionhealthcare.ca</p>
---	--

**FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES IN
The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette
CONTACT HEATHER DUNBAR
226.261.1837 OR HEATHER@GRANTHAVEN.COM**

Fort Erie man charged with impaired driving after vehicle driven into EZT ditch

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF
thetwtgazette@gmail.com

A Fort Erie man is facing an impaired-driving charge after a vehicle was driven into a ditch in East Zorra-Tavistock (EZT) earlier this month.

On Dec. 9 at approximately 5:30 p.m., the Oxford OPP responded to a report of a possible impaired driver on 16th Line in EZT. It was reported that a vehicle was in the ditch and was being attended to by a tow-truck operator. Officers attended and subsequently located the vehicle.

As a result, Denis Postol, 36, of Fort Erie has been charged with operation while impaired. Police

issued a 90-day administrative driver's license suspension and a seven-day vehicle impoundment.

The accused was released from custody and is scheduled to appear before the Ontario Court of Justice in Woodstock on Jan. 20, 2026.

The OPP is committed to safety for all who utilize Ontario's roadways. Members of the public are urged to report impaired driving by calling 911 in emergency situations. Complaints of impaired, aggressive, or careless driving can also be made by calling 1-888-310-1122.

For more information on the consequences of drinking and driving, visit www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/safety/impaired-driving.shtml.

Santa brings big smiles during neighbourhood visits in Shakespeare

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Santa made a special tour through Shakespeare on Saturday, stopping at homes throughout the village and delighting young families with an early taste of Christmas magic.

With Lennie behind the beard and the sleigh parked nearby, the jolly old elf posed for countless photos and listened carefully as local children shared their Christmas wishes.

Most kids had their lists ready, along with the age-old question from Santa: "Have you been naughty or nice?"

These three brothers assured him they've been very good – always trying to do what mom and dad ask – though they admitted their grandparents spoil them just a little.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Rys, Oscar and Colten Burgers, who live near Amulree, were surprised – and thrilled – to discover they could all fit on Santa's big knees and even bigger belly. The boys are part of Jenna and Terry Burgers' broiler-breeder chicken farm. Santa joked that if the Burger family grows any more, he may need to "work on having a bigger lap."

Early Christmas Deals are on now @ Stratford Nissan

2018 Ford Edge TITANIUM



IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$20,999 OR **\$236 B/W**
MILEAGE - 72,110 KM *HST & lic

2023 Hyundai Elantra SEL



IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$20,999 OR **\$151 B/W**
LOW KMS - 83,176 KM *HST & lic

2024 Nissan Sentra SV



PRICE DROP
IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$22,495 OR **\$162 B/W**
LOW KMS - 24,730 KM *HST & lic

2021 Nissan Rogue SV



IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$22,495 OR **\$182 B/W**
LOW KMS - 93,245 KM *HST & lic

2023 Hyundai Elantra SEL



PRICE DROP
IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$22,999 OR **\$165 B/W**
LOW KMS - 18,469 KM *HST & lic

2025 Nissan Sentra S PLUS



IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$23,495 OR **\$169 B/W**
MILEAGE - 15,651 KM

2024 Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross ES



PRICE DROP
IQ GREAT PRICE AWD

\$24,999 OR **\$180 B/W**
LOW KMS - 31,946 KM *HST & lic

2025 Nissan Sentra SV MOONROOF



IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$25,495 OR **\$183 B/W**
LOW KMS - 17,893 KM *HST & lic

2023 Honda Civic EX



PRICE DROP
FWD

\$27,999 OR **\$201 B/W**
LOW KMS - 56,295 KM *HST & lic

2023 Toyota Corolla Cross LE



IQ GREAT PRICE AWD

\$28,495 OR **\$205 B/W**
LOW KMS - 82,646 KM *HST & lic

2021 Honda CR-V EX-L



PRICE DROP
AWD

\$32,495 OR **\$263 B/W**
LOW KMS - 44,497 KM *HST & lic

2025 Chrysler Grand Caravan SXT



PRICE DROP
IQ GREAT PRICE FWD

\$43,999 OR **\$316 B/W**
LOW KMS - 11,115 KM *HST & lic

2024 Jeep Wrangler Sahara



PRICE DROP
IQ GREAT PRICE 4WD

\$46,495 OR **\$334 B/W**
LOW KMS - 46,603 KM *HST & lic

*While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, we are not responsible for any errors and omissions. Please see your dealer for current pricing. Plus tax and licensing. Bi-weekly payments are based on an interest rate of 7.99% O.A.C. Some terms and conditions may apply.

Find Your Perfect Match: Pre-Owned Cars for Every Taste and Budget!

BAD CREDIT... NO PROBLEM! All Credit Approved with \$0 Down.

T&C APPLY, O.A.C.



Stratford NISSAN

STORE HOURS SALES: Mon.-Thu. 9:00-8:00; Fri.-Sat. 9:00-6:00 PARTS & SERVICE: Mon.-Sat. 8:00-5:00

Our Service Department is Now Open on Saturdays

2001 Ontario Street, Stratford ON

519.273.3119

www.stratfordnissan.com

STRATFORD NISSAN



OBITUARY

KRANTZ: Larry Carl Edward



It is with deep sorrow and much love that the family and friends of Larry Carl Edward Krantz mourn his passing on December 5, 2025 in Stratford, Ontario at the age of 68 years. He was born March 31, 1957 in Stratford, Ontario to Carl and Dorothy (Otto) Krantz.

Larry leaves behind his three sisters: Joan Krantz, Sharon Binkle and Mary Ann Krantz as well as his nieces and nephews. He will also be deeply missed by a vast group of friends in the dairy business, as well as his loyal companion Taffy, his Border Collie.

He was predeceased by his parents, Carl and Dorothy.

Larry farmed under the Carldot prefix on Perth Line 33 in South Easthope Township. His love and dedication to his dairy herd showed in the winning of his 3rd Master Breeder Shield. His cows not only did well in the barn, they shone in the show ring too. Each year, he generously offered calves from his herd to 4-H members to train for their projects. His office in the dairy barn was a central location for social hour with anyone that stopped by. He was always up for a chat whether it

be teaching a 4-H member a thing or two about the ring or reminiscing of days gone by with visitors. There was never a dull moment at Carldot. He enjoyed following the Tavistock Braves hockey team and watching the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Relatives and friends will be received in the Francis Chapel of the Glendinning Funeral Home, 77 Woodstock St. N., Tavistock on Monday, December 22, 2025 from 7 - 9pm. There will also be a short visitation prior to a private funeral service on Tuesday, December 23, 2025. After the service, a Celebration of Life will be held at Tavistock Memorial Hall from 1-5 pm for anyone wishing to share stories, a laugh or just a drink to toast the life well lived of a man known and respected by so many. A private family burial will take place at a later date.

In lieu of flowers Memorial Donations may be made in Larry's name to Ronald McDonald House or Stratford General Hospital through the funeral home. Personal condolences can be posted at www.francisfh.ca

Larry's loved ones would like to send a special thank you to the staff at Pro Resp, nurse Allie from Bayshore Home Health and the ER and Critical Care doctors and nurses at Stratford General Hospital for their wonderful care of Larry these past few months.

Until we meet again. Thank you for the memories.

OBITUARY

LICHTI: Mildred Ferne (nee Gerber) "Millie"



Passed away suddenly at her home, the Maples Home for Seniors on Wednesday, December 10, 2025 in her 92nd year.

Beloved wife of the late Ken Lichti who predeceased her November 25, 2016.

Loving mother of Bradley & wife Christine of Newry, Brian of Stratford, Connie & husband George Werner of New Hamburg, Randall & wife Sherri of Tavistock, the late Philip (August 2018) and Stephen of Russeldale. Sadly missed by her 11 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren.

Predeceased by her grandson Jay Randall Lichti, parents John & Elizabeth (Bast) Gerber, brother Harold & Anna Gerber, sister Elsie & Harold Lichti, brothers and sisters-in-law Leona & Mervin Bender, Elmon & Emmalien Lichti, Elroy & Loretta Lichti, Lincoln & Mary Ann Lichti, Stanley & Irma Lichti and Mervin & Geneva Lichti.

Relatives and friends will be received in the Francis Chapel of the Glendinning Funeral Home, 77 Woodstock St. N. Tavistock on Monday from 4-7pm. Funeral service will be conducted at the Tavistock Mennonite Church on Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 11:00am. Reception to follow. Interment to follow in East Zorra Mennonite Church Cemetery, 16th line.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Tavistock Mennonite Church would be appreciated by the family. Personal condolences can be shared at www.francisfh.ca

OBITUARY

Bruce Wayne Hertel Born April 23rd, 1941



Peacefully, at his home in New Hamburg, on Thursday December 11th 2025, just as he wanted it to be.

Cherished, devoted and father figure and uncle to Christine (Baan) Snider and her husband Richard, and Jeremy Baan. Forever cherished by his 3 great nephews and niece, Matthew Snider (Sarah), Kirstie Baltus

(Josh), and Daniel Snider. Dearest life long and beloved best friend of Jackie Snyder. Brother to Dianne (Hertel) Baan.

In Bruce's early years his family lived in Preston and then moved to Haysville where spent special times with family and friends. It was there that he learned to fish and hunt and ride his pony. He later moved to Baden and then settled in New Hamburg. Bruce was a businessman, and investor and a very hard worker. He was the co-founder and investor of Mercedes Developments where he joined the Shantz's in building up the village St Jacobs, the St Jacobs Market and many hotels for tourism in that area. He was also an integral part of the beginnings of Hybrid turkeys, where he started working at 18. He held many roles there, including investing in the company, making feed at the mill in Elmira, delivering feed, delivering truckloads of eggs to the airport to be transported all over the world. He was also a cattleman, caring for farmers beef cows, all the while with his niece perched high up high on her shoulders to keep her safe. He was an experienced and knowledgeable investor and shared freely his financial advice to anyone who would listen. It was a hobby that he enjoyed right up until he passed away this week. He also spent many years attending harness racing where he was able to gain access to the barns and enjoyed spending time talking to the jockeys because he knew them from the

horse barns that used to stand at the New Hamburg Fair grounds.

He found true joy and fulfillment in teaching his niece Christine to drive his boat, water ski, hunt, fish, plant gardens, care for beef cows, how to fix things, how to forage for morals and puff balls in the bush when she was a child. One of the most uniquely Bruce skills he taught her was that the best dandelions for eating can be found on top of a turkey manure pile. So, each day when they went to each turkey farm to deliver feed, that was their special search together. He was a gentle man who also taught her how to care for animals. Rescuing a nest of baby squirrels and rabbits that were left orphans at the feed mill in Elmira and raising them up and returning them to their home after they were strong enough to survive on their own. He also taught her the value in hunting and wildlife management, spending every Saturday tracking coyotes, fox, rabbit, deer and pheasants together. Once Matthew, Kirstie and Daniel were old enough, Bruce found joy in passing on those same important life skills on to them. In recent years, he also beamed with pride when his two great, great nephews Elijah and Silas were born.

Bruce was always telling jokes while sharing a meal with family. His stories of years gone by were endless and will be a cherished reminder of him.

Predeceased by his parents Luella (Dopp) and Lester Hertel. His aunts and uncles Shirley (Hertel) and Walter Love, Hilda (Hertel) and Herb Thomas, Gladys (Hertel) and Oliver Raddatz, Milton Dopp and Mabel (Dopp) and Herb Fedy. Also remembered by many cousins of the Dopp, Hertel, Fedy and Raddatz families.

Family and friends may call at the Mark Jutzi Funeral Home on Monday December 15th 2025 from 1 to 3pm. A private family interment at Riverside Cemetery to follow. Donations can be made to the CNIB. This charity was dear to his heart because his mother lost her sight at a young age as well as Stratford General Hospital where he received exceptional care a few years ago.

Personal condolences can be placed on the funeral home website, and donation information can be found also at www.markjutzifuneralhomes.ca

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

Sorry For Your Loss

Futher-Franklin
Funeral Home Ltd.

1172 Henry Street,
Wellesley, Ontario. N0B 2T0
519-656-2880

chris@futher-franklinfuneralhome.com
www.futher-franklinfuneralhome.com



Christopher W. Franklin
Funeral Director

Serving the families of Wellesley Township and the surrounding regions with the care, respect and dignity families deserve.



CHRISTMAS at Trinity Lutheran Church

Please join us for worship

Dec 24th - Christmas Eve
7:00 PM with Holy Communion

Dec 25th - Christmas Day
10:00 AM

For streaming information e-mail us at :
trinitylcoffice@gmail.com

2210 Line 29 Tavistock Ontario
Corner of Hwy 59 and Line 29

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
Living Out God's Grace & Unconditional Love

The Old Gazettes

By Stewart 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.

December 16, 2015, Edition (10 years ago)

Hundreds of patrons attended the fifth annual Spaghetti Supper at Quehl's Restaurant in support of the Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP) on Tuesday evening, Dec. 8, with \$3,535 being raised for TAP.

Mountainoak and Bright Cheese and Butter's recent wins at the World Cheese Awards showcase the best of Canada's Dairy Capital. The World Cheese Awards were held in Birmingham, England, with 2,727 different cheeses entered by cheesemakers in countries from across the globe.

As of Jan. 1, 2016, all East Zorra-Tavistock Township properties will be smoke free, per a bylaw passed by the township.

The Tavistock Public School Boys' Volleyball team captured the Thames Valley District School Board A Championship in London recently, completing an undefeated season on the courts. Members of the team include Brady Roth, Luke Hyde, Blair Sparling, Ryan Ziegler, Chad Brown, Zhao-Yu Tan, Kyle Roth, Alex Dingwell, Mason McKay and Carter Roth.

December 18, 1985, Edition (40 years ago)

Mr. Ken Vinen, owner of Stratford's Kent Hotel, is the new owner of the Arlington Motor Hotel at 32 Woodstock St. N, Tavistock. Mr. Vinen took over the 10-unit facility on Dec. 1, 1985, having purchased it from Roy Schleuter. Fred and Fran Currah had been operating the

hotel since March 1, 1985.

Mrs. Bonnie Steinman has become one of only 60 Canadian watercolour artists to have her work accepted into the permanent collection of paintings housed in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle in London, England.

It's taken 10 years, but the Tavistock Atoms have finally won their home tournament as Tavistock edged New Hamburg 2-1 in the championship game on Saturday, Dec. 14 to take the 10th annual Optimist Atom Hockey Tournament. Members of the championship team are Shawn McKay, Jeff Weicker, Rob Fishback, Brett Bartlett, captain Brad Hammer, Mike Schwartzentruber, Shawn Yungblut, Richard Hill, Jason Bender, Darryl Wharram, Mark Yausie, Jason Wilker, Jim Junker, Greg deBellevale, Wayne Wettlaufer and Mike Donaldson.

December 17, 1975, Edition (50 years ago)

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Grant were honoured by almost 400 friends on Thursday night in the Tavistock Memorial Hall. Mr. Grant recently retired from active police work and Mrs. Grant, while not on salary in Tavistock, retired from answering the telephone and door on police business. After 10 years with the Ontario Provincial Police before coming to Tavistock, and 15 years with the Tavistock police department, Mr. Grant is looking forward to some private time for himself and his family.

Santa Claus visited the Memorial Hall in Tavistock last Saturday afternoon and presented the many children of the town and area with bags of goodies. He made his appearance at about 3 p.m. and the children saw two films beforehand, a Charlie Chaplin silent movie and a popular one called The Ride with Carl J. Seltzer at the projector.

WORSHIP
with us!

TOWNSHIP OF EAST ZORRA-TAVISTOCK

GRACE UNITED CHURCH

116 Woodstock St. S., Tavistock

Phone: 519-655-2151

All are welcome

Service led by Rev. Marilyn Arthur
Music by Marilyne Nystrome

TRINITY LUTHERAN (ELCIC)

Sebastopol - Tavistock

2210 Perth Line 29

Pastor Steve Hoffard

Worship In Person or on Zoom

Sundays at 10:00 AM

(519) 655-2372

trinitylcoffice@gmail.com

www.trinitytavistock.com

TAVISTOCK MENNONITE

Pastor Julie Ellison White

131 Wettlaufer St., Tavistock 655-2581

Sunday Worship services begin at 9:45am,

with coffee and fellowship to follow at 11am.

All ages Junior Sunday School will follow
after the service.

All are Welcome

Stream services online at
www.tavistockmennonitechurch.ca

TAVISTOCK BIBLE CHAPEL

32 Oxford Street, Tavistock, Ontario

Questions or Need Help?

Text or Call: (519) 655-2413

tavistockbc.org

Family Bible Hour - 11am Each Sunday

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN LCC

Church Phone 519-276-0701

Wellington Street, Tavistock

stpaulstavistock@gmail.com

Pastor Rev. Michael Mayer

**Christmas Eve Service,
December 24 at 2p.m.**

EAST ZORRA MENNONITE

677044 16th Line Road, East Zorra

Pastors Ray Martin & Mike Williamson

www.ezmennonite.ca

Service audio recordings available at:

<https://ezmennonite.ca/worship/>

WILMOT TOWNSHIP

ST GEORGE'S ANGLICAN CHURCH

Corner of Waterloo St and Byron St, New Hamburg

Weekly Sunday services at 10:15 am.

All are welcome.

<https://www.stgeorgesnewhamburg.com>

Please join us for Advent & Christmas!

December 21 @ 10:15am - Fourth Sunday of
Advent with Christmas pageant and potluck

December 24 @ 6:30pm - Hymn Sing

December 24 @ 7:00pm - Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service

St James Chapel of Ease

4339 Huron Rd Wilmot Township

All are welcome.

Contact Carol Massel: 519-502-8648

carol@masselsmarine.com

ST AGATHA MENNONITE CHURCH

1967 Erb's Road St Agatha 519-634-8212

Pastor Jim Brown

Worship service 10am followed by coffee hour
and sermon discussion.

All are welcome

**READ US ONLINE AT:
GRANTHAVEN.COM/WILMOT-TAVISTOCK-GAZETTE**

**FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES IN
The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette
CONTACT HEATHER DUNBAR AT
226.261.1837
OR HEATHER@GRANTHAVEN.COM**

Milverton youth donates \$1,000 to Perth County 4-H

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Perth County 4-H Association received an unexpected and welcome boost at its annual meeting last week thanks to the generosity of a young Milverton resident who believes strongly in the future of agriculture and the value of 4-H.

Wyatt Westman-Frijters, who has been closely connected to farming throughout his youth, won a Holstein heifer calf earlier this year through a contest hosted by Listowel's radio station, The Ranch 101. The calf was later auctioned off during a charity sale at OLEX in Waterloo, where a

syndicate of area dairy farmers bid generously in support of the cause.

With the impressive proceeds generated from the auction, Westman-Frijters has been quietly directing donations to several Perth County organizations. Last week, he chose to contribute \$1,000 to the Perth County 4-H Association – a program he says plays an important role in shaping young people who are passionate about agriculture.

Westman-Frijters' gesture underscores how community-minded youth continue to strengthen local agricultural programs and traditions, ensuring they remain vibrant for future generations.

New official plan underway

Continued from page 18

As part of this process, Nethery Planning consultants will work with township staff to make recommendations to council as to whether boundary expansion requests should be granted.

Now that council has approved the six

discussion papers, the consultants from Nethery Planning are working to draft the policies and maps and complete a first draft of the new official plan for feedback from both council and the public early next year.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

From left, Melinda Scott of 4-H Ontario, Tammy Horn, president of the Perth County 4-H Association, donor Wyatt Westman-Frijters, who presented the \$1,000 cheque, and his mother, Heather Westman.

COMPLETE TREE SERVICE

*Thank you for your continued support.
Merry Christmas from the team at
Complete Tree Service
and The Sno Pros*

Call "Tom The Tree Fellar" 519-580-6255

Peace & Joy

TO ALL THE WORLD

**To all our friends both near and far,
may harmony surround you wherever you are.**

The holidays are happier with friends like you, and we thank you for being such an important part of our year. Merry Christmas!

Royal Canadian Legion
Tavistock Memorial Branch #518
223 Hope St W, Tavistock

ICC
Interfaith Counselling Centre
Supporting Wilmot and Surrounding Communities
since 1983- All are welcome!

Happy Holiday!

Sending you warm wishes for a delightful holiday season.

WWW.INTERFAITHCOUNSELLING.CA
519 662-3092
23B Church St. New Hamburg

MERRY Christmas!

SOILOPTIX

(+1) 519-902-7645 | INFO@SOILOPTIX.COM | TAVISTOCK, ON

New Hamburg's The Erb Group celebrates 2025 Lactalis Extra Mile Award win

The Extra Mile Award was presented to company execs at a ceremony in Oshawa Nov. 28

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Executives and staff with the New Hamburg-based company, The Erb Group – one of North America's largest privately owned refrigerated transportation providers – are celebrating after being acknowledged by Lactalis Canada as going the extra mile in 2025 at an awards ceremony in Oshawa last month.

The Erb Group was presented with the 2025 Extra Mile Award during Lactalis Canada's annual Carrier Awards Ceremony at the Lactalis Oshawa distribution centre on Nov. 28. The award recognizes The Erb Group's exceptional capabilities, strong service performance and commitment to supporting Lactalis' complex network of production facilities across Ontario and Quebec.

"This award means a lot to us because it recognizes our people and the standards we care deeply about," The Erb Group vice president of sales Marty Otten told the Gazette. "It signifies that Erb consistently surpasses the expectations set for core carriers by delivering exceptional service that exceeds standard requirements.

"When faced with particularly challenging situations, Lactalis regularly turns to



(PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ERB GROUP)

The Erb Group short-haul truckload fleet manager Sanjay Wadhwa, vice president of truckload Kevin Erb and vice president of sales Marty Otten with the Lactalis Canada team at Lactalis Canada's Carrier Awards Ceremony in Oshawa Nov. 28 after winning the 2025 Extra Mile Award.

Erb, confident in our extensive resources and the expertise of our operations, staff and drivers."

The event brought together carrier

partners from across the region to celebrate those businesses that excel at delivering high-value, time-sensitive freight. Otten, vice president of truckload Kevin

Erb and short-haul truckload fleet manager Sanjay Wadhwa accepted the award on behalf of The Erb Group.

"There's a strong sense of responsibility that comes with what we do, and our team never loses sight of that," Otten said. "In refrigerated transportation, going the extra mile means protecting the integrity of the cold chain, communicating proactively and treating every load as if it were feeding our own families. That shared commitment is what sets our team apart and makes strong partnerships like this possible."

The Extra Mile Award follows The Erb Group's achievement as Carrier of the Year in 2024, which the company says showcases its consistent performance and ongoing commitment to going above and beyond for its clients.

Founded in 1959, The Erb Group specializes in the timely, protected distribution of temperature-controlled perishable goods across Canada and the U.S. The Erb Group is a family-owned business, hosting over 1,500 employees, 1,000 trailers and 600 power units. Its head office is based in New Hamburg with additional Canadian terminals in Baden, Toronto, Thunder Bay, North Bay, Ottawa, Montreal, Trenton, Winnipeg and a U.S. terminal in Elverson, Pa.

JUTZI WATER TECHNOLOGIES

Merry Christmas

Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good
will toward men.

Luke 2:14 NKJV

525 WRIGHT BLVD,
STRATFORD

519-814-9283

WWW.JUTZI.COM

MERRY
Christmas
& HAPPY
New Year

ARPAN KHANNA MP
OXFORD

ARPAN.KHANNA@PARL.GC.CA
519-421-7214

Milverton youth donates \$10,000 to give every Perth County student free chocolate milk

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Students across Perth County received an unexpected – and much-appreciated – treat last week thanks to the generosity of Milverton's Wyatt Westman-Frijters and the support of Perth County Dairy Producers.

Westman-Frijters, who recently sold a

Holstein calf during a charity auction, donated \$10,000 of his own proceeds to ensure every student in all 41 schools across the county could enjoy a carton of chocolate milk. His goal was simple: give kids access to a nutritious local product instead of sugary drinks and brighten the holiday season for families who may be feeling the pinch this time of year.

Westman-Frijters said he knows

Christmas can be difficult for many households and wanted to help in a way that brings joy and promotes healthy choices. His donation set the wheels in motion for Perth County Dairy Committee volunteers, who spent the week delivering chocolate milk to schools in Stratford, St. Marys, Listowel, Milverton, Mitchell and throughout the county's rural villages.

Principals, teachers and parents were

quick to praise both Wyatt and the local dairy farmers for their community spirit, noting how excited students were to receive the surprise just three weeks before Christmas.

As one committee member put it, "Milk is nature's most perfect food – and this was the perfect time to share it."



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

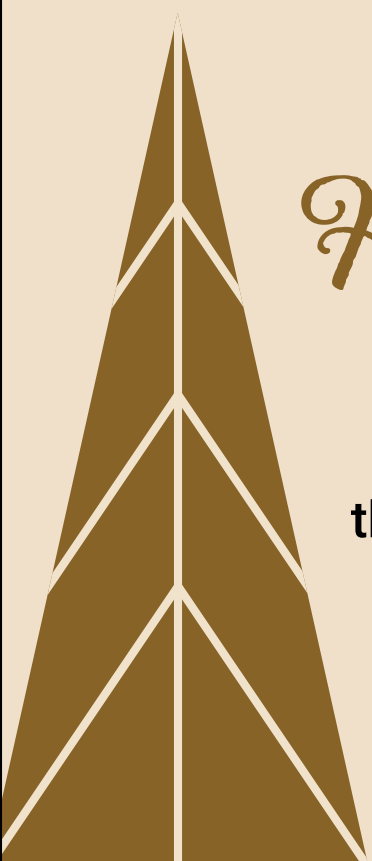
Milverton's Wyatt Westman-Frijters visits Milverton Public School with free chocolate milk, part of his effort to ensure every student in Perth County received a nutritious treat before the holidays.



Wyatt Westman-Frijters inside a local dairy barn with Perth County Dairy Committee members who helped deliver chocolate milk to all 41 schools across the county.




Stratford dairy farmer Frank Louwagie distributes chocolate milk at a city school, helping bring smiles to students thanks to Wyatt Westman-Frijters' donation.



Hope & Happiness

Warmest wishes at Christmas time and throughout the new year!

HOLIDAY HOURS:
 December 24th – 8am close at 3pm.
 December 25th Closed
 December 26th Closed
 December 27th 8am-5pm
 December 31 8am close 3pm
 January 1st Closed
 January 2nd 8am 6pm regular hours



59 Peel St., New Hamburg
519-662-1450



We wish you a Merry Christmas!

We're happy to have this opportunity to express our gratitude and offer our very best wishes to all of you at this joyous time of year. Thanks!



Jeff, Chris, Steve,
Wayne, Stewart,
and Hayley



Perth East and West Perth fire departments launch of Next Generation 911

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Gazette Reporter

The Perth East and West Perth fire departments, in partnership with the Owen Sound Police Service (OSPS), have launched Next Generation 911 (NG911) at the Owen Sound emergency communications centre (OSECC), a move aimed at strengthening public safety and emergency response.

NG911 uses advanced geolocation – GPS, WiFi and device-based hybrid location information – rather than relying solely on cell-tower triangulation. Dispatchers receive more precise caller locations, which speeds up response times and reduces misrouted calls.

“I’m pleased to share that the Perth East / West Perth fire departments are moving forward with the

launch of NG911. This upgrade will enhance reliability, improve response capabilities and ensure that residents in our response area have access to the most modern emergency communication system available,” said Perth East and West Perth Fire Chief Bill Hunter in a press release.

“Calls are routed based on exact geographic coordinates instead of cell-tower boundaries, helping to streamline border calls and will allow for better coordination



(PHOTO COURTESY OF PERTH EAST/WEST PERTH FIRE DEPARTMENT)

The Perth East and West Perth fire departments have launched Next Generation 911 services in partnership with the Owen Sound emergency communications centre.

across police, fire and EMS agencies,” added Suzanne Bell-Matheson, director of corporate services at the Owen Sound emergency communications centre.

While dialling 911 remains unchanged for callers, the new technology provides faster, more reliable help when people need it most.

“Most residents will not notice any major changes right now when they call 911,” said Bell-Matheson. “Most of the upgrades that are taking place today are behind the

scenes and are focused on infrastructure. Calling 911 still works the same way as it did yesterday; you dial the same number, speak with a call-taker, provide your location and describe your emergency.

“What they may notice is faster routing and fewer transfers, better location accuracy, better call stability as NG911 networks are more resilient.”

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) has mandated that all service providers and

primary public safety answering points must transition to the new NG911 network by March 2027.

“I’d like to recognize the outstanding work of our dedicated team in this monumental step forward for the Owen Sound emergency communications centre,” said Owen Sound police Chief Craig Ambrose in the press release. “This transition to NG911 allows us to continue evolving and improving services for our communicators, police officers and other emergency responders, and most importantly, to the people we serve in Owen Sound and in communities all across Ontario.”

Future capabilities – such as the ability to provide photo and video data to 911 call centres and first responders – are on the horizon. Several factors remain in development, including how the data will be delivered and policies around data ownership and access.

When to call 911

Calling 911 is for police, fire or medical emergencies requiring immediate action – when someone’s health, safety or property is in jeopardy, or when a crime is in progress. Use 911 responsibly; it is not an information line. Call-takers cannot provide information on weather, power outages or phone numbers for other municipal services.

Wishing you a Christmas filled with warmth, laughter, and special moments. From our home to yours — Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Extendicare

Telfer Place Retirement Residence
245 Grand River St., N., Paris, ON

Helping people live better

80 coyote sightings and encounters reported in first year of Perth County tracking and education program

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Residents of Perth County's four lower-tier municipalities, Stratford and St. Marys reported a total of 80 coyote sightings and encounters in the first year of Perth County's coyote tracking and public-education program.

After county council instructed staff early last year to launch and promote a web portal at www.perthcounty.ca/coyotes, which was officially launched in November 2024, that includes both a coyote-sighting form allowing residents to report coyotes online, and information on how to safely live alongside coyotes and what to do during a coyote encounter, county staff presented the data collected as of Oct. 31 of this year to county council at its regular meeting Dec. 4.

"Since launch, we've received over 3,000 views to the page and the form linked on the page offers residents an easy way to report sightings and provides public information on how to safely coexist with coyotes," county communications officer Sarah Franklin said. "... As of Oct. 31 this year, 80 sighting reports were submitted; 72 of those were considered to be sightings, eight encounters (with people or pets) and zero concerns about sick or injured animals.

"Reports came in from across the county with higher numbers in more populated areas, likely as there are more people present to observe them."

Some of the reports submitted



(VECTEEZY PHOTO)

Perth County logged 80 coyote sightings and encounters in the first year of its new tracking and public-education program.

through the county website indicated sightings or encounters with multiple coyotes. Additionally, reports could be submitted by multiple people who saw the same coyote.

Breaking those numbers down further:

- The highest number of individual coyotes seen in a single month was 80 in November 2024 with 28 reports submitted online;
- The lowest number of coyotes reported in a single month was zero in August 2025 with no reports submitted; and
- There were 38 coyotes sighted in North Perth, 53 in Perth East, 14 in Perth South, 20 in West Perth, 43 in Stratford and three in St. Marys;

Additionally, in the eight reported

encounters with coyotes:

- Coyotes observed near chicken enclosures commonly resulted in an interaction with a pet;
- There were two reports of a coyote observed in close proximity to a home – in one instance, the coyote had to be verbally discouraged from moving closer;
- There were two reports of a coyote moving towards a dogwalker in an urban area; and
- There was a close encounter with a coyote when a person was hiking on a local trail, but they were able to scare the animal away with loud noises.

Prior to the launch of this program by the county, there was no method for tracking

coyotes in Perth County except for when farmers reported coyote interactions with livestock through the Ontario Wildlife Damage Compensation Program run by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness.

"I wonder if, down the road, there is an avenue we should be looking at further, and I guess my question is, are there any counties surrounding us that actually have a bounty or some type of reimbursement for coyotes?" Coun. Walter McKenzie asked.

In response, county CAO Lori Wolfe said council had considered a formal program for the management of coyotes last year prior to council approving the tracking and public-education program. At the time, she said the county did not have enough data to justify a predation program similar to the one in Huron County.

While both Wolfe and McKenzie suggested that, should coyote sightings and encounters escalate in future years, there may be cause to consider such a program, Coun. Rhonda Ehgoetz cautioned against offering a bounty on coyotes.

"A bounty could bring a lot of problems," she said. "When you put bounties on them, you have people coming into the area, coming onto people's property. Sometimes they just cut the ear off of the animal to prove that they got it and leave the carcasses all over farmers' properties. Bounties will cause a whole lot of issues."

Ehgoetz did note that coyote hunting is permitted in some areas of the county, and both her husband and Coun. Jerry Smith cull between 40 and 50 coyotes each year.



Franklin & Donna Hinz

Do what makes you happy.

Look upon what gives you joy. Listen to what lifts your spirit. Speak to those who warm your heart.

Surround yourself with sights and sounds and people who make you smile during this 2025 Festive Season.

Franklin E. Hinz
196 Ontario Street
STRATFORD
273-1633

MERRY
Christmas
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

Thank you for being part of our story.
We're grateful for the years of support
from our customers and community,
it's been our honour to serve you.

**Schultz Plumbing
& HEATING**

Tavistock • 519-655-3111

Brett & Monica Schultz,

*Wishing you a very
Merry Christmas and
a happy and healthy
New Year.*

**Thank you for trusting
Crescent Ridge Services
with your electrical needs.**

**Crescent Ridge
SERVICES**

101 – 66 Woodstock Street N, PO Box 495,
Tavistock ON N0B 2R0
p:519-655-6802 | f:226-779-9819
www.crescentridge.ca ESA/ECRA # 7013110



DOWNLOAD THE
WASTELINE APP



519-539-9800
1-800-755-0394
info@wasteline.ca
wasteline.ca

HOLIDAY COLLECTION GARBAGE AND RECYCLING



WILL YOUR COLLECTION DAY CHANGE?

Residences and businesses in Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra-Tavistock (north of Braemar Sideroad), Ingersoll, South-West Oxford, Tillsonburg and Zorra will have regular collection during the holidays.

TOWNSHIPS OF NORWICH AND EAST ZORRA-TAVISTOCK

(south of Braemar Sideroad)

ORIGINAL DAY	NEW DAY
Wednesday, December 25	Saturday, December 28
Wednesday, January 1	Saturday, January 4

Please have all garbage bags and recycling bins to the curb by 7:00 a.m. on your collection day. In the event of severe weather, collection may be delayed or cancelled. Monitor local news, visit www.wasteline.ca or download the wasteline app for alerts.

LOCATED IN WOODSTOCK?

Visit www.cityofwoodstock.ca/waste for holiday collection dates. Information on the 2026 six-day cycle and green bin pickup is in your December Wasteline Newsletter or at www.wasteline.ca.

DON'T LET YOUR HOLIDAYS GO TO WASTE

1. Remove all tape, plastic film, twist ties and other decorative objects before recycling cardboard.
2. Flatten and bundle cardboard boxes no larger than 75 x 75 x 20 centimetres.
3. Recycle wrapping paper, except foil-based paper.
4. Remove all ribbons and bows. Save and reuse for next year where possible.
5. Bulky Styrofoam can be dropped off at the Oxford County Waste Management Facility, Tillsonburg Transfer Station and Woodstock EnviroDepot.

HOLIDAY HOURS

WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

CLOSED: Thursday, December 25, 2025
Friday, December 26, 2025
Thursday, January 1, 2026

2026 TIPPING FEES

Please refer to the Fees and Charges By-law for 2026 pricing details at oxfordcounty.ca.

Merry Christmas From Our Family To Yours!



NO JOB TOO BIG OR TOO SMALL

NEW INSTALLATIONS • RENOVATIONS • REPAIRS
SEWER CAMERA • WATER SOFTENERS
WATER HEATERS • A MINI EXCAVATOR FOR SEWER
WATER AND HYDRO TRENCHING AND TILE REPAIRS

Jeremy Berger, Owner • 519-274-0160

BERGER PLUMBING

bergerplumbing.ca

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

SECTION 2

PJHL Roundup: Braves earn four valuable points to move into a share of third place

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

A pair of wins over the Provincial Junior Hockey League's (PJHL) Doherty Division cellar-dwellers was just what the doctor ordered for Tavistock as they took both ends of a home-and-home with Dorchester.

The weekend kicked off with a 9-2 drubbing of the Dolphins at home on Friday, a game that saw Yann Raskin, Evan Palubski, Ryan McKellar and Carter Arseneau earn four points each, with rookie Nolan Miller chipping in with a pair of goals and two helpers for Keaton Bartlett. Tavistock led 3-0 after the first period and 5-1 after 40 minutes. Arseneau picked up his 100th career point in his 147th game as a Brave.

It was a different story on Saturday in Dorchester as the Dolphins led 3-2 after the opening period but were outscored by the visitors 3-1 the rest of the way. The home team took a 4-3 lead early in the second before a late goal by Palubski pulled

the Braves to within one going into the third. Tavistock would score three times in a five-minute span in the final frame – Ethan Stover with the tying goal, Carson Bernhardt with the game-winner and then Feli Isert-Bender with an insurance marker.

Tavistock captain Marc Dionne said bouncing back from a three-game losing skid was a big deal for the Braves.

“Even though we were playing Dorchester back-to-back, it was still going to be a challenge for us. Every team in this league can win hockey games and knowing that, it was important that we stepped up. Running away with four points put us in a really good spot going into this next weekend against New Hamburg and Norwich being that we’re battling for third.”

The Braves have made several roster moves in recent weeks, something that can be difficult when it comes to adjusting to new faces. Dionne said the new recruits have fit in well.

“Adding two veterans like Ethan Stover and Keegan Metcalf has been a huge help

on the ice and in the dressing room. Both players know what it takes to win and that’s going to be crucial as we start the second half of the season going into the playoffs.”

Dionne said his new teammates have shown tremendous leadership qualities in the room, which has helped his leadership.

“Most of the guys we have gotten know at least a couple of the Braves which helps them to feel more comfortable and gives them more confidence to be themselves in the locker room, on the bus and around the team in general. We have a tight group and even with the changes that we’ve made, I’m really excited to see where this second half takes us.”

The Braves were in first place in the Doherty Division to start the season, something the captain said has been tough on the team, but also something that motivates them to be better.

“I’ve been really happy with the way we’ve committed to our systems and to what the coaches have been talking about. It’s getting to that time of the season where

we need to all be on the same page and throughout these past couple weekends, I’ve been able to see that. One of the areas I feel like we still need to improve on is being engaged and working hard for 60 minutes every single night. There’s been games where we’ve taken periods off and that has cost us in the long run. Being able to start games with intensity and grit while being able to maintain that for three periods is the one key that will open the door to a lot more success as we get towards playoffs.”

New Hamburg split its two weekend games, beginning with a home-ice loss to division-leading Woodstock on Friday night.

After a scoreless first, Justin McManus gave the Firebirds a 1-0 lead 45 seconds into the second period and that lead held until Owen Ireton tied it up with 43 seconds left in the frame. Charley Barnes scored the game-winning goal for the Navy Vets 37 seconds into the third period.

On Sunday, the Firebirds hosted

Continued on page 26



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTOS)

Justin McManus celebrates with young fans at the New Hamburg Firebirds' game against the Woodstock Navy Vets on Dec. 12. McManus scored the lone New Hamburg goal in the team's 2-1 loss.



Michael Gear moves the puck through centre ice during the New Hamburg Firebirds' game on Dec. 12 against the Woodstock Navy Vets.

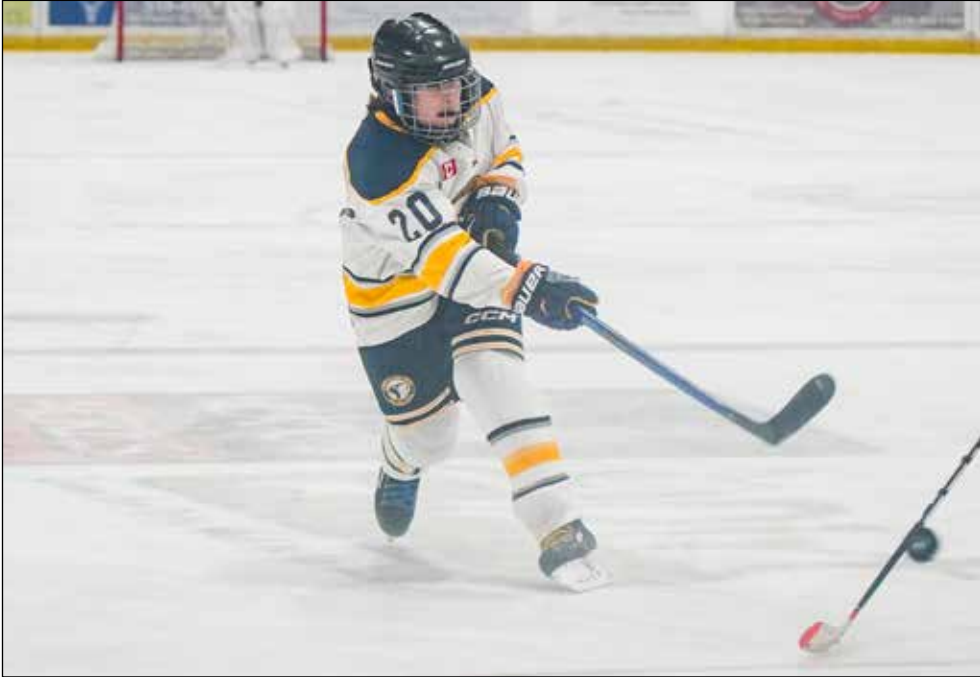


MINOR SPORTS **SCRAPBOOK**



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Everleigh Yantzi skates the puck up from the defensive zone during this past Sunday's U13 C Wilmot Wolverines game.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Braden Robinson fires a shot from the blueline during last Saturday's U13 LL 2 New Hamburg Huskies game.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Bryce Fulton sends the puck up through the offensive zone during the U13 LL 1 Tavistock Titans game this past Monday.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Nolan Lichti flies through the offensive zone with the puck during this past Monday's U15 LL 1 Tavistock Titans game.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Connor Bowker blasts the puck on target during the U15 REP Tavistock Titans game this past Monday.

Braves bounce back with weekend sweep of Dorchester

Continued from page 25

Dorchester for a rare Sunday home game where they managed to earn a 5-3 come-from-behind victory. Josh Soulliere gave New Hamburg a 1-0 lead with 13 seconds left in the first period, then Ben Oliver made it 2-0 early in the second, but the Dolphins would score three consecutive goals to take a 3-2 lead into the final frame.

Oliver, with his second, Soulliere, with the game-winner, and captain Andrew Gear scored third-period goals to complete the comeback as Connor Harmon stopped 33 of 36 shots he faced to earn

his fifth win of the season.

Wellesley split its two games on the weekend, ending with a 3-2 overtime home-ice victory on Saturday. Ben Morton tallied the winner 26 seconds into the extra period. Rhys McCloskey and Ian Spieran also scored for the Applejacks in a game where the two teams combined for just six penalty minutes.

Wellesley travelled to Norwich on Friday and found themselves down 3-0 late in the second period. Kaelan McDougald scored his first goal of the season in the third as the Applejacks were outshot 8-5 in the final frame.

Royals back on track after four-point weekend

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Reporter

The Tavistock Royals snapped a four-game losing skid with a pair of victories over two teams above them in the Ontario Elite Hockey League's (OEHL) Southern Division.

After dropping a 6-5 decision to Elora at home last weekend, the Royals bounced back with a 6-2 road win over the Rocks on Friday night.

After the teams exchanged first-period markers, Tavistock exploded for five third-period goals. John McDonald, Drew Gerth, Callan Christner, Issac Westlake, Jeromy Munro and Michael Capicotto scored for the Royals while Mitch Atkins added three assists. Atkins, the Kitchener native with several years of semi-professional hockey under his belt, leads the team with 19 points in 12 regular-season games.

Joseph Clark kicked out 29 of the 31 shots he faced to earn the victory between the pipes.

On Saturday, Tavistock hosted Petrolia and downed the Squires 7-4, thanks in large part to a two-goal, one-assist performance by Deven Kropf.

The Royals jumped out to a 4-1 lead after 20 minutes as the teams traded goals the rest of the way. Matt Zilke, Lucas Bast, Andrew Van Boekel, Christner and Capicotto scored single markers in the win, while Andrew Sauder, Luke Robichaud and Luke Fanjoy chipped in with a pair of assists each.

Zach Shompe and Clark combined to stop 30 of 34 shots to share the win.

Tavistock coach Tyson Zehr said the



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF TAVISTOCK ROYALS)
Mason Kropf, son of Royals player Deven Kropf, took home a toy truck at Kids Night.

difference over the weekend was the team's competition level and attention to detail.

"After four straight losses, we really challenged the group to get back to doing the little things right – managing the puck, winning battles and playing a full 60 minutes. Beating two teams ahead of us in the standings shows what we're capable of when we commit to our structure."

In senior hockey, it's not easy for any team to ice a full, consistent lineup, something that has challenged the Royals this season.

"We've had some challenges getting a full lineup at times, whether it's injuries, work commitments, or availability. That said, no one's used it as an excuse. The guys who've been in the lineup have stepped up, and our depth has been



Finlann Lichti and Jaxson McGeoch took home brand-new scooters.

important during that stretch."

Zehr added the win on Elora was huge heading into Saturday night's home game.

"It was huge. Losing to them the weekend before didn't sit well with our group. I thought we played well enough to win, but that's how good the league is now; sometimes a good effort isn't enough. Getting that win in their building set the tone for the weekend and gave us some confidence back."

Tavistock has had some injuries in the goaltending ranks, but Zehr said he is confident one of the three netminders on the roster will step up and take over the number one job. He added the play of

Tavistock native and veteran Deven Kropf has been outstanding.

"His consistency and leadership have been huge and has been for the Royals for years now. Not many guys in the league can match his skill, but more than that, he sets the standard in terms of effort. Having a guy you can rely on every game is invaluable."

The Royals held a Kids Night promotion on Saturday and gave away three prizes while, at the same time, raising money for the Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP).

"Four-hundred dollars in cash was raised for TAP which will surely come in handy as they fill their Christmas Hampers this month," said team president Kyle Wynette.

**Merry
CHRISTMAS!**
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Wishing you and your loved ones a joyful
and blessed Christmas and a New Year filled
with peace and happiness.



**JANTZI
ELECTRIC**

Jantzi Electric,
1558 Perth Line 43
New Hamburg, Ontario
Phone: 519-656-2449

ESA/ECRA Licence #7003180

**Merry
Christmas!**

Glory to God in the highest
heaven, and on earth **peace** to
those on whom his favor rests.

Luke 2:14 NIV



KINDRED
Credit Union

100 Mill Street, New Hamburg

Join the conversation!



1.888.672.6728

www.kindredcu.com

W-ODSS senior girls battle CHCI



tavistockoptimrs@gmail.com

WE WISH YOU A
Merry Christmas
&
A HAPPY NEW YEAR

Tavistock Pharmacy

I.D.A.

17 Woodstock Street South
Tavistock, ON N0B 2R0
T: 519-655-2111 | F: 519-655-2152
tavistockpharmacy@gmail.com



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTOS)

Pictured on top is Samantha Zehr bumping the ball up into the air near the net during the Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School (WODSS) senior girls volleyball team's game against Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute (CHCI) of Kitchener on Dec. 9. On the bottom, Alina Meuleman kneels to keep the ball in play.

Your Holiday Clean-Out
= *Holiday Cheer for All*



→ Donate your gently used household goods to your local MCC Thrift shop



41 Heritage Dr, New Hamburg, ON

"Christmas brings friends and family together. It helps us appreciate the love in our lives we can often take for granted. May the true meaning of the Christmas season fill your heart and home with many blessings.

Merry Christmas from
Our Home to Yours!

YANTZI'S
HOME DESIGN & MART

Home
building centre

985434 Perth-Oxford Rd, Tavistock, ON | 519.655.2014



Tavistock
Home Hardware

24 Woodstock St S, Tavistock, ON | 519.655.2943

W-ODSS junior girls down CHCI in straight sets

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Gazette Sports Director

The Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School (W-ODSS) Junior Girls Volleyball team picked up a decisive win over Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute (CHCI) of Kitchener on Dec. 9.

Coach Kelsey Smith credited the team for their continued progress in several aspects of their game.

“The progress is ongoing,” said Smith. “Our passing on serve receive and serving

was a little more consistent and is still something we are working on. Quite a few of the girls on the team had serving streaks, which helped us to take the lead. Some of the rallies would go on for several attacks. The energy in those moments was intense, but so fun to watch.”

W-ODSS won the first set 25-17 before narrowly taking the second set 25-23 and then winning 25-20. Smith noted the hot start to the game set the stage for the team to wade through choppy waters later in the game.

Smith told the Gazette the team displayed a strong compete level throughout the match.

“In the first set, they started out strong,” Smith said. “Our serving was definitely the key. The second set was a tougher battle. CHCI came out fighting and made it a close game that could have gone either way, but we got the win. In the third set, both teams were playing to win, but in the end, we were able to take the lead. Our communication and going for every ball was key. The girls didn’t give up.”

Smith added the junior girls, who have a 3-2 record through five games, have displayed some strong potential thanks to their cohesive nature.

“I’ve been impressed by how well they get along and work with each other as a team,” Smith noted. “We hope that they continue to develop their skills to become better players and have fun as a team. We think that they can go far into the playoffs if they continue to work together.”



Molly Jacomen sends the ball back over the net during the Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School (W-ODSS) junior girls volleyball game on Dec. 9. W-ODSS defeated Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute (CHCI) in straight sets.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTOS)

Cameron Schmidt leaps and hits the ball while supported by Quinn Witzel during the Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School (W-ODSS) junior girls volleyball game on Dec. 9 against Cameron Heights Collegiate Institute (CHCI).

WISHING YOU A
Merry Christmas

Mike
HARRIS
MPP KITCHENER-CONESTOGA

519-669-2090 • mike.harrisco@pc.ola.org
mikeharrismpp.ca

WISHING EVERYONE A HAPPY
Holiday Season
FROM MATT AND JACKIE AND THE STAFF AT

— THE —
IMPERIAL
— RESTAURANT —

Holiday Hours

OPEN: Dec 24
11 am to 4 pm

CLOSED: Dec. 25,
Dec. 26, and Jan. 1

New Year's Eve Dinner

Call to book your reservation today

60 Huron Street, New Hamburg • 519.390.6000
imperialmarketeatery.ca

Book launch for The Historic Buildings of New Hamburg and the People Who Lived in Them set for Dec. 21

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After more than a decade of exhaustive research, writing and fine-tuning, the authors and historians behind the five-volume anthology, *The Historic Buildings of New Hamburg and the People Who Lived in Them*, will officially celebrate its release at a book launch later this month.

Though the book launch on Dec. 21 beginning at 12:30 p.m. at Puddicombe House will be a relatively quiet affair – those who preorder now while supplies last will get an opportunity to pick up their copies and the authors will have the chance to thank everyone who contributed or supported them along the way – the event will mark the final chapter of a monumental journey through local history the historians and authors, Marie Voisin and Kristen Hahn, as well as the late Ernie Ritz, embarked on 15 years ago.

“For me, it’s unlike any feeling I can possibly describe because I’ve never encountered anything of this scope,” Hahn said. “I think the very first moment when I realized the last words had been written, I got this sort of vertigo, and it was twice as intense when the files got sent to the printer. It’s a mix of excitement, a little bit queasy, it’s sadness, accomplishment; there’s no word for this feeling.”

“It was a sadness for me because it really linked me with the current people who are in the houses, but also the people from 50 or 100 years ago who built the houses, and I feel very close to those families,” Voisin said. “They were my people who



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

Authors and historians Kristen Hahn (left) and Marie Voisin (right), with a cardboard cutout of the late Ernie Ritz in between them, hold a copy of the five-volume anthology, *The Historic Buildings of New Hamburg and the People Who Lived in Them*.

built New Hamburg and I’m sad to not be investigating anymore.”

Coming in at more than 1,200 pages across four books, and a fifth just for the index, *The Historic Buildings of New Hamburg and the People who Lived in Them* explores human stories through the lens of New Hamburg’s heritage buildings – both those that still exist today and those that have been demolished and replaced with newer construction.

The idea for the exhaustive work was originally brought to Voisin, and then later Hahn, by Ritz – the legendary local newspaper editor and printer who had a unique memory for local history, which he both lived himself and heard from others.

Sadly, Ritz died a few weeks shy of his 99th birthday in March 2024, a little more than a year and half before the work he initiated would see its conclusion.

“He’d be just thrilled; he’d be beaming, smiling because he once wrote in the 1940s when he was editor of a newspaper that it would be nice if, someday, someone catalogued all the houses and the people who have lived in them,” Voisin said. “And now it’s done.”

“Because of his memory, too, he could just hold court and tell us everything that he remembered of the buildings of the people who lived in them and their stories, and I feel we did our best to write them all down and get them in the book,” Hahn

said. “It feels to me like it is kind of a tribute to our dear friend who the town misses and we miss very, very keenly.”

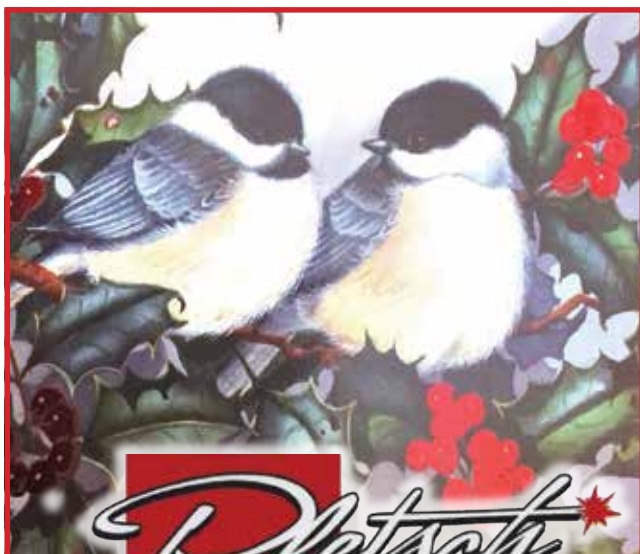
Now, as Ritz once prophesized, *The Historic Buildings of New Hamburg and the People who Lived in Them* can serve as the definitive architectural and historical record for New Hamburg, not only giving researchers, historians and journalists a starting point when it comes to the history of the town’s buildings and people, but also offering local homeowners and the stewards of heritage buildings a chance to see what their buildings looked like when they were first built, and the opportunity to maintain or restore those original architectural features.

At a time when heritage protections are being eroded by the province, both Voisin and Hahn hope their work inspires others to take the up the cause of heritage protection themselves, preserving visible local history for generations to come.

At a cost of \$200 for the anthology, a total of 150 copies have been ordered and will arrive in time for the book launch Dec. 21. To preorder, e-transfer \$200 to historicbuildingsnewhamburg@gmail.com. Buyers should include their name, address and phone number in the transfer message.

More copies will be available for purchase in the new year.

While this work may be complete, both Hahn and Voisin have already begun work on another historical book, started by Ritz before he died, about the early history of New Hamburg and the surrounding Township.



519-655-2461

"May your faith be renewed, your spirits lifted by the true meaning of Christmas. We Thank You for your friendship and for the privilege of serving you this past year."

**Merry Christmas from:
Derek, Curtis and Kim**

Season's Greetings

Wishing you & yours a wonderful Holiday Season!



Sandra Eby
Sales Representative

519-273-2821 Office
519-272-7676 Cell
mseby@rogers.com

Serving Tavistock, Stratford & area since 1994

Wishing you a joyful Christmas and a New Year filled with health and happiness.

Thank you to all my clients, past and present, for your trust and support over the past 31 years – it has truly been an honour. I look forward to continuing to serve you in the years ahead.

If you're considering buying or selling in the new year, I'd be happy to discuss your options.

RE/MAX | a-b REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

88 Wellington Street, Stratford, On. N5A 2L2



Cutting your own Christmas tree remains a cherished tradition east of Amulree

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Families from across Oxford, Perth and Waterloo counties are still embracing the

timeless tradition of picking out and cutting down their own Christmas tree, and a quiet corner of North Easthope Township east of Amulree has become a favourite destination.

Visitors arrive from communities as far as Kitchener-Waterloo, Woodstock and Ingersoll, drawn by the chance to walk the rows, choose the perfect tree and make a memory together.

Once the tree is cut and loaded, families gather around an open fire to warm their hands and enjoy hot chocolate and cookies – a simple ritual that has become as meaningful as decorating the tree itself.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

James Mitchell and Francine McGrath travelled from Ingersoll with sons Bentley, eight, and Braydon, four, to cut down their first-ever Balsam fir Christmas tree. The family found the farm online and said the experience – from choosing the tree to enjoying hot chocolate by the fire – was “a great idea to do together before Christmas.”



Tree farm owner Paul Kroes, who operates the business with his wife Debbie Roth-Kroes, helps Mike Wymenga of New Hamburg with the spruce tree he selected. With roughly 200 trees available, visitors know they're taking home a fresh-cut Christmas centrepiece because they cut it themselves.

Mark Jutzi

FUNERAL HOME LTD.

*May this Christmas season
bring you closer to all
those that you treasure
in your heart.*

*Merry Christmas and
a Happy New Year from
our Family to Yours*

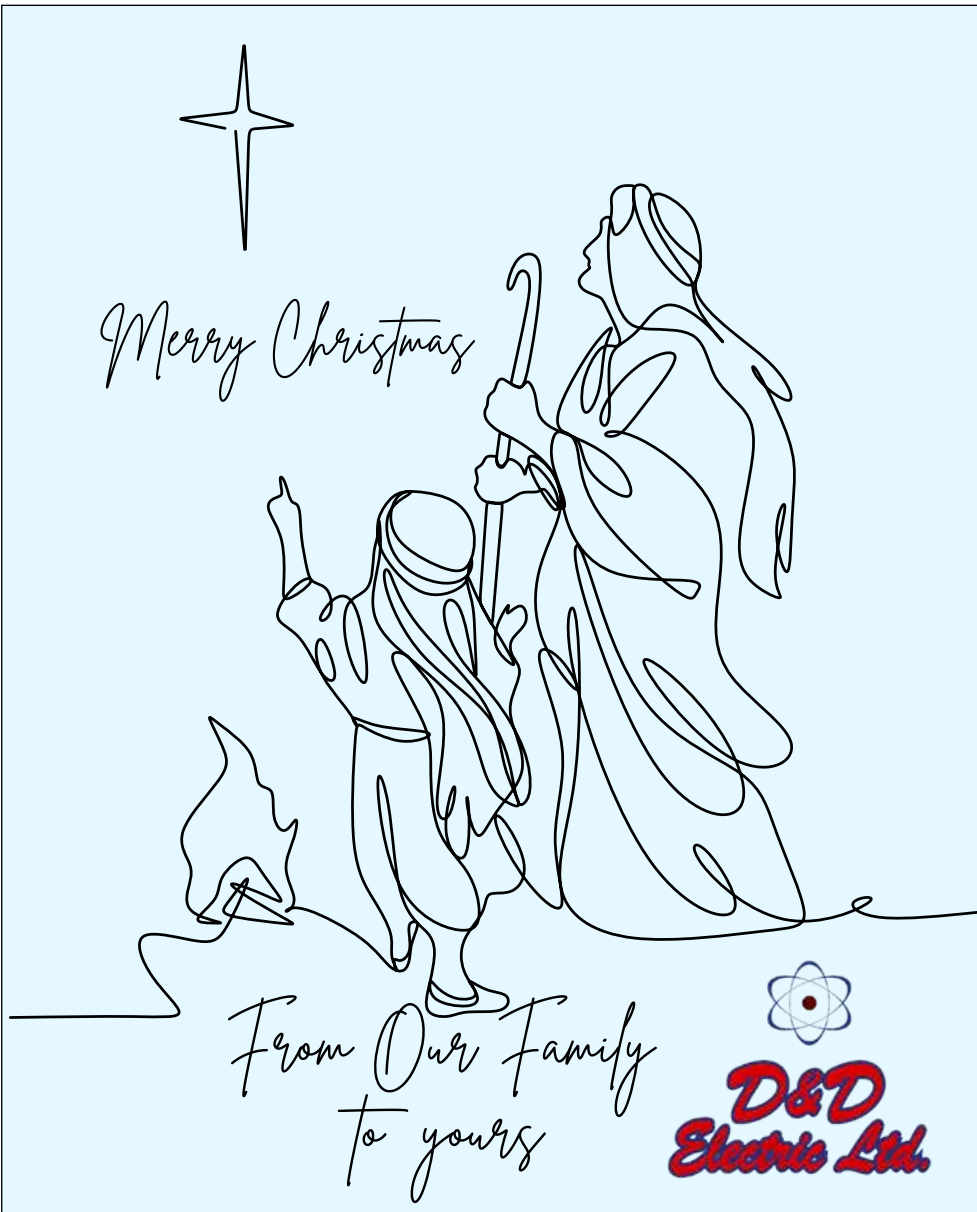
*- Ainslee Hackett and
Jeffrey & Michelle Glendinning*

*May
you
and your
family
have a safe
and happy
Christmas that
is full of making
happy memories.*

**Custom Steel Fabricating
WAL-DOR INDUSTRIES
LIMITED**

202 Bergey Court,
New Hamburg, ON N3A 2J5
519-662-2820

wayne@waldorindustries.on.ca



Schmidtsville Restaurant welcomes back former Gazette editor Veronica Reiner

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A familiar face returned to Wellesley last weekend when former Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette editor Veronica Reiner stopped in at the ever-popular Schmidtsville Restaurant.

Reiner, who helped shape the Gazette during its period of rapid readership growth alongside owner and publisher Stewart Grant, is now continuing her journalism career at the University of Waterloo where she works with students pursuing media and communications while helping produce a campus newsletter.

Her visit brought smiles from restaurant owner Miriam Kuepfer, who runs Schmidtsville with her husband, Glenn Kuepfer. Miriam Kuepfer said it was a pleasure to reconnect and hopes Reiner will stop by again.

Schmidtsville has long been a fixture in the village. In an upcoming edition of the Gazette, readers will find a deeper dive into the history of the restaurant and gift shop – a history tied closely to the roots of Wellesley itself.

In 1866, John George Reiner arrived in the village and would go on to build, in 1880, the structure that now houses Schmidtsville. While Reiner is unsure whether her family tree connects to John George, she joked that “stranger things



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Former Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette editor Veronica Reiner, left, visits with Schmidtsville Restaurant owner Miriam Kuepfer. Kuepfer says a brand-new menu will debut in the new year.

have happened.”

The restaurant’s name is also a nod to local history; Wellesley was originally known as Schmidtsville, named after early settler John Schmidt, who arrived from Lancaster, Pa.

More stories about this landmark and its legacy will be shared in future editions of the Gazette.

Happy Holidays

**AND HAPPY NEW YEAR
FROM THE GC BOYLE LAW TEAM!**

We are open December 22, 23, 29th and 30th



GC BOYLE LAW FIRM

NEW HAMBURG 519.589.1687 | ST. MARYS 519.284-2112
WWW.GCBOYLELAWFIRM.CA

**JOY
LOVE
PEACE
HARMONY
HEALTH
HAPPINESS
& GOOD
FORTUNE**

From the Partners and staff at **Famme & Co.**
Professional Corporation
CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTANTS

25 Water St.N., St. Marys 519-284-1030

125 Ontario St., Stratford 519-271-7581

210 Oxford St. E., London 519-432-1663

Snowmobile trails open early across the region

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Local snowmobile enthusiasts are gearing up for one of the earliest trail openings in recent memory, with routes across Perth, Waterloo and Oxford counties now groomed, staked and ready for riders.

Volunteers have installed guide stakes and stop signs, and with a strong snow base already in place, conditions are shaping up perfectly for an early start to the season.

This is the first time in years that

snowmobile trails across Ontario have opened before Christmas. The early snowfall has also delighted skiers and snowboarders, with hills across the province reporting excellent conditions as snowmaking machines continue to build their base. Cross-country skiers, too, are taking advantage of well-covered bush and field trails that are quickly becoming ideal.

Local ski hill operators say they "couldn't be happier," as winter enthusiasts of all kinds make the most of the weather.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Three volunteers with the local snowmobile club – Shawn Burchutski, Danny Schurink (on snowmobile) and crewmaster Kevin Zehr, all of Tavistock – were out Saturday finishing staking and signage near Road 106 in South Easthope Township. With recent Ontario government funding of \$4.5 million to the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs, local clubs have been able to prepare and expand safe, groomed trails. The volunteers extend thanks to area farmers for once again allowing trails through their properties, making the sport possible for so many riders.

*May Faith and Love
Light Your Path*

This Christmas and Always

HOLIDAY HOURS:

December 24 Open til 2 for Pre-Ordered picks up only.
Closed till January 2.

New Years Eve Buffet - SOLD OUT

Quehl's TAVISTOCK, SINCE 1931
Restaurant & Catering

519-655-2835 | 33 WOODSTOCK ST., S. TAVISTOCK
WWW.QUEHLSRESTAURANT.COM



HAPPY HOLIDAYS & *Warm Winter Wishes*

Your friendship and support are so special to us, and we are grateful to have you as part of our extended family of customers and friends.

Thank you for your loyal support, and best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season!

Mark & Pat Langenegger and Staff



Oak Grove Cheese
Factory limited
Since 1879

29 Bleams Rd. W., New Hamburg • 519-662-1212

You are **INVITED**
to celebrate **CHRISTMAS**
with us

CHRISTMAS EVE
5pm & 7pm
Dec 24

Wilmot Centre Church
2463 Bleams Rd.
Petersburg

www.wilmotcentre.church

PROMISES

Sprucedale Public School celebrates the season

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

Sprucedale Public School was filled with holiday cheer on Thursday, Dec. 10, as students and families gathered for the school's Winter Woodland Holiday Social.

Senior students greeted guests at the front entrance with warm smiles and holiday wishes. The school lobby was beautifully decorated with a winter woodland theme. Visitors had the opportunity to support the school by purchasing raffle tickets for a wide variety of items generously

donated by Sprucedale families and local businesses.

A large audience turned out for the afternoon performance, which showcased the talents of students from kindergarten to Grade 3. The concert opened with senior students welcoming everyone and kicking things off with some Christmas-themed jokes.

Kindergarten classes delighted the audience with two action songs. The first, "The Snowflake Song," featured students wearing snowflake headbands, followed by the song, "Penguins," complete with

penguin-inspired actions.

Students in grades one, two and three followed with a lively selection of festive songs, including "Making Christmas Cookies," "Snowboard'n Santa," and "Reindeer Like to Boogie." They concluded their performance with the touching song, "We Can Make a Difference."

Principal Lisa Cairncross acknowledged the hard work of the students, teachers and the parent council in making the event such a success. She also thanked everyone for joining the celebration and invited guests to visit the primary classrooms,

where students proudly shared their recent work with family and friends.

The evening event drew a large crowd and featured the same wonderful entertainment, along with time to socialize. Guests had the opportunity to purchase homemade baked goods, and raffle winners were posted in the hallway. The night concluded with a carol sing led by Hannah Thomas, providing a perfect ending to the evening and a great kickoff to the holiday season.



(DIANE DANEN PHOTOS)

Parent council president Jody Hart sells raffle tickets to Lanie Van Der Kooi, while elementary secretary Ms. Zandstra lends a helping hand.



Natalie Kuchma (Grade 7), Kiara Jordan (Grade 7), Cohen Anwender (Grade 6), Lincoln Eicher (Grade 6) and Jaxon Fisher-Nagtzaam (Grade 8) welcomed guests at the doors and hosted the program, delighting everyone with their Christmas-themed jokes.



Clark Weber (Grade 5), Aidan Roser (Grade 6) and Lainey Kittmer (Grade 6) served as greeters and backstage helpers, while Isla Roser (Grade 5) welcomed guests at the front door.

This December, join us as we Build a Healthy Community Together

Your year end gifts make all the difference.

Visit www.tchi.ca for payment options.

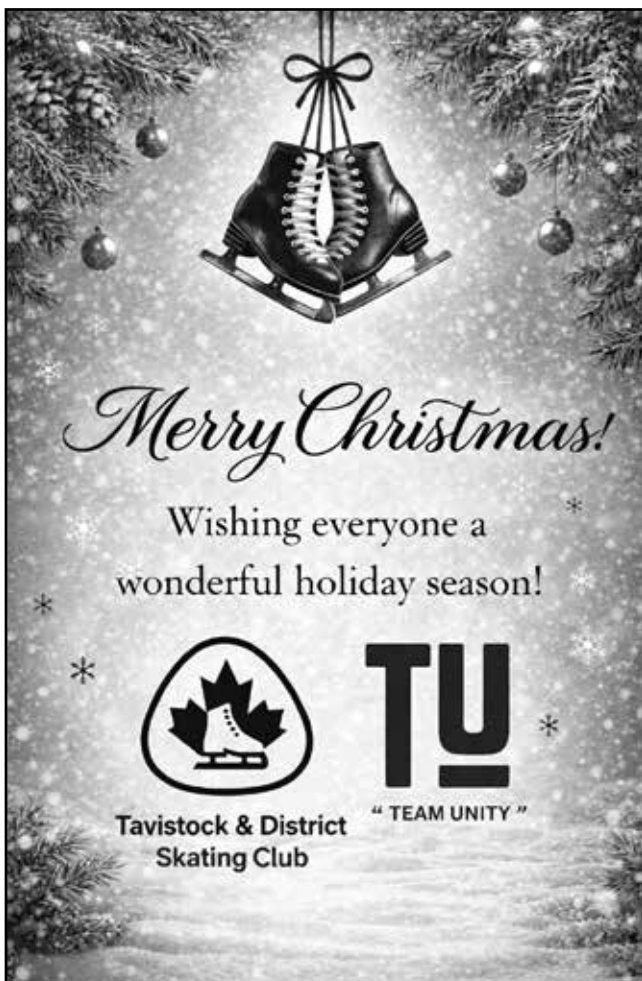
Any amount is appreciated.

Tax receipts will be issued for amounts of \$20 or more.

THANK YOU!



TAVISTOCK COMMUNITY HEALTH INC.



HAVE A STORY IDEA?

SEND IT TO OUR EDITOR GALEN SIMMONS
AT GALEN@GRANTHAVEN.COM

Santa draws a crowd at Sprucedale Public School

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Sprucedale Public School was the place to be on Saturday afternoon as families streamed in following Shakespeare's annual Santa Claus parade.

Inside the gymnasium, Santa settled into his big, comfy chair and welcomed a steady line of excited children eager to share their Christmas wishes.

Parents and grandparents snapped photos as each child climbed onto Santa's knee for a quick visit and a treat. The atmosphere was festive and warm – a perfect continuation of the holiday spirit that filled the village earlier in the day.

After meeting Santa, youngsters were invited to take part in Christmas crafts set up around the gym, adding another layer of fun to a much-anticipated community tradition.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Bennett Plumb and his mom, Heather, are greeted by Santa inside the Sprucedale gym after the parade. Dad Kyle captured the moment while grandparents Gary and Angie Plumb of Shakespeare looked on.



Hoven Sinclair enjoys her annual visit with Santa, accompanied by her mom, Amanda Roth of Shakespeare. Kids visiting Santa were also invited to make festive crafts throughout the gym.

MERRY
Christmas

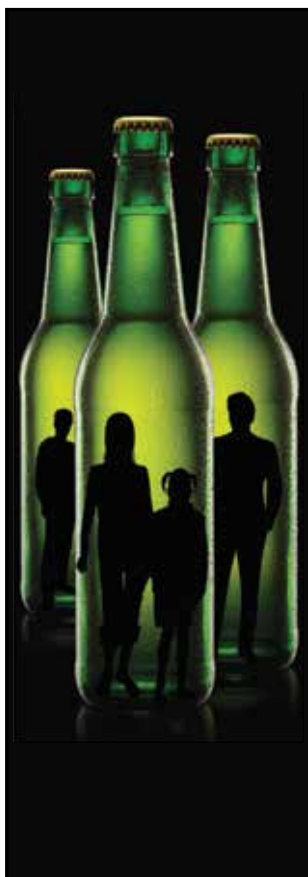


From our family to yours,
have a very
Merry Christmas and a
prosperous New Year!

*Thank you for your
support in 2025*

Holiday Hours:

Wednesday, **December 24th** Open 8am-5pm, Thursday, **December 25th** Closed
Friday, **December 26th** Closed, Wednesday, **December 31st** 8am-5pm
Thursday, **January 1st** Closed
Hot Deli Closed December 24th and 31st at 2pm



**NOT EVERYONE
TRAPPED
BY ALCOHOL IS AN
ALCOHOLIC**

Families and friends
are suffering too

**Al-Anon & Alateen
could help**



App
available

1-800-706-9833
al-anon.alateen.on.ca



1-888-4AL-ANON • AL-ANON.ORG

*Best wishes for a joyous Christmas filled
with love, happiness, and prosperity*



www.peakrealestate.com

INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED

90 - C Peel Street, New Hamburg, Ontario, N3A 1E3
Office: 519-662-4900 Cell: 519-635-3171
shirley.koehle@gmail.com



Shirley Koehle
Sales Representative

Hickson firefighters deliver another season of generosity to TAP

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Each December, not long after Santa and Mrs. Claus make their visit to Hickson, the village's firefighters turn their attention to another important tradition: gathering donations for the Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP).

This year was no exception as Hickson Fire and Rescue once again filled their trucks with food, toys and gift cards generously contributed by local residents and farm families.

TAP program director Angie Brenner was invited to the firehall this week to load up the donations, which will be distributed to individuals and families in need across Hickson, Tavistock and Shakespeare.

Longtime firefighter Kevin Kaufmann said the department first began collecting for TAP in 2020 and has been overwhelmed each year by the level of community support. He thanked everyone who contributed, noting the smallest

acts of giving often make the biggest difference for families facing a difficult holiday season.

Brenner shared her gratitude on behalf of TAP and the people the program serves.

"TAP would like to offer our sincere thank you to the communities of Hickson, Shakespeare and Tavistock for the kindness and consideration shown once again to our area friends and neighbours," she said. "Emergency services, sports teams, businesses, service clubs, churches and community members have come together this Christmas season to provide food, gifts and comforts to those in need."

"I have had the honour of delivering gifts and food over the last number of weeks, and each and every person I visited expressed their sincere thanks for the generosity of those who had a little extra to share again this year."

Her message speaks to the spirit of the season and to the continued commitment from Hickson firefighters, who help ensure those in need are not forgotten.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Hickson firefighter Kevin Kaufmann helps TAP program director Angie Brenner load donations collected from local residents. Food, toys and gift cards gathered by Hickson Fire and Rescue will now be distributed to families in need across Hickson, Tavistock and Shakespeare.

Community invited to join in dramatic retelling of Jesus' final days

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

Several years ago, Richard and Jean Smelski were travelling through Brea, Ky., when an unexpected stop turned into an unforgettable experience.

While attending a local church service, they took in a dramatic presentation of The Last Supper, an experience they describe as deeply moving and truly lifechanging.

Once they returned home, the impact of the performance stayed with them. Wanting to share this experience with their own community, they began talking with others

about creating a similar dramatic retelling of the final week of Jesus' life.

They connected with Rev. Gail Fricker, a gifted minister and storyteller, who wrote an original drama titled The Table: Bread. Wine. Betrayal. The production explores the stories behind the events of Jesus' final days, touching on timeless themes of faith, friendship and betrayal.

The play will be presented at Shakespeare Presbyterian Church on Friday, March 27, 2026, and Saturday, March 28, 2026.

Community members are invited to take part in this amateur production, with auditions scheduled for Jan. 9 and 10, 2026. Both speaking and non-speaking roles are available. Rehearsals will begin on Sunday, Jan. 18, 2026. No theatre experience is required, just an interest and commitment in participating and being part of a meaningful community project.

Shakespeare Presbyterian Church hopes to bring members from surrounding churches and communities together to share in creating this powerful and memorable dramatization.

For more information or to book an audition, email Richard Smelski at rjsmelski@gmail.com.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

After seeing The Last Supper during a visit to Kentucky, Jean and Richard Smelski were inspired to share the experience with others, bringing community members together to create a similar production.

Season's Greetings

Debbie Hammer
Designs

www.debbiehammerdesigns.ca

I know not how that Bethlehem's Babe
could in the Godhead be;
I only know the manger Child
has brought God's life to me.
I know not how that Calvary's cross
a world from sin could free;
I only know its matchless love
has brought God's love to me.
I know not how that Joseph's tomb
could solve death's mystery;
I only know a living Christ,
our immortality.
Hymn by Henry Lowell Mason 1923



Wishing you a blessed Christmas and a peaceful 2026.
The Gummerson and Green Families

SHAKESPEARE TRUCK CENTER

Hwy 7&8, 2322 Line 34 Shakespeare 519-625-8510

*December 24 - 7:30 am - 12:30 p.m., *December 25, 26, 27, 28 - Closed
*December 31 - 7:30 am - 8:00 p.m. *January 1 - Closed *Jan. 2 - 7:30 am - 4:30 pm

No matter where you're
celebrating this holiday
season, may it be filled
with peace and happiness

Thank you for trusting us with your travel needs
this past year. Your support means the world to us!

Happy Holidays & Safe Travels!

210 Mill St., New Hamburg, ON N3A 1P9
226-333-9939
newhamburg@stonetowntravel.com
TICO#5002840

**STONETOWN
TRAVEL**

www.stonetowntravel.com

150 Queen St E, St. Marys, ON N4X 1B4
519-284-2332
agent@stonetowntravel.com
TICO#5002839



Christmas Tyme in Wellesley parade draws crowds and colourful floats

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Santa Claus rolled into Wellesley last weekend to lead one of the village's most vibrant Christmas Tyme in Wellesley parades in recent memory.

With crisp temperatures, fresh snow and

streets lined with enthusiastic spectators, the community delivered a festive display that captured the spirit of the season.

Locals, businesses and community groups turned out with brightly decorated floats, showcasing the creativity and pride that small-town Ontario is known for.

Residents Wendy and Bruce Richardson were among the many impressed parade-goers, calling the evening "a super Christmas spectacle" and one of the best they've seen.

From youth sports groups to farm-equipment operators, parade participants

brought their best to ring in the holidays, giving Santa a warm Wellesley welcome as he made his way through the village.

Organizers and participants alike can take pride in an outstanding community event that left young and old smiling under the falling snow.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Young players with Twin Centre Minor Hockey enjoyed an easy ride on their colourful float – much less effort than a hard-fought game on the ice.




Shepherds on a festive nativity themed float pass by CIBC during the Christmas Tyme in Wellesley parade.



Santa waved to a packed crowd as he travelled through Wellesley's streets during the parade last Friday night.

HAVE A JOLLY GOOD SEASON!



Thanks to all our customers for your patronage in the past years and wishing you a prosperous and happy new year.

Bill Ferguson and Family and Staff

HICKSON MOTORS
164 Loveys Street, Hickson • 519-462-2886

Wishing our community a safe & joyous holiday season!

MERRY Christmas

15 Arcadian PROJECTS
arcadianprojects.ca
519-804-9697

INTEGRATED ENERGY SOLUTIONS
Decarbonization
Net Zero Technologies
Energy Optimization

MULTI TRADE SERVICES
Electrical & Mechanical Trades
Operational Efficiencies
Innovative & Sustainable Solutions

Memories of Christmas past courtesy of the Tavistock and District Historical Society

TAVISTOCK AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Introduction

When Tom Zimmerman and I were looking for items to add to the Tavistock and District Historical Society (TDHS) Christmas display at the Tavistock Arena, Tom came across a story about skating that appeared on the front page of The Tavistock Gazette dated Wednesday, Dec. 22, 1982.

This beautifully written – clear, vivid and memorable article – shares a fun, childhood experience in the early 1930s entitled Skating Skimmings written by the late Robert (Bob) Krug of Tavistock. We added the article to the Tavistock Arena Christmas display and decided, with permission from Sherrill Calder, to share it with the readers of the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette too.

“Bob’s words are magnetic; I couldn’t stop reading,” said Marilyn Pearson, a volunteer with TDHS. “Every sentence lands with exceptional clarity and rhythm. Bob is not just a writer, he is a wordsmith – an expert in the choice and use of words that results in a memorable story.”

Krug, with his wife Beatrice, owned and operated Krug Funeral Home and Krug Furniture Store for over 40 years in Tavistock. He passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 23, 1990, at the age of 68 at the

home in which he was born.

“I believe it’s fair to say that Bob’s innate talent is hereditary and has been passed down to his daughter, Sherrill Calder, a longtime member of the Tavistock and District Historical Society,” Pearson added. “Her unmatched writing skills are found in their newsletter, YESTERDAY, along with house histories and researched material she has meticulously prepared on anything and everything related to Tavistock and community.”

Each time I see the neighbourhood youngsters wending their way toward our local “recreational basin” complete with

Skating Skimmings

ROBERT KRUG

Tavistock Gazette

hockey equipment stowed out of sight in a usually oversize duffel bag, or at least with a pair of skates slung over their shoulder, my mind reverts to the days of our youth when we headed the opposite direction complete with identical, but much less elegant, wintersports necessities. In those days of the early 1930s, our free skating surface was the frozen pond behind the local Cheese and Butter Company buildings – a delightful place it was on a frosty and moonlit night. In fact, the only time it was

better was Saturday afternoon when we could enjoy its pleasure longer.

To the best of my knowledge, none of us at any time asked permission to use this ice surface prior to the time it was annually cut for refrigeration purposes. Seemingly, we just knew that to do so was completely in order, thanks to the kind generosity of Henry Neeb, the then congenial manager of the local butter-making establishment.

The warm boiler room of the factory provided a perfect “change room” and again, “Cheesemaker” Neeb as he was commonly and endearingly known to all the local gentry of that era, was sufficiently thoughtful to provide benches to sit on to don and doff our skates or for brief respite from the nippy air or to relax tired leg muscles. We had no walls to protect us from the wintry winds, no recorded waltz music to skate to and no electric lighting system to tell us to turn the opposite direction.

The full moon, at that time still the sole property of the Creator, provided illumination. Occasionally, the nocturnal hooting of a great horned owl perched high in the bush across the Dover Line tracks on the neighbouring Conrad Mogk farm and wafting across the snowy silence provided the tempo to glide over the ice surface.

Then there was the Saturday night in July of 1938 when the water from the same pond was used for another purpose than



(IMAGES COURTESY OF TAVISTOCK AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY)

The Tavistock and District Historical Society's Christmas display at the Tavistock Arena.

the edge of town. Recalling the short space between the back metal brace and the end of the runner, cutters were not designed to accommodate winter hitchhikers complete with seasonal footwear, often purchased two sizes too large to endure more than one

Continued on page 39



Dine, LAUGH & BE MERRY

Thank you for sharing so many of your special moments with us this year. Your presence truly warms our table. Cheers to good company, festive flavours, and a joy-filled holiday season from all of us.



39 Snyder's Road West, Baden
519-634-5711
www.badenhotel.com



Continued from page 38

snowy session, and bound for that outdoor recreational oasis of the yesteryear behind the building that manufactured Sprucedale butter by the pound print and by the countless thousands of them.

As the passage of time plunges ever onward in its headlong flight to “who knows what and where” and two of “our gang” of the lean 1930s have now passed to the life in the land beyond the sunset where loveliness never dies, my keen regret is that in our youthful quest for pleasurable pastimes, we likely never expressed our thanks to Henry and Emma Neeb for the many hours of winter happiness that their generosity provided for us youngsters at no admission charge to dad’s oft-times depleted and consequently flattened wallet. At this late date, perhaps a word of sincerest appreciation to their children, Harold, Florence and Henrietta, will suffice to show that their father’s mammoth kindness and thoughtfulness will always be cherished memories to all who enjoyed gliding in the moonlight in our “shrimp kepp” (tasselled stocking caps), home knitted warm wool mufflers and “fist” mittens and omni-present and always, where applicable, cast off from elder brother “long johns” now half a century ago when oft-times we shared our “blades,” too large or too small, with our school friends where



The original scan of Robert Krug’s Skating Skimmings column.

family income did not permit money to purchase this winter pleasure equipment. Regrettably, totally so, today’s youngsters will never know what they have missed in life by being deprived of this enjoyment in the Creator’s great out-of-doors while the man-in-the-moon kept a constant wary vigil on our youthful winter activities, simple and outdated as they were by today’s lifestyle – or were they?

Merry Christmas

from Tavistock Men’s Club,
President: Brian Boland

MEN'S CLUB
SINCE 1937
TAVISTOCK

www.tavistockmensclub.ca

From my family to yours, wishing you a very
MERRY CHRISTMAS
and a joyful holiday season!

ERNIE HARDEMAN
MPP - Oxford

ernie.hardemanco@pc.ola.org
519-537-5222 • 1-800-265-4046

Gazette Puzzles

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

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

Away in a Manger	Joy to the World	The First Noel
Deck the Halls	Let It Snow	We Three Kings
Feliz Navidad	O Christmas Tree	What Child Is This
Here Comes Santa Claus	Silent Night	White Christmas
Jingle Bells	Sleigh Ride	Winter Wonderland

SPONSORED BY:

ZEHR
INSURANCE BROKERS LTD.
Since 1954 | www.zehrinsurance.com

PROTECTING WHAT MATTERS TO YOU

59 Huron Street New Hamburg, ON 519-662-1710	24 Hope Street Tavistock, ON 519-655-2422
--	---

Pet of the Week

BISCUIT

Meet Biscuit! He is a loving, friendly cat searching for a furever home filled with love. He’s a chatty boy who can’t wait to share his stories with someone special! Affectionate and easy-going, Biscuit enjoys lounging with his feline foster siblings and would make a wonderful addition to a calm, caring home.

Biscuit is currently on a special vet-prescribed diet that he will need to continue. A good relationship with your veterinarian is helpful when adopting a cat with specific needs, and we’re happy to share his records with your vet before adoption so everyone is confident in his care.

Biscuit is available through our Stratford centre, and if you think you might be his purrfect match, apply today! Learn more, please visit: www.kwsphumane.ca/adopt/cats

SPONSORED BY:

TLC PET FOOD

3514 Bleams Rd, New Hamburg, ON
519-662-9500 | www.tlcpetfood.com

W Physiotherapy & Sports Performance offers patients a chance to get back to living their full lives

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



W Physiotherapy & Sports Performance opened its doors in New Hamburg back in August, and the business has been getting rave reviews ever since.

Matt and Claire Wardrop, couple, co-owners and the two smiling faces patients see walking through the doors are on a mission to change the quality of life for the people they serve. They offer a wide range of techniques and tailor-made treatment plans – and have a trail of top-notch testimonies.

Matt and Claire Wardrop's personal story didn't begin in our town, but they were drawn to the strong sense of community, purchasing their first home here before they began building a business.

Matt Wardrop grew up in Owen Sound, playing a wide range of sports and excelling at fastball,

representing Team Canada in 2014. He graduated with a Bachelor of Kinesiology from Wilfrid Laurier University and completed his Master of Physical Therapy degree at Western University.

With a strong foundation in competitive sports and a love for personal training, his knowledge is well-rounded. As a primary health practitioner, Matt Wardrop's passion is one of a kind, focused on patient-centered care.

Claire Wardrop, the other half to the dynamic duo, grew up in Oakville, meeting Matt Wardrop while studying at Western. She went on to graduate with a Bachelor of Science with a specialization in Kinesiology. She wears many hats in the clinic. From the cheery welcome at the front desk to balancing the books

to managing social media, Claire Wardrop is always there to assist.

Why physiotherapy? Physiotherapy helps restore movement, mobility and function due to illness, injury or disability. Reducing pain improves strength, balance and flexibility. Physiotherapy is non-invasive and can improve quality of day-to-day life and prevent future issues without medication or surgery.

The clinic sees a variety of injuries ranging from acute, such as sprains and broken bones, to chronic conditions, the most common being back pain.

The clinic treats a lot of athletes, and concussions are common among younger clients, especially ones playing hockey. W Physiotherapy offers pre-injury baseline concussion testing.

According to Matt Wardrop, the best plan for enjoying a physically active, fit and fabulous future is prevention. Focusing on keeping muscles strong minimizes joint pressure, improves balance and reduces the risk for slips and falls. He points out personal training is for everyone, and offers one-on-one, small group and softball-pitching training.

January 2026 brings exciting



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

W Physiotherapy & Sports Performance is located 148 Peel St., Unit 2, in New Hamburg.

news. Dr. Joscyline Cadwell, a chiropractor, will be joining the team. Cadwell earned her undergraduate degree Western University, going on to complete her Doctor of Chiropractic at Northwest College of Health Sciences. By combining in-office, hands-on therapy, spinal adjustments and take-home programs, each client has a personalized plan to ensure long-term success.

W Physiotherapy is on a mission. Matt and Claire Wardrop want "to empower you to move better, recover with

purpose and perform your best every day." They are committed "to providing evidence-based, personalized care in a supportive and motivating environment."

"Whether you're an elite athlete or working towards a more active lifestyle, our goal is to help you reach your peak potential and prevent future injury," the couple says.

Make a date with W Physiotherapy and let 2026 be the year to discover the perfect plan of action to start living an energetic and pain-free life.

"This holiday season, we are looking back with appreciation for your loyalty and looking forward to moving into the New Year together."

HOLIDAY HOURS:
 December 24th: 9:45am to 1:00pm
 December 25th: Closed
 December 26th: Closed
 December 31st: 9:45am to 1:00pm
 January 1st: Closed
 January 2nd: Closed

DOLMAN EYECARE
 251 Huron Street, Unit B, New Hamburg
519-662-3340
www.dolmaneyecare.com



Claire Wardrop, left, and Matt Wardrop, right, of W Physiotherapy & Sports Performance in New Hamburg.

MERRY
Christmas
 AND
 HAPPY NEW YEAR

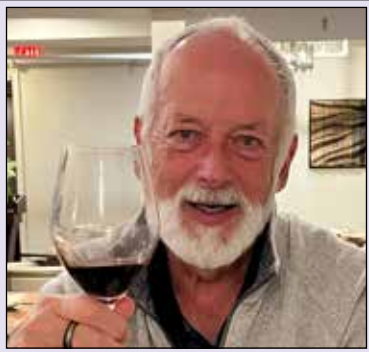
Wishing you a joyful holiday season filled with warmth, happiness, and time well spent with loved ones. Thank you for trusting us this year—we look forward to serving you in the new year!

McKay Plumbing Ltd.
 Mark, Holly & Family and Jill Roth

Can't wait to see old friends on stage in 2026

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



About 20 years ago, I discovered that CBC Radio was promoting community-based readings of Charles Dickens' wonderful story, "A Christmas Carol." The idea was initiated by CBC radio news anchor Judy Maddren. CBC would provide scripts, posters and a volunteer reader for such an event if local organizers did the rest.

I liked the idea and so did some others in the community of New Hamburg. So, we contacted CBC Radio, got the supplies and started to recruit the other four readers we would need, as well as some musicians.

The way it worked was the story was read in five "staves" by five separate readers, with musical interludes between each stave. Charles Dickens himself had converted and abridged his novel for live presentation and had been the first one to do such a reading in 1853.

I emceed our first one a century and a half later. Although we didn't present such an event every year, we did do at least 10 in New Hamburg, Fullarton and London, and I got to emcee each one, sharing the stage with fabulous readers.

And what, you are asking by now, has this to do with travel?

Okay, maybe it's a bit of a nostalgic stretch, but stay with me. To digress for a moment (it will all come together, I promise), I am a big fan of the Stratford Festival and I think it is important to write about Stratford – both the festival itself and the rest of the community, a day-trip destination we are very lucky to be close to.

So, I was interested to receive the full menu of plays being mounted at the festival in 2026, including a

list of all of the actors appearing on Stratford stages next season.

The playbill looks great, by the way. Check it out on the festival website (stratfordfestival.ca). I can't wait to see *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Guys and Dolls*, the return of *Something Rotten*, *The Importance of Being Ernest* and much more. It will be a superb season.

And the reason I link 2026 Stratford with my fond memories of Dickens' readings? Well, that first year, as we stumbled our way through a process we had never done before, we realized our proximity to Stratford might mean we could do something special. So, we naively reached out to some wonderful actors who were appearing on the Stratford stage at that time. First to say "yes" was the amazing Brian Tree, showing amazing trust in us. Brian not only came to read the fifth and final stave (which he did for us several more times over the years), he also brought with him Thom Marriot, a terrific actor, hugely impressive as the Ghost of Christmas Present. And we were off and running.

Subsequent Dickens events saw the returns of both Brian and Thom, and a revolving cast of Stratford greats. The readings were so well performed that in 2010, when Judy Maddren herself came to read, she told me it was the finest she had ever attended. After CBC Radio stopped sponsoring the readings, we continued with five first-rate volunteer actors every time.

And so, as I read the details about the 2026 festival season, I was thrilled that half a dozen of "our" actors will be on stage in Stratford

next year. These are folks who volunteered their time and talent for our readings and never ever took it for granted. They brought their full passion and commitment every time.

Sara Topham (in our Dickens in 2008, 2011 and 2017) will be busy this year; she is Titania in one of my favourite Shakespeare comedies, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, she plays Cath in *The King James Bible Play* and she is also movement director in *The Hobbit*.

Steve Ross (2017) – who knocked it out of the park in previous seasons in *La Cage aux Folles* and *The Rocky Horror Show* – will play Shylock in the much-anticipated return of *Something Rotten* and Nicely-Nicely Johnson in *Guys and Dolls*, where he gets to bring down the house with "Sit Down, You're Rocking the Boat."

Rod Beattie (2014) – famed for his *Wingfield Farm* one-actor plays, but also well known for his work in classical theatre – is back on the Stratford stage playing Antonio in *Saturday, Sunday Monday*.

Stratford icon Lucy Peacock (2006) plays Miss Prism in *The Importance of Being Ernest* and Linda Loman in *Death of a Salesman* where she will share the stage with another of "our" alumni – Tom McCamus (2009). Tom is the tragic protagonist, Willy Loman, and will also appear as Estragon in *Waiting for Godot*. And finally, Tom McCamus' wife, Chick Reid, who joined us for a Dickens' reading (2009), appears in *Death of a Salesman* and as Brabantia in *Othello*.

So, forgive me for wallowing in nostalgia, but I for one can't wait to see these generous and talented people on stage, once again, in the best theatre in Canada, in a city which I think is the number one day-trip destination in southern Ontario.

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.



(DAVID HOU PHOTO)

Sara Topham as Hermoine (front-right) and André Sills as Polixenes (front-left) with members of the company in *The Winter's Tale*. Stratford Festival 2025.



(DARIANE SANCHE PHOTO)

From left, Lucy Peacock as Linda Loman and Tom McCamus as Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*. Stratford Festival 2026.



(ANN BAGGLEY PHOTO)

Steve Ross as Shylock in *Something Rotten*! Stratford Festival 2024.

At This Time Of Year...

Thoughts turn to loved ones, both past and present,
Of happy childhood memories
Unwrapping toys, helping with the baking and licking the bowl,
Remembering always their kindness and love.
Sweet times gone by
During your time of loss and sorrow, thank you for the
confidence placed in us.

Futher-Franklin
Funeral Home Ltd.

1172 Henry Street,
Wellesley, N0B 2T0
519-656-2880
chris@futher-franklinfuneralhome.com
www.futher-franklinfuneralhome.com



Rod Beattie, on stage at Stratford again in 2026.



Chick Reid appearing at the Stratford Festival for her 14th season in 2026.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF STRATFORD FESTIVAL)

*From Our Home to Yours,
Merry Christmas!*

*Wishing you
a season filled
with every
little happiness.*

*Thank you
for being such
great friends!*



*Residents, Staff and Management of
The Maples Home for Seniors*

www.caressantcare.com



ALISON WILLSEY

Real Estate Broker

REALTOR® since 2005



PROFESSIONAL

HONEST

EXPERIENCED

Direct : 519-275-4900

Office : 519-747-0231

www.peakrealtyltd.com

www.willseyrealestate.com

willseyalison@gmail.com

*Merry
Christmas*



**HAPPY HOLIDAYS TO CLIENTS, COLLEAGUES,
FAMILY & FRIENDS**

Wishing all my clients, family, friends, and colleagues a SAFE, JOYFUL, and MEMORABLE HOLIDAY SEASON. May you enjoy time with loved ones and find moments for REST, REFLECTION and REJUVENATION.

As I celebrate 20 years in real estate, I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to my clients for your LOYALTY, TRUST and continued SUPPORT. I am truly grateful for the meaningful relationships built over the years and for the privilege of helping you navigate your real estate journeys.

Warmest holiday wishes,

Alison Willsey & Family

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: What's on your budget wishlist, Wilmot?

'Tis the season! Health, happiness, prosperity and peaceful coexistence is a common wish. I add transparency, accountability and trust-building actions to my Wilmot list.

Using her Strong Mayor Powers as head of council, the mayor took unilateral control of the 2026 budget process. She called a public council meeting at Castle Kilbride on Nov. 10 asking Wilmot residents what they wished for in a 2026 budget.

Only three people delegated. The director of development services submitted a seven-page "wishlist" of 379 capital items totaling \$240,291,345 over 10 years. The 2026 wish total alone is \$27,076,560. There is no matching column indicating where the revenue to finance each item, each year, is projected to come from.

A fellow citizen noted that "cost-cutting is absolutely essential," and suggested that "a zero-based budgeting process would be absolutely ideal."

I asked that all the financial documents that will serve as the basis for decision-making be publicly available before asking taxpayers to make recommendations, as was past practice. Mayor Salonen didn't want discussion about "democratic process," and only wanted an aspirational wishlist.

Since Nov. 10, KPMG has been working (for \$130,000) to produce all the financial documents that previous Wilmot staff had not.

OK. Here are the things the Strong

Mayor wouldn't hear on Nov. 10 and are still on my wishlist. I'm wishing for:

Transparency

1. The 2025 budget, recreated by KPMG, based on actual expenditures, to compare to a 2026 proposal.
2. A proposed 2026 budget for each of: a) utilities levy, b) school boards' levies, c) operations 2026, d) capital 2026, e) 10-year capital forecast, f) asset management plan, g) infrastructure risk assessment for assets above and below ground over 30 years, h) All of the 2026 budgets formatted with two sub-columns – one showing planned expenditures and a matching / balancing column showing where the revenues for each expenditure are to come from, i) proposed total tax percentage increase.
3. The prioritized lists, with rationale, for expenditures in operations and capital that can be referenced by councillors and taxpayers in weighing proposals. Taxpayers can't make recommendations to councillors for amendments if we don't have the data and time to study it and comment on it in public townhalls, not at Castle Kilbride.
4. The delinquent (as of Nov. 10) financial information returns (FIR) for the years 2023 and 2024. The FIR 2025 is due May 31, 2026. These are standardized reports about a

municipality's financial position and activities for the previous year which the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing requires when determining whether Wilmot is eligible for provincial grants.

Accountability

5. A series of "townhalls", not in the stifling, seven-minute-restricted Castle Kilbride format, for presentation of all budget-setting information. The Strong Mayor is chair with KPMG, staff department heads to add accurate data and information, and all councillors present to listen. This is not an official council meeting as no decisions that forward the business of council will occur. The agenda will include an information session by staff, and opportunities for Q&A. Councillors listen to taxpayers. As citizens, there are a lot of "unknown knowns." That is, the Strong Mayor knows and senior staff know all the information, but we taxpayers don't even know yet what questions to ask until we get the information and can listen to each other ask questions and discover new information we want to comment on.

Trust-building actions

6. It is a normal human learning strategy: listen to each other in ongoing discussion and then know when to apply our own values to

the information in a sharing atmosphere. It is during this stage when a Strong Mayor can prove they are listening. Ensure that a record is made of public comments, concerns, suggestions. Publish these on the budget webpage and convince taxpayers their budget and priorities are valid and appropriate. Prove to citizens that their plan will be successful this time after all these past years of failures. Build trust through transparency and fulsome honesty.

I have six wishes for financial information and a democratic decision-making process. Wilmot staff have, so far, 379 wishes for \$240+ million.

What's on your wishlist, Wilmot? You have to pay. Do you want a say? I invite you to tell the mayor and council by emailing Mayor Natasha Salonen at natasha.salonen@wilmot.ca, calling her at 519-634-8519 ext. 7, or emailing township councillors at council@wilmot.ca.

Because of all the terrific sponsors/advertisers in this area, Stewart Grant is able to provide this newspaper to us for free. Pick up an extra copy and pass it to a neighbour who may want to contact the mayor with their wishes.

Wishing peaceful health, happiness and prosperity to all.

Barry Wolfe,
Baden



PERTH COUNTY OPP



PARK IT.



LOCK IT.



POCKET.

**Over half of stolen vehicles had the keys left inside.
Know the risks. Don't be an easy target.**

CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)

Proactive approach to reduce crime by designing and organizing spaces so homes and businesses are safer and harder for criminals to target.

Good news! Perth County residents can request a FREE Assessment to identify vulnerabilities in their homes and receive advice on safeguarding their property. Contact Perth County OPP to learn more! (519) 393-6123



PERTH COUNTY OPP

CAMSAFE (Volunteer Registry of Security Cameras)

Volunteer registry aimed at keeping our community safe and informing police if any cameras are available in the neighbourhood.

CAMSAFE does not have access to footage or cameras - only basic contact info. Delete your information or account at any time. Register any cameras with as many or as few details as you wish. Visit camsafe.ca to learn more.



Non-Emergency Line: 1-888-310-1122



Merry Christmas
Jesus is the light of the world!
Thanks for a great year.
Electrical Innovators
519-801-9473
 ESA/ECRA 7010779

LETTER TO THE EDITOR: A Christmas angel at Punkeydoodles Corners

We just know them as Tonya and Cody.

We were going to my in-laws' home in St. Marys from Guelph Saturday and ended up in the ditch just before Punkeydoodles Corners on Perth Road 101. We were on hold for about 30 minutes trying to get a tow.

Many trucks and vehicles drove by and then we saw a white truck turn around, pull up and offer a hand. Within minutes, they had pulled us out and sent us on our way, not even accepting my offer to pay them.

Tonya just said, "It was our pleasure to help."

These two changed the course of our day. I send this just to say, we don't know who you are, but we are grateful and if you see Tonya and Cody around, buy them a coffee for us or give them a hug.

This world needs more people like you!

*Domenic and Paula Rossi,
 Guelph*



(PHOTO COURTESY OF DOMENIC AND PAULA ROSSI)

Locals Tonya and Cody helped Domenic and Paula Rossi of Guelph out of a ditch in Punkeydoodles Corners while they were waiting for a tow, allowing the out-of-towners to get back on the road to visit their in-laws in St. Marys Dec. 13.

True partnership, made from the Ring of Fire

There's an area in Northern Ontario rich with critical minerals. By partnering with Indigenous leaders to develop the land, we will create lasting benefits for all Ontarians.

Learn more at ontario.ca/RingOfFire
 Paid for by the Government of Ontario



**PROTECT
 ONTARIO**

Ontario



North Easthope Public School stages a Christmas concert to remember

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Anyone who has ever had a child or grandchild in the North Easthope Public School Christmas concert knows the magic this rural school can create year after year.

That tradition continued Tuesday as students from kindergarten to Grade 8 took

the stage for a holiday performance that filled the gymnasium with music, laughter and proud family members.

Music director Colleen Rothwell and principal Charles Longston led the school through two packed shows – one in the morning and one in the evening – after the original concert date was postponed five days earlier due to a snowy-day bus cancellation. Appropriately, this year's show

was titled "The Snowy Day."

Each class contributed a unique piece to the program, with students singing, acting and dancing through a lineup of seasonal favourites. Musical selections included "A Sleigh Ride," "Wizards of Winter," "Chubby Little Snowman" and "Winter Fantasy." The finale brought the entire school community together as students and audience members stood to sing "We

Wish You a Merry Christmas," creating a heartwarming finish to the evening.

For a small country school in North Easthope Township, just west of Amulree, the concert once again showcased the talent, enthusiasm and community spirit that have become hallmarks of its annual holiday production.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Students fill the stage with song during one of two performances of the North Easthope Public School holiday concert on Tuesday.



Key organizers behind this year's Christmas concert included, front row from left, Gracie, music director Mrs. Rothwell, Mrs. Brace and Eva. In the middle row, from left, are Enoch, Garrett and principal Mr. Longston. In the back row, from left, are Alex, Andrew, Landon, Cam and Hunter.

Serving
Ontario
Agriculture
since 1966!



B-W FEED & SUPPLY
BEYOND NUTRITION
WWW.BWFEED.CA • 519-662-1773

Family owned
&
Operated

Proud sponsor of the Community Calendar

COMMUNITY CALENDAR - DECEMBER 2025/JANUARY 2026

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18

Wellesley Council Budget Meeting
9 a.m.
Council chambers
4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20

Tavistock and District Historical Society Museum open 1 - 4 p.m.
37 Maria Street, Tavistock

MONDAY, DECEMBER 22

Wilmot Council meeting
7-11 p.m.
Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road W., Baden



WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship
12 noon
Cost: \$15.00. Please register by Jan. 9 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Wellesley Recreation Complex,
1401 Queen's Bush Rd., Wellesley

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship
12 noon
Cost: \$15.00. Please register by Jan. 16 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Wilmot Rec Complex,
1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting
7 p.m.
Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship
12 noon
Cost: \$15.00. Please register by Jan. 23 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Linwood Community Centre,
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

MORNING & EVENING BIBLE READING

Read the Bible in a Year in Community
Morning meeting 6:00am daily
Evening meeting 6:00pm daily
Contact Arthur Rosh if interested.
Phone number: 226-899-1551
Email address: arthur.rosh@gmail.com
Location to be determined in New Hamburg, Tavistock, Baden, Wellesley, New Dundee, St. Agatha, Shakespeare, Petersburg, Hickson, Punkeydoodle's Corner and area

EVERY WEDNESDAY

TOPS - Taking off Pounds Sensibly
Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
TOPS is a non-judgmental weight loss support group. Need help on your weight loss journey. For info call Cathie 519-662-9273.
St James Church, Baden

Wednesday Night Euchre at the New Hamburg Legion
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
65 Boulee St., New Hamburg

STAMP CLUB

Oxford Philatelic Society
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2-4pm) and 4th Tuesday (7 to 9pm)
September to May
If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection.
Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com
Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>
Church of the Epiphany
560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7

FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES

Tavistock Seniors Activities @ Tavistock Memorial Hall, 1 Adam St. Tavistock ON, except Shuffleboard
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
Inside walking Monday & Wednesday morning 8:30-12. Contact: Larry Brown 519-240-6715
Crokinole Monday, Wednesday morning 8:30-12, Just drop in to play, good to bring someone. Contact: John Schultz 519-655-2346
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



RE/MAX

a-b REALTY LTD.
BROKERAGE
INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED

88 Wellington Street, Stratford, Ontario N5A 2L2

OPEN HOUSES



**SATURDAY,
DECEMBER 20
1:00-3:00 P.M.**
**101 RUDY AVENUE
TAVISTOCK**
MLS#X12139631
NEW PRICE \$924,900

TWO STOREY CUSTOM BUILT HOME WITH 4 OR 5
BEDROOMS- 3.5 BATHS- INGROUND SWIMMING POOL



**SUNDAY,
DECEMBER 21
1:00-3:00 P.M.**
**48 WELLINGTON STREET
TAVISTOCK**
MLS#X12547948
PRICE \$649,900

3 BEDROOM - 1 FULL BATH AND 2 - 2 PC - ONE WITH A SHOWER ROUGH IN
LOW MAINTENANCE YARD - FINISHED FAMILY ROOM IN THE BASEMENT



Sandra Eby

Sales Representative
Office: 519-273-2821 or Cell: 519-272-7676
Email: mseby@rogers.com

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

CHRISTMAS TREES – Beautiful Ontario Balsam trees.

PRICE REDUCED TO \$50.

Available at 75 William St., N., Tavistock.

Fundraising project of Tavistock Grace United Church, Middle Aged Pews. Thank you for your support.

FOR SALE

Hundreds of shade trees, fruit trees, apples, pears, peaches, plums, sweet and sour cherries, apricots, nectarines, blueberries, haskapp grapes, raspberries, elderberries etc. Lots of spruce, pine, cedars for windbreak and privacy hedges. Sizes 1-8 ft. in containers ready to go. Flowering shrubs and much more. Mon-Sat 7:00am to 6:00pm

Martin's Nursery, 42661 Orangehill Rd Wroxeter, ON N0G 2X0 (1 Conc. North of Wroxeter on Belmore Line)

WANTED

\$ Cash Paid \$ for your RECORDS and LPs. Jazz, Blues, Rock, Pop, Folk, Soundtracks, and more. Selectively buying CDs, Cassettes, Turntables, and Stereo Equipment. For more information: DIAMOND DOGS MUSIC 114 Ontario St. Stratford/ 226-972-5750

WANTED

I will pay cash for antiques and collectibles. Coca Cola, Pepsi, any pop company, Brewery items Kuntz, Huether Labatts, etc. Old radios and gramophones, Wristwatches and pocket watches, Old fruit jars, Beaver Star Bee Hive etc. Any old oil cans and signs Red Indian Supertest etc Any small furniture. If you are moving or cleaning out stuff please contact me - 519-570-6920.

WANTED

In search of vintage stereo equipment pre 80s. Receivers, amps, speakers, records etc.
Preston - 519 770 7366 - prestonsoutar@gmail.com

TO PLACE YOUR CLASSIFIED ADS CONTACT:
thewtgazette@gmail.com

SERVICE DIRECTORY —

ASSISTANCE



TAVISTOCK ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

**Assistance for people & families in
Shakespeare, Tavistock, Hickson**

519-655-3500
tapisforyou@outlook.com
NEIGHBOURS HELPING NEIGHBOURS



TAPISFORYOU.COM


AUTOMOTIVE



**Full Service
Maintenance &
Repair on All
Makes & Models**

272 Snyder's Road, Baden
matt@badenauto.ca

AUTOMOTIVE



CSN - E&L
374 Hamilton Road,
Unit 4, New Hamburg, T: 519-662-1892
ON, N3A 2K2 E: newhamburg@likeneu.ca
Website: csncollision.ca/el
24-Hour Towing Assistance 1-877-700-4CS (4276)

**To book your space
call Heather Dunbar
at 226.261.1837 or
heather@granthaven.com**

CABINETRY



**Specializing in Custom Kitchens, Baths,
Mantels, Bars, Entertainment Centers**

Mike Foster • 519-655-2874

www.selectivecustomcabinets.com

e-mail: selective@sympatico.ca

380 Woodstock St. S. Unit 8, Tavistock

CLASSES

KARATE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL! SCHWEITZER'S MARTIAL ARTS

6 weeks plus uniform only \$139.99!

Taxes extra. Beginners only.

Join now or give as a gift

Special ends Jan. 2, 2026

Group classes for ages 4 to adult

Classes taught by Renshi Becky Schweitzer,
5th Degree Black Belt and 12X World Karate Champion

Location at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
23 Church Street, New Hamburg

Call 519-580-1418 or

e-mail becky_schweitzer@hotmail.com

www.schweitzersmartialarts.com

SUDOKU SOLUTION

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

Christmas Quiz Answers

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. The North Pole | 6. Cindy Lou Who |
| 2. Nine | 7. Candy, candy |
| 3. An old silk hat | canes, candy |
| 4. Hansel and Gretel | corns, & syrup |
| 5. Bah! Humbug! | 8. Milky white |
| | 9. In a manger |
| | 10. Boxing Day |

TO BOOK YOUR SPACE, EMAIL THEWTGAZETTE@GMAIL.COM

SERVICE DIRECTORY —

CHIROPRACTIC

LAFAY FAMILY CHIROPRACTIC

Dr. Stephen M. LaFay (Chiropractor)
New Patients Always Welcome
296 Ontario St. Stratford
519-273-4404

COMPUTERS

73 PEEL ST., NEW HAMBURG
519-662-6720

NOW SELLING AUDIO INTERFACES AND OTHER MUSICAL ACCESSORIES!!

★ VIRUS REMOVAL
★ ON SITE AND IN-STORE SERVICE
★ NEW AND USED COMPUTERS

FOCUS COMPUTERS

CONSTRUCTION

Agcore Brian Stere
519-276-1851

CONSTRUCTION LIMITED
Foundations, Floors, Driveways, Patios
Drive Sheds, Barns & Bunk Silos

General Contracting - Anything Concrete!
www.agcore.ca • bster@agcore.ca

RESIDENTIAL AGRICULTURAL COMMERCIAL

MOHR CARPENTRY

New Buildings and Renovations.
Box 250, Tavistock
Ph: 519.655.2355
info@mohrconstruction.com

COUNSELLING

WENDY LANTZ Therapy

Social Worker / Psychotherapist
MSW, RSW

2450 Huron Road, Wilmot, ON, N0B 2H0

519-580-6088
wlantz@rogers.com
https://wendylantz.ca

• Individuals
• Couples

DENTAL

Tavistock Dental
DR. KWON KIM

Offering I.V. Sedation,
Nitrous Oxide, Implant Tooth
Replacement and Root Canal
Treatment

48 Woodstock St. N.,
Tavistock, ON N0B 2R0
Tel: 519 655 2101
info@tavistockdental.ca
tavistockdental.ca

GET NOTICED

PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS HERE

DENTAL

Wilmot Smiles
Independent Dental Hygiene Clinic

Where smiles are contagious!

NEW HAMBURG, ONTARIO

SERVICES (all ages welcome): dental
cleaning & polishing (stain removal),
teeth whitening, custom sport
mouthguards, oral cancer screening,
denture cleanings & more!

ONLINE BOOKING @ www.wilmotsmiles.ca
226-880-1648 lisa@wilmotsmiles.ca

CONTRACTORS

ENTWISTLE
CONCRETE & LANDSCAPE

DRIVEWAYS | PATIOS | WALKWAYS
STEPS | RETAINING WALLS

• EXPOSED AGGREGATE 519-501-5260
• STAMPED
• SPIN FLOAT entwistlecl@hotmail.com
• BROOM FINISH www.entwistlecl.com

FIVESTAR
CUSTOM CONCRETE LTD.

Foundations • Floors • Driveways • Sidewalks

Jon Willsey 519-778-2616 Tavistock, ON
jwillsey@fivestarcustomconcrete.com
www.fivestarcustomconcrete.com

M&G Carpentry

ADDITIONS • RENOVATIONS
REPLACEMENT WINDOWS & DOORS
DECKS & INTERIOR FINISHING

GARY PEARSON 519-655-2825

JW JON WITZEL
CONTRACTING LTD.

Residential • Commercial
Agricultural • jonwitzel.com

519-662-4239

Paving stone (installation & repair), sidewalks, patios,
pool decks, planters, driveways, retaining walls

ZEHR
INTERLOCK & MORE

P.O. Box 979, Tavistock
Kris Zehr Cell: 519-801-1743

ELECTRICAL

Specializing in Agricultural, Solar,
Automation Control and EV Charging

Crescent Ridge
SERVICES

163 Hope St. W. Toll Free: 1-855-655-6802
P.O. Box 495 Local: 519-655-6802
Tavistock, ON N0B 2R0 Email: info@crescentridge.ca

MOGK ELECTRIC

BRADIN MOGK
(519) 535-4767 / mogkelectric@gmail.com

RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURAL

ECRA/ESA License #7016946

EXCAVATING

JEL-JOE HAULAGE

EXCAVATING SERVICES
Skidsteer and Mini Excavator

Randy Fletcher 519-272-3641

HEALTH SERVICES

REBALANCE
Health and Wellness Inc.

FEATURING
Manual Osteopath
Registered Massage Therapy
Psychotherapist (Qualifying)
R.P.N. Consulting

519-545-2442
148 Peel St, Unit 10
New Hamburg, ON
www.RebalanceHealthandWellnessInc.com
info@RebalanceHealthandWellnessInc.com

To book your space
call Heather Dunbar
at 226.261.1837 or
heather@granthaven.com

LANDSCAPING

WE DESIGN & BUILD LANDSCAPES

Ross Yantzi's

PAVESTONE PLUS LIMITED

WWW.PAVESTONE.CA

REAL ESTATE

ALISON WILLSEY
Real Estate Broker

REALTOR® since 2005

PROFESSIONAL
HONEST
EXPERIENCED

peakrealtyltd.com willseyrealestate.com willseyalison@gmail.com

PEAK REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

Direct: 519-275-4900
Office: 519-747-0231

RE/MAX a-b REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED

DEDICATED TO MEETING ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS!

Serving Tavistock, Stratford & Area since 1994
88 Wellington Street, Stratford, ON, N5A 2L2

SANDRA EBY, Sales Representative
mseby@rogers.com • www.remmaxabrealty.ca

Cell: 519-272-7676
Res: 519-655-2548
Office: 519-273-2821

REMAX a-b REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE

INDEPENDENTLY OWNED & OPERATED

Brian Wilhelm BROKER
CELL 519-272-3465
brian@brianwilhelm.com

Kyle Wilhelm SALES REP
CELL 519-574-7244
kyle@brianwilhelm.com

MASSAGE

Massage Therapy Associates of Tavistock

KRISTY SCHLEGEL, RMT
24 Hope St. W., Tavistock

- Prevent & Treat Muscular Disorder
- Restore & Enhance Physical Well-Being
- Massage Therapy • Reflexology

Ph: 519-655-2512 for appt. or inquiries

PLUMBING

McKay Plumbing
Commercial - Residential - Agricultural

Mark McKay 63 Hope St. W.
Owner/Operator Box 899, Tavistock
NOB 2R0
519-301-1097 markmckay@rogers.com

REAL ESTATE

THINKING OF MAKING A MOVE?

KATE GINGERICH
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

kate@paulandkatekw.com
226-789-3846

PAUL & KATE
GOING THE DISTANCE FOR YOU

540 Riverbend Dr.
Kitchener, ON, N2K 3S2

STORAGE

STORE YOUR STUFF!

MINI STORAGE: 8x13/8x16/10x11
INTERIOR MINI STORAGE
Call for Pricing!

MOHR STORAGE
114 John St, Box 250, Tavistock
Tel: 519-655-2355 • Fax 655-2715

RENT A BOX

Portable Storage Containers
Sizes 8'x12' to 8'x24'
Store at your place or ours.
Phone 519-625-8510

TRAVEL

STONETOWN TRAVEL

Main office: 150 Queen St E,
St. Marys • 519-284-2332
210 Mill St, New Hamburg • 226-333-9939
www.stonetowntravel.com

To book your a space call
Heather Dunbar at
226.261.1837 or
heather@granthaven.com

WE ARE **NOT** CLOSING! **COMING SOON** **NEW NAME**

SAME GREAT PEOPLE, SAME GREAT PRODUCTS

 **Home** *furniture*

SPECIAL PURCHASE LAST MINUTE GIFT!

GLIDER RECLINER



Leather/match
3 colours Available

\$799
TAXES IN

SWIVEL GLIDER RECLINER



Leather/match
4 Colours Available
Black, Blue, Silver, Latte

\$999
TAXES IN

ELECTRIC FIREPLACE



Fireplace flat/corner,
Black Espresso,
40w x 36h x 16d

UP TO 50% OFF RECLINERS STARTING AT \$499 TAX IN



519-273-9330
2954 Hwy 7&8 E

Mon. - Fri. 10-6, Sat. 10-5,
Sun. 12-4

Follow us on:



www.stratfordhomefurniture.ca
www.homefurniture.ca