

Exeter Examiner

VOL. 3 • ISSUE 1

Thursday, March 12, 2026

FREE



Andrew Darling

Mortgage Agent Level 1, Lic #M25000482

"Get 25+ years in the mortgage industry working for you."

Cell: 226.376.1641

Email: Andrew.Darling@mortgagegroup.com

Web: www.andrewd.tmgbroker.com



Exeter Examiner

NEWSPAPER

Your Free Community Newspaper

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

CONTACT US AT:

info@exeterexaminer.com

519.284.0041

granthaven.com

Huron County removes Airport Line roundabout from 2026 budget

DAN ROLPH

Editor

Plans to create a roundabout at the intersection of Airport Line and County Road 83 west of Exeter won't be moving forward this year.

County council voted to remove the project from the draft 2026 county budget in a tight 8-7 vote during the Feb. 18 council meeting, marking the second time the project has been delayed in the budget process.

The roundabout project was first considered for inclusion in the 2025 budget and delayed with the intention of moving forward this year.

Discussions over the busy intersection turned into action in 2021 when the county began investigating improving the intersection, focusing on safety concerns about drivers failing to stop at the intersection while travelling along Airport Line.

Since the intersection started drawing attention, safety measures including flashing lights, rumble strips and reduced speed limits have been implemented there in the hopes of quelling fears of a major accident on the stretch of road that sees heavy traffic going toward the lakeshore, particularly in the busy tourist season.

According to a report created for the county by B.M. Ross and Associates, the intersection saw 16 reported accidents from 2017 to March 2022, with

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



FINDING ITS WAY HOME

(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

A copy of the first yearbook published by the former Exeter District High School has been donated to the library at South Huron District High School. The yearbook, which belonged to longtime school secretary Doris Ohmayer (Schwartz), was kept in almost perfect condition. Pictured are school technical resource assistant Robyn Cox, who accepted the donated yearbook, and Karen Windsor, Ohmayer's niece who found the yearbook after aunt's death.

She kept everything: 76-year-old yearbook finds its way home

DAN ROLPH

Editor

A unique piece of local history now sits on the shelves of the library in South Huron District High School, thanks to one local woman who was the "face of the high school" by the time she left.

That piece – the first yearbook published by what

at that time was Exeter District High School in 1950 – was found by Karen Windsor, the niece of former school secretary Doris (Schwartz) Ohmayer.

Ohmayer, who died in October 2025 at 95, held onto that yearbook and kept it in near mint condition, with its black velvet cover almost untouched and the words "Ink Spot" the only thing time has faded.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 5

AROUND THE WORLD WITH

STONETOWN TRAVEL

150 Queen St E, St. Marys, ON N4X 1B4

519-284-2332 agent@stonetowntravel.com TICO#5002839

www.stonetowntravel.com

JOIN US ON ONE OF OUR GROUP TRIPS



BALTIC CRUISE
AUGUST 11 TO
AUGUST 22, 2026



MARITIMES & CAPE BRETON
AUGUST 29 TO
SEPTEMBER 6, 2026



DANUBE RIVER PLUS PRAGUE
NOVEMBER 1 TO
NOVEMBER 13, 2026

COMMUNITY

Huron County removes Airport Line roundabout from 2026 budget

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

causes including animals, drivers disobeying traffic controls, inattentive drivers and drivers failing to yield the right of way.

That B.M. Ross report found there was a need for improvements at the intersection and recommended a roundabout over the alternative of a traffic signal.

The busy stretch of road along County Road 83 is also expected to see its traffic levels rise over the next two decades, which the B.M. Ross report found could cause further issues at the intersection.

Coun. George Finch, who is also the mayor of South Huron, labelled the idea of delaying the project as “irresponsible” while speaking at the meeting.

“This is a ticking time bomb that needs to be dealt with immediately,” he said.

Coun. John Becker also spoke in favour of continuing with the project’s inclusion in the budget, pointing to his personal experiences witnessing drivers fail to stop at the sign.

“People are not adhering to the speed,” he said. “We have the results from our consultants telling us that there’s these accidents and near misses.

“Who carries the liability down the



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

The proposed roundabout at the intersection of Airport Line and County Road 83 won't begin construction this year after the project's removal from the draft 2026 county budget.

road when we don't address the problem that's out there in front of our noses?"

Some members of county council, including Coun. Jim Ginn, sought further

information about whether the already existing safety measures had any impact and noted that the B.M. Ross report was completed before many of the safety

measures were put in place.

“We’ve made many changes in that area, including reduced speeds and bigger signs,” said Ginn. “To my knowledge, we haven’t had any kind of a major accident there. That’s why I would defer it.

“Next year, the council of the day may decide to kill it,” he added.

However, county staff noted waiting for further information before making a decision about this year’s budget would have left the county unable to tender the project in 2026, effectively deferring it to next year at the earliest.

The roundabout’s removal from the draft 2026 budget comes as county council searches for ways of combating a potentially hefty tax rate increase. The cut was presented for council’s consideration alongside other potential cuts, including the removal of 14 non-union staffing positions, ending an annual grant to the Huron County Food Bank Distribution Centre and delaying the proposed expansion of the Huronlea parking lot.

With cuts to the budget, the county is aiming to keep this year’s tax rate increase below six per cent.

Meet the Exeter Examiner team



Stewart Grant
Publisher

Stewart graduated from Ivey Business School at Western University in 1997 and then began a 25-year career in accounting. The purchase of his hometown St. Marys Independent in 2014 began an adventure in community newspapers which has since grown to 12 publications following the mission of restoring local journalism, one community at a time. Stewart and his wife Laurie are avid travelers and often host group trips for Stonetown Travel, an agency which he purchased in 2018.



Dan Rolph
Editor

A lifelong news junkie, Dan Rolph always wanted to get into the media business. He attended Mohawk College in Hamilton, graduating from the journalism program. Looking for a life away from the city, he moved to Lucan in 2019 and pursued a career reporting the news in Huron County. When he’s not busy chasing a story, Dan spends his time traveling, reading, playing board games and enjoying walks on Lake Huron’s beautiful beaches with his wife, Molly.



Deb Lord
Advertising Rep

A familiar face in local newspapers for more than three decades, Deb Lord has built a career rooted in community connections. Starting as a graphic designer in Exeter and St. Marys, Deb progressed to sales representative and then general manager. Deb started her career under Jim Beckett’s mentorship and moved on to Metroland and Postmedia media groups.

She is looking forward to working with her clients past and present in this new venture.



John Miner
Reporter

A long-time resident of Usborne Township, John Miner attended Usborne Central School and South Huron District High School. Starting his journalism career in Exeter after graduating from Western University, John has worked for community and daily newspapers in Ontario and Saskatchewan, including stints as a reporter, business editor, agricultural writer and online editor. When not on his farm or in the sugar bush, John enjoys back-country hiking and canoeing.



Meg Pearson
Reporter

Born and raised in Exeter, Meg Pearson attended Exeter Elementary and South Huron District High School before earning her diploma in television broadcasting from Loyalist College. With an international career that’s leapt from broadcasting to holistic wellness and digital marketing, she returned to Huron County in 2023 to be closer to family. When she’s not behind her computer, you’ll likely find her travelling somewhere sunny, dancing to ’80s and ’90s rock or chasing her two young kids.



Samantha Lawson
Reporter

Samantha Lawson is a Huron County native, growing up outside of Seaforth and attending Central Huron Secondary School before moving to Hamilton for Mohawk College’s journalism program. She worked for InSauga.com and later joined the team at CHCH News. After moving back home, Samantha found herself in Bayfield with the Bayfield Breeze. When she’s not writing, Samantha enjoys building and collecting miniatures, being outdoors and keeping active in her spare time.



Kyrath Smith
Graphic Designer

Kyrath Smith is your friendly neighbourhood journalist and graphic designer. A resident of Ingersoll since 2016, she has always had a passion for storytelling and the arts; if it’s creative, she’s all in. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Kyrath earned her degree in 2D animation and graphic design and received a distinction in illustration. When she’s not writing or designing, she can be found strumming her ukulele, still very much a novice, but enthusiastic nonetheless.

LIVE YOUR BEST LIFE



Goderich Place RETIREMENT RESIDENCE

Proudly Serving
THE GODERICH COMMUNITY
FOR OVER 30 YEARS

Ask about our
UNBEATABLE
MOVE-IN
Specials!

30 BALVINA DRIVE E., GODERICH
www.goderichplace.ca

INDEPENDENT LIVING

Thoughtfully designed bachelor 1 & 2 bedroom suites, many with kitchens, kitchenettes & balconies. Well planned amenity spaces include hair salon/spa, 1st rate dining room, games room, library, craft room, movie theatre, tv lounge, nursing care, and snack bar.*

RESPIRE & SHORT TERM STAYS

Offering the most comprehensive short term rehab services in the Goderich Area. The focus is on you, your outcomes, your goals, returning you home stronger than before.*

MEMORY CARE/ALZHEIMER'S

We have a specialized, secure wing within Goderich Place focused on a Montessori based program & proven methods of engagement, designed to create, enhance & stimulate each individual's interests.*

*An assortment of care packages available tailored to your needs.



Call Jennifer Puckett
to Arrange a Tour

519-524-4243 EXT 224

EDITORIAL

Exeter Examiner 2.0

STEWART GRANT

Publisher

Many readers will recall that roughly ten years ago, on July 8, 2016, I suspended operations of the original Exeter Examiner. After buying the St. Marys Independent in 2014 and having some initial success, I was keen to expand this newspaper model into nearby Exeter, and we optimistically rolled out the first issue of the Examiner on June 19, 2015.

Our newspaper was raw and folksy, but people always told us that they enjoyed it, and they appreciated that they could read it for free, with advertising sales ideally covering the costs of operations.

While we made a good try of it over 29 bi-weekly issues, as a father with a young family I felt it would be irresponsible of me to continue to incur financial losses in a start-up newspaper that still faced a formidable competitor in the Metroland-owned Exeter Times Advocate.

Even as we closed the doors in 2016, I always felt philosophical about the experience. I loved the entrepreneurial adventure – meeting so many new people, closing sales, and trying to make a positive difference.

On the financial side, I didn't classify the losses as permanent, but rather as "tuition". Lessons were learned from this interesting experience. In fact, in that final edition, I recounted the "Top 10 Key Success Factors for the Exeter Examiner" as I made the case for its eventual return.

So here we are, ten years later. It is time for the Exeter Examiner to return.

Going back to my Economics course at Western about supply and demand, while people continue to have the demand for local news and information, so much has changed on the supply side. Local news in so many communities has vanished, while in others like Exeter, the newspapers are mere skeletons of their for-

mer selves.

In 2016, Metroland and Postmedia dominated the news industry throughout the province, including small towns where they had bought up family-run independents over the preceding decades. But this started to change in late 2017, when the two media giants completed an anti-competitive deal that closed three dozen community newspapers, including the St. Marys Journal Argus.

In the years that have followed, Metroland and Postmedia have continued to drastically cut their staff, reduce page counts, and stop publishing print editions altogether in many communities.

The big conglomerates have failed to adapt to the internet era. They continue to charge for readership of their papers, even as they insult readers by scaling back their local coverage and shift operations out of town.

At Grant Haven Media, we've been busy the last few years by trying to restore journalism to communities that have been abandoned by the media conglomerates. In 2020, we bought the 125-year-old Tavistock Gazette and gradually expanded it from an 8-page paper to a 32-page "Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette". In 2021, we started the Stratford Times as a monthly which has since evolved into a weekly that has surpassed the Beacon Herald. Within the last three years, we've started the Woodstock Ingersoll Echo, the Goderich Sun, the Tillsonburg Post, the Simcoe Advocate, and the Paris Independent, all of which have been meaningful additions to the communities that they serve.

It's particularly special to me to be restarting the Exeter Examiner, where this whole adventure began. We have learned so much over the past ten years and this time we return to the Exeter area equipped with an incredible local team that includes Dan Rolph, Deb Lord, Meg Pearson, John Miner, Samantha Lawson and I'm sure many to follow in the future.



Stewart Grant, owner and publisher.

(FILE PHOTO)

I have a spreadsheet that tracks the sales of advertising for start-up newspapers. Exeter Examiner 2.0 is the ninth community newspaper that we have started from scratch, and we are already well ahead of pace versus the previous eight, which is a testament to the strength of this community.

It took four years for the Stratford Times to grow from a monthly newspaper to a weekly. The Tillsonburg Post began as a bi-weekly but had enough advertising support to move to a weekly within nine months. I'm hoping that with the continued support of Exeter, Lucan, Hensall, Zurich, Grand Bend and all areas in between, we can shift the Exeter Examiner from a bi-weekly to a weekly publication in record time so to best serve the continued desire and need for local news and information.

**GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA**

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

Exeter Examiner
N E W S P A P E R

Publisher

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Editor

Dan Rolph • dan@granthaven.com

Graphic Design

Kyrah Smith • info@exeterexaminer.com

Sales Representative

Deb Lord • deb@granthaven.com

Business Development

Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com

Billing Administrator

Jen Gaetan • jen@granthaven.com

Contributors

Meg Pearson, John Miner, Samantha Lawson, Bob Haywood,
Amy Wilhelm, Colin Carmichael, Paul Knowles

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2
info@exeterexaminer.com | 519.284.0041 | granthaven.com

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



Exeter Examiner
N E W S P A P E R

Have something to say?

Submit your Letter to the Editor to us at info@exeterexaminer.com

Exeter Examiner Guiding Principles
N E W S P A P E R

1. Everyone has a story
2. The news should be free for all to enjoy
3. Good news beats bad news
4. A Newspaper should be a community effort (contribute to your local paper!)
5. Newspapers document history
6. Newspapers strengthen communities
7. Advertisers, big or small, should profit from their ads (meaning sensible ad rates)
8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

South Huron lands \$2.7 million grant for Exeter Main Street rebuild

DAN ROLPH

Editor

The third phase of reconstruction of Exeter's Main Street will have shovels in the ground next year after receiving a \$2.7 million funding boost from the provincial government on Feb. 17.

Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson visited Exeter's town hall to celebrate the funding announcement, which comes through Ontario's 2026-27 Connecting Links program.

"Exeter is a gateway," said Thompson. "When you think of the four corners at Highways 83 and 4, right through into Middlesex, this matters.

"It's a no brainer from a Connecting Links perspective."

The third phase of Exeter's Main Street reconstruction will stretch from Victoria Street to Sanders Street.

The Connecting Links grant is the third received for the project, with the first two phases having each received \$3 million.

South Huron Mayor George Finch pointed to Exeter's aging infrastructure as a reason the work is vital to the community's future.

"If we don't do something proactive, we're damaging our reputation and the

future generations of South Huron residents," he said. "That's not the reputation we want.

"We want to be progressive."

Finch said South Huron has a "great" relationship with the province, which has helped the municipality in pursuing funding for such hefty infrastructure projects.

"Many municipalities are applying for the funding across Ontario, and we're very happy to get this funding," he said.

Though the mood was celebratory as Thompson announced the Connecting Links funding, the project's third phase did face roadblocks last year on its path to securing the grant.

When the project was first discussed by council in Sept. 2025 they were split on the matter. Finch supported pursuing the grant, alongside councillors Ted Oke and Aaron Neeb.

However, councillors Wendy McLeod-Haggitt and Marissa Vaughan voted against pursuing the grant, while Coun. Milt Dietrich didn't cast a vote and Deputy Mayor Jim Dietrich wasn't at that meeting.

Finch soon after used his "strong mayor" powers to veto that vote, and a bylaw directing municipal staff to pursue the grant was brought before council in Oct.



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

South Huron received \$2.7 million from the province on Feb. 17 to help fund phase three of the reconstruction of Main Street in Exeter. Pictured from left is Coun. Wendy McLeod-Haggitt, chief administrative officer Rebekah Msuya-Collison, Huron-Bruce MPP Lisa Thompson, infrastructure and development manager Don Giberson, transportation services foreman Taylor Hodgins, Mayor George Finch, environmental services manager Alyssa Keller and Coun. Marissa Vaughan.

2025, passing with support from Finch, Oke, Neeb and Jim Dietrich.

Vaughan and McLeod-Haggitt also voted against that motion, while Milt Dietrich was absent from the meeting.

Finch said the Connecting Links funding will save the municipality from spending tax dollars to tackle Main Street's reconstruction, which will re-

place 60-year-old infrastructure beneath the roadway.

"Those projects have to be completed because it's not going to fix itself," said Finch. "Everybody takes it for granted that those pipes are okay. Our staff, they realize that they have a shelf life, and you've got to invest in that in order to make sure it's safe."

76-year-old yearbook finds its way home

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Windsor said she didn't initially think much of the book beyond its sentimental value as she went through her aunt's possessions after her passing, but in time, she began to understand the importance of what she'd found.

"It's in pristine condition," said Windsor. "I wanted it to be somewhere where it stayed in that condition."

Collections of the high school's yearbooks exist both at the Huron County Library Exeter Branch and the high school's library, but copies of that first 1950 yearbook weren't part of those collections on the shelves.

That was until Ohmayer's copy was donated to South Huron District High School's library on March 2.

The yearbook was published the same year Exeter's high school opened, replacing the building that is now Exeter Elementary School. The same building that opened in 1950 is where today's students go to learn 76 years later – albeit in a school that's been expanded several times over the years.

Ohmayer's career at the school began when she was one of those students. After the school's principal, H.L. Sturgis, visited Ohmayer's parents at their home to tell them of their daughter's potential, she began working in the school office in 1949.

By the time she retired in 1990 – 41 years after she first started working at



(PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY KAREN WINDSOR)

A young Doris (Schwartz) Ohmayer stands in front of the newly built Exeter District High School.

the school – she was running the office as head secretary.

"This career was extremely important to her," said Windsor. "Everyone knew Doris, and their children knew Doris. She was the face of the high school for a long time."

Even in her first year working at the school, it's Ohmayer's face that can be seen front and centre in the first photo featured in the yearbook alongside the rest of the school's staff.

However, what stood out to Windsor was that while the rest of the staff members were identified as "Mr." or "Mrs.," her aunt was called "Doris Schwartz" in

the list of those in the picture.

"It was probably never Ms. Schwartz," said Windsor. "That's the way it was.

"She was tremendously close to the kids. They had to follow the rules and there had to be structure, but the kids would all come in and see Doris."

The yearbook itself acts as a time capsule from an era just after the Second World War, where secondary school education was seen as the pinnacle of schooling for most Canadians. Dozens of local businesses proudly advertised between the pages dedicated to preserving the names and images of the students who first learned in the new

school, while much of the writing below those photos is noticeably handwritten, not typed.

A stark contrast when compared to today's digitally crafted yearbooks.

The school's first yearbook wasn't the only piece Ohmayer kept from her time at the high school that clearly meant a great deal to her.

Amongst many photos from Ohmayer's time at the school, in nearly perfect condition, Windsor found a red booklet — the very first typing job Ohmayer had completed as secretary at the school. Attached to that booklet with a now-rusted paperclip was a note, written in her aunt's handwriting and signed "Doris" that stated principal Sturgis "was really pleased" with her work.

"She has kept that all these years," said Windsor. "She kept everything."

Windsor said she and her family would often find her aunt running into people in Exeter who knew her as she went about everyday life in Exeter after leaving the school, and that those run-ins with former students were a "thrill" for Ohmayer.

"We're extremely proud of her," said Windsor. "You just don't see this much anymore, people having this longevity in one place.

"For her to be the one in the office that was taking your late slip or typing up exams in the corner, to touch people the way she did was pretty incredible."

ACTION HEALTH CARE

SALES • SERVICE • RENTALS

Senior of the Week



Our senior of the week is Anne Cottel (nee Caldwell). Anne was born in the Clinton Hospital on May 15, 1947. She lived in the Blyth area until 1968, when she moved to Crediton after marrying her husband, Dave. Anne has two children, two grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

She was an RNA in Wingham and Exeter. Anne also shared her kindness in the home care field for 21 years.

Anne is a life-long member of the Crediton Women's Institute (disbanded in 2020). She is also a member of the Crediton Community Centre Improvement Committee and a member of the Crediton United Church. Anne enjoys cooking, baking, reading and watching the London Knights games. During the Christmas season, Anne's home shines brightly with her large Christmas Village display.

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, contact us at info@exeterexaminer.com

WEEKEND QUIZ

By Jake Grant

1. What is the blue birthstone for March?
2. What day is international Women's Day celebrated each year?
3. The month of March is named after Mars, the roman god of what?
4. In what year did the first official Paralympic Games take place?
5. How many degrees make up a triangle?
6. The "Ides of March" refers to what famous assassination?
7. What was the name of the first stealth bomber introduced for warfare?
8. Which film franchise features Marty McFly?
9. What is the birth flower for March?
10. What's the oldest pub in Ireland?

This week's answers are found on pg. 30

Bluewater bans hunting on municipal properties



A sign at the entrance of Varna's Stanley Complex, where Bluewater council meets.

(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

DAN ROLPH

Editor

Hunters on municipally owned properties in Bluewater could face fines after the adoption of a new bylaw in the municipality.

The bylaw, which was passed by council during the March 2 council meeting, prohibits all hunting on municipal properties, including hunting with firearms, bows and traps.

The idea of a hunting ban was first brought before council in January, when municipal staff told councillors of several instances of hunting on municipal lands in 2025 while staff were present, leading to concerns about the safety of employees.

If Bluewater continued to allow hunting on its properties, it could have led to liability issues if an employee were injured in an incident — particularly as many of Bluewater's properties of concern don't use controlled entry measures.

The new bylaw prohibits hunting on municipally owned properties including parks and recreational

lands, water operations properties, woodlots and naturalized areas, unopened road allowances, gravel pits and aggregate properties, landfills, sewage treatment plants and any other lands owned by Bluewater.

Though the bylaw was approved during the meeting, Mayor Paul Klopp said he expected members of council would hear from constituents about the new ban and noted that there wouldn't be proactive measures in place to penalize hunters.

"They're not going to be out there ... seeing someone going across a side road when they're hunting," he said. "When someone does something really not right, at least we have the power to take action."

However, Coun. Bill Whetstone cautioned against painting the bylaw's enforcement in such a way.

"I don't think we should be saying they're not going to be there," he said. "At the end of the day it's like any bylaw. If somebody complains, we enforce. It's as simple as that."

Though the new bylaw doesn't specify a fine, Ontario's Provincial Offences Act allows for fines up to \$5,000.

Hobby store that features Pokemon and Magic the Gathering trading card games, as well as Lego, Board Games, Warhammer and sports cards. We have a large in stock selection, but if you don't see it in store we can order it.

144 Courthouse Sq., Suite 300 (Basement), Goderich, ON
519-612-2050 | mtgnorthcanada@gmail.com
www.mtgnorth.ca

Andrew Darling

Mortgage Agent Level 1, Lic #M25000482

Cell: 226.376.1641

Email: Andrew.Darling@mortgagegroup.com

Web: www.andrewd.tmgbroker.com

"Ask me about reverse mortgages and all your mortgage needs!"



THE MORTGAGE GROUP
THINK OUTSIDE THE BRANCH™

GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA

Exeter Examiner

SCAN TO READ THE ONLINE PAPER

www.granthaven.com



Burghardt-Jesson won't seek another term as Lucan Biddulph mayor

DAN ROLPH

Editor

The council chambers in Lucan Biddulph will have a new person at the helm this coming October after Mayor Cathy Burghardt-Jesson's announcement that she won't seek re-election in the fall.

Burghardt-Jesson was first elected mayor of the township in 2014 when she defeated former Mayor Paul Hodgins. Before becoming mayor she was deputy mayor on the township's five-member council after getting elected in 2010.

"I feel good about it," said Burghardt-Jesson. "I know that I've left Lucan better than when I stepped into it. It's not just because of me, it's the collective 'we.'"

During her time as mayor, Burghardt-Jesson also served three terms as warden of Middlesex County and ran as the Ontario Liberal Party candidate for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex in the 2025 provincial election, where she was defeated by Progressive Conservative Steve Pinsonneault.

Lucan Biddulph grew by about 20 per cent between 2016 and 2021 to a population of nearly 5,700, making it one of Ontario's fastest growing communities in that timeframe. That growth has been the context of much of Burghardt-Jesson's tenure as mayor and has seemingly continued as the community sees further residential and commercial development.

"When I got on council in 2010 I would never have thought that we would have seen the kind of growth that we have," said Burghardt-Jesson. "Nobody, I think, could foresee it happening in such an aggressive way. What we have experienced is not just because of decisions of the councils that I've sat on."

"What Lucan Biddulph is experiencing is because of collective work that has been done during the 2000s, but certainly, nobody can deny how we've been able to capitalize on it."

In pursuit of growth, Lucan Biddulph has moved forward with a project to expand its wastewater treatment plant, receiving more than \$17.6 million from the province for the expansion that is expected to facilitate further development in the community.

"That's been years in the making. We were certainly fortunate in getting a financial commitment from the province to help us with this project."

"For our users and for those that pay into the system, it's not like we woke up in January and said we need to do this. This project, to get us to this point, has been seven years in the making. It's been seven years of developing what it's going to look like, and it's been seven years of advocating to the province on the importance of why the province needs to invest in this project."

Burghardt-Jesson said she stepped into the mayoral role in 2014 with a list of items she hoped to tackle, and one of the items that was at the top of her list was the industrial park at the corner of Saintsbury Line and Fallon Drive. The township has worked to attract businesses to the community with fully serviced and developed lands, and that project is moving into its second phase of seeking bids from businesses that could include warehouses, truck terminals, manufacturers and more.

"I've lived in Lucan Biddulph for over 30 years, and there'd always been a sign at that corner," she said. "Nothing ever happened with it, so that was always a bee in my bonnet."

Another project that Burghardt-Jesson said she considered an accomplishment of her time as mayor is the traffic light that was installed at the intersection of Saintsbury Line and Highway 4 – a project that took nearly a decade of negotiations to come to fruition.

"The most famous traffic light in all of Ontario, I like to say," she said.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Lucan Biddulph Mayor Cathy Burghardt-Jesson has announced she won't seek a fourth term as mayor in October's municipal election. The announcement comes as Burghardt-Jesson enters the final months of her third term as mayor of the growing community.

Burghardt-Jesson said the township has also seen substantial changes in areas that may be less obvious to residents, such as how the township communicates internally, as well as with those in the community.

"There's much more opportunity for our residents to engage with us," she said. "Whether it's through social media, whether it's through our app, our digital footprint or our community events that we are always involved in, we always make sure there's a table there that has what's going on, where we can hear feedback."

"It's how we hear from our residents, and how we're hearing what's important to them, what they like and what they don't like. I'm very proud of how we've expanded our communication."

Burghardt-Jesson said the revitalization of the Lucan Biddulph Community Memorial Centre was a particular point of pride for her. Lucan Biddulph received about \$5.5 million from the federal and provincial governments to help fund the enhancement of its recreational hub, adding new community rooms, changing rooms, washrooms and a heated and accessible viewing area.

"Recreation, obviously, is incredibly important to our community," said Burghardt-Jesson. "Personally, it's been incredibly important to my family. I raised my children in that building. That revitalization has allowed us to present at a different level. You walk in the doors and all of a sudden you know you're in a professional setting. You're in a building worthy of 2026. Whether you're in the parking lot at 7 a.m. or 10 p.m., the parking lot is full because of the programming and what we're able to offer to our residents."

"Now, our residents don't need to go to a neighbouring community to get what they need, and that's really great to see that it's not just hockey on the ice. There's a wide variety of recreation programming."

Though Lucan Biddulph has gone through undeniable growth over the years, Burghardt-Jesson said the largest highlight from her time as mayor is the 2018 Kraft Hockeyville competition, when Lucan Biddulph showed its community spirit and was named the winner of the nationwide contest, earning a \$250,000 grant to upgrade the community's arena and an opportunity to host the Ottawa Senators and the Toronto Maple Leafs for a pre-season match.

"Winning was fantastic, and winning was great, and the game was wonderful, but for me, my takeaway will always be the voting weekend," said Burghardt-Jesson. "We brought the community together in a way that hadn't been done before."

Burghardt-Jesson said Sportsnet broadcaster Ken Reid, who was in Lucan for the competition, spoke to her about the excitement in the town during that weekend.

"He said 'I've never been to a community where the atmosphere has been so electric,'" she said. "You can't bottle that, and we talk about it to this day. You'll be in Foodland and somebody will bring it up, or you can be at a Lions Club event and somebody will bring it up."

"The whole thing was about bringing community together, and I will be always proud of that."

Though Burghardt-Jesson said there may not be projects she'd tackle differently with the power of hindsight, she said learning is an ongoing process, and communication continues to be an area that can be improved despite the improvements that have been seen.

"I don't mean this to insult anybody, but we do have a more sophisticated resident than maybe we've had in the past, and so the expectation of what we have to provide them, we're still learning about that and how to get information out to them in a way that they understand and that they can respond," she said.

Burghardt-Jesson said serving as Lucan Biddulph's mayor has made her learn the value of patience – particularly in the setting of government where she said progress can be a slow-moving process.

"Municipalities are a product of the province, and certainly we have seen with this government in particular, how they have really gotten down into the weeds of how municipalities are managed," she said. "That can make it very difficult when you want to get a project through when rules are always changing."

Burghardt-Jesson may have announced she has no intention of seeking re-election, but she still has the better part of a year as Lucan Biddulph's mayor. In the final months, she said she hopes to see shovels in the ground for the expansion to Lucan's wastewater treatment plant, which she said will give developers confidence in the community that was listed as one of Ontario's fastest-growing communities in the 2021 census.

"I want developers and home builders and builders in general to know that we're committed to that continued growth, and the only way that's going to happen is when shovels go in the ground for this," she said.

Other areas she hopes to tackle in her final months as mayor include the urbanization of several areas in town, including on Saintsbury Line where the new school is being built, as well as along Highway 4 toward the Glens shopping centre.

With her time as a mayor coming to an end later this year, Burghardt-Jesson had words of wisdom for whoever is chosen by residents to be next to pick up the gavel. She highlighted the importance of patience, flexibility and trusting municipal staff.

"We can't change everything all at once," she said. "You sit at the head of the horseshoe with humility and openness. Lucan's council is a council of five, and the mayor is only one voice. It is listening to not only your councillors, but to your residents. Take those phone calls. Have those conversations at the grocery store. Listen to what people are saying."

"Listen to them because they're going to tell you what's right and what's wrong, and be open to that."

As for what's next for Burghardt-Jesson after leaving office? She said she isn't certain of what the future holds, but that she won't be straying far from home.

"I'm committed to our community, so whether my service is in a political way or another way, I will still have an involvement somehow."

Loonies for Laundry initiative brings community together to support neighbours in need

MEG PEARSON

Examiner Reporter

A new community initiative in Exeter is aiming to ensure that no one goes without clean clothes during times of hardship.

Sawyer Dry Cleaning and Laundry Co., in partnership with the Exeter Lions Club, launched Loonies for Laundry, a grassroots program designed to provide free laundry services to individuals and families in need across the region on Feb. 1.

The idea for the initiative came from Exeter Lions Club member and vice president Marc Denomme when he noticed an unhoused man taking shelter inside the newly renovated Sawyer Laundry on a cold December day.

Denomme contacted co-owner Jayden DesJardine, who welcomed the individual to stay warm. The moment sparked a conversation about accessibility and dignity, and how something as simple as clean laundry can make a meaningful difference in someone's life.

For those experiencing financial hardship, access to clean clothes goes beyond hygiene. It can mean the confidence to attend a job interview, the dignity of sending children to school in clean clothing or a small but important step toward regaining stability. While acknowledging that homelessness and poverty are complex issues, Denomme said the initiative is about taking a step in the right direction.

"Laundry shouldn't be a luxury," he said.

To launch the program, Sawyer Dry Cleaning and Laundry Co. and the Exeter Lions Club each contributed \$600 to establish the initial fund. Every dollar do-



(MEG PEARSON PHOTO)

Sawyer Dry Cleaning & Laundry Co. co-owner Jayden DesJardine and Exeter Lions Club vice president Marc Denomme show one of the donation boxes for the newly launched Loonies for Laundry initiative. The program supports individuals and families in need by providing access to free laundry services through local community partners.

nated goes directly into a fund and is used exclusively to provide laundry services for community members in need.

Loonies for Laundry has partnered with five local organizations that work closely with families and individuals in the community, including Precious Blood School, Exeter Elementary School, South Huron District High School, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron and Noah's Ark. The organizations help identify those who would benefit most from the program and distribute punch cards that can be redeemed for free laundry services at Saw-

yer Laundry.

The goal is simple: one loonie helps provide one clean load of laundry.

Donation boxes have been placed at various locations around Exeter, and online donations are also being accepted at www.looniesforlaundry.ca. Community members are encouraged to donate any amount, with all contributions supporting local residents directly.

Sawyer Dry Cleaning and Laundry Co. is located at 342 Main St. S., at the corner of Main and Sanders streets. Co-owned by Jon Baker and Jayden Desjardine, the

business opened in September in the former home of the Exeter Cleaning Centre. The owners later expanded into the former Exeter Music Centre to accommodate a full-service laundromat and a new café. The space has been fully renovated with a bright, modern design that brings new life to the downtown core. The laundromat features brand-new, high-end machines from Sweden that are both water- and gas-efficient. The largest washer is capable of handling up to eight loads at once, offering a time-saving option for busy families.

In addition to self-serve laundry, the business provides laundry services for long-term care facilities, hotels, and cottages, as well as a wash-and-fold service with free pickup and delivery through the Sawyer Laundry app. Pickup and delivery service areas include Exeter, Stratford, Goderich, Parkhill, and Lucan. A recent addition to the space is Sawyer Café, which opened Jan. 6 and held a ribbon-cutting ceremony Jan. 12.

The café offers a selection of espresso-based coffees, lattes, smoothies, and other beverages, along with baked goods supplied by White Squirrel Bakery, including pastries, cookies, and sweets.

DesJardine said plans are underway to introduce fresh, healthy lunch options, with items such as grain bowls and yogurt parfaits being added to the breakfast menu soon.

Together, the laundromat and café have quickly become a welcoming hub in downtown Exeter, combining modern amenities with a strong focus on community connection and care.

Family Day at Westland Greenhouses



(MEG PEARSON PHOTO)

Family Day fun was in full bloom at Westland Greenhouses Feb. 16, where children met incredible reptiles and planted their own creations to take home. Pictured is Owen Thompson, 6, of Dashwood while he proudly holds a snake during the hands-on reptile experience.



(MEG PEARSON PHOTO)

The Klumpkens family was one of the many families gathered around the potting tables to design and plant tiger begonias together. From left: Heather, Teddy, Renée and David Klumpkens from Port Franks.

Proposed development charge boost panned by builders

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

South Huron council is being warned that a proposal to triple development charges would put housing out of the reach of new buyers and risk stifling the local economy.

The increased charges, rising from the current \$6,206 to \$18,641 for a single-detached house, are suggested in a report prepared for council by consultants Watson and Associates Economists Ltd.

Under provincial rules, council is required to pass a new development charges bylaw this year.

At a public meeting to review the report, Nancy Neil of Watson and Associates said the increased charges are calculated to recover the capital costs associated with development in the municipality.

Council is free to phase in the increase and can provide exemptions, she said.

But if it decides not to collect all the charges it might not have the money necessary in the future to cover the costs to the municipality of new development.

"Therefore, there would be an impact on your taxes," she said.

The report suggests council pass its new development charges bylaw on March 16.

According to the report, South Huron currently has one of the lowest development charges of area municipalities at slightly over \$6,000 for a single-detached house.

Lucan Biddulph charges \$46,340 for development in Lucan; North Middlesex



(JOHN MINER PHOTO)

A recent report is recommending South Huron triple its development charges, which are currently some of the lowest in the region. Pictured is a sign at the entrance of Exeter's South Pointe subdivision, which could see its townhouse prices rise as development charges go up.

charges \$47,790; West Perth \$19,827; Stratford \$17,343; and Lambton Shores \$13,021. Goderich charges less than South Huron at \$4,035.

Asking council to delay the bylaw and reconsider the charges, John Meinen, president of Pinnacle Quality Homes, said developers are in a tough situation with building costs climbing.

In the case of Pinnacle, Meinen said he has spent millions on services for the

South Pointe subdivision in Exeter but only sold six units in 2025 and is currently sitting on 35 to 40 serviced lots.

"I know the perception out there is builders are rich and builders are wealthy. I can tell you one thing for certain, six units does not cover the cost of what I've done out there," he said.

Pinnacle reduced prices on its townhouses, but if the proposed hike goes through it will have to raise them back

up again. It is getting to the point where it is impossible for young people to build or buy in the community, he said.

Meinen suggested some of the services used to calculate the new development charges are wants rather than needs.

"We have to be very very concerned about stifling our own economy."

Don de Jong of Tridon Properties also called on council to delay its development charges bylaw.

He said his company has consulted an economist and would like time to provide input.

In a written submission, the Perth-Huron Builders Association said it is concerned with the speed and magnitude of the increases. It warned the threefold increase in development charges may lead to stalled residential projects.

The association suggested new charges be phased in over multiple years.

Council appeared sympathetic to delaying the bylaw.

Coun. Wendy McLeod-Haggitt said she supported reviewing the study to find ways of making the charges more affordable.

"We are in a recession, we have some very serious financial restraints on our residents."

Coun. Ted Oke said he would like to know what other municipalities plan to charge when they revise their development charge rates.

"I don't want to be in a race to the top here," he said. "We have to be competitive to attract people to move to South Huron and we can't price ourselves out of that."

South Huron businesses support United Housing initiative

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

Two local businesses have stepped up to support future affordable housing in South Huron.

Jayden's Mechanical and the McCann Group each donated \$25,000 to United Way Perth-Huron's (UWPH) efforts to create housing solutions through the United Housing initiative, UWPH's non-profit housing organization.

Jayden's Mechanical president Jayden DesJardine said he's proud to support the work done by the initiative.

"Access to stable housing is fundamental to strong communities, and we're committed to helping make that a reality for families in South Huron," he said.

UWPH and United Housing executive director Ryan Erb thanked the businesses for "taking the lead" on the project that aims to bring affordable housing to Exeter and the surrounding area.

"We'd also like to thank Lipman Farms and MacLean's Home Hardware in Grand Bend for coming to the table after hearing more about this community-building project and lending their support," said

Erb. "Building affordable and attainable housing requires the collective effort of so many local individuals and companies. We invite anyone who wants to help UWPH and United Housing make this project a reality to connect with us. Help us reach our land campaign goal of \$150,000 by March 31."

According to United Way Perth-Huron, the future build aligns with recent developments in the municipality, including the Ontario government's \$5 million investment in water infrastructure to enable housing growth and a recent boundary adjustment by South Huron council, setting the stage for new housing opportunities while the need is urgent.

A key piece of advancing a housing initiative in South Huron is the land offered to United Housing at a reduced cost by the Exeter Pentecostal Tabernacle church. The church already hosts UWPH's Southern Huron Connection Centre, providing supports and services for vulnerable people experiencing homelessness.

Connection centre volunteer co-ordinator Andrea Loohuizen said affordable and attainable housing is about more than bricks and mortar.

"It's about creating spaces where people can come together and really feel part of the community," she said. "The Connection Centre already provides that, and we want to see the same spirit guide local housing development. That's why the

church chose to really get behind this idea."

Those interested in making a capital donation can contact UWPH community development manager Michelle Millar at mmillar@perthhuron.unitedway.ca.



EXETER
FAMILY EYE CARE

Clarity in Vision, Excellence in Care

www.exeterfamilyeyecare.ca





Book your eye exam today!

☎ 519-235-2433 extereyecare@gmail.com

📍 11, Huron St. E ON, N0M 1S1

Open: 9-5 Mon - Thurs | 9-4 Fri Dr. Hytham Elkolaly & Dr. Cheryl Letheren

South Huron water system has top rating

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

South Huron's drinking water system in 2025 withstood 13 water main breaks and leaks, 25 shutdowns by the Lake Huron water supply system and a lightning strike that knocked out equipment at the Huron Park Tower.

Despite the challenges, the water system's risk rating was pegged at 0 per cent by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, which found it was in full compliance with provincial regulations.

It is the 16th year South Huron's system has had a rating in the highest percentile, Alyssa Keller, manager of environmental services, told council.

There were three adverse water quality reports during the year.

One was for lead in the water at a private residence on Huron Street West in Exeter. Keller said resampling found there was a private lead service in the residence.

Overall, the risk from lead in the water is very low as the former Exeter PUC removed lead services in the 1990s and Stephen's system was mainly constructed with PVC piping, Keller said.

A second report involved a temporary water main that was broken by a dozer in June 2025 during the Victoria Street East reconstruction project. A boil water advisory was issued by the Huron Perth



Exeter Town Hall, where South Huron council meetings are held.

(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Health Unit for the area for three days.

In the third instance, routine bacteriological testing on MacDonald Road showed coliform bacteria in the water. The water service was flushed, retested and cleared.

Keller said water main breaks are on a downward trend in the municipality due to an active water main replacement program.

On July 24, 2025, the Huron Park Tower was hit by lightning, damaging the equipment that allows operators to control the flow and level in the tower.

A split-second decision was made to open a valve connecting the tower to the one in Exeter built on the same grade.

"We were then able to run both towers off the Exeter tower level control," Keller said. "It was essentially like nothing happened which was great news as it took about a month to get parts in to repair the level control system."

The number of Lake Huron water supply system shutdowns climbed 67 per cent from the previous year.

Keller said the shutdowns affect fire protection, storage quantity and pres-

ures.

A particular problem is providing the lakefront and surrounding communities with water during shutdowns as there are no connection points to storage.

Fortunately, South Huron was able to obtain water from a neighbouring municipality, but this cannot always be relied on, she said. Future construction of an interconnecting water main should address the issue.

Another problem that emerged in August 2025 was drops and surges in pressure from the Lake Huron distribution system. The surges often happen far too quickly for protective valves to work, leading to over-pressurization of the South Huron system.

The incidents require an emergency response by staff to cut off the water supply from the Lake Huron system.

Keller said discussions are being held with regional water supply staff and the contract operator to try to resolve the problem.

Thanking Keller for the report, Mayor George Finch said the water and wastewater infrastructure is the municipality's largest and most important asset.

"We always have to invest in that every day," he said. "If we don't, we are going to have the problems that we see in different parts of the world that don't have fresh water. We can never take that for granted."

CHAIR-ISH THE SAVINGS EVENT

Relax into **Stressless®** chairs at the best prices in Southwestern Ontario.

The Divani \$2699

100% Genuine Leather
Power Recliner
Available in five colours
In-stock & available for immediate delivery



The Consul \$1999

100% Genuine Leather
Chair & Ottoman
Special Purchase
Shadow Blue or Bordeaux
In-stock & available for immediate delivery



The Admiral \$2999

100% Genuine Leather
Chair & Ottoman
Special Purchase
Available in three colours.
In-stock & available for immediate delivery



1350 Fanshawe Park Rd W
London, Ontario

(519) 473-5400
www.austinandtaylor.com

Monday-Friday: 10:00am-6:00pm
Saturday: 9:30am-5:30pm
Sunday: Closed

Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser rolling back into Zurich

DAN ROLPH

Editor

Bowlers of all skill levels will be hitting the lanes in Zurich for the annual Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron (BBSSH) Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser.

The event, which has been held at Zurich's Town and Country Bowling Lanes for more than 30 years, is one of many fundraisers the organization relies on to deliver its programming throughout the year.

The three-day event will kick off Friday, March 13, with bowling sessions at 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Saturday, March 14, will feature three sessions at 1 p.m., 3 p.m. and 5 p.m., before wrapping up Sunday, March 15, with sessions at 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.

BBSSH executive director Amy Wilhelm said the event is open to bowlers, no matter their skill in the sport, and that challenges throughout the weekend will help to mix up the day's fun for everyone who attends.

As well, this year's bowlers will be able to win incentive prizes depending on how much they raise, earning up to a \$100 Canadian Tire gift card.

Coming off the success of last year's event that had more than 30 teams participate and raised \$17,310, the organization has set an ambitious \$20,000 goal for this year.

"We get very minimal government funding," said Wilhelm, who noted that



(PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS OF SOUTH HURON)

Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron is inviting bowlers to an evening of fun for the annual Bowl for Kids' Sake fundraiser. From left are fund development co-ordinator Angie Steckle, board member Elena Thomson, little sister Sofia Thomson, executive director Amy Wilhelm, "Little" Brooklyn McVeeny and "Big" Linda Martens, who attended the 2025 fundraiser.

3.5 per cent of their budget comes from government sources for school programming.

"The rest of our budget comes in through fundraisers, grants, individual donations and The Little Shop."

Though BBSSH is mostly sustained through donations, Wilhelm said the need for funding is particularly important, as anticipated funding cuts could lead to

shortfalls for the organization this year.

BBSSH has taken on a growing service area over the years, particularly after the closure of the Big Brothers Big Sisters branch in Goderich. The South Huron organization now encompasses communities as far north as Bayfield, Clinton and Holmesville while stretching southward to Lucan, Ailsa Craig and Parkhill – far beyond what their name might suggest.

In addition to their well-known mentoring programs, the organization also offers other programming for young people.

Their in-school mentoring connects mentors with children for an hour each week in a school setting, while "Big Bunch" is a weekly group program aimed at building self-esteem and learning new skills.

"Go Girls! Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds" is another group program open to girls from Grades 5 to 8 that gives them a space to learn how to stay healthy and active. Boys of the same age can get involved with "Game On! Eat Smart, Play Smart," a program focused on developing healthy lifestyles.

Its most immediate event may be coming this month, but BBSSH is already looking forward to a busy April as well.

The bi-annual Spring Quarter Auction is planned for April 9 at the South Huron Recreation Centre, with tickets already selling for the popular event. The doors will open at 6 p.m., and the auction is set to begin at 7 p.m.

As well, the Little Craft Show is being held April 25 at the South Huron Recreation Centre from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Shoppers are invited to stop at the show to find local vendors and a bake sale. Admission for the show is \$3 at the door.

To register for Bowl for Kids' Sake, or to learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron, visit southhuron.big-brothersbigsisters.ca.

West Coast Active Living seeking Virtual Vitality Committee volunteers

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

West Coast Active Living (WCAL) is recruiting volunteers for a new Virtual Vitality Committee, focused on helping seniors build confidence and stay connected through digital technology.

Volunteers can be individuals of all

ages and levels of tech experience who will help shape a community-wide strategy that supports digital literacy for older adults. Whether someone is an IT expert or someone who wants to make technology feel more accessible, their perspective matters.

The committee's goals will include exploring how seniors use digital de-

VICES to stay connected, identifying barriers and opportunities for improving digital confidence and helping to develop a plan that will be unveiled at the Community Volunteer Appreciation Night on April 22, 2026.

The committee will also work with community partners, including the Municipality of South Huron, the Hu-

ron County Library's Exeter branch and local IT service experts.

Those interested in joining the Virtual Vitality Committee to improve the quality of life for seniors and their families can contact WCAL at wcal@hay.net or 519-630-2891.

Exeter Examiner

NEWS PAPER

"I KNOW THE PAPER IS FREE, BUT CAN I GET A SUBSCRIPTION ANYWAYS?"

Yes. We understand that some people might like the convenience of the Exeter Examiner arriving at their home (located near or far) through Canada Post, so we do have subscriptions available for this purpose.

Price for a subscription is **\$57.00 PER YEAR** (\$54.29 + GST).

To subscribe, please e-transfer granthavenmedia@gmail.com and include your full mailing address in the comments, or send a cheque with mailing address to Grant Haven Media, PO Box 2310, St. Marys, ON N4X1A2

Follow @Exeter Rodeo!

Follow @ExeterRodeo

EXETER RAM RODEO

AUGUST 8 & 9, 2026

South Huron Community Band celebrates 35 Years



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The South Huron Community Band is celebrating 35 years of bringing music to the community. Above are members of the Community Band in 1991, when it was first founded.

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

The South Huron Community Band is celebrating its 35th anniversary, marking three and a half decades of bringing music, friendship and intergenerational collaboration to the local community.

Originally established in 1991 and sponsored by the Exeter Legion, the ensemble was founded under the direction of Bob Robilliard. The very first rehearsal took place Feb. 4, 1991, at South Huron District High School. From that first downbeat, the group included children, youth, adults and seniors.

The band has always welcomed a mix of talent, from experienced musicians

from Exeter and the surrounding area to members from as far away as London, as well as those with no instrumental experience who learned “on the go,” supported by their peers.

“The community band has given my family the opportunity to make music together with three generations in the same room,” said member and former director Isaac Moore. “We really enjoy the laughs and good nature of everyone who comes out to be a part of it.”

Over its time in the community, the ensemble has been led by Robilliard, Moore and Aaron Neeb. Though 35 years have passed since its formation, the emphasis remains on fun. Under



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The South Huron Community Band continues to focus on fun and welcomes musicians of all skill levels. Pictured are members of the Community Band in 2024.

the current direction of Neeb, the band continues to offer musical and social opportunities. Rehearsals are a blend of playing, socializing, and preparing for performances.

“In the early ‘90s, I was a stay-at-home mom who had recently moved into the area,” said member and community band chair Karen Knip. “Feeling a bit isolated, I was looking for ways to connect with my new community. That’s when I saw the advertisement for the start of a community band—no experience needed. That first newspaper ad read ‘the emphasis will be on fun,’ and that really has been true these past 35 years.”

The band is active throughout the region. Over the years, they have performed at Canada Day celebrations, church services, nursing homes, friendship group gatherings and even weddings and funerals.

Long-time member Sandy Robilliard noted the enduring appeal of the band’s diversity.

“It has always been a multigenerational group, which is part of its charm,” she said.

To learn more about the South Huron Community Band or to join, contact Karen Knip at karenknip@gmail.com or Aaron Neeb at aaron.neeb@gmail.com.

**ALL THINGS BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL
COLLECTION
BY ARNOLD MATHERS**

Homemade & Hand-Me-Downs 2016- short humorous stories that were printed in the Rural Voice

From Ireland to The Queen’s Bush – 2018- 12 families that came from Ireland to the Wingham, Harriston, Hanover, Kincardine, area

Tales from the Township -2022- More short stories

The Investigators -2024 – three families from the Barrie area and how they became related

The Bachelor 2025 – a young lad decides to raise Muscovy ducks and where life leads him.

**Grab your copy
at
these locations:**

**Eidt’s BMR Express (Exeter)
Merchant 6 - Exeter
Pete’s Office Pro - Seaforth
Bee’s Knees Books & Emporium - Goderich
(previously Fincher’s)**

Huron County PRIDE

www.huroncountypride.ca

**SPRING FLING
COMEDY
WEEKEND**

March 20, 2026
Imposter Brewing Co.,
190 Thames Rd E, Exeter

March 21, 2026
Goderich Legion BR109
56 Kingston St, Goderich

GET YOUR TICKETS!



Friday



Saturday



Aidan O'Loughlin



Kari Johnson



Steve DeGay



Jenna MacAskill

THIS IS AN 18+ EVENT
Doors open @ 6:30pm
Laughs start @ 8:00pm

With support from:



sounds
GAY,
I'M
IN!



From Lucan to Westminster: Local dog and owner compete on world stage

MEG PEARSON

Examiner Reporter

When Dallas Hodgins packed her bags for New York City earlier this year, she wasn't going alone. Her four-year-old Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Retriever, Brie, was right there with her, tail wagging and ready for the adventure.

Together, they were about to walk into one of the world's most famous dog shows.

Brie took her place at the 150th anniversary of the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show. Top dogs show up from all over North America and beyond, but only 76 of the roughly 2,500 entries this year were from Canada.

Getting into Westminster isn't easy. Every dog has to earn an American championship title first; Brie received hers a couple of years ago. After that, you either get an invite if you're one of the best in your breed, or you cross your fingers and hope to get picked in the lottery.

Brie's name came up.

"There's obviously so much hype built up around it," said Hodgins. "It is the longest standing U.S. sport that's run and publicized. There's just so much hype to it when you go."

Hodgins has been showing dogs since

2012, but this was her first shot at Westminster, and her first time in New York.

Brie, who Hodgins called a "country dog," was seeing the big city for the first time.

All the lights and cameras might seem intimidating, but once they stepped into the ring, everything settled down.

"Honestly, when you're out there, it just feels like another dog show," said Hodgins. "Except, you know, you're on the green carpet and there's a camera in your face."

Her favorite moment? Brie's individual exam.

"She was just so good," she said. "She did everything I asked of her. For her to just be able to kind of ignore that and do her best, I was so happy with her."

Brie didn't place in the top five for her breed—there were 17 in the running—but Dallas said the experience mattered more than any ribbon.

"The goal is to go to Westminster," she said. "If you get a ribbon, that's just the cherry on top."

Back home in Lucan, the support was overwhelming. Hodgins runs Collars and Combs, her pet grooming shop, and she's been in business in the community for nearly eight years. When word got out, people from all over town reached out—even folks who'd never brought a



Dallas Hodgins and Brie at the Westminster Kennel Show.

(DAVID HODGINS PHOTO)

pet to her shop.

"The support from the community was unmatched," she said. "People from town who weren't even my grooming clients were messaging me - 'Oh, good luck,' or 'We watched the live feed.' It was just so cool."

Next up, Brie's calendar is packed with

Canadian shows including the breed national in Dorchester this June. But for one weekend in New York, Hodgins and her "country dog" stood on the green carpet.

It was proof that even a small-town team can find their place on the biggest stage.

DARLING ELECTRIC LTD.

Service, Construction & Electrical Upgrades

519-229-8009 CENTRALIA

Request a free quote!

www.darlingelectric.ca

ECRA/ESA#7012173

Huron County Pride hosting pair of comedy evenings

DAN ROLPH

Editor

Huron County Pride is bringing two nights of laughs to the region with their Spring Fling Comedy Evenings.

Four comedians – Steve Degay, Jenna MacAskill, Kari Johnson and Aidan O’Loughlin – will be coming to Exeter and Goderich on March 20 and 21 for shows that promise to bring “good vibes, great jokes and awesome company,” according to Huron County Pride.

The first event in Exeter on March 20 will take place at Imposter Brewing Company. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., while the show starts at 8 p.m.

Following the Exeter show, the comedians will be in Goderich on March 21 at the Goderich Legion Branch 109, where doors will also open at 6:30 p.m. and the show will start at 8 p.m.

Huron County Pride chair Alex Jebson said the evenings are the first time the organization has tried its hand at hosting comedy-centric events, while the Exeter show has allowed them to extend the programming beyond the Goderich area.

“We’re very excited to be spreading out further into the county and share the laughs there,” he said. “With Huron County Pride, we do want to represent the entire county.”

Jebson said the idea for their Spring Fling Comedy Evenings came from a Stratford-Perth Pride event that Huron



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Huron County Pride is welcoming four comedians to the area for two shows in Exeter and Goderich on March 20 and 21. Photo by Dan Rolph

County Pride members attended. While there, members connected with Steve Degay, who has since helped to build a diverse lineup for the pair of shows in Huron County.

“We thought that it would be a good idea to do it here as well because everyone loves to laugh,” said Jebson. “Comedy seemed like a great next step for us.”

Spring Fling Comedy Evenings also marks a partnership between Huron County Pride and Community Futures Huron, which offers funding opportunities for projects that aim to support local economic opportunities.

“We definitely wouldn’t be able to put this on without them,” said Jebson.

In addition to the upcoming comedy evenings, Jebson said planning for the

upcoming Huron County Pride Festival is well underway. Though the festival date is set for June 6, plans for events stretch well beyond that single day.

“We’ll have a full week’s worth of entertainment and community opportunities there,” said Jebson.

As well, Jebson said the organization is looking to focus further on consistent and ongoing community programming, such as with their monthly Pride Board Game Nights and the Community Leadership Award, which provides a \$500 bursary to high school students in Huron County.

“There’s lots of different stuff going on, which is really exciting,” said Jebson.

Jebson said the focus toward ongoing programming came from consultations with the community.

A recent report from United Way Perth-Huron’s Social Research and Planning Council found LGBTQ+ individuals in the region face isolation and discrimination, and that there is an urgent need for more inclusive services and spaces.

“We really wanted to be able to offer that,” said Jebson. “What better way to do that than to argue over a game of Monopoly?”

Tickets to Huron County Pride’s Spring Fling Comedy Evenings can be purchased online at bit.ly/pride-comedy.

Huron Health System seeking community leaders for common board of directors

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

Huron Health System (HHS) is inviting passionate individuals to apply for volunteer positions as common board directors.

As a partnership between Alexandra Marine and General Hospital in Goderich and South Huron Hospital in Exeter, HHS plays a vital role in delivering high-quality health care services to residents across the region.

In a press release, the organization stated it’s committed to strong governance, strategic leadership and ensuring exceptional patient care now and into the future.

HHS is seeking individuals who bring experience or interest in areas such as:

- governance
- health care
- quality and patient safety

- legal
- finance
- information technology
- communications
- strategic planning
- risk management

Board directors serve in a volunteer capacity and contribute to shaping the strategic direction, oversight and long-term sustainability of local health services. Serving as a board director is a unique opportunity to help guide the future of health care in Huron County while working collaboratively with dedicated health professionals and community partners.

Those interested in learning more about the role and application process are encouraged to visit huronhealthsystem.ca/boardofdirectors for more information.

Applications are being accepted until March 27.

Exeter Examiner
NEWSPAPER

**PART-TIME
NEWSPAPER
DELIVERY PERSON**

The Exeter Examiner is seeking a part-time employee to deliver newspapers to our several pick-up locations in Exeter on a weekly (Wednesday/Thursday) basis. The applicant will require use of their own vehicle but will be paid for time plus kilometer allowance.

Interested parties should contact Stewart Grant at stew@granthaven.com.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.GRANTHAVEN.COM

Surge in seniors and drop in healthcare workers hitting region

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

The economic region of Huron, Perth, Bruce and Grey counties is facing a rapid surge in its senior population at the same time as there is a disturbing drop in healthcare workers.

The Four County Labour Market Planning Board called the situation “alarming” in its recently released report, “Navigating the Future of Care.”

“Healthcare is definitely a flashing beacon,” said Dana Soucie, executive director of the labour board.

According to the report, from 2014 to 2024 the four-county region had the largest percentage increase in the population aged 65 and older of all economic regions in the province, up 42 per cent.

It is a portion of the population that generally requires more healthcare and has more complex issues than other age groups.

While this population sector was surging, the four-county region experienced a 10 per cent decrease in the number of persons employed in health occupations.

Out of the 11 economic regions in Ontario, the area covering Huron,

Perth, Bruce and Grey counties was the only one to see a drop in health-care workers.

“The gap between labour supply in the health-care workforce and demand for health-care services continues to widen, heightening pressures on an already strained sector that is struggling to attract and retain workers,” the report said.

The impacts include forced emergency department closures and extended wait times for patients.

The report cites wage differences and a higher cost of living as factors in driving some workers to leave the region.

The 2025 living wage rate—the hourly income workers need to meet basic expenses—was calculated at \$24.60 an hour in the four-county region, the second highest in Ontario just behind the Greater Toronto Area.

But the average overall hourly wage offered in the region has been consistently below the Ontario average, hitting a gap of \$5.60 an hour in the first quarter of 2025.

The rural nature of the region also presents particular challenges for attracting and retaining workers in the

health-care sector, the report said.

Possible barriers include housing and other living costs, geographic isolation, increased workloads due to an older population with more complex health concerns, limited resources including outdated equipment, and family con-

cerns such as lack of accessible or affordable childcare options.

Given the shortages in the four-county region, the report concludes it is critical that attraction and retention efforts be prioritized.



WE'RE

RECRUITING

Huron Health System Common Board Directors

Huron Health System is seeking passionate individuals to serve as volunteer Common Board Directors who bring experience or interest in areas such as governance, health care, quality and patient safety, legal, finance, information technology, communications, strategic planning, or risk management.

Join us in helping shape the future of local health care.

Visit www.huronhealthsystem.ca/boardofdirectors to apply.

Submission deadline: March 27, 2026.

CONGRATS
FROM MURPHY BUS LINES
TO THE EXETER EXAMINER!



Clinton, Exeter and Seaforth

Apply Online at MurphyBus.ca

Contact us
 Exeter: 519-235-0450



Now Hiring
 Come drive a bus for us

SOUTH HURON COUNCIL BRIEFS

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

Water rates going up

South Huron water and sewer charges are going up. Approved by council during the March 2 meeting, the increase for Exeter customers, based on an annual water consumption of 150 cubic metres, is 1.2 per cent in 2026, 4.2 per cent in 2027 and 4.2 per cent in 2028.

For Stephen water and sewer customers the estimated increases for the same volume are 4.5 per cent in 2026, 4.7 per cent in 2027 and 4.7 per cent in 2028. For Stephen water only customers the estimated increases are 4.2 per cent in 2026, 4.6 per cent in 2027 and 4.6 per cent in 2028.

Smoking bylaw changes backed

South Huron council has voted in favour of strengthening the Huron Smoking Bylaw to include vaping and waterpipe (hookah) use in its restrictions.

The revised bylaw would prohibit anyone from smoking or vaping in any workplace in Huron County and in any indoor public place. The bylaw is set by



Huron County council but requires the support of a majority of lower-tier municipalities representing a majority of electors within the county.

Residential recycling charges may be cut

Residential recycling charges will likely be eliminated in South Huron, but the charges for garbage

collection are another matter.

A staff report to council recommends the recycling charges be dropped as the municipality no longer pays the cost for residential recycling. The province shifted that cost to producers.

However, the same staff report suggests garbage collection fees be upped as that service is currently subsidized by the municipality's landfill operation. With charges for one service dropped and more charges added for the other, residential customers would see no change in their overall cost.

Drop-in programs launched

South Huron has three new drop-in programs.

Launched by the newly hired recreation coordinator, the programs are Stroller Strides in Exeter; Coffee, Cards and Checkmates offered in Dashwood, Crediton and Exeter; and Tiny Champs Playtime - Parent and Tot Sports Drop-in launched in Crediton.

Details of the drop-in programs can be found on the Municipality of South Huron Facebook page.

The recreation coordinator's position is funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Leprechaun Hunt- March 9-March 20th

Follow Experience Exeter on Facebook and Instagram to get clues as to where you can find 10 Leprechauns in the Exeter BIA.

Take a photo of all 10 Leprechauns and email them into info@exeterbia.com

Follow the Business on social Media when you find them

Opportunity to Win \$100 in BIA Bucks & 2 Gift Baskets to Giveaway

Happy Leprechaun Finding!



MACLEAN'S SOURCE FOR SPORTS ELECTRONICS TRAILER SALES

EXETER, ON 519-235-0800 110 Main St. N.

GRAND BEND, ON 519-238-8282 70948 Bluewater Hwy.



Custom Covers for Home and Office

Custom Window Coverings ~ Shades, Shutters & Blinds Shades and Shutters for Every Budget

- Bed and Home Accessories
- Free Home Consultation
- Professional Free Installation
- PowerView Automation Specialists
- Consultation
- Installation
- Repairs

(519) 235-2444

415 Main Street South, Exeter, ON

Experts@customcoversontario.ca customcoversblinds.ca



Aura® Illuminated Shades

Revolutionary, stylish window treatments designed to create their own captivating light.



Black Squirrel Tattoo Celebrating one year in Exeter

Artist for over 25 years, tattooing for a decade. Specializing in custom tattoos with a focus on originality and precision. New apprentice on staff. Weekends booking up fast!

Book now to be ready for the summer weather!

BlacksquirrelTattoo@gmail.com blacksquirreltattoo.ca

(519) 318-3478

409 Main Street South, Exeter, ON



Exeter Examiner NEWSPAPER

Fisheries biologist to speak on Ausable River species recovery

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

Shawn Staton, a species at risk biologist with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, will be speaking at the annual Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) partner appreciation evening.

Staton, who is being featured as the event's keynote speaker, is the team leader for Ontario with the Species at Risk program.

"The Ausable River is home to an incredible diversity of rare fish and freshwater mussels," said Staton. "I am excited and honoured to share my experiences partnering with the ABCA in the ongoing work to recover aquatic species at risk within this nationally significant watershed."

Staton has been working for Fisheries and Oceans Canada as a species at risk biologist since 2003, leading the development and implementation of recovery programs for fish and mussel species at risk. He has a Bachelor of Science in biology from the University of Guelph and has been working as an aquatic biologist for more than 25 years.

Staton knows the Ausable River well and is co-author of the Action Plan for the Ausable River: An Eco-

system Approach, which was written along with Ausable Bayfield Conservation's Kari Jean and Mari Veliz. The document outlines detailed steps to protect populations of the Northern Riffleshell, Snuffbox, Kidneyshell, Mapleleaf, Rainbow, Lake Chubsucker, Pugnose Shiner and Eastern Sand Darter species in the Ausable River.

The ABCA partner appreciation event will take place at Ironwood Golf Club on March 26, 2026, located east of Exeter and south of Highway 83. The event is free to attend, but seating is limited. Interested individuals are asked to reserve their spot at least a week in advance.

The partner appreciation evening includes a complimentary light supper, and attendees are asked to let organizers know if they have dietary restrictions.

The annual event will also include the announcement of Ausable Bayfield Conservation's Conservationist of the Year Award winner, as well as years of service awards for ABCA directors and staff.

ABCA is asking individuals interested in attending to contact Micaela Lubberts by email at mlubberts@abca.ca, or by phone at 519-235-2610, or toll-free 1-888-286-2610, ext. 221.

For more information, visit the ABCA website at abca.ca.



(PHOTO CONTRIBUTED BY ABCA)

Shawn Staton will be this year's keynote speaker at the annual ABCA partner appreciation evening on March 26. Photo contributed by ABCA.

Construction of detached homes up in South Huron

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

The overall value of building permits took a tumble in South Huron last year, but the municipality still managed a strong year for single detached housing construction.

The year-end building activity report submitted to council showed building activity was valued at \$40 million in 2025, down from \$101.5 million in 2024 and \$47.4 million in 2023.

But when it came to single detached houses, 2025 had the greatest number of dwellings added over the past three years.

"I'm pleased to see the growth continue to happen in South Huron," said Mayor George Finch.

"We need more housing options to improve local affordability, and we have worked very hard over the past few years to attract private-sector investment capital to build more housing for our community."

While 2024 saw South Huron break the \$100 million mark for construction, much of that was due to the \$42 million long-term care facility in Exeter.

"Construction value is highly variable year to year. One or two big developments can cause dramatic swings in this number, so it should be interpreted with lots of contextual information," Finch said. South Hu-

ron currently has seven active subdivisions that are expected to add hundreds of dwelling units over the next 10 years.

The municipality also has draft plan approval for 175 additional dwelling units, 247 fully serviced lots, and infrastructure scheduled to be installed to service another 45. Finch said with the upcoming construction of the London Road south trunk sewer project the municipality has the potential to add a further 2,100 dwelling

units. South Huron construction values over the past six years were:

- 2020 - \$41.3 million
- 2021 - \$51.2 million
- 2022 - \$64.5 million
- 2023 - \$47.4 million
- 2024 - \$101.5 million
- 2025 - \$40 million



Take Care of What Matters Most.

Commercial | Farm | Residential | Auto

AXIOM MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

Zurich Office
519-236-4381

Strathroy Office
519-246-1132

axiommutual.ca



Your Business Deserves to Be Seen.

Meg Pearson of Rebel Soul Media helps small businesses and solopreneurs build a powerful online presence through:

- Website design
- Digital marketing strategy
- Branding and social media guidance

WWW.REBELSOULMEDIA.CA

Summer playground program would require trade-offs

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

South Huron council is being cautioned that reviving a summer playground program could come at the expense of other municipal services.

“Theoretically it could be doable — however, there might be some trade-offs,” said South Huron chief administrative officer Rebekah Msuya-Collison.

If council decided to proceed with a playground program, staff would need to bring back information on what it could not feasibly complete as a result, she said.

The comments came as council considered a staff report at its March 2 meeting warning there was little time left to plan and staff a program for this summer.

“Given the department’s current workload, operational demands, and most recent commitments, there is insufficient capacity to complete the necessary pre-planning and provide the appropriate day to day oversight required to successfully deliver a camp program this year,” the staff report stated.

In addition, attempting to introduce a summer camp program at this point in the year could impact the department’s ability to deliver other services, such as operating an additional pool and extending the ice season.

South Huron ran a summer playground program for children ages 4 to 11 up until 2019.

Council had asked staff to look into a summer playground program after receiving a letter in January urging them to consider it.

In her letter, Jessica Bickell said she had worked



at the former playground program for five summers during her high school and university years.

“I witnessed firsthand the tremendous value these programs bring to our community. Not only do they provide meaningful, safe, and engaging experiences for local youths, but they also offer exceptional employment and leadership opportunities for young people in South Huron,” Bickell wrote.

Council decided to defer making a decision after being advised that a private operator is running one in the municipality. Staff was asked for more information for the meeting on March 16.

If the municipality ran its own program it was estimated South Huron would be looking at covering \$14,000 in cost above the revenue received from registrations.

The calculation was made assuming 40 children would be registered for eight full weeks. Parents would be charged \$150 a week to register a child for a full week, or \$120 for a four-day week.

It was estimated staff salaries for the camp would total \$53,074, with additional expenses for sports equipment, craft supplies and special event trips.

Other impacts of a day camp would include using staff time to manage registrations, communicating with parents, and scheduling.

Management personnel would also need to develop camp policies and procedures. Operations staff could expect an increased workload that may include more frequent washroom cleaning and additional garbage collection.

The staff report noted the community had identified a need for additional summer programming options following the closure of the former before-and-after school care provider that had offered summer day camps.

But the report also said there are some existing organizations within the community, including churches, that offer summer programming.

“Any consideration of introducing a municipally operated day camp would require continuous reviews to ensure it does not unintentionally compete with current or future providers,” the report stated.

**CONGRATULATIONS ON
YOUR RETIREMENT, RON!**
From your family at Jayden's Mechanical

**Jayden's
Mechanical**
PLUMBING • HEATING • ELECTRICAL

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.GRANTHAVEN.COM

Search on for illegal sewage system connections

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

South Huron staff will be searching for illegal connections to the municipality's sanitary sewage system this year, a problem that contributed to raw sewage flowing into area water courses in 2025.

"It is a significant issue," Don Giberson, South Huron's infrastructure and development manager, told municipal council.

Illegal connections to the sanitary sewage system include roof drains, downspouts, sump pumps and tiles that have been connected to the sanitary system.

In South Huron, the infiltration into the sanitary system is 10 times higher than allowed for under Ontario guidelines for new sanitary sewer installations, Giberson said.

The program to find the illegal connections this year will include flow monitoring, dye testing and smoke testing. Staff have already done a historical review of South Huron's collection system dating back to the 1940s and completed a database with video of all South Huron sewage collection mains.

South Huron's wastewater collection system consists of about 67 kilometres of sanitary sewers and forcemains that transfer wastewater from Huron Park, Centralia, Crediton and Exeter to the

South Huron wastewater treatment facility.

Alyssa Keller, South Huron's environmental services manager, reported there were seven instances of raw sewage bypasses in 2025 that resulted in 8,940 cubic metres of raw sewage flowing into water courses in South Huron.

The bypasses all occurred during wet weather events when there was snowmelt, heavy precipitation or a combination of both.

The additional infiltration into the sanitary system from illegal connections uses up capacity that would otherwise be available for future development.

The additional inflow also requires

the use of more chemicals for treatment and puts more wear and tear on the system's sewer pumps, Keller said.

In 2025, the South Huron sanitary system experienced seven sewage pump failures at sewage pumping stations, according to the annual wastewater report submitted to council.

All of the pump failures were emergency failures that created the risk of basement flooding and sewage pumping station surcharges.

Keller said the failures show the need for a sewage pump maintenance program to proactively rebuild sewage pumps during periods of low flows versus reacting to emergency failures.

Hensall Co-op offering \$10,000 grant for community projects

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

Hensall Co-op is looking for applications to its 2026 Strong Communities Initiative, which will award a one-time \$10,000 grant to a community project.

"As a farmer-owned co-operative, we believe strong rural communities are the foundation of a thriving agriculture

industry," the co-operative stated in a press release.

According to Hensall Co-op, the Strong Communities Initiative is designed to fund projects that address a significant community need and create a lasting, measurable impact — particularly those with a focus on community health and healthy living.

To be considered for the grant, an ap-

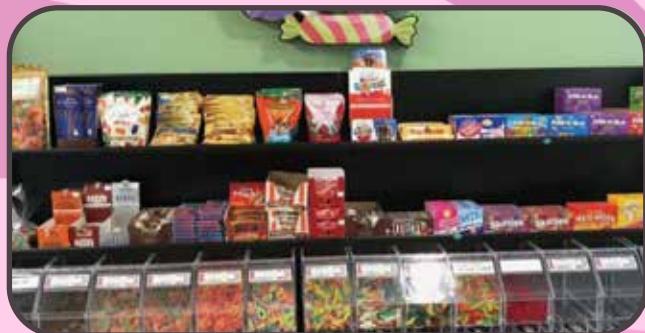
plication must be from a Canadian community-based not-for-profit organization that's registered with the Canada Revenue Agency as a charity.

As well, proposed projects should have a long-term impact and have a clear, measurable benefit to the community. It must fill a strong need in the community and not be for the benefit of a single individual.

Priority is also being given to organizations that have not received a large-scale sponsorship or donation from Hensall Co-op in the last five years.

Applications are being accepted until May 31, 2026.

More details about the initiative can be found on the Hensall Co-op website.



WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD ~ EXETER EXAMINER
"LET'S DOUGH THIS TOGETHER!"

Uptown Sweets only serves the best!

- High Quality Real Shaw's Dairy Ice Cream
- Culbert's Bakery Pastries
- Bartliffs' Bakery Goods
- Jerry Rader's Meat Pies & Salads
- Barker & Snouts Frozen Dog Treats
- Traditional Candies: Bulk & Packages
- Zehr's Country Market Fruit Pies

Uptown Sweets

362 Main St. S.

Exeter, On

226-735-5733

Uptownsweets.ca

STARTING MARCH 16:

Jerry Rader's Salads: * Potato * Coleslaw * Macaroni * Baked Beans

SPORTS

Hawks sweep Irish, advance to second round of playoffs



Lucan's Andrew Beckett and Exeter's Blake Jankovich look for an opportunity in the final match of their best-of-seven series on Feb. 25.



Lucan Irish forward Austin Ma fires a shot during their first round playoff series against the Exeter Hawks.

(DAN ROLPH PHOTOS)

DAN ROLPH

Editor

The Exeter Hawks are on their way to the second round of the Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) West Yeck playoffs after dominating the best-of-seven series against the Lucan Irish.

The Hawks, who sat at the top of the division with 57 points by the end of the regular season, were pitted against the last-place Lucan Irish who had 10 points.

The first round of the playoffs for the teams started Feb. 20 at the South Huron Recreation Centre in front of a crowd of 530 spectators. The game saw Exeter take an early lead, while Lucan kept the score within a single-goal difference in the first period.

However, an explosive five-goal second period made a gap too big to close despite a third-period goal by Lucan's Nolan Muller, wrapping up the match 7-2 in favour of the Hawks.

Their second meeting of the series on Feb. 21 brought the teams to the Lucan Biddulph Community Memorial Centre, where the Irish were first on the board at 8:21 off a goal from Cole Dunn.

That lead was short lived when Exeter replied about 40 seconds later with a goal of their own and continued to build a hefty two-goal lead by the first buzzer.

Lucan's Kevin Waters was first to score in that game's second period, but the scoring was all Exeter from there forward, leaving the Hawks with a sizable 9-2 victory.

The third match of the series on Feb.

22 brought the teams back to South Huron, where the Hawks were quick to build a three-goal lead in the first seven minutes of the first frame.

The Irish began chipping away at that lead throughout the match, but Exeter continued to keep them at bay as they kept the goals rolling in, leaving the Hawks with an 8-4 win.

The final matchup of Lucan and Exeter brought the teams back to the ice in Lucan in front of a crowd of 117. The Hawks continued their domination on the ice, racking up six goals before Lucan's first by Lucas Dixon halfway through the second period.

Though the Irish found a second goal in the third period, two more from Exeter left the final score at 8-2 for the Hawks, moving them to the second round and

bringing Lucan's season to an end.

The round saw an unlucky string of games continue for the Irish, wrapping up their season with a 27-game losing streak, having last won a match in shootouts against the Port Stanley Sailors on Nov. 22, 2025.

With the Hawks in a strong position in the division both in the playoffs and in the regular season, their lineup's talent has been receiving recognition from the PJHL.

Harrison Meulenstein was named the division's MVP and top scorer with 33 goals and 35 assists in 39 games.

As well, Hawks goalie Ben Foster was awarded Goalie of the Year, with a goals against average in the regular season of 2.87 and a 0.907 save percentage.



Pictured is Jack Taylor of the Exeter Hawks.



Trey Taylor played for the Exeter Hawks in the Feb. 25 game against the Lucan Irish.

**EXETER HAWKS
PLAYOFF STATISTICS**

(as of March 9, 2026)

Player	POS	GP	G	A	PTS
Tanner Thayer	F	6	4	8	12
Blake Jankovich	F	5	6	4	10
Justin Skirten	F	6	6	3	9
Danny Scott	D	6	1	7	8
Rocco Bigioni	F	5	4	3	7
Ryder Rivermore	D	4	1	6	7
Jimmy Schiedel	F	6	1	6	7
Carter Bowerman	F	6	2	4	6
Jayce Durand	F	6	4	1	5
Jack Taylor	F	6	2	3	5
Chase Wedlake	F	6	1	3	4
Harrison Meulenstein	F	2	1	2	3
Trey Taylor	D	6	1	2	3
Ty Wheeler	F	5	1	1	2
Andrew Hill	D	3	0	2	2
Cole Tucker	D	4	0	2	2
Nate Coward	D	6	0	2	2
Mason Cornwall	F	5	1	0	1
Ben Foster	G	2	0	1	1
Rourke McEwan	D	6	0	1	1
Nate Schiedel	F	6	0	1	1
Goalie	GP	W	L	GAA	SV%
Ben Foster	2	2	0	1.96	0.930
Maddow Nazwaski	5	3	1	2.49	0.930

**PJHL ROUND 2 PLAYOFFS
EXETER vs MT. BRYDGES**

Game 1 - Friday, March 6
Exeter 2, Mt. Brydges 1 (2 OT)

Game 2 - Saturday, March 7
Mt. Brydges 2, Exeter 2

Game 3 - Tuesday, March 10
Results were unavailable before the Exeter Examiner went to press

Game 4 - Friday, March 13
8:30 p.m. in Mt. Brydges

Game 5 - Saturday, March 14
8:00 p.m. in Exeter

Game 6 - Monday, March 16
8:30 p.m. in Mt. Brydges *

Game 7 - Wednesday, March 18
8:00 p.m. in Exeter *

MINOR SPORTS

SCRAPBOOK

(SAMANTHA LAWSON PHOTOS)



The next generation of local hockey stars were on the ice at the South Huron Recreation Centre in Exeter on Saturday, March 7, for the annual South Huron U7 Jamboree. Players on South Huron, Lucan, North Middlesex, Mount Brydges, Strathroy and New Hamburg teams played in half-ice matches throughout the day filled with hockey action. Pictured in net is Norah Hack, 5, of the Lucan Red Martin team as she defends during a jamboree match.



The March 7 South Huron U7 Jamboree featured teams with athletes from throughout the region.



A young hockey player handles the puck during the jamboree.



The ice was full at the South Huron Recreation Centre during the jamboree as teams played in half-ice matches.



Colt Harrigan, 5, of the Lucan White Luyten team goes for the puck.



Lucan Orange Gibb team's Sutton Harris, 5, played as a goalie in the jamboree.

Proposed Grand Bend casino hits roadblock

JOHN MINER

Examiner Reporter

For the second time, the backing of South Huron council isn't enough to make a Grand Bend casino a reality.

Council gave its blessing to a developer's proposal for a small casino on Highway 21 on the north side of Grand Bend last November.

But when municipal staff started the required consultation process for the casino, it found out the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) wasn't about to approve the project.

In a recent report to council, Scott Currie, South Huron's manager of strategic initiatives, said OLG confirmed they have no plans to expand casino gaming or the number of casinos in the area of South Huron.

In addition, adding new gaming sites in locations governed by existing operating agreements would require amendments to the commercial terms of those agreements.

OLG advised it is not in a position to explore or to unilaterally make such



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

A project to create a new casino on the former Boat Store property in Grand Bend is on hiatus after failing to get backing from OLG.

changes.

For the proposed casino project to

move ahead now it would require a joint proposal from the developer and Gate-

way Casinos, which is the operator in this region, Currie said.

"This project has no path forward without the participation of the operator," he told council. "It is on hiatus indefinitely."

South Huron council in 2019 voted to back a proposal for a casino near the Dark Horse Winery and Huron Country Playhouse at Grand Bend. That proposal never went ahead.

If a viable proposal comes forward for a casino, South Huron staff would revive its plans to consult the public, Currie said.

The proposal for the Highway 21 casino was for a "small-footprint casino" on the former Boat Store property. Ranging in size from 6,000 to 12,000 square feet, it would be designed for year-round operation.

The planned location of the casino at 70589 Bluewater Highway ran into public opposition with submissions to council saying the site lacked adequate parking and would add to highway traffic problems.

ABCF 50-50 raffle tickets are on sale

EXETER EXAMINER STAFF

Staff Contribution

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation (ABCF) is selling 50-50 raffle tickets as it prepares for the annual Conservation Auction in April.

The Conservation Auction, a partnership between the foundation and the Exeter Lions Club, has raised more than \$1.42 million in support of needed local projects over the past 35 years. These projects include parks and trails and conservation areas, outdoor recreation events and experiences for youth and families, conservation education for the young and young at heart, job and education opportunities for youth, and other local conservation projects that depend on the auction for support.

There are 1,500 tickets printed this year, and the cash prize could be as high as \$7,500 if all tickets are sold. Tickets are \$10 each. The draw supports local community projects that could not happen otherwise.

Tickets are available until April 16, 2026.

People can buy their ticket from a Conservation Auction Committee member or at the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Administration Centre (71108 Morrison Line) east of Exeter, just south of High-

way 83. Alternatively, they can phone 519-235-2610 or toll-free 1-888-286-2610. Tickets must be sold in Ontario.

Conservation Auction Committee co-chair Janet Clarke said net proceeds from the draw are donated to local community projects.

"Buying a ticket for the 50-50 draw in 2026 is a great way to support needed projects in local communities while also giving the purchaser a chance to win up to \$7,500," she said.

The 36th Conservation Auction is online, running from April 9 to 16 this year. During the auction week, the 50-50 raffle will be held on Thursday, April 16, at 4 p.m. at the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Administration Centre.

The Conservation Auction Committee already has some wonderful items donated, but they are looking for more donations from the community. Those with items to donate, or who would like to make a cash donation or sponsorship, please contact Ausable Bayfield Conservation. Donations before the end of February are appreciated by the committee.

When the online Conservation Auction is live, a link will be posted on the online auction web page at conservationdinner.com/online-auctions. The virtual Conservation Auction ends at 8 p.m. on April 16.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Tickets for the ABCF 50-50 raffle are on sale. Those interested can purchase tickets from Conservation Auction Committee members or at the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Administration Centre outside of Exeter.

Exeter Examiner
SCAN TO READ THE ONLINE PAPER
www.granthaven.com

Jayden's COMFORT CARE®
 MAINTENANCE & PROTECTION PLAN
 A NEW STANDARD OF HOME MAINTENANCE

PROTECT WHAT KEEPS YOUR FAMILY COMFORTABLE

519-237-HEAT (4328)
JAYDENSMECHANICAL.COM

New Lucan café blends Korean roots with Canadian breakfast tastes

DAN ROLPH

Editor

One of Lucan's newest additions to its downtown core is serving up a mixture of classic breakfast fare, delectable baked goods and Korean cuisine – a rarity in small-town Ontario.

On Table Café owners Eun Ju (Anna) Shim and Myunghyun (Ryan) Choi opened their restaurant in the former Donnelly Café location on Dec. 18, 2025.

Already owners of Grand Bend's Seoul Bites, Anna said they were looking for a place where diners could sit and enjoy their food, something that isn't easy at their Grand Bend restaurant.

After a search that lasted six months, they decided on the spot in the heart of Lucan's downtown on Main Street. Customers can now find Anna making the café's many drinks and Ryan in the kitchen, using his experience as a chef to create handmade meals.

Though they received the keys to the restaurant in October 2025, they were far from ready to open, and Anna said they almost immediately began getting to work on brightening the space and breathing new life into it.

"We changed almost everything," said Anna. "We worked every day."

When they first planned on opening in Lucan, Anna said they intended to create a dedicated Korean restaurant in a



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Pictured are On Table Café owners Myunghyun (Ryan) Choi and Eun Ju (Anna) Shim. The café is one of Lucan's newest places to find breakfast, baked goods and Korean food.

place where Korean food is rare. However, as they were working on the space and speaking with locals, they quickly discovered there was a thirst for a local breakfast joint.

"They said 'we need breakfast,'" said Anna. "A mix of Korean food and coffee was okay, but they really wanted breakfast."

Their menu that aims to cater to the

community includes full breakfast options, baked goods, rice bowls, noodles and drinks.

With the change in approach to the menu, Anna said it's been a learning experience, particularly as they discover the differences between South Korean and Canadian breakfasts.

"There are different cultures in Korea and Canada," she said. "We didn't know

their breakfast."

Despite the need to learn as they go, Anna said they're still bringing a dedication to the quality of their food to everything on the menu, baking all of their own breads and pastries, creating their own sauces and hand-selecting the foods that go on the plate.

As well, Anna said they learned by visiting other breakfast restaurants to compare prices, learn plating and taste what was being offered in the region.

Anna described her husband, Ryan, as an honest chef who takes a great amount of pride and care in his work.

"He checks everything," she said. "Bacon, vegetables, sauces. He makes everything he wants here."

Anna arrived in Canada with her children in 2019, coming from South Korea looking for a healthy work and life balance. After originally settling in Nova Scotia, and with Ryan arriving in Canada about two years later, the family moved to southwestern Ontario as the children hoped to attend university in the area.

"Canada's the perfect country for us," she said. "It's a very happy place. I chose Canada."

Looking to the future, Anna said they would love to set their sights on new locations where they could bring Korean food to other small towns in the region that may not have access to it.

\$52,330 raised during Coldest Night of the Year Exeter



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Exeter's Coldest Night of the Year walk had raised \$52,330 as of March 9 in support of local initiatives that provide supports for individuals experiencing homelessness, food insecurity and hardship.

DAN ROLPH

Editor

It was a day to remember those in the community experiencing homelessness as the Coldest Night of the Year hit the streets in Exeter.

The annual fundraiser where walkers bundle up for a trek in the cold weather was organized by United Way Perth-Huron and was one of several hosted throughout the region on Saturday, Feb. 28. Other area fundraisers included events in Goderich, St. Marys, Stratford, Listowel and Wingham.

This year's walk in Exeter, which set off from Exeter Christian Reformed Church,

supported local initiatives such as the Southern Huron Connection Centre and the Huron Homelessness Initiative.

The connection centre offers a place where individuals in the community experiencing homelessness can access showers, washrooms, laundry facilities and meals, as well as connect with local service agencies that can provide further assistance.

"The connection centre is more than just a place," Andrea Loohuizen, the connection centre's volunteer co-ordinator and community outreach director, said. "It is a hub for relationships, partnerships and a resource for people facing tough times."



(DAN ROLPH PHOTO)

Pictured are Coldest Night of the Year Exeter participants as they set off from Exeter Christian Reformed Church on Feb. 28.

The Huron Homelessness Initiative supports local programs such as Artemis Huron, Exeter Turning Point and Huron Safe Homes for Youth.

With \$52,330 raised in Exeter as of March 9, the walk brought in 80 per cent of its \$65,000 goal, with more than 100 walkers on 15 teams supporting the annual event.

Exeter's top fundraising teams included Grand Bend Winter Walkers (\$11,390), The New Testaments (\$7,941), LMR Walkers (\$3,550), TR-E Huggers (\$3,530), South Huron District High School (\$2,546), Libro Winter Warriors (\$2,118), Hayter's Farm (\$1,325), ER-CAMITOJO (\$1,000), KZMC Kids and

Youth Ministry (\$890) and Zion's Warm Hearts Year 3 (\$835).

The top fundraising walker was Cheryl Masson of LMR Walkers, who had raised \$2,750 as of March 9.

Across Canada, Coldest Night of the Year was a success, surpassing its \$15 million goal with more than 6,500 teams and over 40,000 walkers participating.

South Huron Mayor George Finch spoke to participants before they set off on the walk.

"The Coldest Night of the Year Walk is a reminder of the power of coming together for a cause as a community," said Finch. "I think we're making Exeter and South Huron a better place for all."

COLUMNS

Exeter at the time of Canada's birth



BOB HEYWOOD

Examiner Columnist

The writer of this historical sketch is privileged to own a rare copy of "Sutherland's County of Huron Gazetteer Directory 1869-70." This hardbound relic extends a generous picture of the "Exeter" that existed at the time of confederation in 1867. It should be noted that the directory included no mention of the portion of the village north of the river as being recognized as "Francistown."

I will share the publication as written.

Exeter is an important village situated on the London and Goderich gravel road, equidistant from either place, with which it is connected by daily stages. The village was first laid out by the Canada Company in 1853 and became a post village in 1855. It contains some excellent manufacturing establishments viz:

The foundry and agricultural implement manufactory of Messrs. Verity and Ross, consists of five departments being in all about 200 feet long by 30 feet broad, where 12 hands are employed, and an engine of

eight horsepower in manufacturing Ball's Ohio self raker and Wood's combined reaping machines, plows, and all kinds of agricultural implements.

Mr. Henry Hidder's flour and grist mill contains 3 runs of stones used in dressing merchant flour and gristing, at an average of 130 bushels daily.

Mr. George Kilpatrick's woolen mills were established in 1863, employment is here given to 10 hands, in custom carding, spinning, weaving and cloth dressing, also in the manufacturing of fancy coverlets.

Mr. James Pickard's steam sawmill turns out about one and a half million feet of lumber annually.

Mr. James McNab's hub morticing and turning factory, he has an eight horsepower engine and four hands employed in the business.

Mr. John Trick, carriage maker, and general blacksmith, employs 10 hands in a brick building 24 by 42 feet and a frame 80 by 22 feet and manufactures carriages, wagons, buggies, sleighs and cutters and executes general blacksmithing.

Mr. R. Davis is in the same line, employing nine hands, has four forges in full blast, the buildings are frame, 60 by 25 feet.

Mr. Richard Manning's cheese factory is not excelled by any in the county for economy or quality, the cow stables are 100 by 40 feet, 60 cows are here fed and milked, from 14 to 16 tons of cheese are made annually at this factory.

There are several other manu-

facturing establishments of note in the village. In the mercantile department, Mr. J. Pickard, Messrs. A. and J. Freeman, Mr. Isaac Carling, each carry on an extensive business. Mr. Fitton watchmaker, Mr. Wm. Fanson saddler, Mr. Southcott pump-maker, and Mr. Edward Drew cabinet maker, are prepared to execute all work in their respective callings.

Churches: There are three churches

Christ Church Episcopalian – This is a handsome framed 35 by 48 feet, 30 feet high, with square tower 50 feet high, erected in 1860 at a cost of \$2000 and seated for 250. Services each sabbath at 11 a.m., Sunday school at 9 a.m. There is a handsome brick parsonage in connection with this church. Rev. George Keys incumbent, and also at St. Patrick's church, Biddulph. [Some readers will remember that this original frame church was moved to the fairgrounds and was known as the "Crystal Palace" and used for Exeter fair displays for many years.]

The Wesleyan Methodist – This congregation which had worshipped for several years in private houses and otherwise as circumstances permitted. In 1857 erected a brick, which has served up to the present time. It is now too small for the congregation and they have commenced the erection of a new handsome building to be completed this year. It is a white brick, 40 by 60 feet, 30 feet high, plain gothic style of architecture. The basement to be used for lecture,

classrooms and sabbath school purposes. The auditorium is seated for 350, the cost of the building \$3500. There are five other churches in this circuit Rev. Andrew Edwards superintending minister, Rev. E.H. Taylor, assistant minister. [This building was located on the present site of the Dairy Queen corner in Exeter and eventually amalgamated with the James Street congregation in the 1970s.]

The Bible Christian Church [now Exeter United] – This building is of white brick with stone basement, 58 by 38 feet, 30 feet high. The basement storey is the full size of the building and is used for sabbath school, lecture room etc. The body of the church is seated for 300. This building was erected in 1862 of plain gothic style and cost \$4500. Services each sabbath 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m., sabbath school at 2 p.m., Rev. William Hooper minister. [A large addition in the 1880s would almost double the capacity of this congregation, named after its benefactor, James Pickard.]

School – There is a good school with over 200 pupils in attendance.

Masonic – The Lebanon Forest Lodge NO133 of A.F. and A.M. holds its communications on Mondays on or before the full moon. Wm. Carrick Worshipful Master; Michael Eacrett, secretary. [This lodge is still meeting in Exeter.]

Orange – L.O.L. number 934 meets on the first Wednesday of each month in the Orange Hall for the dispatch of business.

George Eacrett W.M.; James N. Howard, secretary, J. Spackman, C.M. [The Orange Lodge folded in the 1970s in Exeter. The Oddfellows missed the Gazetteer by two years as they were instituted in Exeter in 1871 and still meet on Main Street in their own lodge hall.]

Stages – Daily stages run to London, Clinton and all intermediate stations. Mails daily.

Less than a decade later in 1875, the first train rolled into Exeter on the brand-new London, Huron and Bruce Railway. The ambitious project had been completed late that fall when the construction gang from the north in Wingham met the London gang from the south and hammered the last spike in Exeter. Over the next 15 years the population of the town doubled from one to two thousand inhabitants.

Exeter was coming into its own.

According to James Scott in "The Settlement of Huron County," by 1880 Exeter could boast seven large general stores, three hardware stores, six grocery stores, two drug stores, two book stores, two jewellery stores, five boot and shoe stores, three tin-smiths, six harness makers, four merchant tailors and several millinery establishments and two more hotels bringing the total up to six.

The construction of the London Huron Bruce Railway would give the town a significant boost in commerce and activity, but that's for the next edition.

Mentoring Matters



AMY WILHELM

Examiner Columnist

Before I begin, I would like to welcome the new Exeter Examiner to our community. A local newspaper plays an important role in highlighting the events, stories, and people that

make our community stand out. It also provides organizations like Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron (BBSSH) with a valuable opportunity to share who we are and the work we do.

I would also like to thank the Exeter Examiner for reaching out and inviting us to be part of this initiative. Through a bi-weekly column, we are excited to share more about the impact of mentoring, highlight our current waitlists, promote upcoming events and showcase the many ways our organization supports youth and families in our community.

For those who may not be familiar with BBSSH, or who

have heard of us but are not quite sure what we do, we invite you to follow along. In the weeks and months ahead, we look forward to sharing more about our programs, our impact and the work we do in the community.

Let me begin by introducing myself. My name is Amy Wilhelm, and I have the privilege of serving as the executive director of this remarkable organization. I am incredibly proud to be part of an organization that makes such a meaningful difference in our community. My belief in the work we do—and in the incredible impact it has on the lives of young people—is what has kept

me involved in this movement for the past 19 years.

As our first edition, we would like to begin by sharing a brief overview of who we are.

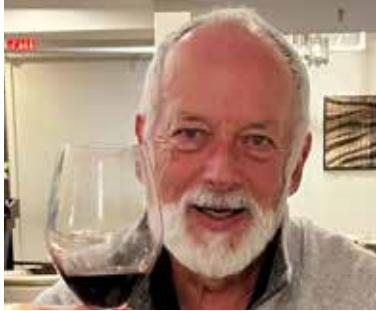
We are a youth mentoring organization with a simple but powerful vision: that all young people realize their full potential. After all, isn't that what we all hope for, for the youth in our community?

We work toward this vision through our mission of enabling life-changing mentoring relationships that ignite the power and potential within young people. It may sound simple, but the impact is truly something big. Through our mento-

ring programs, we match children and youth in South Huron, Lambton and Middlesex Counties with caring, screened and trained volunteer mentors who spend regular time with them. These relationships provide young people with an additional supportive adult in their life—someone to listen, encourage and help them build confidence as they grow.

In each edition of this column, we will share more about the difference mentoring makes, highlight the programs we offer and explore ways you can help us grow our impact as we work towards being #BiggerTogether.

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Halifax has converted its waterfront into a welcoming destination



PAUL KNOWLES

Examiner Columnist

Fun fact: no point in Nova Scotia is more than 60 kilometers from the sea. And that geographical reality translates into innumerable delights for visitors to this Maritime province.

From Cape Breton – where the Cabot trail is a must-do for all visitors – to the Acadian Shores; from Digby on the Bay of Fundy coast to Lunenburg, home of the Bluenose, on the Atlantic, the sea is an intrinsic part of so many visits to Nova Scotia.

And nowhere is the connection with the sea more beautifully realized than in Halifax, where inspired vision and incredible effort has gone into transforming the waterfront into one of the most visitable destinations in Canada.

Visitors can walk the entire waterfront, and it will take a while, because there is so much to do, here. Major attractions include the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, and the HMCS Sackville, the last remaining “Flower-class Corvette” from World War II, and now a National Historic Site and a naval museum. The Sackville is permanently moored in Halifax Harbour.

And speaking of boats and Halifax Harbour, a terrific way to get a water-side perspective on the scene is by taking the unique Halifax Harbour Tours cruise. What’s so special about this particular cruise? It truly is unique – the boat is 105 years

old, built in England, and once used in Florida’s Everglades. But while it has all of this history, it’s also thoroughly modern, having been retrofitted as “Halifax’s only all-electric harbour cruise.”

Captain Glenn Fraser told us that the retrofit, which was admittedly expensive, has meant that the operating cost of each 90-minute cruise is about \$1.

The cost to passengers is \$40 per adult – in my opinion, quite a bargain when compared to a lot of tourism experiences.

The cruise not only provides wonderful views of the entire waterfront – including ships ranging from luxury yachts to imposing military vessels – it also provides a good look at Georges Island, home to Fort Charlotte. A few years ago, Parks Canada opened Fort Charlotte to the public, with its maze of underground tunnels. Guided tours are available. And visitors to the island may also encounter the unique, black and white species of garter snake that have evolved on the island.

The Harbour Tour is really worthwhile, but you will also want to spend time strolling along the waterfront, taking in all the attractions, big and small. These will range from unique sculptures commemorating the history of Halifax as the first port of call for immigrants, to buskers offering live entertainment along the way.

There are play areas for kids, including and the iconic and accessible sculpture, “The Wave”, which is continually populated by climbing kids, and which gives me the willies as I wait for someone to fall off the crest. This does not seem to happen, though!

You can find the entire spectrum of dining experiences along the waterfront. There are plenty of pubs and craft breweries, as well as higher-end dining. And

there are food shacks, selling every variety of fast food, including, of course, beaver tails, donairs, and ice cream.

A fairly recent addition to the waterfront is the luxury hotel, the Muir. It’s an attraction in its own right, and the development created an amazing waterfront space that includes an event area, sculpture gallery, a vast staircase into the sea, and lots of spots for boutiques and restaurants.

One of my favourite shops on the waterfront is the Peace by Chocolate boutique. Peace by Chocolate has an inspiring story – a business founded by Syrian refugees to Canada, committed to making a positive difference in the world, and also to producing some of finest chocolate I have ever tasted! The founding Hadhad family – who still own the business – are based in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, the location of their factory, but the Halifax waterfront shop certainly offers all the best of their admittedly addictive products.

The developers of the waterfront had the brilliant idea of making sure every visitor has an opportunity to simply relax. So there are innumerable chairs provided for lounging with a great view of the sea – perhaps even napping?

There is a lot more to do in Halifax, away from the water: the famous Citadel, one of the most visited history attractions in Canada; the Nova Scotia Art Gallery, which includes the highly decorated home of primitive painter Maud Lewis; and not



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The 105-year-old, now electric boat of Halifax Harbour Tours.

to be forgotten, the Alexander Keith’s brewery. But I have a confession to make: during our two-day stay in Halifax, we never actually left the waterfront. We stayed at the Westin Nova Scotia, spent hours and hours at the Museum of Immigration, and the rest of our days strolling, cruising and exploring along the waterfront. It was a wonderful, relaxing visit.

Next time, Halifax, I will try to pry myself away from your amazing waterfront to enjoy everything else in this welcoming city. But it won’t be easy.

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



A view of The Muir hotel from the harbour, including the mysterious steps into the sea.

GLOBUS

MARITIMES & CAPE BRETON

AUGUST 29 - SEPTEMBER 6, 2026

GROUP TRIP HOSTED BY

STONETOWN TRAVEL

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

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

www.stonetowntravel.com

Rural Roots, Modern Reach



MEG PEARSON

Examiner Columnist

Hello Exeter!
 If you've lived in this area for any length of time, you know that small towns run on relationships. Word travels fast. Businesses grow through trust, reputation and the conversations that happen between neighbours.
 That's exactly what this column is about.
 My name is Meg Pearson, and I was born and raised right here in Exeter. After graduating from South Huron District High

School, I went on to study television broadcasting and spent more than a decade working in news and live television production in Toronto. For years, my job was literally helping stories reach people.
 Eventually, I left the world of broadcast media and stepped into entrepreneurship. Over the last 12 years I've worked in the wellness industry, led retreats, written and spoken publicly and built several businesses of my own. Today, I combine those two worlds: media and entrepreneurship – as a digital marketer and web designer working with small businesses through my company, Rebel Soul Media.
 This column is where those experiences meet.
 Each edition of "Rural Roots, Modern Reach" will spotlight local businesses doing interesting, creative or inspiring things, from strong branding and community initiatives to clever

digital strategies. Along the way, I'll share a few practical insights about marketing and communication that any small business owner can learn from.
 Because despite all the buzzwords, marketing is actually very simple.
 A mentor of mine once explained marketing using an analogy that stuck with me: the difference between a supermarket and a farmers' market.
 Think about how most of us shop at a big grocery store. We go in with a list, push our cart down the aisles, grab what we need, tap our card at the register and leave. These days, many people don't even do that; we order online and pick up our groceries in the parking lot.
 There's very little conversation involved.
 Now think about the local farmers' market.
 When you go to a farmers' market in the summer, you don't usually rush in and out. You

take a lap. You wander. You see what's there. As you approach a vendor's table, they might greet you, tell you about their product, explain how it was made or share a story about their farm.
 Suddenly, buying something becomes an experience.
 That's marketing.
 At its simplest, marketing is starting conversations.
 For business owners, the goal isn't just to get attention. It's to start the right conversations with the right people.
 In my work, I often explain that marketing has three core jobs: Get attention, help people understand whether your product or service is a good fit and reduce the risk so customers feel comfortable choosing you.
 For small businesses, especially here in rural Ontario, there's another layer.
 In a small town, everyone knows someone who knows someone. Word-of-mouth is still one of the most powerful

forms of marketing we have. That means the real goal isn't shouting the loudest online. It's making it easy for the people who already love your business to talk about you.
 And the best way to do that?
 Be excellent! Create products that solve real problems. Offer services that genuinely help people. Show up for your community. When businesses do that well, the marketing almost takes care of itself.
 Over the coming months, I'll be highlighting local businesses that are doing just that, whether it's through great branding, creative social media, community involvement or simply running a business that people can't stop talking about.
 If you know a local business doing something awesome, I'd love to hear about it.
 Send your suggestions my way at news@meghanpearson.ca. You might just see them featured in a future column.

Chamber Connect



COLIN CARMICHAEL

Examiner Columnist

When a local chamber of commerce is doing its job well, most people do not spend much time thinking about it. They simply experience the benefits through stronger connections, better advocacy, useful programming and a business community that has someone in its corner.
 With the Huron Chamber of Commerce now expanding into South Huron, this is about much more than a change in

geography. It is about ensuring that businesses and non-profits in South Huron continue to have a strong local network, a voice in regional conversations and access to the kinds of relationships and resources that can help communities grow.
 Before anything else, it is important to acknowledge the work of the South Huron Chamber of Commerce.
 For more than 20 years, it supported the local economy and contributed to the life of the community in meaningful ways. That kind of work matters. The Huron Chamber of Commerce is proud to continue that tradition of business leadership and community connection.
 Business success is shaped not only by taxes, infrastructure and labour force issues, but also by whether a community is healthy, stable, welcoming and capable of supporting the people who live and work there.

That means the scope of chamber work cannot be limited to conventional business issues alone.
 Yes, we care about workforce development and economic growth. But we also must be willing to engage with broader community issues that impact the overall resilience of our towns and villages. In rural communities especially, those lines are not neatly separated.
 As independent, non-profit organizations, chambers can be agile in ways that many other organizations in the county simply cannot be. We can respond quickly to emerging issues, connect the right people across sectors and help move conversations forward. In a place like South Huron, where relationships and practical problem-solving matters, that kind of role is especially important.
 It is also important to recognize that South Huron's op-

portunities and challenges are shaped by its place within a wider regional economy.
 Employers in South Huron are dealing with many of the same pressures seen across Huron County, and a chamber that can work locally while also seeing the bigger regional picture is in a stronger position to help.
 Across the county, we work closely with business improvement areas (BIAs) and other community organizations because strong local economies are built through cooperation, not duplication.
 That is certainly true in South Huron, where we are already working with the Exeter BIA, as the South Huron chamber did. Downtown Exeter is an important part of the South Huron economy, and it benefits everyone when local organizations are aligned and focused on practical results.
 That is also why I am so

pleased that Exeter BIA manager Caroline Hill has recently joined the board of directors of the Huron Chamber of Commerce. Her presence helps ensure that South Huron has a direct voice at the board table.
 For me, this expansion into South Huron is not about declaring a dramatic new beginning. It is about building on a solid local foundation, strengthening connections across Huron County and making sure that businesses and communities in South Huron are fully part of a broader regional conversation about the future.
 That is good for the Huron chamber. More importantly, I believe it is good for South Huron, because it brings local relationships, regional reach and a strong independent voice together at a time when communities need all three.

FARM EDITION

Check out the special *Farm Section* in our next edition of the Exeter Examiner, coming

March 26, 2026

Exeter Examiner
 NEWSPAPER

**EXETER EXAMINER
 UPCOMING ISSUES**

March 26, 2026 (including Farm special section)

April 9, 2026
 April 23, 2026
 May 7, 2026
 May 21, 2026
 June 4, 2026

Exeter Examiner
 NEWSPAPER

Historian David Yates releases new book 'Huron at the Crossroads', 1925-2025

KATHLEEN SMITH

Contributor

Loaded with stories about Huron County's recent past, historian David Yates' newest book 'Huron at the Crossroads, 1925 - 2025' is sure to awaken memories.

From watching CKNX-TV's 'Circle 8 Ranch', to attending a 1967 Centennial event, or summers at Judith Gooderham Pool, the 'streaker fad' and where you were on the morning of 9-11, this new book is a fast-paced and easy read.

Stories within 'Huron at the Crossroads' are sure to engage readers of all ages and interests.

Joe: Fulop: It's Only Crokinole...but I Like It, or The Chin Brothers Hockey Line tell of the county's athletic greatness, while others like Matt Dinning's death in battle in Afghanistan are tragic reminders of the cost of being free.

Throughout the process of finding and researching stories for 'Huron at the Crossroads', Yates thought the streaking fad was a fun story to investigate.

"I had no idea that it was such a big deal," admitted Yates.

Another story Yates says readers can look forward to learning about was the annual gathering of the Octogenarian Club at St. Patrick's Park from the 1920s to the 1960s.

More recent stories like Canadian Idol contestant Kati Durst, or the story on Phil Main were interesting because Yates was able to interview these remarkable individuals.

Researching is part of the process, and Yates enjoys every minute of it.

"For some reason, I love researching old stories," he added.

"It's a hobby like stamp collecting that becomes an obsession."

A surprising find during research for this new book was the number of new settlements founded in Huron County in the last 100 years.

Many perceive Huron County as already settled in the 19th century but new and vibrant places like Blue-water Beach, Ad Astral and Huron Parks were established and became thriving communities during the period of 1925 until 2025.

Yates explained that one doesn't have to be a history buff to enjoy the book.

"Anyone who likes a good story or wants to know more about the area will get something out of the book," added Yates.

"It's a mix of nostalgia, comedy and unfortunately, tragedy."

According to Yates, change is constant and that's why history has always been so interesting to him. People and institutions rise, have their hey-day before fading away, and Yates explains that it's luck if one generation will remember who or what you were.

Fame, fads and public pools - they all fade away. Read 'Huron at the Crossroads' for a modern perspective on Huron County history.

Those who are interested in checking out 'Huron at the Crossroads' may gain a better understanding of the area, while realising that Canadians and Huron County have a unique culture.

"Contrary to some, rural living does produce its own culture and society," Yates said.

"The stories of those people deserve to be told and told loudly, and proudly."

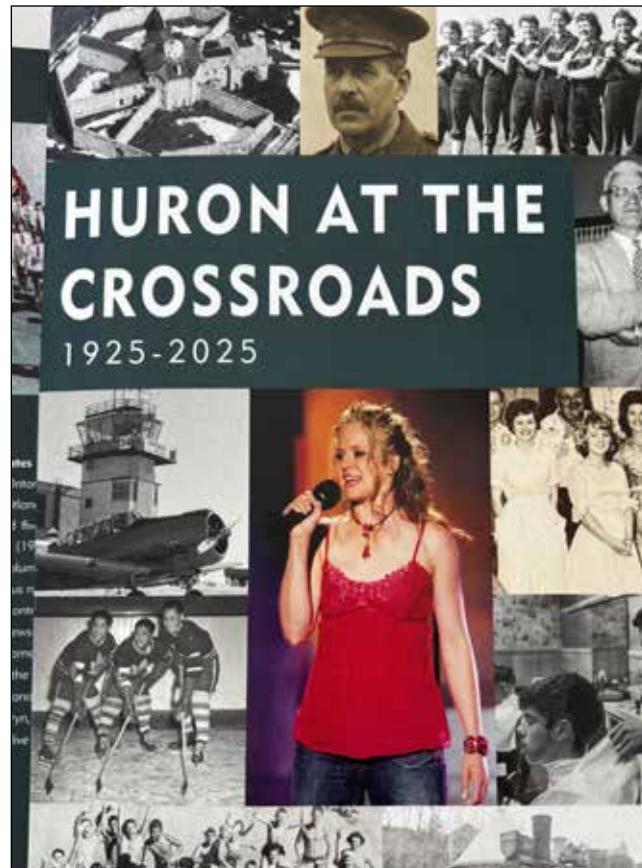
While reading, one is reminded at how transient everything is.

Yates explained that with the Goderich bicentennial occurring next year in 2027, he thought it would be a good opportunity to look back and recover some of the people, places and events of the last century.

"Many readers will remember the people, places and events covered in the book," Yates said.

"While some will be of people and places that few remember or know about."

Although the period differs from the other books by Yates, like his earlier books, 'Huron at the Crossroads'



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

'Huron at the Crossroads' can be purchased at the Bee's Knees in Goderich, Michael's Pharmasave in Goderich, Clinton and Bayfield, at Blyth Citizen and the Bayfield Village Book Shop.

is an anthology, or patchwork quilt of stories that when stitched together, making a colourful picture of the last 100 years.

'Huron at the Crossroads' can be purchased at the Bee's Knees in Goderich, Michael's Pharmasave in Goderich, Clinton and Bayfield, at Blyth Citizen and the Bayfield Village Book Shop.

LOOKING TO RENT AN APARTMENT?



Contact Us Today!
Terry Richardson
519-636-3213
Towerview@wmcd.ca

- We'll help you find the most suitable apartment that fits your needs.
- We're offering over 2800 apartments and townhomes in Southern Ontario.

SPECIAL OFFER



WILLIAMS & MCDANIEL
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

Let Our Customer Service Bring You Home!

Receive a \$250 gift card with approved lease

Straight Line Collision

519.228.6114

At Straight Line Collision, we're proud to be celebrating our

35th Anniversary!

We have enjoyed every day in which we were able to serve our community with all their auto body needs. Our ancestry goes back to some of the first pioneers to step foot on this land we call home. We're proud to honour their memory with the same hard work and commitment they brought forward in their success as entrepreneurs! Certainly, they endured many more hard ships than we can imagine.

But every generation faces their own challenges!

Would just as soon forget the word "Covid" but it sure created its own level of frustrations! We can't say enough about our amazing staff throughout those times! Not one workday lost! Incredible commitment!

Thanks to our staff, Bryan Stuckless "Refinishing Technician" (Man! Can he paint!), Blair Cooper "Auto-Body Technician" (Nothing he can't Fix), Derrick Misner "Collision Technician" (Brilliant at his art), Audrey Ellerington "Office Administrator" (Once in a lifetime find!), Trevor Mellin "Auto Body Apprentice (Learning Fast).

Thank you to all of you who are the reason why we're still here every day to serve the community.

The biggest thank you goes to my wife Carol Stuckless who without her unwavering support none of this would be possible! The 80-90 hour weeks in the first 10-15 years was necessary before being able to hire more staff. Her incredible work ethic was contagious and with her it was more like "get to work" than you "spend too much time there"! Our success has no doubt been us not me!

The wonderful part is the last 10 years we became equal partners in business and what a team! Xoxo.

To close, I'd like to challenge all local businesses to show their support as we have in donating to the Stephen Central School project for the purchase of new playground equipment which is desperately needed for the children there. A two-year fundraising project has recently taken off. Can there be any better song than that of children playing happily together at recess and lunch while they're getting educated to replace us as time goes on and find their place in the community.

Jump on board and share the pride in a successful venture.

Centralia, ON

Riddles

What is the richest nut?
A cash-ew!

Why did the fruit salad skip its own wedding?
It had a lot of can't-elope!

What kind of beer won't get you tipsy?
Root beer!

What kind of poultry is always going to the bathroom?
Chick peas!

Why did the citrus tree go to the hospital?
Lemon-aid!

You cut me, slice me, dice me, and all the while,
you cry. What am I?
An onion!

What kind of apples do computers prefer?
Macintosh!

What has many ears but cannot hear?
Corn!

I'm a bird, a person, and a fruit. What am I?
A Kiwi!

I'm the father of fruits. What am I?
A papa-ya!

What vegetable always loses in every competition yet is a terrific rapper?
Beets!

What vegetable can you use to tie your shoelace?
A string bean!

Sudoku

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

Solutions on pg. 31

Pet of the Week

BREATHE EASY: WINTER WELNESS FOR PETS

Did you know that cold weather and close indoor contact can increase and spread infections in pets? If your furry friend is coughing, sneezing, showing nasal discharge or appearing lethargic, it's important not to ignore these signs. Early veterinary care can help prevent complications and keep your pets happy and healthy!



Sponsored By:
KIRKTON VET CLINIC
kirktonvetclinic.com 519-229-8911



OSCAR

Our Pet of the Week is Oscar, a two-year-old 10 pound Pomeranian Border Collie cross. All ten pounds of Oscar is full of character. Oscar is owned by Debbie O'Brien.



Nominate your pet to be a Featured Pet by emailing info@exeterexaminer.com

office SOLUTIONS INC Word Search

SPONSORED BY:

Office Solutions Inc. | 92 Main St. S. Exeter, ON N0M 1S1
p. 519.235.1840 | shop.shos.ca | info@shos.ca

EXETER EXAMINER COVERAGE AREA

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

- Exeter
- Lucan
- Centralia
- Clandeboye
- Crediton
- Dashwood
- Grand Bend
- Granton
- Hensall
- Huron Park
- Kirkton
- Mt Carmel
- Saint Joseph
- Shipka
- Zurich

COMING EVENTS

MARCH

Grand Bend Area Community Health Centre

Programs and Partnerships

- **Fridays March 6th -27th 9-10 am "Walk and Talk"** Lambton Heritage Museum. Free Indoor Walking program. Please bring your indoor running shoes. Coffee time follows. For more info contact cmaxfield@gbchc.com GBACHC

- **Tuesdays & Thursdays March 10th -26 "Free Income Tax Clinics" 1-5 pm** Boardroom . Every Tuesday and Thursday Please contact Mary at 647-295-8292 or email mpnorris58@gmail.com to book an appointment. Grand Bend Area CHC , 69 Main St East .

- **Thursday. March 19th. 1:30 -3:30 Alzheimer's caregiver support group.** Support group program with trained facilitator Randy Chapman. 1-800-561-5012. Adult Day wing at GBACHC.

- **Thursday. March 26th 10-11am Service Canada Information Session,** Good Neighbours of Bluewater 28 Goshen St N Zurich. Everyone welcome.

- **March 31st 10:30-12 "Powerful Tools for Caregivers"** Are you looking after a loved one and need some support? Contact Kate Mason 519-238-2362 x 241 for more information and to register. Grand Bend Area CHC

- **Wednesdays. 10-11:00 am GBACHC Walk & Talk** Hensall Arena. Contact Grace at gbonnett@gbchc.com Fun social walking program with coffee and chatting to finish every Wednesday 529-238-2362 x 202

- **Wednesdays. 9:20-11 am Pinery Walking Group.** Meet at the Lambton Heritage Museum parking lot 9:00 am Email Lindsey.lindseyashworthducharme@gmail.com

- **Thursdays 9:30-12 Early On program.** Free program for adults with children birth to 6 years. Adult Day Wing, GBACHC , 69 Main St East Grand Bend Contact earlyonchildcare.ca or 519-786-6161 x 9226.

Saturdays 8:30-11:30 am Walk In Medical Clinic GBACHC . Open to anyone in the community who needs medical attention (Not an Urgent Care or Emergency Centre) 69 Main St East.

March Break at the Library

EXETER LIBRARY BRANCH

exeterlibrary@huroncounty.ca | 519-235-1890 | Registration Required

- Beeswax Candle Making with Trash Theatre - Saturday, March 14th: 1pm-2:30pm (Ages 5 and up)

- Tiny Clay Cactus Pots - Monday, March 16th: 10am-12pm (Ages 6-12)

- ABCA What's the Buzz - Thursday, March 19th: 11am-12:30 pm (Ages 6-12)

- Melted Crayon Suncatcher - Friday, March 20th: 10am-12pm (Ages 6-12)

- Drop-In Art Club - Wednesday, March 18th: 3:30 - 4:30 pm (Ages 10+)

KIRKTON LIBRARY BRANCH

kirktonlibrary@huroncounty.ca | 519-229-8854 | Registration Required

- Beeswax Candle Making with Trash Theatre - Saturday, March 14th: 10am-11:30 a.m. (Ages 5 and up)

- ABCA Art in Nature - Tuesday, March 17th: 11am-12:30 pm (Ages 6-12)

HENSALL LIBRARY BRANCH

hensalllibrary@huroncounty.ca | 519-262-2445 | Registration Required

- Tiny Clay Cactus Pots - Tuesday, March 17th: 4-5 p.m. (Ages 6-12)

- Melted Crayon Suncatcher - Thursday, March 19th: 4-5 p.m. (Ages 6-12)

- ABCA Art in Nature - Friday, March 20th: 11am-12:30 pm (Ages 6-12)

March 22

South Huron Community Choir's Fundraiser. Take Out Turkey Dinner. Pickup 4:30-6pm at Exeter Community Centre (South Entrance). Adult dinner: \$27. Kids under 12: \$10. Orders due March 20. Get your tickets from Hansen's (Courtesy Desk), Exeter Animal Hospital or e-transfer to southhuronchoirs@gmail.com

Experience Fanshawe at Open House All locations are open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 28.

- Meet faculty and current students from all areas of Fanshawe

- Drop-in and ask about your program interests, career options and becoming a Fanshawe student

- Hear from college experts on student life, admissions, financial aid, and more!

- Explore our campuses at London, Woodstock, Simcoe, St. Thomas, Clinton and Tiverton

March 25th Easter Basket Program BBBS

We're excited to launch our Easter Basket Program! We're collecting donations of Chocolate, Outdoor activity items, Hygiene products, Craft kits and Supplies, Socks and Gift cards. Drop off your donations at the Little Shop in Exeter to help fill baskets of joy!

Any questions reach out to Meghan at meghan.hartman@bigbrothersbigsisters.ca

APRIL

Thurs., April 9th - SPRING QUARTER AUCTION

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Huron.

Doors Open at 6:00pm. Auction Begins at 7:00pm.

TICKETS \$5, EXTRA PADDLES \$2 EACH.

South Huron Rec Centre. 94 Victoria St East - Exeter.

Tickets available at: The Little Shop!

Contact Angie To Order Yours Today!

Angie.steckle@Bigbrothersbigsisters.ca



PIECEMAKERS 2026
QUILT SHOW

New Quilts, Merchants' Mall, Boutique, Lunch Café

Admission (Cash Only)
\$10

April 23, 24 and 25, 2026
Thursday and Friday - 10 am until 5 pm
Saturday - 10 am until 4 pm

Contact: Joan Robinson
Email: markjoan@quadro.net

The Pyramid Centre
317 James Street South
St. Marys, ON

Huron Perth Quilters' Guild & Stonetowne Quilters' Guild




Grand Bend Family Dental

Book Instantly Online!



Ask Us About the CDCP!
Flexible Payment Plans
Direct Insurance Billing

(519) 238-2368
29 Gill Road, Grand Bend, ON
grandbendfamilydental.com

\$299
Complete Oral Exam
Includes X-Ray, Cleaning & Comprehensive Exam

Offer ends April 30

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

OFFICE SUPPLIES & SERVICES

office SOLUTIONS INC.
 p. 519.235.1840
 info@shos.ca
 Order Online:
 shop.shos.ca
 92 Main St. S. Exeter

SIDING / EAVES / ROOFING

TRUE TROUGH LTD.
 Seamless Eavestroughing
 Siding - Soffit - Fascia
 Asphalt - Steel - Flat Roofing
 Windows - Doors - Decks
TREVOR TRUEMNER
 Hensall, Ontario
 Cell: 519-671-6117
 Email: truetrough@gmail.com

METAL PRODUCTS

Dietrich Metal Products
 Metal Fabricating • Lumber & Metal Sales
 For all your building needs
519-294-6940
 35665 Salem road, Parkhill

CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING

FABRIC MASTER
 CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING
519-228-6051
 WE DO THEM ALL - BIG OR SMALL
 • CARPET & UPHOLSTERY CLEANING
 • TRUCKMOUNT STEAM CLEANING
 • WATER EXTRACTION
 • DRYER & DEHUMIDIFIER RENTALS
 • HOME, BUSINESS, RV, BOAT & AUTOS
 WE USE ONLY ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY PRODUCTS

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Aquamarine
2. March 8th
3. War
4. 1960
5. 180 degrees
6. Assassination of Julius Caesar
7. F-117 Nighthawk
8. Back to the Future
9. Daffodil and jonquil
10. Sean's Bar in Westmeath

AUCTIONEER

JACOB AUCTIONS
 Estate • Farm • Real Estate
 "Our Place Or Yours"
 David & Doug Jacob
519-348-9896
 jacobauctions.com

LAWN CARE & MAINTENANCE

- ✓ Lawn mowing & reseeding
- ✓ Stone Work & Junk removal
- ✓ Aggregate/mulch delivery and installs
- ✓ Firewood sales and delivery
- ✓ Yard leveling & rough grading
- ✓ Wet yard & water drainage solutions
- ✓ Driveway rebuilding & regrading
- ✓ Gravel parking areas & laneways
- ✓ Shed, hot tub & patio base preparation
- ✓ Brush clearing & property clean up

A full service landscape company servicing Huron County
JARED'S (519) 494-7624
 LAWN CARE

FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS

GC FINANCIAL
 Solutions Group
 • Established 1952 •
 Building Wealth for Generations
 425 Main St, Exeter
 39 Ontario Rd, Mitchell
 519-235-2740
 gc.financial@sunlife.com

AUTO GLASS & CARE

Home & Auto Glass
 Sales & Installation
 Les MacDonald Installations
 Office: (519)-235-1829
 Mobile: (226)-268-4492
 79 Victoria St. W. Exeter, ON

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

ROOFING

Jb JIM BECKER CONSTRUCTION (2013)
TILCOR
 STONE COATED STEEL ROOFING SYSTEMS
DAN BECKER
 • 519-871-4907
JIM BECKER
 • 519-237-3526
 jdbecker@hay.net

DRAINAGE SOLUTIONS

PARKER PARKER LIMITED
 "Quality, Experience & Service."
Drainage Solutions
 • Backhoe/Excavating Work
 • Septic Design & Installation
 • Soil Erosion Contractor
 Call Wayne Cook
 519-236-7390

HYDRO EXCAVATION

CT ENVIRONMENTAL
 • Hydro Excavating
 • Sewer Cleaning
 • CCTV Video Inspection
 Cathy Cook • 519-236-7401

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA **ADVERTISE LOCAL**
 Support the local businesses that keep your community and its newspapers thriving.
 Canada

COMPUTER SALES & SERVICE

LRV Computing & Consulting
 Specializing in all things Computer Since 1997
 519-235-2136 lrvcomputing.com
 153 Anne St., Exeter, ON
 Email: AL@LRVCOMPUTING.COM

PAINTING

GLAVIN PAINTING
 BARN | COMMERCIAL | INTERIOR
MARTY GLAVIN ☎ 519.808.0556
 glavinpainting@gmail.com Interior Painting by Marty Glavin

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE AT GRANTHAVEN.COM

"A familiar face in local newspapers for more than three decades."

Deb Lord
Advertising Rep
 • 519-520-5366 • deb@granthaven.com

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA **Exeter Examiner**
 NEWSPAPER

Q and A regarding the new Exeter Examiner

STEWART GRANT

Publisher

Q: Is this a weekly newspaper?

A: Not yet. We are starting as a bi-weekly publication and then will graduate to a weekly once we have enough advertising support. It took four years for our Stratford Times to become a weekly whereas one of our newest publications, the Tillsonburg Post, did it in nine months. With the great community support in Exeter, hopefully we'll become a weekly in record time.

Q: Where can I get the Exeter Examiner?

A: This week was unique because we sent it out through Canada Post Neighbourhood Mailing so that people would become aware of it. But in the future, there are 4 ways to get the newspaper:

1. Pick up a free copy at one of over 100 different pick-up locations, including grocery stores, coffee shops, retail stores, community spaces, retirement residences, etc. (we'll finalize the list this week)
2. Order a mail subscription for \$57 annually by visiting www.granthaven.com/print-subscriptions and following the instructions.
3. Sign up for our e-newsletter by visiting www.exeterexaminer.com and we'll send a link to each future newspaper to your email address.

4. Visit our website anytime at www.exeterexaminer.com and you can read each edition in either PDF or Flipbook format. You can also see our other community newspapers at www.granthaven.com.

Q: How can I advertise in the Exeter Examiner?

A: Our ad rates are super reasonable because we want there to be something for everyone. For businesses, our ad rates range from \$15 for a small business directory ad to \$550 for a full page. Our business rate card is available at www.granthaven.com/advertise. You can also support our newspaper by contacting us at info@exeterexaminer.com or 519-284-0041 for birth announcements, graduations, obituaries, birthday celebrations, upcoming events, yard sales and classifieds. These types of ads depend on size but are all very reasonable because we want to promote community involvement in our newspaper.

Q: Why does the front page say "Volume 3, Issue 1" when this is the first issue?

A: Actually, volumes 1 and 2 were in 2015 and 2016. We were too early back then since there was already a thriving newspaper in Exeter. However, much has changed in ten years, and this time we are here for the long run to meet the need for local news and information.

OBITUARY

Ross



Unexpectedly, as the result of a motor vehicle accident, on Saturday, February 7, 2026, Laura Natsuko (Nakamura) Ross, of Exeter, age 38, leaving behind a legacy of love, laughter, and devotion to her family. Born on August 24, 1987, in Goderich, she was the dearly loved wife of Rob Ross. Proud and adoring mother

of Colin and Ethan Ross. Forever loved daughter of the late Brian Nakamura (2013) and Linda (Haugh) Nakamura of Seaforth. Loved sister of Jason and Sarah Nakamura and their daughters Mya and Carmen of Kitchener and sister-in-law of Scott Ross of London. Lovingly remembered by her father-in-law and mother-in-law Jim and Mary Ann Ross of London. Fondly remembered by her aunts, uncles, cousins and many friends. Predeceased by her grandparents Ross and Irene Haugh, Tomiye and Yujiro Nakamura.

At the request of the family, cremation has taken place and interment in the family plot in Crediton Cemetery. An Open House Celebration of Laura's Life, with refreshments, will be held at the Crediton Community Centre, 38 Victoria Avenue East, Crediton, on Saturday, May 2, 2026, from 1 to 4 p.m. T. Harry Hoffman & Sons Funeral Home, Dashwood, entrusted with the arrangements.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to Cornerstone Montessori School in Clinton or Egmondville United Church.

Go Raptors Go! and Let's Go Blue Jays!

White Squirrel Watch

PHOTO BY MEG PEARSON



Nominate your White Squirrel sightings by emailing info@exeterexaminer.com

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA Exeter Examiner NEWSPAPER

BE IN THE KNOW!
Get the Latest Edition Delivered Straight to Your Inbox!

www.granthaven.com/exeter-examiner

Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett • 519.272.5742 • jtsquote@gmail.com

Joel Hackett is a certified Arborist residing in the St. Marys area. Currently, he spends most of the year running Joel's Tree Service. For contact call 519.272.5742 or email jtsquote@gmail.com

Dear Arborist,

My Colorado Blue Spruce was perfectly fine until roughly two years back. Lately the needles have started turning orange then purple before dropping off. The tree now looks awful.

Thanks, Gary

Dear Gary,

It sounds like your Colorado Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens*) is suffering from a fungal disease. These trees are highly prone to *Rhizosphaera* needle cast (caused by *Rhizosphaera kalkhoffii*). The fungus spreads by spores and usually begins on the lower branches and older

needles inside the canopy. Needle cast is in the ground and also spread by wind.

The standard approach is to apply a fungicide spray (typically one containing copper) at the right times—generally in spring when new growth is emerging and again a few weeks later. This can stop the disease from advancing and protect fresh needles, but it won't bring back needles or branches that have already died. Because of the often permanent damage, quite a few owners ultimately decide to take the tree down and replace with something else.

Sincerely, The Arborist



Overheard At McCafe

Brought to you by: McDonald's

Grand Bend, 75 Main Street East • 519-238-6991 Exeter, 261 Main Street North • 519-235-4227

"Now I know why they kept the Exeter Examiner sign up on Huron Street for the last 10 years!"

"FIFA really dropped the ball in giving Trump their Peace Prize."

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others? Either email them to us at info@exeterexaminer.com with the title "Overheard at McCafe" or call 519.655.2341.



The Hub

March 11, 2026

Reduced Load Limits in Effect

The reduced load limit period in the Municipality of South Huron typically runs from March 1 to April 30 of any given year, depending on weather and road conditions. Roads are most vulnerable to heavy vehicle damage in the early spring when frost is leaving the ground and load restrictions help to minimize the damage.

With the exception of Main Street, Exeter from the North limit of the Connecting Link (Walper Street) and the South limit of the Connecting Link (Huron Motor Products), all roads in South Huron are subject to restrictions during the reduced load limit period.

Questions or concerns? Please contact our Transportation Services Department.

2026 South Huron Votes - Are you on the voter's list?

The next municipal and school board election will be held on October 26, 2026. If you are a resident, owner or tenant of property in Ontario, a Canadian citizen and 18 years of age you can vote in Ontario's municipal and school board elections. It is the responsibility of every elector to make sure their information is up to date and accurate.

By visiting registertovoteon.ca and you can:

- confirm or update your information on the voter's list;
- add your name to the voter's list;
- remove your name from the voters list
- (16-17 year olds residing in Ontario) add yourself to the Ontario Register of Future Voters
- if you are temporarily living outside of Ontario, you may be eligible to add yourself to the Register of Absentee Voters

Further, to ensure your correct school support designation is included on the voters list, be sure to review and, if needed, update with MPAC (mpac.ca/schoolsupport) by June 1, 2026.

For more information regarding the 2026 Municipal and School Board Election, check out the *Municipal Election* page on SouthHuron.ca.

March Break Drop-In Activities

Looking for an easy, affordable way to keep kids active and entertained this March Break? Join us for fun-filled drop-in activities at the South Huron Recreation Centre and Dashwood Community Centre!

South Huron Recreation Centre

March 16, 18 & 20
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Dashwood Community Centre

March 17 & 19
9:30 AM – 11:30 AM

Activities include:

- Giant Connect 4, Giant Jenga, Bean Bag Toss, Cornhole, Crafts, Sport activities
- Cost: \$3 per parent/caregiver & child. Children must be accompanied by a parent/caregiver

Important Dates

Monday, March 16th

Public Meeting
5:00 PM (EST)*

Monday, March 16th

Regular Council Meeting
6:00 PM (EST)*

South Huron Council meetings are open for in-person attendance and continue to be livestreamed. See our website **Agendas, Minutes & Meetings page or the South Huron Youtube channel at meeting time to access the livestream video link. A recording of the meeting will be available on the municipal Youtube Channel following the meeting.*

Exeter Cemetery Flowerbeds

In keeping with the provisions of the Cemetery Bylaw, flowerbeds may only be planted by municipal staff. Please note the deadline to purchase a new flowerbed or renew your current flowerbed contract is May 1, 2026.

Please contact the Clerk's Department at 519.235.0310 x232 or cemetery@southhuron.ca if you require assistance.

Tax Notice

The 2026 Interim tax bills have been mailed/emailed. If you haven't received your tax bill please contact our office at 519-235-0310 to ensure we have the correct information on file. Be sure to keep your bill as it shows both installments due – the first by March 15th and the second by June 15th.

Tax payments are due in office by the deadline. If paying online or at the bank, make sure to leave enough time for the payment to be processed by the bank to avoid late fees.

See our *Payment Options* page at SouthHuron.ca for information.

Our information is accessible! Contact us if you require alternative formats.

MUNICIPALITY OF SOUTH HURON

322 Main Street South, PO Box 759, Exeter, ON N0M 1S6

PHONE: 519-235-0310 • FAX: 519-235-3304 • TOLL FREE: 1-877-204-0747

WEBSITE: www.southhuron.ca

Building Services ext. 6

Community Services ext. 222

Transportation, Roads ext. 230

Water & Wastewater, Landfill ext. 230

Afterhours ext. 7