

Tillsonburg POST

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Coldest Night of the Year nears fundraising goal

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

There was excitement in the air in the Tillsonburg Community Centre Lion's Auditorium as participants in the Coldest Night of the Year prepared to walk to raise money to aid homelessness locally.

The third annual fundraiser, coordinated by United Way of Oxford in Tillsonburg, sees all proceeds going to Tillsonburg Light House, a transitional housing initiative that helps the homeless.

"What you're doing here tonight will make a difference for your neighbours, your town and your community," United Way of Oxford Executive Director Kelly Gilson told those in the audience before they set out.

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna told the crowd there are 2.5 million Canadians who rely on food banks monthly, and there is a 10 per cent increase in homelessness. He said local initiatives like this help communities.

"Every step you take, every dollar you raise is going to make someone's winter a little warmer," he said.

Deputy Mayor Dave Beres continued on that theme, noting he woke up that morning in a warm house.

"There's more than 85,000 people that don't have that luxury, just think about that," he said.

The real motivator was a man who was a resident of Tillsonburg Light House. He went four years without finding a job and was struggling before living in Tillsonburg Light House.

"This program helped me so much, I'm getting back on my feet again," he said.

Gilson said since it opened in May 2023, 31 people have gone through Tillsonburg Light House. All who have finished have gone on to stable, independent housing and have been equipped with "everything they need to have an amazing future story."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

Sporting their toques as individual fundraisers who collected \$150, participants in the Coldest Night of the Year set out on their walk on Saturday afternoon. The fundraiser for Tillsonburg Light House was only a few hundred dollars from its goal as of press time. Story on left and more photos on page 22.

Minor variance approved to allow McDonalds on Broadway

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

A minor variance for a McDonalds restaurant on north Broadway was approved by council with amendments after neighbouring residents raised concerns.

The application from McDonalds Restaurants Canada was for relief from a bylaw restricting the restaurant's queue spaces from abutting a residential zone

at 693 Broadway. The 1.1-acre property currently contains a single-family dwelling.

Council heard the application at its Feb. 21 meeting, where planner Amy Hartley explained the proposed design is for a drive-through wrapping around the building. She recommended a 2.4-meter noise barrier on the west and rear property lines to mitigate the noise. She also noted that the lights from the restaurant shouldn't be an issue once the walls are up.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



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Application approved for new McDonalds restaurant on Broadway

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Mayor Deb Gilvesy pointed out members of council have received a lot of complaints from neighbours about the A & W restaurant, and said the bylaw is there for a reason.

Coun. Chris Rosehart agreed that there have been many complaints about A & W.

“Once you get the lights up, you’ll have light pollution in the backyards of all those people,” she said.

Hartley explained the lights will be facing in towards the restaurant, and the wall will block any ambient light.

“There’s not anticipated to be any light pollution onto these properties,” she said.

While Rosehart said the street lights illuminate her entire yard, Hartley said the future restaurant’s lights are professionally designed and more directional.

Gilvesy raised a concern about the menu boards, noting they are bright, and asked about their height. Hartley said the menu boards wouldn’t be eight feet tall.

Rosehart said the drive-through speaker at A & W can be heard six houses down on Allen Street. Hartley said the speaker system at McDonalds will have automatic volume control that decreases the volume at night.

The debate continued, with Rosehart asking about delivery trucks at 2:30 in the morning. Hartley admitted the noise study did not address this, but said trucks are on an infrequent basis.

Gilvesy also asked more about the noise.

“There is still some noise, the sound barrier won’t mitigate all the noise, correct?” she asked, to which Hartley said the provincial Ministry of the Environment provides noise guidelines.

Coun. Chris Parker argued it’s possible some of the neighbours work in shifts and may sleep during the day. He asked about

sound mitigation during daytime hours.

“Stopping the noise completely, I don’t think, is possible,” she said.

Coun. Kelly Spencer asked for examples of where sound barriers were used, and Hartley said it does help, citing rail-ways.

Resident D.J. Renaud, who lives near the proposed restaurant, said backyards in the condos are only about 25 feet. He estimated backyards on the properties next to A & W are 60 to 70 feet deep.

“We’re in a worse situation with this proposition,” he said.

Mark Taylor, who lives next to Renaud, raised a concern about the constant smell of fast food. He also asked where the dumpsters would be placed and how rodents would be controlled.

Gilvesy explained that this application was only for zoning, and that the placement of garbage bins would be dealt with under site plan control.

Coun. Kelly Spencer moved Hartley’s suggested motion to approve the variance with a 2.4-meter wall. She added that she knows people who live behind similar walls next to a highway, and they say it makes a difference.

“The wall is the major game-changer here, it may even help mitigate the noise from the cars along the highway,” Spencer said.

She accepted a suggested amendment from Rosehart to raise the wall to address noise from refrigeration units on delivery trucks.

Gilvesy maintained that the bylaw was there for a reason and asked whether there was a traffic study. Hartley said the Ministry of Transportation has no issues with the proposal.

The application was approved by a split vote, with a 10-foot wall.

Coldest Night of the Year close to fundraising goal

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

“We are truly changing lives together,” she said.

With walkers ready to set out, the event was at 97 per cent of its goal, raising \$50,400 towards \$52,000. There were 121 walkers, 22 teams, and 31 volunteers who helped to make the night a success.

The Tillsonburg Kinettes, who were last year’s top fundraising team, lost the unofficial competition for the top team to the Rotary Club this year. President Carrie Lewis said they plan on challenging the Kinsmen next year to see who can raise more. The Kinsmen didn’t have a team this year, but club member Ken Butcher did walk with the Kinettes.

“The thing we like most about it is the funds from this go right back into Tillsonburg,” Lewis said.

Rotary member Kris Layman was also the top individual fundraiser, raising \$4,325 himself. He was also the Rotary member who organized the team and expected the Kinettes to surpass them again. His goal was only to raise \$2,000 as a Rotary team, but they hit \$6,950.

Speaking to his individual success, Layman said his generous donors make it possible. He built a network of people who respected what he is doing and continue to support it.

The top five teams, in order of finish, were: Rotary Club, Kinettes, Crosspoint Church, Ontario Nurses Association and Care Bears.

Gilson was happy with the outcome, predicting the goal would be hit after the event. By Monday morning, 99 per cent of the goal had been raised.

“We set what we thought was a bit of a stretch goal,” she said. “We wanted as much as we could to do as much as we can in the community. It does speak to the generosity of the community because these are difficult times.”

Asked why the event continues to be a success, Gilson answered, “Everyday people see homelessness in their community. In a community our size, people see it, and they care about it. They want to help and don’t know what to do about it. This is a direct way they can do something and make a difference.”

WEEKEND QUIZ

by Jake Grant

1. What actor starred in Ace Ventura?
2. What is the capital city of Iran?
3. What does MAID stand for in medical terms?
4. Which Renaissance artist painted 'The School of Athens' in the Vatican?
5. In 'Children of Men', what event has made humanity desperate?
6. The Danube River flows into which sea?
7. Which hormone is produced by the pineal gland and helps regulate sleep cycles?
8. A Phon is a unit of what?
9. What is the highest-rated daytime talk show in American Television history?
10. What country do the Galapagos Islands belong to?

This week’s answers are found on pg. 27

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EDITORIAL

Tillsonburg, you've got this

What can be done about the homeless situation in Tillsonburg?

That's a commonly-asked question, with a complicated, multi-layer answer that bridges county, provincial and federal levels of government in most cases. The one exception is there are local initiatives which are driven by non-profit organizations that are making a difference. Tillsonburg Light House is one of those initiatives.

Tillsonburg Light House is a transitional housing facility that can accommodate up to seven people at once. Residents can stay up to 364 days and learn life skills, such as cooking, budgeting and making their food go further.

Residents are also assisted with finding jobs and securing permanent housing

within the community.

The success of Tillsonburg Light House speaks for itself. Since it opened in 2023, 31 individuals have completed the program and are in stable, independent living. That is making a difference in local homelessness.

The largest funding source for Tillsonburg Light House is the annual Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser. This year's event was a success, but was \$863 short of its goal as of Tuesday morning. All it would take to reach the goal would be a few dozen readers committing \$25 or \$50 each. Donating is simple, and can be done online at cnoy.org and searching for Tillsonburg.

Let's put the local event over the top. Tillsonburg, you've got this one.

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(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

PHOTOGRAPHERS WANTED

Do you have a great photo you think would look good on the editorial page?

The Tillsonburg Post is looking for images to display in this space from community members who would like to share their art work. All images must be taken in Tillsonburg, or the immediate area, and should not be of people.

Images should be high resolution jpegs. Please send only one image per e-mail, and send no more than three images. Images should be sent to jeff@granthaven.com

'I Think I Can' is good motivation



**WRITER'S
CORNER**

NORMA COLLIS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

As a child, one of my favorite picture books was titled "The Little Engine That Could."

Whenever I faced a difficult task, I would frequently mutter under my breath "I think I can, I think I can." On a good day, I would eventually reach a point where I could exclaim "I did it."

Other days I might mutter sotto voice, "I blew it."

I have always felt a real infinity for trains. Growing up in Tillsonburg, two

blocks away from one of the town's two remaining railway stations, I was accustomed to waking in the night to hear the whistle of a "midnight" train as it approached our town.

The station closest to us at Bridge and Bidwell Street, was called The Grand Trunk Railway Station. I had no idea what a "Grand Trunk" was but I liked the sound of that name. It sounded regal and very important.

The trains that passed through our town also sounded grand and very important. There was the "Michigan Central" and the "Great Western." The one name I loved the most was "The Wabash." It was fun rolling that name around on my tongue.

The overhead bridge located right in our downtown area, was also fascinating. That bridge arched up and over the railway tracks. If you happened to be walking over the bridge when a train was passing below, you experienced a delightful vibration and a rumble as the many rail cars bearing exotic names, passed below you.

As an adult, we lived in the historic

part of Brampton. Now it is referred to as "Olde Towne Brampton" But during our time there it was just called "Old Brampton."

The Brampton hospital was located quite close to the historic section of town and the fastest route to get to the hospital, necessitated crossing double sets of railway tracks.

The Go train into Toronto, used this track three times in the morning and again three times in the early evening. That train sped over the hospital train crossing quite rapidly and one only had to wait a few minutes before they could resume their drive to the hospital.

A driver had a much more challenging problem if the train was shunting flat bed cars carrying shiny new cars from the town's Americal Motors plant. This "ballet" of crashes, bangs and extremely slow-moving rail cars could keep a driver waiting for 10 to 15 minutes.

This was generally a mild inconvenience. To a woman in labour, this was a disaster just waiting to happen.

Our own family doctor got stuck at the tracks as his wife tried very hard not to give birth to their son right there in the family sports car. He told us later that he was yelling at her, "Don't you dare have this baby in our car. The other doctors in town will never let me live this down."

This was one occasion when repeating "I think I can, I think I can" is destined for failure. They did make it to the delivery room with a few minutes to spare.

I was retelling this story to friends when they told me about a woman who gave birth in the Brampton hospital elevator on her way up to the delivery room.

"Oh, I am so embarrassed" she told the nurse.

"Don't be embarrassed." said the nurse "Last year, a woman gave birth on the front lawn of the hospital."

"I know" wailed the new mother.

"That's why I am so embarrassed. That woman on the front lawn was me!!"

Norma Collis is a Tillsonburg author of several books, including "Tales from Holy Cottage".

Soccer in years gone by and today in Tillsonburg



**THE
STAGE
IS THE
WORLD**

LAUREL A. BEECHEY

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

The Canadian Encyclopedia notes that in the late 1800s that soccer as we know it, was played in Canada. It had arrived with British and European immigrants. In 1914, Canada became a member of FIFA, which is still soccer's international governing body today.

In May of 2000, 28 acres of land was purchased by the Tillsonburg Soccer Club and transferred to the Town of Tillsonburg, with priority rights for soccer. While the land was being leveled, artifacts came to light. As a result, with Six Nations approval, Archeoligix Inc. was hired. The first of what would end up as three digs began.

All this was across the road from my home, on North Street West and I loved going over to see and learn all I could about 'Tillsonburg's Indigenous Village.' The archeologists were excited. I could see where the wood posts of a long house had been by the discoloured ground. The archeologists shared their new information of the village and artifacts they had discovered.

The archeologists were back in 2008 to work at the subdivision between the soccer club and Quarter Town Line Rd. and back in 2017 to just north of the railroad bed, which is now a trail. The whole area once held 15 longhouse structures. It is the largest settlement on the

continent from the Iroquoian period and dates to 1300 to 1400 AD.

Fifteen Longhouse were discovered, the largest the size of a football field! Sweat lodges attached to longhouse. We know now what they grew what, they made and ate and what they built.

The artifacts

Let's go back 700 years ago when our local Indigenous peoples, the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe were playing a game where they kicked a ball into a goal! [sound familiar?] Most of the games played by the young Indigenous were much more than a game. There was often a specific area for that and other games like lacrosse that neighbouring Indigenous communities would come to play.

Many of their games often had profound spiritual significance and were used for training, conflict resolution, and in fulfillment of spiritual visions. What we call sports, they used for life lessons, developing mental acuity, strategy, tactics, problem solving, and building positive relationships. Also, through games they developed social values like, 'Honor those that gave you the most challenge', 'Respect the rules of the competition', 'Respect your competitors', 'Have courage, intuition, persistence, and patience', 'Be humble even when winning', 'Help others be the best they can be', and 'Recognize how your environment contributes to your quality of life and respect it.' They are much the same rules as good sportsmanship.

The next time you are the soccer club for soccer or other events, and the land acknowledge is read out: "In Tillsonburg, as we gather on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, dating back countless generations, we acknowledge the Anishinaabek (Ah-nish-in-a-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee) and Attawandaron (Add-a-won-da-run) peoples, showing respect for the long-standing relation-

ships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers." When you turn onto Attawandaron Way, you are not on a generic piece of land, you are entering a large village where as many as, 1,200 to 2,000 Attawandaron peoples lived, loved, and died.

Have players and fans watching the games at The Tillsonburg Soccer Club, ever given thought that you are in the middle of village, where people lived and played a very similar game hundreds of years before? Stand there for

a few moments and look around. On this land they grew their food, fished in Clear Creek, and hunted amongst trees 200-plus-feet high.

Peter Timmins of the Department of Anthropology and Western Univ. was very generous and plotted the longhouse on satellite pictures of the Soccer fields and assisted me with the basic form of the longhouses so I could paint them. If you have questions, please get in touch. lbeechey52@gmail.com or 519-842-9416.



A diagram showing location of the long houses.

(CONTRIBUTED IMAGE)

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Tillsonburg POST

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6. Newspapers strengthen communities
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8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

Public provides input into Tillsonburg being film-friendly



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

About a dozen people attended a consultation about furthering Tillsonburg as a location for film production. Participants were asked to leave input through sticky notes with their ideas.

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Will Tillsonburg locales become the set for television shows or movies?

That was exactly the question asked during a consultation on Tillsonburg becoming a film-friendly community.

And, spoiler alert, two locales are already on the radar of a well-known television series. To find out which ones, read on.

The consultation drew about a dozen people, which was more than most similar public input sessions have attracted.

Some of the concerns raised were where film crews and actors will be housed, security, whether there will be control of the number of projects, if there will be fees, and how potential gunshots and explosions that are part of the script would be dealt with.

Local businesswoman Sarah Senior has more than 25 years of experience in the film industry as a producer and was among those who attended. Her credits include full-length feature films, short films, commercials, and series, as well as teaching at a film school in the United Kingdom.

"It's a great opportunity for the town, but any kind of production is niche, and understanding the niche is important," she said.

Senior explained location is important, but support for the film crew, which can be 20 to 100 people, is equally import-

ant. As an example, she said demands for a film crew on a larger production could include parking for 30 cars, parking for a Winnebago for a dressing room, lodging, and a way to feed the crew. A smaller production would have fewer demands.

"If you get on the radar of good productions, they remember you," Senior said. "The other side is if you get on the radar of bad production sites, people talk."

Local resident Les Lonsbary was among those who attended.

"It's very interesting and has huge potential for the town," he said.

Some of the potential filming sites being suggested are Annandale National Historic Site, Lake Lisgar, Tillsonburg Community Centre, the airport, Lake Lisgar Waterpark, Rotary Clock Tower, Participark, J.L. Scott McLean Outdoor Rink, and the pioneer cemetery.

Tillsonburg Development Commissioner Cephas Panschow said overall reception of the idea was good.

"Generally, it's a positive response," he said. "There were a couple concerns and a couple suggestions."

A second online consultation on the film strategy will be held today (March 5 from 4 to 5 p.m.). For more information, go to <https://www.tillsonburg.ca/news/film-friendly-community/>

As for Tillsonburg as a film location in the near future, scouting already took place at Annandale House and Seven Gables as locales for Murdoch Mysteries, but nothing has moved forward.

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New local artists display in Tillsonburg Town Centre

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Local artists recently unveiled the Gallery of Goods in the Tillsonburg Town Centre.

The new display features three local artists painting two works each on panels shaped like shopping bags. The display is the latest collaboration between the Tillsonburg Town Centre and the Station Arts Centre.

Station Arts Centre executive director Tabitha Verbuyst said the idea came up during discussions with Salthill Capital, which owns the Tillsonburg Town Centre, about expanding the local artists' work on display. She came up with the idea of creating panels in the shape of shopping bags to make it unique and easy for the artists to work on at home.

"The station is always proud to work with the community and showcase our artists," Verbuyst said.

The Station Arts Centre held a juried competition in which artists submitted their concepts for display, describing the colour scheme and subject matter. About a half-dozen artists submitted ideas, and three were chosen last fall.

Verbuyst was happy with the results after it was unveiled on Feb. 18.

"It's a whimsical, colourful hallway now," she said.

Emily Mulhern, marketing manager for Salthill Capital, spoke highly of the partnership with the Station Arts Centre.

"At Salthill, community is at the heart of everything we do," she said. "Our continued partnership with Station Arts Centre at Tillsonburg Town Centre reflects our commitment to supporting and strengthening the neighbourhoods we proudly serve. Thank you to Tabitha and her team for their continued engagement with us. We look forward to working with them to bring light to more local art in Tillsonburg."

The artists

At 21, artist Peyton Corriveau is the youngest of the three chosen. She recently started her own business offering tattoos and commissioned art. Her two pieces highlight the



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The Gallery of Goods, a new permanent art display in the Tillsonburg Town Centre, was unveiled recently. Left to right are: Mary Chiasson, senior property administrator, Tillsonburg Town Centre; Peyton Corriveau, artist; Tabitha Verbuyst, executive director Station Arts Centre; Stella Jurgen, artist; and Nicole Hancox, property manager, Tillsonburg Town Centre.

town's agriculture and Lake Lisgar.

"It's the agriculture of Tillsonburg, the roots," she said of the agriculture painting. "But it's more than that, it's the community growing and community sharing."

Speaking about the painting of Lake Lisgar, she said, "It represents the different seasonal changes and how the mall is more than a shopping place, it's where you can meet new friends or catch up with old friends."

Stella Jurgen had her work on display in the overhead

discs hanging in the mall's centre court. Her work "Meet me at the mall" was inspired by sitting in the mall one afternoon, having a coffee, and sketching.

"I sat there a half-hour and experienced this thing you don't experience in big cities where everyone knew each other," she said. "This is the place to be."

Her second piece, "Shopping Spree", was also inspired by being in the mall. "It's me walking in the mall, seeing whatever I like, and enjoying a coffee because it's fun in here," she said.

It is also local artist Megan McKiernan's second time having her art displayed in the Tillsonburg Town Centre, as she was also part of the overhead display in the centre court.

"I created a watercolour full of joy and song that's unique to Tillsonburg," she said. "In spring, birds appear, and tulips blossom, highlighting Tillsonburg's heritage. During summer, umbrellas are unfurled, and a Timmy's cup sits on a shared table. Fall brings falling leaves and festive decorations for everyone to enjoy, while winter brings family gatherings, blue jays, and the coziness of the season."

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Olivia Mae Graham releases new single - I'm Not Sorry - on digital platforms

CHRIS ABBOTT

Post Contributor

A new year brings a powerful new single from Olivia Mae Graham, one of the country's rising country voices.

'I'm Not Sorry', released Feb. 20 globally on streaming platforms, is another standout song from a prolific local songstress.

"It's release day, which is always like a little kid on Christmas morning – up at 6 a.m.," Graham laughed that morning. "Then at the desk, just making sure everything is up to date and all the links are working, and all the messages are responded to... so I'm good, I'm here. Later tonight my family and I will celebrate."

Written about 'the art of letting go,' 'I'm Not Sorry' includes one of her most poignant lyrics to date and one of her favourites... 'When hanging on becomes holding back.' Graham feels her raw - and real track - is a true testament of an artist singing her truth.

Early release response has been good, she said.

"It's been really cool. This song is one of the most vulnerable songs I've ever written and it's a very different message than I've ever put out. It's about choosing yourself and leaving a situation."

For Graham, songwriting comes from a process of reflection – something she's been through before, something she's felt.

'I'm Not Sorry' was different. As she was writing it, she was discovering how she felt about a situation. And it was at that point she realized 'It was time to go.'

"I think in the lyrics of the song, you can really hear that. Every lyric is a realization. It's like 'oh...' 'oh...' 'okay it's time to go...' kind of situation. So when you put something like that out into the world, people resonate on a bazillion different levels. So far, the messages have been so positive, people saying 'I relate to this.' It could be a relationship or a job, a friendship, whatever it is that you felt like you had to leave. It's kind of cool that music is such a universal language in that way."

Graham had that feeling when she decided to leave a safe 9-to-5 and dive into making and performing music full-time.

There was fear, she admitted, and no guarantee in sight.

"For me, that was the leap. Not being sorry for that. Not being sad about it."

When she wrote, 'When hanging on becomes holding back,' she realized that's what she had been doing, holding herself back. When she let it go, and trusted herself, that's when she stepped into the unapologetic life she is living today.

"Something my co-writer Jay Allan is so good at is writing a song that is universal. So it could be moving your location, maybe an actual (relationship) breakup. If you feel, 'Hey, I'm not even sad, at this end, then it's like 'Ok, maybe that's an indicator.' If it's not working for one person, it's probably not working for the other person either."

"It can be scary, people sometimes cling to what's secure vs. what actually sets their soul on fire and the things that bring us joy and happiness. For me, it was just a realization that where I was at in life had just run its course."

"I just want people to know, it's February and it's OK if you want to change your life."

Following a milestone 2025 year that included the release of her debut album Nobody, multiple award nominations, and extensive touring, Graham continues to solidify her reputation as an artist to watch in Canada's country music scene.

Each release has its own thrill, she said, its own uncertainty.

"For me, 'release day' eve is always like saying a prayer to the universe... and whoever needs to hear this song specifically, I hope they get to hear it. And I hope it gives them the courage to step into the life that they've always wanted."

On the eve of releasing 'I'm Not Sorry', Graham shared with her team 'success isn't the numbers, it isn't the streams, it isn't the money. It's the messages of the people that connected to it."

She launched her YouTube video for the song two days later.

"The last release was super upbeat, super 'live show' driven. This one is like super 'heart' driven."

One more song from her debut full-length album, Nobody, will be released as a digital single this spring. It was however included on her earlier vinyl/CD album release as a 'secret song.'

"And we're going back into the studio," Olivia shared. "I've



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

Olivia Mae Graham is excited to share her newest single, 'I'm Not Sorry', available globally on digital platforms.

been writing so much since the debut album, and we are ready to start making the next one. It sounds so crazy to say, but that's where we're at right now, which is really cool."

About Olivia Mae Graham

Olivia Mae Graham is a 2025 CMA Ontario Breakthrough Artist of the Year nominee and 2025 Manitoba (MCMA) Songwriter of the Year nominee. Born and raised in Norfolk County, she is known for her emotionally resonant songwriting, captivating live performances, and commitment to creating music rooted in homegrown collaboration. Her debut album Nobody helped establish her as one of the province's most promising emerging country artists.

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TILLSONBURG COUNCIL BRIEFS

Sports hall of fame nominees

Tillsonburg council approved recommendations from its Recreation and Sports Advisory Committee of the latest additions into the Tillsonburg Sports Hall of Fame for 2026.

The nominees to be inducted are: Judy Liwanpo, Karen Liwanpo, Christine Liwanpo, and Remi Donaldson under individual athlete; Senior Men's Tillsonburg Track & Field under team; and Steve Garnham, builder. Additionally, a Lifetime Achievement Recognition will be presented to Colin Campbell.

Updates to town's workplace policy

An update to Tillsonburg's Workplace, Anti-Violence, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy added coverage of town council and committee members.

Under the province's Occupational Health and Safety Act, employers are mandated to have such a policy and review it annually. The main change with the latest review, which council approved, was adding council members and those serving on the town's various committees to the policy.

Parker appointed chair of bylaw committee

Coun. Chris Parker was appointed chair of the town's new Bylaw Appeals Committee, which was struck in December. At the time, Parker, Coun. Pete Luciani and Coun. Bob

Parsons was appointed to the committee, but no chair was appointed. Parker's appointment at the Feb. 23 meeting remedied that vacancy.

Community Improvement Plan property tax rebates increase

An update on the cost of the town's Community Improvement Plan (CIP) property tax rebates showed an expected increase, as this tool is successfully attracting investment to the town.

Revenue Manager Ted Lyons explained in the report that the CIP is an important tool for attracting industrial investment to the town in a competitive environment in Southwestern Ontario.

"These additional tax dollars would not exist if these investments had not been secured and while there is a short-term expense, which adds pressure on the budget, the long-term benefits include a strong diversified assessment base for future tax years," he wrote in the report.

The town's budget for tax write-offs, including CIP items, has been \$250,000 since 2022. That was increased to \$400,000 for 2026 to account for four new rebates added this year. It is expected to increase to \$552,520 in the 2027 budget, with another council-approved project having its first-year rebate included. Another increase to \$577,092 is expected in 2028, with another approved rebate coming online.

Council approved the report as information with no questions.

POLICE BRIEFS

OPP investigating reports of extortion

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is investigating multiple cases of extortion in Southwestern Ontario.

Since 2024, the OPP has identified 10 cases that appear to follow a pattern of extortion. These are in addition to the more than 50 cases being investigated in Caledon and Dufferin detachments. These extortion attempts have targeted victims in the Norfolk, Brant, Middlesex and Wellington areas and involve phone calls or text messages threatening violence unless a large sum of money is paid. The callers often demonstrate knowledge of the individual's home or workplace and appear to target members of the South Asian community.

The OPP has investigated numerous weapons incidents where properties have sustained damage due to gunfire. No injuries have been reported in relation to these incidents. Police believe these shootings are linked to threatening communications and extortion attempts.

Investigators would like to remind individuals and business owners:

- Extortion is defined as, "unlawfully obtaining money, property or services from a person, entity or institution through coercion," according to the Canadian Anti-Fraud Centre.
- If you receive a threatening call or message, report it to police immediately.
- Callers will use high-pressure intimidation tactics to solicit money from you. Do not reply to threatening messages or calls, and block the originating number.
- Reach out to people you trust or contact victim services.

OPP West Region continues to investigate these incidents, under the direction of the OPP Criminal Investigation Branch (CIB).

Anyone who has received threats of extortion, or has information regarding these incidents, is asked to contact the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. If you wish to remain anonymous, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or ontariocrimestoppers.ca. Learn more about extortion at opp.ca/extortion.

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Town to look at tweaking sponsorship policy

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg will reconsider its policy on community sponsorships and partnerships following a notice of motion passed at the Feb. 23 meeting.

The notice of motion, put forward by Coun. Kelly Spencer, called for staff to develop a comprehensive policy to increase “municipal revenue through sponsorships, partnerships, and community campaigns” for town assets, including recreational facilities, cultural programming, environmental initiatives, and communications. It will also look at community-based opportunities for memorial recognition and crowdfunding.

Spencer explained she attended an information session on this topic at the recent Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA) conference with Deputy Mayor Dave Beres. She realizes the local budget is tight.

“This motion is being proactive and strategic with how we develop non-tax revenue for a municipality,” she said.

Although council approved a policy for sponsorship of recreational facilities, Spencer said there are other opportunities, such as events. She explained she doesn’t want to commercialize the town, and a policy would make the process more transparent.

“Every dollar generated through sponsorship is a dollar that doesn’t come from taxpayers,” she added, explaining the policy doesn’t change anything today, but just provides options and guardrails.

Coun. Chris Parker pointed to the naming policy ap-

proved in 2024 and questioned the difference between what is being proposed and that policy. Spencer answered that this would be town-wide.

Beres said this type of funding can pay for ongoing maintenance, mentioning the name change of London’s John Labatt Centre, Budweiser Centre, and Canada Life Place as an example. He said he has been approached by representatives of local industries asking how they can assist.

Parker, a member of the Sports and Recreation Advisory Committee that was instrumental in developing the policy, said he sees it as a policy on top of another policy.

“I’m not saying it’s wrong, I’m saying there’s room to make things better,” Beres said.

Parker responded that the policy has been in place for a year and hasn’t been used.

Spencer suggested adding town events to the policy, saying, “The policy is great. It’s taking that policy and expanding it.”

CAO Kyle Pratt said the current policy applies to town property in general, adding that the policy hasn’t been used is a reason to explore it further.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy suggested tweaking the existing policy, agreeing it needs to include possible sponsorship of digital communications and events. She said looking at an entirely new policy may be a little redundant, though.

“It has vague working about anything beyond recreation, culture, and parks; it doesn’t have infrastructure or events,” Spencer answered. “I’m just asking the departments to look at the policy we have and expand it to

more options of potential revenue.”

Coun. Pete Luciani said there is also a policy for advertising on the bus, and asked if this suggestion is for a comprehensive all-in-one policy or just looking to gather ideas and put them into other policies.

Spencer said her vision was to look at all options for revenue that is not taxpayer revenue.

Coun. Chris Rosehart also raised concerns about a policy already in place and understood that the naming of bridges was under review. Her question about how such a policy would work prompted Director of Parks, Culture, and Recreation Andrea Greenway to share that she is working on a report on names in connection with the first policy. Still, it has required looking through records, as some of the names can’t be removed because of the terms of the agreement. A report on this will be coming to the council in the future.

Gilvesy said she supported the concept, but not the resolution, because it involves a lot of staff time. She added that there were great ideas in the resolution, and changes could be made to the existing policy.

“We haven’t seen the policy work yet,” the mayor said. “We’re going to get a report back. We need to see that and then go from there.”

Parker suggested limiting the resolution as it overcomplicates the changes sought, but agreed there were some positives.

Some tweaks were made to the original resolution before it passed, taking out a couple of points but retaining the emphasis on exploring sponsorship opportunities across a wider range.

Tillsonburg Post is available for free in print and online:
www.tillsonburgpost.com

Reduced load restrictions in effect for Oxford County

Oxford County wants to remind residents and businesses about the reduced load restrictions (5 tonnes per axle) on several county, and many area municipality roads.

Reduced Load Period restrictions occur seasonal-

ly, based on weather and road conditions, and typically run from March 1 to April 30. Reduced load restrictions started in Tillsonburg, and all of Oxford County, are now in effect.

David Simmonds, CPA WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

We have hired Shelley Klassen as Senior Accountant at David Simmonds CPA Professional Corporation in Tillsonburg. Shelley has over 20 years of experience in the accounting industry. Her areas of focus include agriculture, businesses, corporations, income tax, estates, bookkeeping and payroll.

Shelley comes to us after 8 years with Larry Hemeryck CPA of Simcoe and later Dely & Associates also of Simcoe. Our practice is welcoming new clients this tax season. Please reach out to Shelley for all your income tax and accounting needs.

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SWOX NEWS



SWOX Councillor Valerie Durston not seeking re-election in October 2026

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

On the heels of South West Oxford Township (SWOX) Mayor David Mayberry's and Coun. Jim Pickard's retirement announcements, Coun. Valerie Durston has confirmed she will not be seeking re-election.

Durston represents the Salford area (Ward 3) and is chair of the township's Engage and Inform Committee and serves on the Salford Community Hall Board, Hilltop Park Mount Elgin, the Environment and Energy Innovation Committee, and the Tillsonburg Regional Airport Advisory Committee.

Durston is also presently the area director for Toastmasters for the Woodstock, Tillsonburg, and St. Thomas areas and spent most of her career as a developmental service worker and a criminal justice worker.

Durston has served two terms in office.

The township approved new ward boundaries last July, which will impact the municipal election. These boundaries changes will take effect on the day the new council is organized after voting day on Oct. 26.

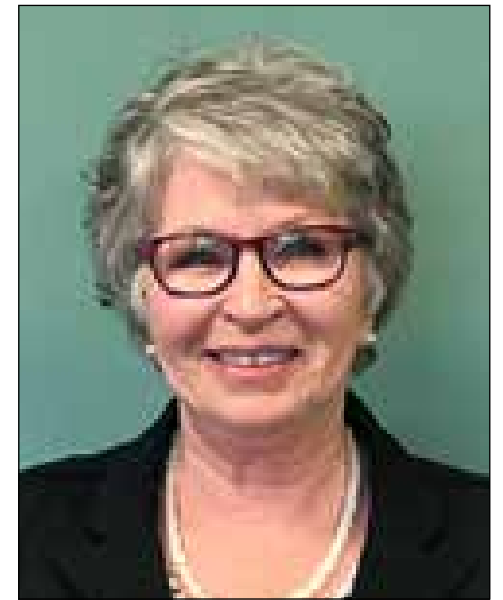
Council is holding two candidate information sessions to assist with the 2026 municipal election. These sessions will cover key topics such as eligibility require-

ments, the nomination process, important dates and deadlines, as well as the roles and responsibilities of elected officials.

These sessions will also provide staff, Mayberry, Pickard, and Durston with an opportunity to engage with members of the public who are interested in running for office and to offer insight into what is involved with serving as an elected official at the municipal level.

The sessions will be held on Wednesday, March 4 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Brownsville Fire Station and Monday, March 9 at the Beachville Fire Station. The

nomination period opens on May 1 and closes on Aug. 21.



Valerie Durston.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

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Diering's route to the Dorchester net results in 'good OT thing'

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

Keegan Diering went to the net.

And as hockey coaches have suggested since time immemorial, a good thing happened.

"Just saw Viktor (Henkin) shoot the puck (from the left point) and saw it out front," recalled the Tillsonburg Gemini boys' hockey forward. "Put it to my backhand and put it in."

Diering's 'good thing' lifted the Gemini into a 3-2 Thames Valley Regional Athletics Southeast semi-final victory over the visiting Lord Dorchester Beavers Tuesday, Feb. 24 inside Tillsonburg's Memorial Arena, giving them a 1-0 lead in their best-of-three semi-final.

Its dramatic effect was only enhanced by the fact Tillsonburg had killed off a double minor penalty for kneeling assessed with 1:55 remaining

in regulation time, and the home team enjoying a narrow 2-1 advantage. Dorchester pulled goalie Connor White for a six-on-four advantage in skaters, captain Ryan Lehouillier knotting the game at two with 32.9 seconds left in regulation. One half of the double-minor remained, finishing out a tense final 30-plus seconds of regulation time, and carrying over into OT.

"Just trying to get in lanes, block shots and try not let them get to the net," said Gemini Clarke Lessif of the team's penalty-killing gameplan.

Overtime opened, as in any civilized hockey universe, as a five-on-five skater event although the Gemini a man short, the Beavers unable to score through the balance of their second power play. The game-winning play began innocently enough, a harmless-looking shot from the left point which provided a juicy, and ultimately decisive, rebound. Diering's goal ignited a celebra-



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Gemini girls skip Lucie Panschow (left) keeps her eyes firmly on the prize while releasing a rock, Emily Howe (right) standing by prepared to sweep.



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Gemini Viktor Henkin managed to get a shot off despite going down to the ice, against the defensive attention of Dorchester's Ryan Lehouillier.

tion amongst a solid crowd of Gemini supporters, on hand for the early-afternoon contest.

"Kept 'em in it right to the end, that's for sure," smiled Gemini coach Derek Partlo.

Tillsonburg's Liam Nunn had opened scoring at the 7:56 mark of the second period, assisted by Noa Black. Dorchester's Emerson Monk countered 32 seconds into the third frame, Black and Nunn adding helpers as David Lamers restored the one-goal Gemini lead with 8:23 left in regulation time.

"Found a way," said Partlo, who felt his team's effort had been consistent throughout. He was not unhappy with the late penalty kill, feeling the goal had been a bit 'fluky' off a stick. The Gemini killed off the second minor in overtime, enjoying a territorial advantage as the extra period went on, said Partlo.

"And a big finish on the OT winner by Keegan."

The series was far from over with one victory. "Still going to be a battle," said Lessif.

"But the first one is nice," added defenceman Hunter Whittington.

The Beavers eliminated the Gemini from playoffs last year said Lessif, hoping to return the favour this season.

"Sucks that we lost, but we have another chance at it."

The Gemini finished the job Thursday on the road in Dorchester, skating away with an 8-4 series-clinching victory.

"Probably the best game we've played all year," credited Partlo, speaking to moving the puck well, skating on the big ice and making good on their chances. "We got up early and held on."

Tillsonburg came out of the first period up 4-0 said Partlo, extended its lead to six goals midway through the second. The Beavers closed to gap to 6-2 by the end of the frame and got as close to 6-4, before the Gemini rounded a four-goal victory with a pair of empty-netters. Lamers had a hat-trick for the winners with Nunn, Drew Hunter, Black, Lessif and Ritch Heleniak adding singles.

"It was a big win," said Partlo, of a series victory that also brought with it a Western Ontario Secondary Schools Athletic Association (WOS-SAA) A/AA berth.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 13

Thunder 1-1 in playoffs against Erin Outlaws



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Tillsonburg Thunder defender Cameron Fraser clashes with an Erin Outlaws forward by the Thunder net while goaltender Ben Blacker watches the puck during the opening game of a series between the two teams. While the Thunder lost the opening game, the team came back to tie the series on the road.

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The Tillsonburg Thunder are 1-1 in the A playoffs against the Erin Outlaws.

The series opened on Feb. 28 in Tillsonburg with a closely-matched first period that saw both teams with 13 shots on goal.

The Outlaws were first on the scoreboard at 17:24 of the second, but Kane Johnson converted a Justin Abraham pass to stalemate the score at 11:18. Erin pulled ahead 2-1 before the second buzzer with a goal with 2:45 remaining.

Nearly three-quarters of a tightly-contested third period would be off the clock before Hunter Monkhouse evened the score for the Thunder, with Nicolas D'Agostino assisting. Erin got the go-ahead goal with 1:49 remaining, and added an insurance goal with 33 seconds on

the clock for a 4-2 win.

The Thunder were looking for vengeance playing in Erin on March 1, and found it with a 3-1 road win.

Robert McLean netted the first goal at 9:50 of the first period to set the tone. D'Agostino and Tye Johnson assisted.

Second period scoring opened with the Outlaws hitting the mesh on a short-handed goal with just over five minutes off the clock. Andrew Oosterveld pulled the Thunder back in front with 6:05 remaining after taking the feed from Tye Johnson and Kurtis Heggie.

Luke Sinclair, from Danny Attridge, added an insurance goal with nine seconds left on the clock in the third.

This weekend sees the home and home series continue with the two teams facing off in Tillsonburg at 8:30 p.m. on Friday, and in Erin on Saturday.

Diering's route to the Dorchester net results in 'good OT thing'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

The Gemini will face St. Thomas Parkside in the TVRA Southeast championship game, Wednesday, March 4 in St. Thomas's Joe Thornton Arena, beginning with an 11:15 a.m. faceoff. Beyond the title, a win there would be helpful for WOSSAA seeding said Partlo, although that is the team's primary goal at this point.

The team has played up to and beyond expectations this season he concluded, pleased with the development of its younger players.

"They have stepped up and are complimenting the older guys."

Girls' curling

The Gemini girls curling team ran out of rocks and ends, not the willingness to compete through an 11-9 TVRA Southeast semi-final loss to the St. Thomas Parkside Stampede Wednesday, Feb. 25 at the Ingersoll District Curling Club.

"I'm fine with losing as long as we play our game," said skip Lucie Panschow.

"Left it on the ice," added vice Keona Cornish.

Tillsonburg got down early, trailing 10-2 after four ends. But the Gemini scored three in the fifth and stole two in both the sixth and seventh ends to give themselves a chance.

"Which is a crazy comeback," said Cornish.

In the eight and final end, Tillsonburg was sitting three, with the potential for a dramatic comeback, when the Parkside skip executed a takeout with her final stone, counting one to lock up the victory.

"They still managed to sneak theirs in," said Panschow.

There was no rancour in terms of their opponents, Parkside being 'super nice and personable,' in the words of Gemini second Kyle Thiessen.

It was simply that, after years of curling together, the adventure was coming to an end for the three graduation veterans.

"It kind of hit, this is our last game," said Panschow.

Coach Shelby Colldock was equally said to see the end of a Gemini curling era.

"But really proud of how they did," she concluded.

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Club Oxford playoffs going full steam ahead

JEFF GWYN

Post Contributor

Club Oxford's B Division finished its regular season play with Source for Sports in first, and Jeff Prouse finishing for a hotly-contested second-place finish. Playoffs in both divisions are now underway.

February 22

A Division Playoffs

ReMax 3, Health Hut 2

ReMax started a bit slow, but found their rhythm in the second. They forced turnovers and used their speed to get some solid breaks. Health Hut held ReMax at bay in the first and stayed with them all night. A late push just came up short in this one.

Brian Velthove had two goals for ReMax. Ryan Dayman had two points for Health Hut.

Fody's 7, Apple Shack 3

Fody's came out fast and strong in this one. They were getting chances from different areas of the ice and had both lines going. Apple Shack started off great, but the Fody's pressure kept them hemmed in most of the game. They had a tough time clearing the front of the net in this one.

Christian Clifford had three points for Fody's. Brandon Velda had two points for Apple Shack.

B Division

Prouse Mortgages 5, B-Line 0

Prouse Mortgages, especially Jeff Prouse, wanted to finish strong as he had a natural hat trick in 41 seconds in this one. A solid effort to

keep B-Line off the board tonight. B-Line were stunned by the quick hat trick in the first and it took them out of this one. They did get some chances, but nothing of substance in this one.

Jeff Prouse had a natural hat trick and Jason Beard had four points for Prouse Mortgages.

Source 3, Glass 3

Source played hard in this one, trying to be a spoiler. After an injury in the second, they were just wanting to finish this one out. Glass needed a point to secure a top-four finish and they fought hard all night. A well-earned point in this one.

Jamie DeSouza had two points for Source. Adam Matthews had two points for Glass.

Royal LePage 5, Airmount 1

Royal LePage came alive in the second. They had five different scorers in this one and they will need that for a deep playoff run. Airmount started off well in this one and were getting chances. They couldn't keep Royal LePage under control in the second with lots of rebounds given up.

Christian Devlin had three points for Royal LePage. JJ Harden had the goal for Airmount.

RND 5, Carquest 3

RND relied on their top guys to make a statement in the finale. They played a great game at both ends and gave Carquest very little ice all night. Carquest were playing this one out, but still did get some good chances and forced RND to play a tight game in the second.

Gaige Benish had two goals for RND. Chase Beres had two goals for Carquest.

February 25

B Division Playoffs

Prouse Mortgages 4, Royal LePage 1

After a tightly checked first period, Prouse Mortgages found some speed and were able to get some rush chances. They played well in both ends to get the win in this one. Royal LePage had a solid first period and has some chances. They were on their heels a bit in the second as Prouse Mortgages pressured, but did get a few good chances, but didn't get the bounces.

Stephan Coulombe had three points for Prouse Mortgages. Nick Brotz had the goal for Royal LePage.

B-Line 6, RND 0

B-Line found some scoring in the second as they took over the game. They were able to keep

RND from getting any down low pressure and created a lot of rush chances for themselves. RND had a decent first period but they couldn't get any sustained pressure. Eventually there were worn down by the B-Line chances and tried to limit the damage in this one.

Hunter Luscombe had two goals for B-Line. Lawson Cumming had the shutout.

Carquest 4, Airmount 2

Carquest had to juggle a couple lines tonight and it worked out well. Some very good passing plays and breakouts helped them offensively all night. Airmount was in this game but had trouble getting shots on net or getting rebounds in close. A late push came up short, but the effort was there.

Evan Prouse had four points for Carquest. Seth Priem had a goal for Airmount.

CLUB OXFORD A DIVISION	GP	W	L	T	PTS
FODY'S AUTOMOTIVE	27	17	8	2	36
REMAX REALTY	27	14	7	6	34
THE HEALTH HUT	27	8	13	6	22
THE APPLE SHACK	27	6	17	4	16

CLUB OXFORD B DIVISION	GP	W	L	T	PTS
SOURCE FOR SPORTS	28	21	4	3	45
JEFF PROUSE MORTGAGES	28	12	7	9	33
ROYAL LEPAGE REALTY	28	13	9	6	32
TILLSONBURG GLASS	28	10	8	10	30
CARQUEST AUTO PARTS	28	10	11	7	27
B-LINE TRUCKING	28	8	14	6	22
RND CONSTRUCTION	28	6	16	6	18
AIRMOUNT FARMS	28	7	18	3	17

A DIVISION PLAYOFFS
FODY'S AUTOMOTIVE (1) VS APPLE SHACK (4) FODY'S LEADS SERIES 1-0
REMAX REALTY (2) VS THE HEALTH HUT (3) REMAX LEADS SERIES 1-0

B DIVISION CONSOLATION
CARQUEST AUTO PARTS (5) VS AIRMOUNT FARMS (8) CARQUEST LEADS SERIES 1-0
B-LINE TRUCKING (6) VS RND CONSTRUCTION (7) B-LINE LEADS SERIES 1-0

B DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP
SOURCE FOR SPORTS (1) VS TILLSONBURG GLASS (4) SERIES TIED 0-0
JEFF PROUSE MORTGAGES (2) VS ROYAL LEPAGE REALTY (3) PROUSE LEADS SERIES 1-0

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MINOR SPORTS

SCRAPBOOK

(STUART BLOWER PHOTOS)



A U9 Optometrists on Broadway forward takes a shot at the Six Nations net during a recent game.



It was a scramble in front of the net with Tillsonburg U11's Oliver Lyonnais, left, taking a shot on the Burlington Raiders goaltender with Dexton Wight providing back-up.



Tillsonburg U11 Local Level Birds Golf defender assists the goaltender with clearing the puck during a game against Burford Coyotes.



U12 Storm Thomas Hitch, left, and Brody Biloski hustle the puck away from a Mount Brydges player during a recent game.



Tillsonburg U13 LL2 E and E McLaughlin forwards reach for the puck to score on Six Nations while the goaltender reaches for it and defenders try to clear it.



Tillsonburg U15 Local Level Entec players fight for control of the puck in the Simcoe Warriors zone. Left to right, in black, are: Grason Coderre, Oden Phillis, Silas Hawel, and Rudy Lofthouse.

Local curling takes on an Olympic flavour



**ON
THE
BROOM**

NORA PETER

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Well, the Olympics are over and our Canadian curling teams came home with some hardware! A gold for the men and a bronze for the women. There were some moments that had us wondering about our teams – a slow 0 – 3 start for the women, a cheating accusation for the men. Both teams overcame these issues, and the outcome was positive with both teams reaching the podium.

Locally, our Monday night Mixed League took on an Olympic flavour, having their own mini-Olympic draw where all teams picked a country to represent and teams wore their colours and flew their flags on and off the ice. Teams from countries like Czechia, Italy, Canada, China and Korea found their way to the ice to add a new twist to the fun competition of the draw.

Tuesday Triples League completed their latest draw with two teams tied for top

points. Team 2, Joel McKie, Susan Goble Hall, and Cody Shepherd, tied with Team 6 McKayla Meyer, Danny Bernard and Gary Smith. The league is now in its final draw for the season which runs until March 24.

The club's last euchre night will happen on March 7 – be sure to register on-line so that organizers know how many tables are needed and there's lots of snacks ready for everyone.

The club and the Tillsonburg community gave Team King/ Team Ontario a hearty send-off to their first appearance at the Canadian Men's Curling Championship being held in St. John's NFLD. Team King was overwhelmed by the support that has been extended to them and plan on answering that support with a good showing at the Brier. Local fundraising reached more than \$6,000 and that figure did not include the "fishbowl" cards or the offer from our local Canadian Tire Store owners who donated a dollar from every jug of Windshield Washer Fluid sold during the week leading up to the start of the Brier. The donations will be used towards taking their coach, Morgan and alternate player Spencer Dunlop with them, plus expenses not covered by the OCA and CCA.

As I write this, I know that the team arrived safely to the Brier – have been caught up in the busy media frenzy, picked up their team jackets, had practice time and are set to play their first game tonight. When the March 5 edition of the Post hits

the newsstand, Team King will have completed their round robin play and we will

know if they will make playoffs. Wishing Team King good luck and good curling!



(NORA PETER PHOTO)

Team King had a tough game on Monday morning in St. John's against Team Jacobs, which recently won a gold medal at the Olympics. Team King started off with two wins and is currently sitting at a 2-2 record at the Montana's Brier.

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Down 'N' Dirty set to shake the Copper Mug



MUSIC CORNER

BEN ADDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

There is something about a loud guitar riff in a small room that just hits differently. Next weekend Tillsonburg will get a full dose of that feeling when the band Down 'N' Dirty takes the stage at The Copper Mug. This rock cover band will be pulling out the best arena-sized songs and performing them in one of our town's intimate live music rooms.

Blending the backbone of classic rock with the muscle of modern metal, Down 'N' Dirty has built a reputation across South-western Ontario for performances that are

as electrifying as they are polished. Influenced by the showmanship of Lee Aaron, the thunder of AC/DC and the soaring vocals of Greta Van Fleet, the band always delivers a setlist packed with crowd-pleasing anthems coated with their own signature punch.

Front and centre in the band is powerhouse vocalist Madison Glomba. Born in London, and now calling Aylmer home, Glomba commands the stage with a presence that is both magnetic and unmistakably rock 'n' roll. Her vocal range and stage confidence have helped the band earn multiple community-voted awards in London over the years. Most recently, fans selected her as the 2025 FCLMA Fantasy Band Vocalist which is a recognition she does not take lightly or for granted.

"It was super-honouring to be noticed by my hometown," Glomba said. "It really made me realize that making great connections and putting in hard work has been worth it. It has made me really push to keep making each performance even greater than the last."

Backing her up is a tour-worthy lineup

consisting of three tight musicians. Lead guitarist and backing vocalist Sean McGee of London brings flash and fire to the group with intense guitar solos. Drummer Cameron Hand, born in Amherstburg and now based in London, anchors the band with driving rhythms and backing vocals. Bassist David Goodman, born in Bridgetown, Barbados and now a London resident, completes the rhythm section with groove and harmonies while rounding out the band's full-bodied sound.

Together, the quartet focuses on delivering songs as fans remember them but with extra horsepower.

"We strive to bring you as close to the original sound of each of these incredible artists as possible. Really getting in touch with the song and what it means," Glomba explained. "We also try to leave a little bit of a Down 'N' Dirty twist that you will remember us for with more powerful vocal lines, more powerful solos and making you feel the music as we do."

That twist is most evident in their live show where movement, crowd interaction and pure adrenaline take over.

"The fire starts as soon as the lights come on," Glomba exclaims. "As we take the stage, we come to life. We love to move and interact with the crowd as much as possible and it just makes it feel like a true rock show experience."

Music fans can expect a mix of nostalgia and surprise when seeing the band perform.

"For the fans, we are so excited to show you what we have got," Glomba says with a grin. "A few new songs joining the setlist. Songs you love that you may have forgotten about and an energy that will leave you wanting more. We do not want to give away too much, you will just have to join us at The Copper Mug."

If any of the band's past shows are any indication, then you can expect the dance floor to be full and the guitar amps set to full blast. Earplugs are optional but the rock 'n' roll spirit is mandatory.

Down 'N' Dirty plays The Copper Mug on Saturday, March 14th. The free no cover charge event starts at 9 p.m. To find out more information about the band you can follow them online at www.youtube.com/@DownNDirtyBand

UPCOMING SHOWS

MARCH 6 - COTY ROBINSON
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 8:30 p.m.

MARCH 7 - SUGAR KINGS
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 8 p.m.

MARCH 8 - ROB CROMWELL
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 5 p.m.

MARCH 11 - EUCHRE NIGHT
The Copper Mug
6 p.m.

MARCH 14 - THE DEEPER CUTS AND ACE OF SWORDS
Paddy's Underground
\$10 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

MARCH 14 - DOWN 'N' DIRTY
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 9 p.m.

MARCH 15 - MCINTYRE'S WISH
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 5 p.m.

MARCH 20 - DANIEL ROMANO'S OUTFIT AND CARSON MCHONE
Paddy's Underground
\$25 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

MARCH 21 - TEXAS KING W/ TEAN DREAM
Paddy's Underground
\$50 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

MARCH 27 - BATES AND STUDDY'S SYSTEM OF A DOWN TRIBUTE
The Copper Mug
8 p.m.

APRIL 17 - MUDMEN
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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Learning about black history in Oxford County



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Heather Rennalls' presentation, *Almost Forgotten: Black History in Oxford County*, was the first in Annandale's Lunch and Learn series and was well attended.

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

In the days of the Underground Railroad and Black slaves fleeing America in the 1800s, Oxford County had a strong connection to this part of Canadian history.

As part of its Lunch and Learn series, Annandale National Historic Site presented *Almost Forgotten: Black History in Oxford County* by Heather Rennalls on Feb. 26 and 27. The presentation included a lunch catered by Snack-Rite.

Although the Black cemetery in Otterville is well known, there were substantial Black populations in Woodstock, Ingersoll, and the Norwich Township villages of Milldale, Summerville, and Hawtrey. In Tillsonburg, there were Black barbers, as columnist Laurel Beechey outlined in a recent column.

"Slavery existed in Canada, it just didn't last as long," Rennalls told the audience.

The first Black person in North America was Mathieu DaCosta from the Azores, an inter-

preter who spoke five languages and accompanied Samuel de Champlain on his 1604 voyage. A few years later, in 1628, Olivier LeJeune was the first slave brought to Canada. He came from Madagascar and was eventually set free.

While early French settlers preferred Indigenous people as slaves, the British preferred Blacks. France's Code Noir provided an outline of rules for keeping slaves and deemed them as property.

In 1793, John Graves Simcoe's Act Against Slavery legislation was the first step towards freedom in Canada. On Aug. 1, 1834, British Emancipation Day, slaves were freed. Local celebrations of this were held in Ingersoll and Woodstock. Slavery did continue in the U.S. until the passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865. This created a background for the Underground Railroad, a network that helped slaves escape from the southern U.S. Quakers, who believed all people were equal, helped establish the Underground Railroad, and there was a substantial Quaker settlement in Norwich.

The former Wesleyan Methodist Church in



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Heather Rennalls' display highlights some of the milestones in the discovery of Black history in Oxford County.

Ingersoll was built in 1854, mostly by Black people who were grateful for the assistance they received in achieving their freedom. At the time, Ingersoll was the northern terminus of the Underground Railroad. In the mid-1800s, 400 of Ingersoll's 2,000 residents were Black.

Samuel Jones was the first known Black settler to live in Norwich Township. Black settlers owned mills in Hawtrey and Milldale, and a school for Black students was built in Summerville. Isaac Joiner, another Black settler, built a sawmill in Otterville. The African Methodist Episcopal Cemetery was established in Otter-

ville in the 1850s, and the settlement northwest of Otterville was one of the largest Black communities in the area. It is one of few Black burial grounds in Ontario.

Camp meetings were popular in the Otterville area, where up to 1,000 people – both Black and white – would come together for two to three days of camping, singing, and preaching.

However, many Blacks were not treated well in Oxford County and left to move to the cities.

The Lunch and Learn series continues with Joan Weston's presentation on the food industry in Tillsonburg on March 26 and 27.

Library presentation gives insight on black ancestry research

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Researching ancestry is often part detective, part historian, and part puzzle-solver, but if your ancestor was a slave and not recorded in early history, the challenge is greater.

Confronting that challenge, and others involved in any ancestry research, were outlined by Oxford County Library's Matthew Griffis during a recent seminar in conjunction with Black History Month.

One interesting document is British General Guy Carleton's Book of Negroes. This 1783 document lists 3,000 British loyalists who left New York State for Nova Scotia and were promised freedom. There is an online database to search that document for those who believe their ancestors lived in Nova Scotia.

Griffis also finds a digitized map of the Underground Railroad routes in Canada helpful. Joyce Pettigrew's book *A Safe Haven* on settlers in Oxford County and Robin Winks book *The Blacks in Canada* are

also sources where settlers names can be researched.

Since not all Blacks in the United States were slaves prior to the Civil War, Griffis suggested American records may reveal information.

"There were free persons of colour in the U.S. recorded in the federal census," he said.

The situation for slaves is different, and their names were likely listed under their owners. The 1860 census was the last before the Civil War and wouldn't have individual names, but would have if a household had slaves and the numbers. Some slaves didn't have surnames and adopted their former owner's surnames after abolition. After the Civil War and abolition, many Black people remained in the same areas they had been in, and names could appear in the 1870 census.

Online resources, such as ancestry.com, are another source of information. For those who don't have a subscription, Griffis said it can be accessed through the local Church of Latter-day Saints, which does have a subscription.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

FLAG RAISING

A snowy day greeted those who gathered on Feb. 24 for the raising of the Pan African flag in celebration of Black History Month. Left to right are: Kathleen Watkin, Annandale National Historic Site; Tysha Rieger, Oxford County archives; Matthew Griffis, Oxford County Library; Heather Mathers, Oxford County Library; Coun. Kelly Spencer; Leila Johnson; Lauren Johnson; Heather Rennalls; Mike Nesbitt, Tillsonburg works department; Mayor Deb Gilvesy and Deputy Mayor Dave Beres.



Dig into a good book during March Break



OCL BOOK TALK

KATELYN BENNETT

Literacy Program Specialist,
Oxford County Library, Tillsonburg branch.

Some of my favourite books growing up featured dinosaurs. One book in particular stands out in my memory; *Dinosaurs Before Dark* written by Mary Pope Osborne. This was the first of 40 books released in the Magic Treehouse early chapter book series, which got me hooked on reading.

Picture this: alongside seven-year-old protagonists, Jack and Annie, you discover a magical treehouse that allows you to travel to prehistoric times. You point to a picture of a dinosaur in a book and suddenly the treehouse spins, transporting you back 65 million years. On your journey, you encounter real living dinosaurs! You touch the leg of a Pteranodon and discover it's surprisingly fuzzy. In the foliage, you find an Apatosaurus nest filled with babies. Their colony cries to warn you about the approaching T-rex! You run to escape the massive, meat-eating creature. Once you are safely back in the treehouse, you point to a picture of home wishing to go back. A gust of wind picks up, spinning the treehouse back to present day. Historical exploration mixed with suspenseful adventure, Mary Pope Osborne's stories captivated me as a child. This book and series are still one of my top recommendations to date.

Reading captivating books as children and to children encourages curiosity. With curiosity comes new interests and new learning. This book sparked my curiosity about fossils and the history buried beneath the Earth's surface. It also inspired my childhood requests for a fossil kit and rock tumbler kit from the annual book fair.

At Oxford County Library, we have several books that can spark curiosity. This March Break, we are digging into good books, featuring books and programs about dinosaurs, fossils, construction, plants, burrowing wildlife and more. Do you have a dinosaur or construction enthusiast in your family? Dig into these fantastic children's books with your family to spark their curiosity and learn more!

Up in the Garden, Down in the Dirt written by Kate Messner

In this beautifully illustrated picture book, a young girl and her Nana learn about the ecosystems that live in and above the earth's

soil. Together, they explore the perfect conditions to grow a garden and the process of natural food chains around us.

Plant Attack! The Fascinating Ways Flora Defends Itself written by Erin Silver

As one of the 2026 Forest of Reading Silver Birch Express nominees, this book is sure to leave you fascinated and curious about all plants on Earth. *Plant Attack!* explores 15 different plants and their unique defense mechanisms against predators.

The Dirt! Wildlife Under the Soil's Surface written by Lindsey Leigh

In this non-fiction children's book, discover the messy critters who live underground and why they're important to our ecosystems.

Above, Below and Long Ago: Animals, Plants and Fossils Hidden in Places written by Michael Bright

In this brand-new non-fiction book geared to children in grades 4-6, explore plants and animals that inhabit all layers of the Earth's atmosphere, in the air, on the surface and below the ground.

Here we go Digging for Dinosaur Bones written by Susan Lendroth

In this musically inspired picture book set to the tune of *Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush*, sing along to the text and learn fun facts on each page about paleontology.

Under Your Feet: Soil, Sand and Everything Underground written by Jacqueline L. Stroud

From mushrooms to moles, discover the diverse wonders hidden below the Earth's surface in this visually captivating non-fiction book. Curious about soils on other planets? This book introduces intergalactic fun facts about soils types in outer space!

Construction Site: Farming Strong, All Year Long written by Sherri Duskey Rinker

As part of the Construction Site picture book series, written by Sherri Duskey Rinker, explore the hard-working machines that help build, plant and harvest on the farm.

The Fossil Whisperer written by Helaine Becker

Follow the life of a modern-day fossil hunter in this picture book biography of Wendy Sloboda. Geared to children in grades K-4, this book highlights her fossil find of a lifetime.

All these titles and more are available at Oxford County Library. If you enjoyed these recommendations, dig into more learning with us during March Break from March 16th – 21st. Visit our program calendar at ocl.net to view our full program line up.

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COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



While participants in the Coldest Night of the Year returned to the Tillsonburg Community Centre after a brisk walk, some of youngest walkers had shoulder rides or were bundled up in wagons or strollers.



Volunteers with the Rapid Relief Team served up beef on a bun cooked by The Mill, and donated by Norpac. The Mill donated the food for all three Coldest Night of the Year events in Oxford County.



Volunteers, from the left, Brody McWilliams, Raphael Dion and Alex Dufton had a little fun in between directing participants which way to walk on the route.



The Ontario Nurses Association team participated in the Coldest Night of the Year because they realize the importance of housing in the healthcare picture. Left to right are: Rebecca Wallace, Cindy Silverthorn and Pat Daltrey.

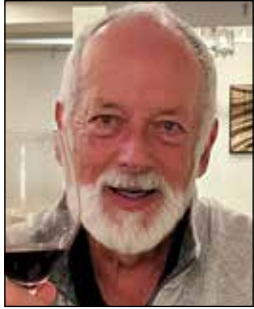


There were more than 121 walkers who participated in the Coldest Night of the Year in Tillsonburg, raising nearly \$52,000 for Tillsonburg Light House.



The Lion's Auditorium of the Tillsonburg Community Centre was the headquarters for Coldest Night of the Year. Participants heard from organizers, politicians and a person whose life was improved by Tillsonburg Light House before heading out for the walk.

Some quirky twists to a visit to Seville



**OH,
THE
PLACES
WE'LL
GO!**

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

The setting could not have been more pleasant. We were seated with some friends at a table in front of a tapas restaurant, a short walk from the impressive Seville Cathedral. We were sampling terrific local tastes, nicely complemented by a jug of sangria. Perhaps two jugs.

And then, within minutes of our being seated, a group of musicians wandered by, played for about 45 seconds, and then rather aggressively passed the hat among all of us partaking in al fresco lunches. Cute, we thought.

Except, perhaps four minutes later, another performing group did the same thing. And then another. Singers, drummers, jugglers and finally some rather talented acrobats. Between donating yet again, or trying to ignore the proffered collection hat, we barely had opportunity to eat!

So, am I knocking Spain's fifth-largest city, the capital of the beautiful, southern Andalusia region? No. We enjoyed our visit to Seville. It just seems like everything here is kicked up a few intense notches from the more laid-back atmosphere we encountered in the communities we visited during our Senior Discovery Tours stay on the Costa del Sol.

For example: the cathedral, itself. The Seville Cathedral is overwhelming. It's the largest gothic cathedral in the world, and the third largest church, after only St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, and St. Paul's in London, England.

The church's history dates back before the actual founding of the church — and if that seems confusing, it's because of the rich history of this region of Spain, which was once ruled by the Moors, who were Moslem. So the cathedral actually includes elements of the mosque that was built in the 1100's. After the Moors were defeated, construction of the cathedral was begun around 1401 and, as was typical of such grand projects, building continued for more than a century. The cathedral's bell tower, known as the Giralda, was originally the minaret of the mosque.

Today, the cathedral (officially the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the See), and the Moorish palace known as the Alcázar, are part of the historic centre of Seville, all designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Back to the cathedral, itself: it's ornate, rich, full of art and stained glass. The Chapter House — where the monks and clergy once held meetings and heard readings from Scripture and the rule of St. Benedict — is lavishly decorated.

But perhaps the most striking thing in the Cathedral is an enormous tomb, which bears a plaque which reads, "Tomb of Christopher Colón; Remains with historical certainty (exhumation carried out in 2003.)"

This, then, is the impressive resting place of Christopher Columbus. And therein lies a story. Columbus died in 1506, in Valladolid, Spain, the site of his original grave. But, because of his important role in Spain's history, his body was soon moved to Seville. But it did not stay there. In 1542, Columbus' remains followed the route of his own nautical adventures — it was taken by ship to what is now the Dominican Republic, and interred in the Cathedral of Santa Maria.

But in 1795, when Spain lost control of the Dominican Republic, Columbus' remains were again on the move, this time to Havana, Cuba. There, he was re-buried in a very impressive tomb, and there he rested for about a century. Until 1899, when not only Columbus' remains, but also the entire, elaborate tomb, was transported to Seville, and installed in the cathedral.

But the story doesn't end there. Some people argue that Columbus' body never left the Dominican Republic, and even today, a box with an inscription indicating it contains Columbus' remains can be found on that island.

So the Spanish authorities decided to answer the question once and for all; in 2003, Columbus' remains were again disturbed, DNA testing was carried out, and it was conclusively proven that the explorer was, indeed, now resident in the Seville Cathedral.

It must be noted that when you visit the cathedral, and Columbus' tomb in particular, he is lauded in a very politically incorrect manner. There is no hint that Columbus did not "discover" anything, because the Americas were already well populated by people; nor that his work led to the horrors of colonialization. It felt like we were back in the day when our knowledge of this bit of history was contained in the jingle "In fourteen hundred ninety-two Columbus sailed the ocean blue." Turns out, the story is a lot more complicated than that.

There is much more to see in this city that attracts several million visitors a year. One rather unusual site is "Spain Square", an impressive sprawling architectural gem, complete with fountains and canals. You would swear that it dates back centuries but the whole thing was actually created in 1928 as the site of the Ibero-American Exposition of 1929, an event hosted by Spain. It was probably an attempt on the part of Spain to assert its role among all of the Spanish-speaking countries that were once colonies of Spain. I love the fact that it was used as a location for both a Star Wars movie, and a Simply Red music video. I wonder what Christopher Columbus would think of Obi-Wan Kenobi or Mick Hucknall.

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.



The ornate Chapter House in the Seville Cathedral.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The tomb holding the much-travelled remains of Christopher Columbus.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The choir in Seville Cathedral.



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COMING EVENTS

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MARCH

MARCH 6 | 1 PM

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

St. Paul's United Church, 88 Bidwell St. Tillsonburg

Theme: "I will give you rest" was written by the women of Nigeria. Please join us, along with other like minded Christians of all denominations to lift these women up in prayer. Tax receipts will be issued for donations of \$20 or more by the WDP. Pre register at 12:30. All are welcome.

Refreshments after the service. For more information call the office at 519-688-0011

MARCH 7 | 10 AM - 12 PM

"BAGS OF FUN" AT MESSY CHURCH

St. Paul's United Church, 88 Bidwell St. Tillsonburg

Crafts, food, music, stories and a surprise or two. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

MARCH 7 | 1 - 4:30 PM

LIVE BAND KICKN KOUNTRY

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

Cash bar. \$8 admission at the door. Jumbo hotdogs available for \$5 from noon to 2pm. For more information call 519-842-5281. All Welcome!!

MARCH 9 | 1 PM - 4 PM

DELHI & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEETING

Delhi Senior Friendship Centre, 418 Queen St., Delhi, ON

Guest Speaker - Trent Myers, a Forest Arborist specializing in the planting & maintenance of trees. Will be very interesting. All welcome to join us. (Enter at rear parking lot off William Street.)

WEDNESDAYS | NOON - 12:30 PM

TILLSONBURG CHRISTIAN MINISTERIAL INVITES YOU TO OUR WEEKLY LENTEN SERVICES

- MARCH 11 - First Baptist Church - Speaker - Denise Walker
- MARCH 18 - St. Mary's Catholic Church - Speaker - Tom Stradwick
- MARCH 25 - St. Paul's United Church - Speaker - Ryan Hutchins

MARCH 11 | NOON - 1 PM

TILLSONBURG LEGION LUNCH

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

\$15 (cash) per person includes homemade chili and cornbread, coleslaw, dessert, coffee and tea. Music band Four T Strings playing. All Welcome!

MARCH 13 | 1 PM - 4 PM

KEN LIGHTHEART AND THE

NORTHSHORE RAMBLERS DANCE

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

\$7 admission at door. Cash only. Bar open. All Welcome!

MARCH 18 | 10 AM - 1 PM, 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM & 4:30 PM - 7:30 PM

MARCH BREAK BOUNCY CASTLE FUN DAY

Tillsonburg Community Centre, Lions Auditorium

Bouncy Castles, Inflatable Games, Petting Zoo, Carnival Fun Foods. Tickets (Ages 2+)

\$16 in advance or \$26 at the door.

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/march-break-bouncy-castle-fun-day-tillsonburg-tickets-1981459662189?aff=ebdsshcopyurl&ke>

ep_tld=1&utm-campaign=social&utm-content=attendeeshare&utm-medium=discovery&utm-term=listing&utm-source=cp

MARCH 21 | 9:30 AM - 4 PM

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY OXPEX & OTEX 2026 STAMP SHOW

St. Mary's Catholic High School, 431 Juliana Drive, Woodstock, ON

Free admission and parking. Framed and Judged exhibits, Stamp dealers, youth gift bags, Sales Circuit, draw prizes. Contact: dhfe@silomail.com. Web: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

MARCH 22 | NOON

KIDS EASTER BINGO

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

Free event sponsored by the Tillsonburg Legion. Doors open at noon and games start at 1:00 pm. Bingo prizes and door prizes. Ages 5-14 and must be accompanied by an adult. For more information call 519-842-5281.

MARCH 24 | 7 PM

LIFE WORTH LIVING

Woodstock Polish Hall, 878 Dufferin Street, Woodstock

The one-hour film was produced by Woodstock native, Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director of Euthanasia Prevention Coalition and will be followed by a Q & A session with Alex. Admission is free. For more information, please email info@oxfordcountyrighttolife.com

MARCH 28 | 2 PM

THE EDISON, VIENNA & AREA MUSEUM IS PROUD TO INTRODUCE JENNIFER GRAINGER

6209 Plank Rd., Vienna ON

Join us as Jennifer shares the enchanting tale of Elgin's crossroad hamlets, lakeports, and rail depots. Jennifer is a passionate heritage activist and book cataloguer, with a keen interest in archives, ghost towns, vintage books, poodles, vegetarian cooking, and nurturing trailing houseplants. bayhamhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com

com.

APRIL

APRIL 11 | 6:30 PM - MIDNIGHT

IN THE MOOD WITH BIG BANDEMIC

South Gate Centre, 191 Old Wellington St S, Woodstock, ON

Big Bandemic will have you toe-tapping and dancing, maybe evening singing along at South Gate Centre's In the Mood concert. Come see this 17 piece big band, with a an additional 10 piece strings section and 2 terrific crooners! BUY TICKETS at the Front Desk in advance or online at www.southgatectr.com/events

APRIL 17 | 8 PM

MUDMEN AT THE TILLSONBURG LEGION

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

Advance tickets \$30 at the Legion or <http://www.ticketscene.ca>. This is and 19 plus event. For more information call 519-842-5281.

APRIL 25 | 9 AM - 1 PM

TILLSONBURG CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

St. Mary's Church, Tillsonburg, ON

Please come join us at our spring rummage sale. Clothing and footwear for the family. Housewares, glassware, bedding, home decor, toys and trinkets, jewelry, books and much more. Everyone is welcome. Fully Accessible. Admission is free. Please bring a bag (or two) to carry home your treasures.

JULY

JULY 17 & 18

BRANTFORD UKULELE FESTIVAL

Tickets for the 2026 Brantford Ukulele Festival, set for July 17th and 18th are going fast! Register before April 17th to get in on the Early Bird special. Get details on performers, workshops and more at brantfordukulelesociety.org.

ONGOING CLASSES, CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

OXFORD COUNTY DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM

Appointments are available at Alexandra Hospital Ingersoll and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital and by phone. Are you looking for support with your Diabetes? Our Team of Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and a Social Worker is here to support YOUR goals. We can help with medication adjustments, lifestyle and diet changes, stress management, weight reduction strategies and more. SELF REFERRALS ARE

WELCOME. Please call 519-485-9611 to book an appointment. Let's work together!

MONDAYS | 9 - 11:30 AM

OTTER VALLEY TAI CHI

St. John's Anglican Church, 46 Ridout St. W., Tillsonburg

New Monday morning classes have begun. Spots still available: 9:00 – 10:30 am Introduction, 10:30 – 11:30 am Foundations. Enjoy gentle exercise with others as you work to improve flexibility, balance and stamina. Call 519-688-9779, email ottervalley@canadiantaichiacademy.org, visit canadiantaichiacademy.org.

MONDAYS | 7 - 9 PM

MODERN SQUARE DANCING IS FOR YOU!

Thames Valley Dance Club

Looking for something to do in the evening or something new to try? Modern square dancing is a great way to learn something new, have fun, meet new friends, relieve stress, and get some exercise! All you need is comfortable shoes and casual clothing. No experience or partner is required and anyone over the age of 12 is welcome (children from 12-15 with an adult, please). The 2025-2026 season has started at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall, 108 Wonham St. S. Ingersoll. The first night is free, and after that the cost is \$7.50 per person each Monday, paid monthly at the start of the month. For more information, contact Julie at 519-535-3314.

2ND TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 2 - 4 PM

4TH TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 7 - 9 PM

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7

If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection. Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com. Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

3RD WED. OF MONTH | 10 AM - NOON

LYNN RIVER PROBUS CLUB Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, ON. Corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St.

Our retired and semi-retired members enjoy diverse interest groups, friendship and fellowship. We have interesting speakers at our monthly meetings as well as time to socialise. Current and prospective members are welcome to join us at the Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, which is on the corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St. For more information, please visit our website at: lynnriverprobus239@gmail.com

COMING EVENTS

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 7 - 9 PM
SATURDAYS | 10 AM - 12 PM
LEARN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU (BJJ)

North Broadway Baptist Church
 Thanks to donor support, we've been able to purchase mats and uniforms, and our instructors generously volunteer their time. This isn't a business—any donations go straight back into the program to help buy more uniforms, mats, and equipment. If it's within your means, a \$20 monthly donation helps support the program, but if not, classes are completely free. **Classes are open to anyone 14 and older.** If you'd like to try a class, please arrive about 15 minutes early to sign waivers and get fitted for a uniform. Information can be found at: <https://www.northbroadwaychurch.ca/nbmfa>, <https://www.facebook.com/northbroadwaymfa/>, <https://www.instagram.com/northbroadwaymfa/> Inquires can be made at: nbmfa@northbroadwaychurch.ca

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM
IN 2026 IT'S YOUR FIX!
INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE
Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S., Ingersoll

Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! March 6 & 20, April 10 & 17, May 1, 15 & 29, June 5 & 19.

FRIDAYS | 1 PM
INTERESTED IN BRIDGE?
JOIN US AT THE TILLSONBURG DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB
Tillsonburg Senior Centre - 45 Hardy Ave, Tillsonburg

Don't have a partner? Come anyway and we will match you up with someone. For more information, visit their Facebook page: [TburgBridge](https://www.facebook.com/TburgBridge).

1ST AND 3RD TUES. OF MONTH
TILLSONBURG LIONS

The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their dinner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Community Centre. If you are interested in giving back to your Community contact Jim at 519 409 0876 for more information.....all are welcome.

1ST WED. OF MONTH | 7 PM
WAGNER MEMORIAL TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526 - MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING

The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON
 Not a member? Contact us to join. For More Information Call, the Legion 519-443-5588. www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP AT ONE OF OUR EVENTS? WE WELCOME YOU!

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON
 You do not need to be a member to Volunteer, Just contact the legion and leave your name and number and purpose of your call. Someone will get back to you as to where you might be needed. Students and Adults welcome. **Open hours. Wed.-Fri. 3 pm-10 pm, Sat.1 pm-10 pm, Sun.1 pm-6 pm. For More Information call, the Legion at 519-443-5588 or teetervillelegionbranch526.ca**

VON OXFORD GRIEF CARE: FREE MONTHLY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Register at: oxford.griefsupport@von.ca or 519-539-1231 Ext 6299 or 6296

TILLSONBURG

WHEN: 2nd Tuesday of every month
WHERE: VON Oxford Office 24 Brock St. W., Tillsonburg
TIME: 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

INGERSOLL

WHEN: 4th Tuesday of every month
WHERE: Ingersoll Public Library 130 Oxford St., Ingersoll
TIME: 10:30 a.m. -12 Noon

WOODSTOCK

WHEN: 3rd Saturday of every month
WHERE: Sakura House Hospice 715180 Oxford Rd.4, Woodstock
TIME: 10:30 a.m. -12 Noon

TILLSONBURG SENIOR CENTRE WEEKLY PROGRAMS FOR 50+

Games such as euchre, cribbage, whomp'em, bingo, and more played weekly. Fitness classes include drum fit and line dancing weekly. We run over 35 programs weekly! Call 688-2520 for details

Council turns down motion for increased business support

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg council turned down a request for additional support for the first business locating in the second phase of the VanNorman Industrial Park.

Development Commissioner Cephas Panschow told council that Wise Line Tools was the first property purchaser in the second phase, aiming to expand its tool retail space. Council originally approved an application to its Community Improvement Plan last September that would provide \$129,259 in tax incentives to the business. However, since then, the company learned it would have to pay development charges from Oxford County and asked for a higher level of town tax incentives.

After clarifying the town won't see any money from the county development charges, Coun. Kelly Spencer asked, "So because of the county council's budget and decision we're going to take from ours?"

Panschow confirmed that was the case. He said it was partly an oversight on the town's part that Wise Line wasn't made aware of the development charges.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy asked if there was a matrix that is followed to go from A to B.

"Frankly this is one of the few applications that wasn't approved at the highest levels," Panschow

said, saying it's within the criteria of the program.

Gilvesy said the program, which provides credits on property taxes, was at a cost of \$129,000, and now the recommendation is to move it to a higher level at a cost of \$367,000, which would cover the county development charge.

"I'm struggling for someone to explain to me why in September we are here and now we are here," she said. "Taxpayers have to make up that amount of money."

Clarifying the suggestion was for a modified amount of \$318,000, Manager of Finance/Treasurer Renato Pullia explained the principle is the increase in assessment will create increased taxation to cover the cost of the rebate.

"It's a substantial amount of money between the general, moderate and strategic," Spencer said. "We are in an era of tight budgets and tight economy for taxpayers and I don't think taxpayers should be subsidizing the policy of another council. It's also important not to set a precedent."

Coun. Chris Parker agreed, saying the county development charges have been in place since early 2025 and the land sale to Wise Line was approved in September 2025. Since this isn't a new policy, he doesn't believe the taxpayer should be subsidizing it.

In the end, council accepted the report for information, meaning there will be no change in the level of subsidization.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

BED SUPPORT

Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign's donation of \$70,646 paid for a new ICU bed, and was recognized with a plaque in Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital's ICU. Left to right are: Drew Van Der Jagt, co-owner of Tim Hortons Broadway; Kaila Van Der Jagt, co-owner of Tim Hortons Broadway; Christina Gazley, co-owner Tim Hortons Tillsonburg Town Centre, Oxford Street and Norfolk Street; Austin Gazley, district manager Tim Hortons; and Mike Gazley, co-owner Tim Hortons Tillsonburg Town Centre, Oxford Street and Norfolk Street. The replacement of the ICU bed, which cost \$55,000, is part of the TDMH Foundation campaign to replace all beds in the hospital.

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RIDDLES

How did the daffodil win the car race?

Petal to the metal.

What is yellow, 10 feet tall, but not a giraffe?

A sunflower.

What type of flower do you plant in the dark?

A lightbulb.

What flowers can be found between the nose and your chin?

Tulips.

What do flowers and trampolines have in common?

They love spring(s).

How can you tell spring flowers are friendly?

They always have new buds.

Why are birds terrible gift givers?

They are cheep.

Why did the police arrest the bird?

He was robin.

Why do birds fly north in the spring?

Because it is too far to walk.

How does a bird find its nest on a treasure map?

Eggs marks the spot.

SUDOKU

		5			8	3		6
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Level: Beginner

Solutions on Page 27

PET OF THE WEEK



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Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Sat: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

Nominate your pet to be Pet of the Week by emailing info@tillsonburgpost.com

WORD SEARCH

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

U	F	L	R	E	S	I	L	I	E	N	C	E	N	X	V	R	U	L	E
I	D	N	E	M	P	O	W	E	R	M	E	N	T	A	C	B	Y	J	Y
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Celebration of life for WM HARRY KNIGHT



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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Jim Carrey
2. Tehran
3. Medical Assistance in Dying
4. Raphael
5. Infertility
6. The Black Sea
7. Melatonin
8. Loudness
9. The Oprah Winfrey Show
10. Ecuador

SUDOKU

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