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(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

Mike Harris, seen at his election party surrounded by volunteers, held on to his Kitchener-Conestoga seat with 41.5 per cent of the vote.

Harris hangs on to Kitchener-Conestoga seat Conservatives win third straight majority

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Mike Harris has won re-election as the Member of Provincial Parliament for the riding of Kitchener-Conestoga.

Harris, who garnered 41.5 per cent of the vote, told the Gazette on election night he is looking forward to getting back to work at Queen's Park.

"I think the most exciting part for me is being able to continue doing the good work

we have been doing for the last seven years into things like the new hospital in Waterloo Region, things like moving forward with Highway 7 connecting the region with Guelph and getting the two-way, all-day GO Train service."

Harris said he wants to see continued investment into the rural areas of the riding, including Wilmot and Wellesley.

"We have the new Wellesley Recreation Centre. I was able to work with the township

and the province to acquire roughly half the funding for the project."

The facility is home to the Wellesley Applejacks Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) team, Community Care Concepts and the Wellesley Community Care Centre.

"We have seen some renewal in infrastructure projects in New Hamburg, in particular, at the community centre. I think a lot of the focus at this point, if we are talking

Continued on page 2

Hardeman easily captures Oxford in provincial election

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Ernie Hardeman successfully kept Oxford blue in the 2025 provincial election, capturing 55 per cent of the vote.

It was only six minutes after the polls closed when the media declared Premier Doug Ford and the PCs had won a third mandate. Two minutes later, media called it a majority and Hardeman's campaign manager Shelley Ratelband announced his victory locally to a cheering crowd at a post-election party in the Woodstock Legion.

Final results for Oxford were: Hardeman 27,061 votes (55.26 per cent); Liberal Bernia Martin, 11,348 votes (23.17 per cent); NDP Khadijah Haliru, 5,374 votes (10.97 per cent); Green Party of Ontario Colton Kaufman, 2,182 votes (4.46 per cent); Ontario Party Grace Harper, 1,414 votes (2.89 per cent); New Blue Party Peter Beimers, 1,317 votes (2.69 per cent); Libertarian Henryk Szymczyszyn, 276 votes (0.56 per cent). Voter turnout was 49.20 per cent, an improvement over the 46.45 per cent in 2022.

Arriving at the party, Hardeman entered to cheers and thanked Ratelband and his campaign team, his family, and supporters.

"It is as great an honour today as it was in 1996," the nine-term MPP said. "The worry about winning didn't decrease in all those races. The first one was the easiest as I had nothing to prove. After that, it became a report card on my past service."

Asked about the highlights of the campaign, Hardeman said he was pleased with the candidates running and how the election was conducted.

Continued on page 3



TIM LOUIS

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Harris hangs on to Kitchener-Conestoga seat

Continued from page 1

shiny and new, would be working with our municipalities to ensure we are putting our best foot forward to help with infrastructure needs and costs.”

Harris added those needs include water, wastewater and other major, new projects along with maintaining current infrastructure.

Liberal candidate Joe Gowing came second in the race with 29.5 per cent support of voters. While Gowing admitted he would have rather won than come in second, the result is what he and his team had predicted.

“We were hoping Mike would lose a bit more of his support, but we are ecstatic. We knew we were in second the whole time. It was a good showing and the results were exactly what we thought from day one.”

Gowing explained the PCs still have a solid base in rural Ontario, including Kitchener-Conestoga.

“I have talked to many farmers, even the ones potentially losing their land, they said, ‘Sorry, we have to vote for the Conservatives as their family has done it for years.’ The problem is the PCs are not for the farmers any more.”

The Kitchener resident told his supporters on election night he wasn’t done yet and added the Liberals and NDP need to come up with a plan to work together.

“I know Mike is not helping anyone in our riding. I know he’s not the right representative and I know I am. I have proven that and the numbers show it. People trust me and

I am going to push my party to have talks with the NDP and see what we can do on that front.”

The NDPs and Liberals combined took 48 per cent of the riding, more than enough to win the seat. He explained vote-splitting between the two led to his second-place finish.

“I don’t know what that looks like, but we need to start having the talks.”

Jodi Szimanski took 18.5 per cent of the vote as the New Democratic Party candidate and said despite her third-place finish, the experience was a memorable one.

“I honestly had a tonne of fun. The ability to meet so many people in the riding and get to know them and their issues is something worth doing again and fighting for.”

She added the party was able to make some gains along with keeping official opposition status.

“We made some huge headway in areas we have never made headway before. We raised more money than we have in this riding’s history. I think it was just a little bit of that unknown and people were really focused on strategic voting which we continue to see doesn’t work.”

Szimanski explained electoral reform is needed to cut through people’s misconceptions on voting day.

“People post polls that aren’t actually polls but projections and it freaks people out. They vote with whoever is yelling the loudest about predictions and it’s not something I was willing to put out there because it isn’t actual poll data.”



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

Mike Harris is seen talking to the members of the media following his Feb. 27 election victory for the Progressive Conservatives.

The NDPs attempted to make the Region of Waterloo’s land acquisition the riding’s number-one issue, something the Wellesley resident said worked.

“People in the other townships were saying if it can happen in Wilmot, it can happen anywhere and there are a lot of farms here. When talking to people in Kitchener, what

they don’t like is the secrecy and the lying from the Conservative party.”

Brayden Wagenaar from the Green Party earned 5.5 per cent of the vote, the New Blue Party’s candidate and leader Jim Karahalios brought in 2.8 per cent while Patrick Doucette brought in 2.2 per cent.

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Hardeman keeps Oxford blue

Continued from page 1

"It was never personal when they talked to the media about the election – they were fighting the Ford government," he said.

One of the personal highlights for Hardeman was the leaders' debate and how the premier did a good job presenting his platform.

"It didn't matter what the other leaders put forward, he didn't lose his cool," Hardeman said.

One of the things Hardeman said he had to defend the most on the campaign trail was why there was an early election.

"The reason we had to do that is the premier said in order to negotiate, you need to be there for the duration," he said.

Hardeman said he is looking forward to getting back to work representing the people of Oxford and assisting with challenges they may face. Those challenges ranged from helping individual constituents who have an issue with government services to working with municipalities and hospitals to get the health-and-addiction hub in place in Woodstock.

On the health-care front, Hardeman said money was announced to assist with primary care, but not yet doled out before the election. He is hopeful the next announcement could include funding for a nurse-practitioner-led clinic in Tillsonburg. He did mention the preference for health-care delivery with wrap-around services that included many health practitioners.

Word from other candidates

Although a distant second, Martin was positive about the results.

"We have achieved an outcome that many thought was impossible given the short campaign period, the weather conditions and the voting history in this riding," she said. "We reached new voters and we educated people."

Many people told Martin she was a "solid candidate and had a lot of potential" but they couldn't vote Liberal.

"We will have to take a closer look at that sentiment and determine how best to address that concern for voters who really were looking for a provincial representative that could take on the issues facing our riding," Martin added.

Going forward, Martin said she is not interested in running federally and will focus on her role as a city and county councillor until the next provincial or municipal election.

Haliru wasn't surprised with the results on election night.

"From day one, we knew this was going to be a long shot, but for me, this campaign wasn't just about winning a seat. It was about aligning so well with the NDP and hopes of what we could do with (leader) Merits Stiles' new fire as we saw in her role of opposition, and it was also about asserting my place at the table, showing that first-generation immigrants, diverse voices and women like me belong in these spaces," she said.

A positive for Haliru was being vetted and validated as the candidate for the NDP.

"I've been misunderstood and silenced in my journey so many times," she said.



(JEFF HELDSON PHOTO)

Ernie Hardeman, PC candidate for Oxford, is congratulated by his wife Rita after winning a ninth term as the MPP for the riding. He captured 55 per cent of the vote.

"It showed me, and hopefully others, that our stories, our experiences, our ideas matter. I had the chance to engage with people directly, to hear their hopes and frustrations and to stand proudly in my truth as a Black, Muslim, immigrant woman running in a space where people like me are often underrepresented. That visibility and validation alone is a win"

One thing she heard at the doors is people are tired of feeling ignored on many issues.

As for the future, Haliru said this wasn't her "last dance." She vowed to continue to show up at the provincial, municipal and community level.

Beimers was disappointed with the results on election night and didn't see any positives coming out of the campaign.

"Not much, if anything," he answered. "One-hundred-and-ninety million dollars spent to bring the Liberal Party to official party status. Everything Doug Ford will do in the immediate future, he could have done without this election. Truly a waste of taxpayers' money."

On the campaign, he heard concerns about the educational system, gender identity, critical race theory, how expensive life is becoming and housing costs.

Beimers said he would like to run again if the opportunity presents itself.

"I still believe New Blue's policies are the best for Ontario; that it is truly the only conservative option for Ontario," he said. "New Blue will be here, ready for when the people of Oxford and Ontario realize that the PC Party has abandoned traditional conservative values."

Harper was hoping to win but was happy to spread the word about the Ontario Party.

"Also, because we are a grassroots movement, every time we run a campaign, we learn a great deal about the political process," she said. "We hope to use this campaign to put the Ontario Party in a position to win Oxford next time round."

She saw a positive in meeting so many people at the door and hearing their stories. These included a Tillsonburg resident in a senior's apartment complaining of an elevator not running for a year to concerns about Bill 197 taking away the ability for municipalities to say no to landfills.

Harper has plans to run again either municipally or provincially.

Responses were not received from the Libertarian or Green Party candidates.

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Oxford County council keeps garbage bag-tag cost at two bucks; new motion coming to council in weeks

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Members of Oxford County Council discussed a potential one-dollar increase to the cost of putting a bag of garbage out on the curb for nearly an hour at last week's regular meeting.

The motion was defeated, as was another motion to have staff take a closer look at the current garbage-collection system. Both motions went down after identical 5-5 recorded votes, something which visibly frustrated Warden Marcus Ryan during last week's regular council meeting.

"One of, if not the main role, of a head of council is to deliver effective and efficient council meetings and I think sometimes we all, elected officials and residents, get caught up in the politics of what we do and the popularity of the decisions we make but, in the end, we are there to govern."

Ryan added governing means passing policy and budgets and then handing those decisions over to staff to deliver services.

"I tend to get frustrated sometimes when we are not putting our best foot forward to govern. We have a responsibility to residents when we get elected to sit in that chair and tax them for tens of millions of dollars. We need to come (to meetings) prepared having done our homework, debate in good faith and make a decision."

The staff report stated the hike was needed to combat program-cost increases as a result of growth, inflationary pressures and upcoming changes to curbside waste-collection services.

"The county's user-pay system is intended to fully fund costs for curbside garbage collection/disposal (excluding large article) and promote use of waste-diversion programs. Since 2021, annual program expenses have outpaced bag-tag revenues and without an increase in bag-tag fees, reserve funds will be nearly depleted by the end of 2025," said the report.

It also warned that if the new fee was not approved, future program deficits would be funded from property taxes.

Along with Ryan, South-West Oxford Mayor and county councillor David Mayberry was one the biggest supporters of the 50 per-cent increase. He said paying a dollar more is still a good deal compared to other services.

"If you had to get in your car and live in Tavistock, and had to take your garbage to Salford (the site of the Oxford County landfill) and drive back, three dollars sounds pretty cheap. If you use DoorDash or something like that and they charged you six dollars to bring your meal, three dollars to get rid of your garbage, in my mind, sounds relatively inexpensive."

Mayberry explained the actual cost of the waste-collection program has been rising, but the bag fee has not.

"The reality is you are going to pay the cost whether you want to or not. Whether it be by bag tag or taxes, I would rather have it right out front where I can see it. Every time I put a tag on a bag, I will say to myself, 'Is there anything here that doesn't need to be, or can I make it last for another week?'"

Last week's motion was to increase the bag-tag fee on May 1 of this year, something that drew the ire of some councillors since the 2025 budget has already been approved. Mayberry isn't giving up on the proposal and has tabled a motion for the March 12 meeting of council to raise the cost of a bag of garbage to \$3 as of Jan. 1, 2026.

Mayberry said the ultimate goal is to divert as much as possible from the landfill, lengthening the life of the Salford location.

Debate on the failed motions was heated at times and one of those opposed was Coun. Deb Tait. She voted against the 2025 budget, which saw an increase of 6.6 per cent and was offended at the timing of the proposal.

"I find this offensive, the comments being made about this to the taxpayer. This is not appropriate. They are not aware. To implement it in May is unacceptable. The taxpayer should have some type of warning, especially with the high taxes we have implemented on them."

Tait supported the motion to have staff bring back a new report with more information including the possibility of reducing the 45 per-cent administrative cost to run the bag-tag program.

"There are so many unknowns. The reason for the report was to find out more information to see if there were savings," she said.

Coun. Phil Schaefer also voted against the one-dollar fee increase but added he supported the motion for a report with more information. His main concern is the

life of the landfill.

"I can support the motion just for the fact it gives us something to look at. You gotta remember, every bag that goes into that landfill is shortening (its life). We have to look at a way to have fewer bags go into that landfill. I want to know all the facts before I make a decision."

Schaefer expressed a concern over the potential of increased illegal dumping should a bag-tag increase be implemented. He also asked county staff if it would be possible to have incremental increases in the future as opposed to a hefty hike all at once.

"We talked about that a bit where you have that overlap where people will purchase more tags to avoid the price increase," said county waste management manager Frank Gross.

"There is a potential for greater loss and it's an administrative issue. I guess (the 50 per-cent increase) is an easier rollout from a staff perspective if we reduce the number of price increases over time," he added.

The motion to have staff bring back a more detailed report was made by Coun. Deb Gilvesy. If passed, it would have examined a hybrid solution which would explore one free bag to ratepayers per collection cycle with additional bags required to have a two-to-three-dollar tag per bag. It would have identified the cost of the production of bag tags as well as the cost to administer the program.

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Be ready for change to waste disposal in Oxford

JEFF HELDSON

Gazette Correspondent

A potential bag-tag hike brought the spotlight on waste disposal within Oxford County at last week's county council meeting. While the consensus seems to be residents don't want bag-tag fees to increase, there is much, much more to the issue.

Being in the south of Oxford County, Tillsonburg residents look with envy at the "free" garbage disposal in neighbouring Norfolk County. There are many sayings about how nothing in life is free, and that certainly applies in this case. Waste disposal in Norfolk County – where residents can put up to four bags to the curb without an additional fee – is included in the taxes.

Hold on to that thought for a moment; by putting a fee on bag tags, Oxford County is charging a tax or user fee on garbage disposal. Looking into the merits of this

concept is another lengthy debate, but the concept of a 50 per-cent increase in what amounts to garbage tax is unacceptable and residents have a right to be upset.

But, as was mentioned, there is more to what is a complicated issue. Along with the increase in fees, Oxford County will be implementing a six-day collection cycle as of Jan. 1, 2026. Garbage pickup is currently on a five-day cycle, the same day of the week each week. With the new system, it will change. For example, if pickup is Monday this week, it will be Tuesday next week. So, the proposal is to pay more for less service. If you think that is confusing, it gets worse.

Blue Box pickup was an expense that municipalities carried. A provincial change in regulations means producers – for example soft-drink manufacturers, restaurants and even those using cardboard packaging – will have to pay and, in the case of

Oxford County, a producer organization will be operating the system. This has two-fold impacts: the county's waste budget no longer has to fund Blue Boxes and the still-to-be-set day of Blue Box pickup may not be the same as garbage pickup. It's enough to make residents' heads spin.

Complicating waste collection even more is the contract for pickup is up for renewal in Oxford and the cost increased substantially. The county also wants to add a green-bin system for picking up organics. County councillors are also rightfully trying to extend the life of the Salford

landfill site.

In a time when some residents may find themselves out of a job or see tightening budgets due to a potential tariff battle with the United States, many can't afford an increase in bag tags. When one considers there should be some room in the budget from not paying for Blue Boxes, it's time to hit pause on the decision to increase garbage taxes and look for further efficiencies.

Now is the time to contact the county councillors whose opinion you don't agree with to talk trash instead of trash-talking them on social media.



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Wellesley council approves budget for 2025 Apple Butter and Cheese Festival

New gateway signs also approved for Wellesley village to be paid for with ABC Festival reserves

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

As the Apple Butter and Cheese (ABC) Festival committee prepares for the festival's 50th anniversary on Sept. 27, Wellesley council has approved a budget for the beloved annual event that could see the committee bring in just over \$15,000 in net income.

According to the budget presented to Wellesley council at its Feb. 25 committee of the whole meeting, this year's festival is expected to generate \$75,750 in gross income. After projected expenses that include day-of expenses like advertising (\$10,000), entertainment (\$3,500) and product and booth expenses (\$22,000) among others that, together, total just less than \$52,000, as well as other miscellaneous, equipment and utilities costs totaling nearly \$8,500 together, the committee expects to make a tidy profit of almost \$15,500.

Last year, the festival brought in more than \$84,600 in gross income and the committee came away with a little more than \$35,400 in net income, all of which

went into the festival's reserves, funds from which are earmarked for community projects.

"This is the 50th anniversary of the ABC Festival and none of this could be possible without a multitude of amazing volunteers who have given so much of their time to support the Township of Wellesley through the ABC Festival," said Theresa Bisch, the festival committee's secretary and treasurer.

"... We do want to highlight that, for 2025, the old (Wellesley) arena is no longer available for our use. Since our committee is trying to maintain the tourism for our core businesses and thus plans on holding the festival downtown (in the Village of Wellesley) again, all our market vendors will need to be outdoors this year. Due to this change, we anticipate a reduced number of vendors applying to be part of the festival."

Currently, the ABC Festival reserve has what Bisch referred to as "a healthy balance" of over \$100,000. From that reserve, the ABC committee recommended to council that it earmark some of that

money to community projects including a \$500 donation to the Wellesley Township Fall Fair, \$4,000 for a Lions Club disc golf course project and \$27,500 for the purchase of two new gateway signs for the Village of Wellesley.

"The Village of Wellesley has two existing gateway entry signs," said ABC Festival committee member Michael Fritz. "One is located on Queen's Bush Road and the other one is on Nafziger Road in Wellesley. ... The signs were originally installed by the Wellesley and District Lions Club many years ago to welcome visitors to our beautiful village and promote special events and service clubs.

"These signs have been refurbished and maintained over the years by the Lions Club, but due to age, they have deteriorated to a state where they have to be refurbished with new materials and hardware."

Fritz said the committee recommended the replacement of both signs with new faces, posts and poured-in-place concrete. With a cost estimate from signontario in Stratford of nearly \$24,000, the new signs would be 11 feet tall and eight feet wide

and will incorporate an eight-by-two-foot interchangeable, coroplast insert to promote special community events such as the ABC Festival, Lions Duck Race, Wellesley Fall Fair and Christmas Tyme in Wellesley among others. When no events are being advertised, the insert would say, "Welcome to our friendly town," or something similar.

"The old signs that are there; how old are they?" Mayor Joe Nowak asked Fritz.

"We tried to get a timeline for when they were put up, but they have been there a long, long time," Fritz responded. "I think along the way the posts have been replaced. You can see in the one there was new posts added to the backside, but we really don't know the history of it."

While Fritz said the old signs are on wooden posts driven directly into the ground, the new posts will be either steel or aluminum and will be mounted in poured concrete.

Wellesley council unanimously approved both the ABC Festival budget and the new gateway signs for Wellesley village.

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Stratford mayor takes a pie to the face for a good cause

CONNOR LUCZKA

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

As the door chime rang and Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma walked into Global Pet Foods Stratford one frigid February day, employees excitedly greeted him and owner Adam Quehl emptied two full bottles of whipped cream into a pie tin.

On Feb. 27, Ritsma came to the store to take a pie to the face after he won a vote to be this year's unlucky winner of the Show Us Your Heart campaign, an annual fundraiser for local pet rescues.

"The pie in the face thing started like five years ago," Quehl told the Times just prior to Ritsma's entrance. "One of our team members, Cole, has always won. And then this year, by popular demand, the mayor won."

"We emailed city hall and Lindsay, his secretary, got back to me and said, 'Yeah, no problem,'" Quehl laughed.

Christine Foster of Pawsitive Difference Professional Pet Care did the honours, but not before Ritsma shared a few words.

"Can I say something first?" he asked, slightly recoiling. "I'm happy to be here and I'm happy I dethroned Cole in the process. So, congratulations on the \$1,000-plus and to Global doing their part here in our community."

"Ready?" Foster asked.

"I am not ready," Ritsma laughed. "But I'm going to receive this just the same."



(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Christine Foster of Pawsitive Difference Professional Pet Care did the honours on Feb. 27, hitting Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma with a pie to the face – all for a good cause. It was part of Global Pet Foods Stratford's Show Us Your Heart campaign, which raised \$1,234 for Shakespeare based Axel's Imprint Rescue and Sanctuary, a cat rescue.

This year, \$1,234 was raised for Axel's Imprint Rescue and Sanctuary, a volunteer-run cat rescue in Shakespeare, surging over the \$1,000 goal they had. The money will go towards food, vet bills and general

care of the animals.

Axel's Imprint Rescue and Sanctuary isn't the only beneficiary of the campaign. Since 2006, the annual campaign takes place across the Global Pet Foods stores

in Canada. Since that time, over \$2.1 million has been raised for over 130 animal shelters and pet-rescue groups across the nation.

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Shrove Tuesday at Tavistock Legion a great success

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A full crowd of pancake lovers gathered at the Tavistock Royal Canadian Legion Branch 518 on Tuesday evening to celebrate Shrove Tuesday.

Hundreds of pancakes were served alongside litres of pure local maple syrup, courtesy of Daryl and Michelle Herlick. Guests also enjoyed Wayne and Margaret Herlick's pork sausage, blueberry toppings with whipped cream and fresh fruit for dessert. The hearty meal left no appetite

unsatisfied.

Tavistock Legion president Jane McKay was thrilled to see so many community members come out to support the Legion's fundraising efforts.

"Once COVID-19 hit, we had to put Shrove Tuesday on hold," McKay said. "It was great to bring it back this year and see such a strong turnout."

She also thanked the volunteers who helped set up the hall, as well as those who cooked and served the all-you-can-eat pancakes and syrup.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

The Legion's kitchen crew and servers, from left: Bill Stevely, Kim Bailey, Bruce Gerber, Tavistock Legion president Jane McKay, Julie Neumeister, Brenda Wettlaufer, Makaya Moore and Deb Stevely.



Tavistock's Doug Shirray lends a hand at the door, collecting donations and assisting as a director for the local Legion.

OBITUARY

Elizabeth (Betty) Duimering November 26, 1938 – March 1, 2025



It is with heavy hearts that the family of Elizabeth (Betty) Duimering announce her passing on March 1, 2025. Betty lived a life rooted in faith, courage, and compassion, leaving behind a legacy of love that will forever be cherished by those who knew her.

Predeceased by her husband of 50 years, John, in

2012, Betty was a devoted mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother. She will be deeply missed by her children: Elly (Joe) Sferrazza, Chris (Dale) Perneel, Joe (Sue) Duimering, and Brent (Laura) Duimering. Her love and laughter will also be remembered by her 10 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Relatives and friends were invited to the Mark Jutzi Funeral Home, 291 Huron Street, New Hamburg, on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. and again on Thursday, March 6, 2025, from 10:30 – 11:15 a.m.. Funeral service will follow in the chapel of the funeral home at 11:30 a.m. with Pastor Gary McNitt officiating. A private family interment will take place in Riverside Cemetery, New Hamburg. For those unable to attend the funeral service a livestream link will be found on the funeral home website.

Donations may be made to Faith's Orphan Fund, Operation Smile or Gospel Echoes and can be made through the funeral home.

Personal condolences can be posted at www.mark-jutzi-funeral-homes.ca

IN MEMORIAM

JOEL WALLACE July 10, 1999 - March 6, 2024

One year since we lost our precious Joel, and although our hearts are forever changed, we see and feel him with us every day. We wish your excavator could build a bridge big enough to give you another hug, Joel, but we will patiently wait until the day we see you again. Until then, we will be missing you.

*See ya a little later,
Your loving family*

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and missed beyond measure.

Miss you
Your loving family

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

By Stewart & Sydney Grant

1. Which country has the highest life expectancy?
2. What is the most common surname in Canada?
3. How many minutes are in a full week?
4. What is the 4th letter of the Greek alphabet?
5. How many dots appear on a pair of dice?
6. What is acrophobia a fear of?
7. December 26 is known by what name in Ireland?
8. Where would you be if you were standing on the Spanish Steps?
9. Which is the only continent with land in all four hemispheres?
10. What is the tallest type of tree?

Answers found on the classified page

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The Old Gazettes

By Sydney Grant

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

March 4-11, 2020, Edition (5 years ago)

Pull up to John Lichti's home today and you'll see a sign on the door that reads, "Sorry, the barber shop is no longer in operation." After almost 20 years in business in Tavistock, John decided to finally retire as a barber. Many men in Tavistock and area will surely miss his expertise and their easy access to a local barber.

The meeting of the Tavistock and District Recreation Facilities Board was held on Jan. 27, 2020 at 7 p.m. In arena manager Ken Wettlaufer's verbal report, subject to budget approval by East Zorra-Tavistock council, there is a possibility the township would contribute \$75,000 to the proposed splash pad project.

The Tavistock Royals eliminated the Lucknow Lancers in four straight games in their WOOA senior A hockey semi-final series this past weekend. Saturday night in Tavistock, Brendan Woods led the Royals with four goals as they doubled the Lancers 8-4. Then on Sunday night in Lucknow, Mitch Facey scored twice for the Royals as they edged the Lancers 6-5 in regulation time.

March 3-10, 2010, Edition (15 years ago)

The Tavistock Tornadoes Soccer Club is excited about the upcoming 2010 season. Armed with a new name, a new logo, a new website, a new club coach lead position and a fresh season just around the corner, the executive is enthusiastic about the upcoming year. Last year, a contest was held to determine a club name. Many great entries were submitted with the winner being the Tavistock Tornadoes. To complement this, the executive determined an appropriate logo to match the name. Through careful selection, we have an entire brand-new image for our club.

With the Tavistock Public Library moving to its new quarters in the restored Oxford Hotel in the summer of 2010, a fundraising campaign has begun to outfit the new space. The face of fundraising, Mrs. Lynne Ross, and Oxford County CEO/chief librarian Lisa Miettinen spoke to members of the Tavistock Men's Club on Thursday evening, Feb. 18, 2010. A \$25,000 donation from the estate of Milan "Mike" Yarich, last owner of the hotel, has been the first

naming opportunity for the library with "Mikey's Room." Ms. Miettinen said the bottom line of fundraising has been set at \$140,000, less the \$25,000 already received. At present, the library board has identified three other naming opportunities within the library. The program room is set at \$25,000, the fiction lounge at \$15,000, and the book drop at \$10,000.

Josslin Insurance Brokers Limited is pleased that through personal contributions of their employees, they have raised more than \$8,600 for the relief efforts in Haiti. Josslin corporately kickstarted the project with an initial seed donation of \$1,000, and then matched all donations by employees to reach the total gift of \$8,600. This amount, combined with our matching funds and the matching funds of the federal government, will total more than \$17,000 for the relief efforts in Haiti.

March 1-8, 1995, Edition (30 years ago)

The Tavistock and District Figure Skating Club celebrated their 25th year with a tribute to "Television - 25 years" during their bi-annual carnival held Sunday afternoon in the Tavistock Arena. A capacity crowd filled the facility for a one and one-half hour extravaganza of colourful costumes, memorable showtunes, great skating and sometimes funny antics by the entire cast. Some of the acts included "I Dream of Jeannie" performers Lane Hallman, Beck Lynn Zehr, Kaitlyn Gingerich and Andrea Green; comic superheroes Brett Wettlaufer, Kaileu Armstrong, Jessica Bickle and Karlee Roth; Nashville Network line dancers Leanne Bender, Teresa Townsend, Lindsay Schlegel and Shawna Fallowfield; and Flintstone lookalikes Philip Kropf, Kevin King, Bobby Jo Hinsperger, Jennifer Schwartzentruer, Megan Meekison, Caitlin Smith and Naomi Zehr.

A Grade 5 student at Tavistock Public School was honoured with the Award of Merit by local firefighters at an assembly held last week in the school. Jacqueline Miles, 10, of Tavistock received the award for her "act of bravery" by township Fire Chief Bruce Holst along with deputy fire chief Paul Roth and Tavistock District Chief Don Gregory. Jackie was visiting her grandparents, just outside New Hamburg, last October when a fire broke out in the home. She alerted her grandparents, then raced to get her 18-month-old niece from a bedroom and take her to safety.



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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

Three Tavistock natives crack top-50 list

Stratford Hockey Club releases all-time greats

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Ross Yantzi, Jeff Hill and Trevor Sauder may have played junior hockey in Stratford at very different times, but all three are on the list of the best-ever players to suit up for the storied hockey franchise.

This old journalist started his career at 1240 CJS in Stratford as a 21-year-old new graduate from the broadcast-journalism program at Fanshawe College in London and, shortly thereafter, was thrust into a play-by-play and analyst role during Culliton games – a role I enjoyed for 13 years.

I didn't see a single game Yantzi played, though I have played some pickup games with him and even in his 60s, he skated circles around guys 30 years his junior. I played with Hill enough to see why he made the list. An unorthodox goalie yet a damn good one who could be likened to Patrick Roy. As for Sauder, I have only seen him on the ice during his Royals career, but to watch him is to appreciate his speed which makes him, to this day, a dynamic defender who can turn a game on a dime.

I reached out to all three men to get their thoughts on what it meant to be named to an exclusive list of the most storied Junior B franchise in Canada. The organization has won seven Sutherland Cups and was a playground for NHL Hall of Fame players Chris Pronger and Rob Blake. Among the other graduates are Ed Olczyk, Nelson Emmerson and Louie DeBrusk, a current Sportsnet broadcaster.

"It's a real honour. You look at some of the names, and they had great careers whether they went to college hockey or the NHL and a couple are in the hall of fame," said Yantzi, who was on the team from 1976-1978.

"I played there two years and we won the Ontario championship twice. We also won gold at the Ontario Winter Games my first season."

Yantzi went on to earn a scholarship at the University of New Hampshire, where he played four solid seasons.

"Stratford was a great stepping stone for me. Jack Nairn was our coach at the time and I have nothing but respect for that man. He let you know where you sat on the team and he loved to win."

Yantzi said the team had won its first 25 games of the season when they went into Hespeler to play the lowly Shamrocks and came away with a regrettable loss.

"The next practice, we had a two-hour bag skate with not a single puck on the ice. We ended up with just two losses in the regular season."

Hill told me he had no idea the list was



1987-88 – Ross Yantzi not only played in Stratford but also coached. He was behind the bench for one of Jeff Hill's campaigns.

being released, and making the top 50 came as a huge surprise to him.

"In my case, I am assuming they picked me because of the time I spent in Stratford, not so much for what I became or what came next. There are certainly some names on that list way more deserving if it was a totality of what you did with hockey."

Hill was supposed to be the backup goalie to Garth Snow, the hotshot prospect from Maryland who played 12 seasons in the NHL and became a front-office guy with the New York Islanders. The Tavistock teenager took over the starting job and went on to backstop the Cullitons to a Sutherland Cup in his third season with the team in 1900. He compiled a record of 67 wins, 13 losses and two ties over four campaigns.

"Maybe at that time he was not ready to be thought of as highly as he was and I had nobody think that of me, so it was pretty easy to just go out and play. I'm sure he felt it every day."

Hill said there are about five memories he replays in his head from time to time, and one is from the Sutherland Cup series against St. Catherines.

"Getting pounded out by their goalie on a line brawl in about game two or three," he laughed. "I didn't see him coming and he hit me like a brick wall."

Another Hill memory was during the championship season in a semi-final series against the Chatham Mic Macs, who boasted Brian Wiseman and Todd Warriner, two of the best junior players in the province at that time.

"I remember watching (Mike McLeod) when he scored the game-winning goal in double overtime in Game 7. That was the one that stands out. I might be full of myself a little bit, but I can still see that clear as day. Even though it was 180 feet away



1987-88 – Jeff Hill was an unlikely hero but helped the Cullitons win a Sutherland Cup.

from me."

Legendary broadcaster Bob Smith dubbed it "The Goal," and the name has stuck ever since and is embedded in Stratford hockey history.

"I remember trying to get down to the other end and having guys from Chatham swinging at me on the way because I was all by myself. That's '80s hockey right there. Everywhere I went, I had to get worried about getting clubbed by somebody."

Yantzi also coached Hill during his first season between the pipes in Stratford during the 1987-1988 campaign, one of two seasons he spent behind the bench.

Sauder played four seasons for the Cullitons from 2011-2015 and despite his five-foot-seven-inch, 150-pound frame, was feared as a penalty-killing forward and defensive juggernaut who created offense with lightning speed.

"I did not think I would be in the top 50, that's for sure. It's an honour, but I think there are better players, even (fellow Tavistock area native) Deven Kropf who could be on that list. He definitely had more points than I did."

Sauder played much of his career with his lifelong friends, Kropf and Mitch Brooks. He remembered how appreciative the Stratford crowd was not only of a great goal but also defensive play.

"That crowd would go nuts if you were able to kill a penalty or block a shot, so that was pretty special. That was my role and that's the only way I was able to make the team. I wasn't good enough my first three years to be on the first few lines."

Sauder said it isn't easy to pick out any one memory, but he said three big playoff wins come to mind for him.

"It's four years I will cherish forever. Unfortunately, they just go by so quickly but a lot of incredible memories and



(STRATFORD HOCKEY CLUB PHOTOS)

2013-14 – Trevor Sauder wowed Stratford fans with his penalty killing and checking, thanks to his electrifying speed.

incredible friendships."

Sauder has played the last few seasons with Kropf and Tristan Hohl on the Tavistock Royals and keeps in touch with some of his former teammates.

Another former Culliton, Boyd Devereaux from Seaforth, started his junior career with Stratford in the same role as Sauder, as a defensive specialist. He went on to suit up for the Canadian World Junior Team in 1997 where he scored game-winning goals in the semi-final and gold-medal games. He also played 627 NHL games and won a Stanley Cup with Detroit in 2002.

A total of five Stratford hockey minds created the list, which included criteria such as players who had a good or great year – or two or three – with Stratford and went on to solid careers at college or in the OHL, local players who played here at a high level and won an Ontario title, and others were selected based on a strong single season or one special moment.

There is one other Tavistock native who could have, arguably, made that list and that's Jeff Zehr, who led the Midwestern League in game-winning goals as a 16-year-old during the 1994-1995 season before moving on to the OHL and a professional career. Zehr was a first-round draft pick of the New York Islanders.

All three Tavistock men on the list remain area residents. Yantzi has owned and operated Pavestone Plus for decades, Hill owns H2O Paddlesport Inc. and Sauder teaches at an elementary school in Baden.

All three deserve to be on that list and were also very modest to receive the honour. Thank you, gentlemen, for the great hockey you provided fans during your time in Stratford. There was nothing like a Friday night at the Allman Arena in the good old days. Absolutely nothing.

Firebirds finally finish off stubborn Braves in memorable PJHL series

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

“If that wasn’t playoff hockey, I don’t know what is.”

That was a comment from one of the more than 1,000 fans leaving the Wilmot Recreation Centre Tuesday night after New Hamburg downed Tavistock in a thrilling seven-game series thanks to a 6-3 victory. Three games were decided in overtime and the March 4 win by the Firebirds was the only victory on home ice.

New Hamburg moves on to the Doherty Division semi-finals while Tavistock looks ahead to next season.

The Firebirds jumped out to a 2-0 lead by the five-minute mark of the second period on goals from Josh Soulliere and Matt Domm, but Tanner Hunt’s goal one minute later pulled the Braves to within one. New Hamburg would score the next three goals to put the game out of reach.

“I don’t believe I have,” said Firebirds head coach Shane Gerber after the game when asked if he had ever seen a series like this one. “Not for us anyways. I can’t even explain it, to be honest.”

Gerber and many others on and off the ice didn’t have an explanation as to why neither team could secure a win on home ice during the first six games of the series.

“I’m speechless,” he said. “I’m just hoping we broke the egg here and when we go forward, that’s not a problem. When you look at last year, I don’t think we lost at home until the first game against Lakeshore (in the PJHL semi-finals).”

Gerber had nothing but compliments for a Tavistock team that struggled mightily in the second half of the season on the way to a seventh-place finish.

“There is some disappointment there, but the way they played this series and how tough they made it for us to get through and the commitment they got out of their players – they got in the lanes, blocked shots, they did all the little things right which makes it tough for any team to win. The buy-in must have been high on that side.”

New Hamburg will now face Woodstock in one Doherty Division semi-final. Norwich and Wellesley square off in the other one. No dates had been released by press time.

New Hamburg captain Owen Fischer said the battle with Tavistock was fierce.

“They are a great team; they came together and really gave us a fight. It’s only going to make us better moving on in the playoffs. We learned some valuable lessons. I wouldn’t say we took them lightly, but they surprised us with how they came out in Game 1. They got off to a great start and we were clawing back the whole time which is not how you want a series to start.”

Fischer led the team with 11 points in the series followed by Owen Sculthorp with eight.

“Any playoff series takes an entire team

to win. It can’t just be one or two guys and that really came out last night. Everyone was a part of it and that’s what we need to have a long run.”

Antonio Pasqualino had five goals to lead in that department, something Fischer said was great to see.

“He’s had some injuries in the playoffs the last few years, so for him to be a huge contributing factor is awesome and I’m happy for him. He lives right next to me, we played together growing up and I couldn’t be happier for him.”

Nicholas Hambly led Tavistock with seven points in the series followed by Etan Sharpe and Carter Arsenault with six each. Braves general manager Brent Lange had nothing but positive words following the Game 7 loss.

“I can’t say enough of how proud I am of the players, coaches and organization. For all we went through all year long, all the hurdles, the injuries and so on. We



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Tuesday’s hardfought game between the Tavistock Braves and the New Hamburg Firebirds ended up with a 6-3 win for the Firebirds as they move on to the next series while the Braves go home. Pictured is the handshake between the New Hamburg Firebirds and the Tavistock Braves at the end of Tuesday’s game in New Hamburg as New Hamburg beat Tavistock 6-3 and won 4-3 in the best-of-seven series



MINOR SPORTS SCOREBOARD

Feb. 26 - U16 BB New Hamburg Huskies def. West Niagara Flying Aces 4-3

Holden Brown scored the overtime winner after Braden Joseph tied the game 61 seconds left in the third. Karter Bell and William Pyette also scored, while Kaleb Pfeiffer got the win in net, behind solid defensive play from Blake Kropf, Jack Kuntz, and Peyton Natywary. Xavier Kaspar and Ashton Nosal also had strong games.

Feb. 26 - U15 LL 2 New Hamburg Huskies def. Embro Edge 4-3

Aren McBeth scored twice while Julian Jones scored the game-winning goal with two seconds left in regulation. Cohen Kruger also scored for the Huskies. The two New Hamburg teams will now meet in a playoff championship series.

Feb. 26 - U13 LL Navy Wilmot Wolverines def. Woodstock Wildcats 3-1

Feb. 27 - U18 BB Wilmot Wolverines def. Owen Sound Ice Hawks 3-0

In the third game of a best-of-three playoff semi-final series, Lola Bradshaw backstopped Wilmot to a shutout. Tori Wagler buried the eventual game-winner, while Paige Campbell added an insurance marker and Haylie Brett scored an empty-netter. Tatum Gaudun Geis had a gutsy performance on defence.

Feb. 27 - U11 A New Hamburg Huskies def. St. Marys Rock 4-2

Feb. 27 - U12 A New Hamburg Huskies def. Strathroy Jr. Rockets 10-0

Jackson Barber recorded a hat-trick, while Elliott Parsons and Nolan Strauss each scored twice, and goaltender Chase Thomas earned the shutout. Cruz Moser-Lopes had five assists, Reid Margetts had four helpers, and Colton Bailey and Logan Koelher were plus-six.

Feb. 27 - U15 A New Hamburg Huskies def. Brampton 45's 2-1

Carter McPhee got the first goal assisted by Carlo Gerdali, before Logan Azzopardi fired the overtime winner with the lone assist going to McPhee. Goaltender Brayden Thomson was the team’s key performer in earning the victory.

Feb. 27 - U18 B New Hamburg Huskies def. Twin Centre Stars 4-2

Goaltender Joe Durrer turned in a great showing, while Reed Hoover, Dylan O’Connell, Jordan Snyder, and Hudson Waechter scored. Each player was credited for their “grit and determination.”

Feb. 28 - U15 B Wilmot Wolverines (Day) def. Ayr Rockets 1-0

Ryane Coombs picked up the shutout in between the pipes with an outstanding goaltending effort. Shae Beitz netted the only goal of the game.

Feb. 28 - U18 LL 4 New Hamburg Huskies def. Woolwich Wildcats 4-0

Mar. 1 - U11 LL 1 New Hamburg Huskies def. Hespeler Shamrocks 5-3

Desmond Thibideau led the offensive charge, scoring a pair of goals. Maverick Edge, Isiah Foster, and Scott Snyder also scored, while Keelan Lichty had a great game, tallying two assists. Kiril Kopan put forward a strong game in between the pipes.

Mar. 1 - U10 A New Hamburg Huskies def. Brant Battalion 5-3

Ethan Cossette scored twice and Oliver Kemp turned in a stellar effort in net. Chase Brown, Easton Tompkins, and Kayo Kimpinski also found the back of the net for New Hamburg.

Mar. 1 - U11 LL 3 New Hamburg Huskies def. Embro Edge 8-3

Strong team-wide defence was complemented by a four-goal game from Micah Puklicz. Parker Hall added a pair of goals, while Brody Thompson and Oliver Reinhart each scored once. Charlie Clemmer, Alex Gutscher, and Levi Stacey also had good efforts.

Mar. 1 - U13 LL 3 New Hamburg Huskies def. Plattsville Rage 5-4

Mar. 1 - U13 LL 2 New Hamburg Huskies def. Woolwich Wildcats 3-2

Mar. 1 - U13 BB Wilmot Wolverines def. Cambridge Roadrunners 2-0

Kay Beaver picked up the shutout in goal for a win that clinched the Wolverines’ spot at OWHA Provincials. Sam Lyon scored the eventual game-winning goal on a powerplay. Wilmot got an empty-net goal to seal the two-goal victory.

Mar. 1 - U15 B (Van Den Berge) Wilmot Wolverines def. Woolwich Wild 2-0

Kyla Kuntz and Lily Beavis each potted goals, with assists going to Charlotte Gaudun Geis and MacKenzie Hallman. In between the pipes, Alanna Pickett was perfect in securing the shutout victory.

Mar. 2 - U13 LL 4 New Hamburg Huskies def. Hespeler Shamrocks 3-1

Mar. 2 - U18 LL 1 New Hamburg Huskies def. Twin Centre Stars 2-0

Ryan Roden turned in a stunning performance in goal to backstop the Huskies to a shutout. Jackson Schwartzentuber scored off a sweet pass by Caleb Hunter, followed later by a great wrap-around goal by Maxim Coombs.

Continued on page 14

The Community Players of New Hamburg gearing up for spring production of Roald Dahl's *Matilda the Musical*

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

With roughly two months until it hits the stage at Trinity Theatre for local audiences May 8-11, rehearsals for The Community Players of New Hamburg's spring production of *Matilda the Musical* are already well underway.

Matilda the Musical is a musical with music and lyrics by Tim Minchin and book by Dennis Kelly. It is based on the 1988 novel, *Matilda*, by British author Roald Dahl and the musical's narrative centres on Matilda Wormwood, a precocious five-year-old girl with the gift of telekinesis who loves reading. Throughout the story, she overcomes obstacles caused by her family and school, and helps her teacher to reclaim her life.

"When *Matilda* came up, I kind of went to (our artistic director) and said, 'I really want to try directing. I've never done it before; I think this would be an amazing show because I love working with kids and there's a lot of them,'" said Hannah Davidson, the production's director.

Of the cast's 40 members, about half of them are kids, posing both an opportunity and a fun challenge for the production team as they work through the music, choreography and stage directions for the musical.

"Half of our cast is children, which makes it super entertaining, high energy and all that, which is the kind of stuff I like



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

The Community Players of New Hamburg head choreographer Kalene Ticknor-Malton works with Arlo Robinson, who plays Nigel, on the opening musical number in the community theatre group's upcoming production of *Matilda the Musical* during a rehearsal at the New Hamburg Community Centre March 2.

to work with," Davidson said. "... Energy is good and it's also great the other half are adults. You need the balance. For a lot of these kids, it's their first show they've ever done. It's been great because they're great at listening, they're super eager, which is always lovely, so when some of us are getting tired and need that break, they don't. They say, 'No, let's keep going,' and, 'Did I do this right?'"

"They're so excited and they're so happy and that just brings a really great energy

to the room and everyone's able to feed off it."

Davidson first got involved with The Community Players as an actor in last year's production of *Anne of Green Gables*. While she's worked behind the scenes with lighting, costumes and props in high school, she's never taken up the mantle of the director's chair before.

Davidson said her team's penchant for

creativity and willingness to try new things when it comes to props, the use of dummies for practical stunts, onstage magic tricks and costumes, as well as using the adult cast members in more scenes than they would be in otherwise by creating "families" for some of the children characters, is making this production one-of-a-kind, even for those who may have seen this musical previously.

"Community Players is super supportive of trying new things out," Davidson said. "I'm the head director, we have a lead choreographer, but then under both of us, we also have our assistant director and assistant choreographer who are part of a mentorship program to learn what does it take to put all of this stuff together. It's been really amazing because we've been able to allow them to try things on their own. My assistant director took on staging a few scenes while I was on vacation and he's talking to our lighting tech on what he wants for lights and that, and our assistant choreographer is taking on some of the numbers and choreographing them by herself."

Tickets for *Matilda the Musical* are expected to go on sale on March 22. Visit thecommunityplayers.com for more information on this production and to find out how to purchase tickets once they become available.

Continued from page 13

instilled in the kids' heads right away to forget about the first 42 games. The playoffs were a new season and it was time to flick the switch. They sure did that."

He added the team was one bounce away from moving on to the second round.

"Taking the second-seeded team to Game 7 with three of those games being overtime is something for our players and organization to be proud of. They fought until the end."

Lange also made a point to thank the Tavistock community for its support during the seven-game series.

"Wow. The support in the playoffs was truly amazing. A small town can come together for the great game of hockey. The support for each game was truly amazing. Thank you so much to all who came

out to support us. We tried to put on a show and get it done for you."

Lange also expressed gratitude to team sponsors and executive members.

"They make this team go. Without them and the support for our great club, we wouldn't be here."

The Braves are losing just three players to age – Will Schlotzhauer, Trent Davies and Lander Hartley. Lange said he's already excited for 2025-2026 and the team he'll be putting on the ice.

"We have a great list of players returning as well as a number of prospects and possibilities for next season. I'm going to take a week or so to reflect and relax here and let the heart get back to a normal rhythm."

There isn't much time for Lange and the coaching staff to rest as the team's mini camp is scheduled for May 9, 10 and 11.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

The New Hamburg Arena was packed to the rafters on Tuesday night for the game between the Firebirds and the Braves.

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MARCH 2025

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of the passing of Development Charge By-Law

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the County of Oxford passed by-law No. 6709-2025, which amends certain sections of development charge by-law No. 6639-2024, on the 26th day of February, 2025, under section 2 (1) of the Development Charges Act, 1997, S.O., 1997 c. 27, as amended;

AND TAKE NOTICE that any person or organization may appeal to the Local Planning Tribunal under section 14 of the Act, in respect of the development charge by-law amendment, by filing with the Clerk on or before the 7th of April, 2025, a notice of appeal setting out the objection to the by-law and the reasons supporting the objection.

The charges in the aforementioned by-law will apply to all new residential and non-residential development, subject to certain terms, conditions and limited exemptions as identified therein.

County-wide development charges are levied against new development to pay for the increased capital costs related to the provision of such municipal services as library, ambulance services, growth-related studies, waste diversion and services related to a highway. Schedule 1 sets out the development charge rates applicable throughout the County.

Area-specific development charges related to the provision of water and wastewater servicing apply to the specified areas of Woodstock, Tillsonburg, Ingersoll, Plattsville, Drumbo, Tavistock, Innerkip, Norwich, Thamesford, Embro and Mt. Elgin. All area-specific charges are in Schedule 2.

Key maps are not set out in this notice as the details and scale of such maps would be difficult to reproduce in an accurate and legible form. Map schedules for each applicable service area are attached to the by-law on the County’s website.

The development charges imposed under the by-law, which came into effect on February 26, 2025, are calculated and payable on the date of building permit issuance.

Copies of the complete development charge by-laws are available for examination during regular business hours (weekdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) in the offices of the County located at 21 Reeve Street, Woodstock, and on the website at www.oxfordcounty.ca.

For further information, please contact the Clerk’s Office at 519-539-0015, ext. 3017.

Lindsey Mansbridge, Clerk, Oxford County
clerksoffice@oxfordcounty.ca
21 Reeve Street, PO Box 1614
Woodstock, ON N4S 7Y3

Schedule 1 – County-wide Development Charge Rates

Service Component	RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS ¹				NON-RESIDENTIAL		
	Single Detached & Semi Detached	APARTMENTS		Other Multiples	\$ /sq m of Gross Floor Area	Per bed for Farm Bunk Houses	Per Wind Turbine
		2-Bedroom & Larger	Bachelor & 1-Bedroom				
Services related to a highway	4,528	2,579	1,637	3,206	16.39	1,451	4,528
Waste diversion	139	79	50	98	-	-	-
Ambulance services	160	91	58	113	0.58	51	160
Growth-related studies	137	78	50	97	0.42	44	137
Library Service ¹	1,556	886	563	1,102	0.86	499	-
Total	\$6,520	\$3,713	\$2,358	\$4,616	\$18.25	\$2,045	\$4,825

¹ The charge for library is not applicable in Woodstock

Schedule 2 – Area-Specific Development Charge Rates

Area	Service	RESIDENTIAL DWELLINGS ¹				NON-RESIDENTIAL	
		Single Detached & Semi Detached	APARTMENTS		Other Multiples	\$ /sq m of Floor Area	Per bed for Farm Bunk Houses
			2-Bedroom & Larger	Bachelor & 1-Bedroom			
Woodstock	Water	\$3,348	\$1,737	\$1,103	\$2,200	\$17.96	\$1,073
	Wastewater	\$5,522	\$2,866	\$1,820	\$3,628	\$30.05	\$1,770
Tillsonburg	Water	\$5,028	\$3,210	\$2,039	\$4,008	\$33.35	\$1,612
	Wastewater	\$1,199	\$766	\$486	\$956	\$6.81	\$384
Ingersoll	Water	\$5,531	\$3,319	\$2,107	\$4,143	\$12.90	\$1,773
	Wastewater	\$10,259	\$6,155	\$3,909	\$7,684	\$36.43	\$3,288
Plattsville	Water	\$5,139	\$2,843	\$1,806	\$3,549	\$24.63	\$1,647
	Wastewater	\$6,771	\$3,746	\$2,379	\$4,677	\$10.82	\$2,170
Drumbo	Water	\$2,390	\$1,323	\$840	\$1,651	\$4.94	\$766
	Wastewater	\$31,003	\$17,153	\$10,893	\$21,414	\$97.87	\$9,937
Tavistock	Water	\$7,325	\$4,181	\$2,655	\$5,219	\$26.27	\$2,348
	Wastewater	\$33,029	\$18,851	\$11,971	\$23,534	\$95.40	\$10,586
Innerkip	Water	\$156	\$89	\$56	\$111	\$0.98	\$50
	Wastewater	\$16,198	\$9,245	\$5,871	\$11,542	\$63.41	\$5,192
Norwich	Water	\$3,926	\$2,165	\$1,375	\$2,703	\$11.82	\$1,258
	Wastewater	\$6,060	\$3,343	\$2,123	\$4,173	\$37.98	\$1,942
Thamesford	Water	\$1,507	\$889	\$564	\$1,110	\$9.65	\$483
	Wastewater	\$9,156	\$5,399	\$3,429	\$6,740	\$26.64	\$2,935
Embro	Water	\$2,706	\$1,596	\$1,013	\$1,992	\$6.70	\$867
	Wastewater	\$7,860	\$4,634	\$2,943	\$5,786	\$8.84	\$2,519
Mount Elgin	Water	\$3,398	\$1,619	\$1,028	\$2,021	\$6.98	\$1,089
	Wastewater	\$11,736	\$5,592	\$3,551	\$6,982	\$26.78	\$3,762

¹ For exemptions that may apply, check applicable by-laws



W-S Feed Mill invests in upgrades, reinforces commitment to Tavistock

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

It was a busy day at W-S Feed Mill in Tavistock on Monday as workers from Pro-Active Millwrights, based in Arthur, replaced aging equipment that has processed hundreds of tonnes of feed for the local farming community over the years.

A large crane from Stratford Crane Service, operating north of Stratford, has been onsite since last fall as part of a major equipment upgrade. After months of work, the final stages of the installation were underway, with crews putting the finishing touches on a new, state-of-the-art computerized elevation and feed system.

The mill operates 24 hours a day, five and a half days a week, receiving and blending feed products such as corn, barley, soybean meal, canola meal, wheat shorts, salt, limestone and cal-phos, among others.

Decades of service to Ontario farmers

Paul Wideman, principal owner and general manager of W-S Feed Mill – where the “W” in the company name represents his surname – said the company has been in the feed business since 1967, serving farmers across southwestern and central Ontario.

The Tavistock head office supplies feed for various types of farms, including dairy, beef, poultry, pork, horse and sheep operations, as well as small-scale farms. The company also operates a smaller mill in



(GARY WEST PHOTO)
A large crane installs new elevation equipment at the busy W-S Feed Mill in Tavistock. The mill's new computerized system, which became operational this week, will significantly speed up unloading times, reducing truck wait times.

Mount Forest dedicated solely to organic feed production.

Wideman said the mill's new elevator system, installed to meet growing demand, will be four times faster than the previous one. By the end of the workday Wednesday, the new system was expected to be fully operational, reducing truck wait

times for deliveries and pickups.

Increased efficiency and biosecurity

“Residents should see fewer trucks waiting on the street to unload, thanks to the improved efficiency,” Wideman said.

The new system is also designed to

enhance biosecurity and traceability, ensuring that farmers receive precisely what they ordered.

Employing 30 full-time workers in Tavistock, plus seasonal students in the summer, W-S Feed Mill remains one of the town's largest employers. The Maria Street mill has been a community fixture for over a century, and Wideman emphasized that the company is committed to staying in Tavistock for the long haul.

“We have zero employee turnover,” he said. “Many of our staff have been with us for over 30 years, and one for more than 40 years.”

Impact of U.S. tariffs on the industry

When asked about the recent Trump tariffs affecting the agricultural sector, Wideman said his company would see minimal direct impact. However, he acknowledged that prices for key feed ingredients like corn and soybean meal could fluctuate significantly, affecting farmers.

“It's a wait-and-see period for sure,” he said.

Wideman also extended his appreciation to the community.

“I want to thank our neighbours for working with us over the years as we strive to minimize disruptions for those living in and around Tavistock.”



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Statement by the Prime Minister on unjustified U.S. tariffs against Canada

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued the following statement on March 3 regarding unjustified U.S. tariffs against Canada. We are reprinting this statement in your community newspaper due to the issue's importance to all Canadian citizens and secondly to document these developments within the historical record of this publication.

"Today, after a 30-day pause, the United States administration has decided to proceed with imposing 25 per-cent tariffs on Canadian exports and 10 per-cent tariffs on Canadian energy. Let me be unequivocally clear – there is no justification for these actions.

"While less than 1 per cent of the fentanyl intercepted at the U.S. border comes from Canada, we have worked relentlessly to address this scourge that affects Canadians and Americans alike. We implemented a \$1.3-billion border plan with new choppers, boots on the ground, more coordination and increased resources to stop the flow of fentanyl. We appointed a fentanyl czar, listed transnational criminal cartels as terrorist organizations, launched the Joint Operational Intelligence Cell and are establishing a Canada-U.S. Joint Strike Force on organized crime. Because of this work – in partnership with the United States – fentanyl seizures from

Canada have dropped 97 per cent between December 2024 and January 2025 to a near-zero low of 0.03 pounds seized by U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

"Canada will not let this unjustified decision go unanswered. Should American tariffs come into effect tonight, Canada will, effective 12:01 a.m. EST tomorrow, respond with 25 per-cent tariffs against \$155 billion of American goods – starting with tariffs on \$30 billion worth of goods immediately, and tariffs on the remaining \$125 billion on American products in 21 days' time. Our tariffs will remain in place until the U.S. trade action is withdrawn, and should U.S. tariffs not cease, we are

in active and ongoing discussions with provinces and territories to pursue several non-tariff measures. While we urge the U.S. administration to reconsider their tariffs, Canada remains firm in standing up for our economy, our jobs, our workers and for a fair deal.

"Because of the tariffs imposed by the U.S., Americans will pay more for groceries, gas and cars, and potentially lose thousands of jobs. Tariffs will disrupt an incredibly successful trading relationship. They will violate the very trade agreement that was negotiated by President Trump in his last term."

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Updates from the Optimist Club of New Dundee

OPTIMIST CLUB OF NEW DUNDEE

Gazette Contributor

The following are news items submitted to the gazette by the Optimist Club of New Dundee about the club's recent and upcoming events and initiatives.

New Dundee Optimist youth appreciation

On Feb. 26, the Optimist Club of New Dundee was pleased to once again hold their annual Youth Appreciation Banquet at the community centre. Recipients and their families, presenters, guests and optimist members totaling 55 attended the event.

Optimist Danielle Baker welcomed everyone. Optimist Lynn Perrin gave the land acknowledgement followed by a giving of thanks before the meal.

Toby and Meagan from The Village Caterer prepared and served up a wonderful meal of roast beef, chicken schnitzel, mashed potatoes, gravy, caesar salad, creamy cauliflower and broccoli salad, rolls and butter and a selection of desserts.

Optimist Don Poth began the formal part of the evening by presenting the Adult Volunteer "Hero" Award to Gord Perrin. Please see article below, written by Don for a more in-depth look at Gord Perrin's contributions to the town of New Dundee.

Optimist Danielle chaired the Youth Appreciation Awards portion of the program. She gave a brief summery on how the youth are chosen for this award.

The following are the groups who nominated youth for the Optimist Youth Appreciation Award, the recipients of the award and the representative from each group who read the nomination letters:

- New Dundee Beautification

Committee: Ryan Rowland and Ethan Martin Root; presented by Charlotte Cudney and Optimist Don Poth

- New Dundee Public School: Edwin Kokkelink and Gabby Hallman; presented by Scott McKenzie
- Sir Adam Beck Public School: Stan Tilt and Clara Russell; presented by Lisa Dal Bello
- Waterloo Oxford DSS: Matthew Tsetsekas and Téa Rogers; presented Jesse Buchenauer and principal Dave Linnerth.

All of the youth being honoured were presented with a commemorative plaque and a framed copy of the nomination letter by the presenter, assisted by youth appreciation co-chair Optimist Danielle Baker.

The 2024 scholarship recipient, Emily Dopko, was recognized by Optimist Lynn. Each year the Optimist Club of New Dundee awards a \$1,500 scholarship to a local youth for post secondary education. The application form and rules are available on the New Dundee Optimist website. The scholarship is awarded in the spring and a cheque is presented at the recipient's commencement. Lynn also thanked Optimists Danielle and Lynn Langford Berry for all of their help in co-chairing the youth appreciation event with her.

President Chad Eidt thanked everyone for coming and concluded the meeting by leading everyone in the reciting of the Optimist Creed.

Optimist Club of New Dundee Adult Volunteer "Hero" Award

As presented by Optimist Don Poth

Gord Perrin joined the New

Dundee Optimist Club in 1984. Since then, he has been on the board of directors for most of the 40 years. He has been the president of our club twice. One of his first big projects was when he co-chaired a very successful Mother's Day Brunch at the old community centre across from the school. He involved scouts and other volunteers. The Mother's Day Brunch has been an annual fundraiser ever since.

Over the years, he has assisted with selling tickets on various car and truck lotteries to finance our community centre, our Doug Fischer Memorial Ball Diamonds and our Optimist Park. He traveled all over southern Ontario selling these tickets.

In 1989, he became the president and, with help from other members, formed the Optimist Club of Wilmot which earned him the Optimist Distinguished President status. He was given an Optimist Life Membership by the club. He took on the roll of president again in 2004.

During his year as president, he also assisted with the idea of recognizing an adult hero as well as our youth.

In 1990, he became Optimist lieutenant governor of our zone and achieved the status of distinguished Lieutenant governor.

He joined the Victoria Day committee years ago and later became the chair, a position he held for many years.

Over the past 40 years, he has been Mother's Day Brunch chair multiple times, served as president twice, lieutenant governor twice and has served many times as a director. He has organized the help for many of our successful bottle drives, getting volunteers to help, making an appointment to drop off the bottles and getting



(OPTIMIST CLUB OF NEW DUNDEE PHOTOS)

Optimist Don Poth presents Optimist Gord Perrin with the 2025 Adult Volunteer "Hero" Award.

a truck and trailer to transport the bottles to Tavistock. Over the years, he has filled many Opti Poop bags. He has also ordered, picked up and sold summer sausage to residents in the community for many years.

Gord has a unique response whenever he is asked to assist in Optimist or community events. For example, this year I called him and asked if he could help take down our Santa and Christmas decorations on a very cold day. His answer was and is always yes. His other responses in other areas when asked include, "Let's do it" and "I will chair!"

Over the years, Gord Perrin has made New Dundee a better community. He has a pleasant, enthusiastic attitude. Even last Monday, there was Gord Perrin helping with the Family Day Spaghetti Supper. One of the first ones there and one of the last ones to leave.

For the last 40 years, Gord Perrin has dedicated his time and energy to promoting Optimism in our community and beyond. He is well deserving of the honour of the Optimist Club of New Dundee 2025 Adult Hero.

Golden Ladle Soup Supper for Nutrition for Kids

All are welcome, so come one, come all to a soup dinner being hosted by St. James Lutheran Church New Dundee on Wednesday March 12 from 5-7 p.m. There will be several different soups to sample. Those attending will be asked to vote for their favorite soup with the best and most deserving earning the "Golden Ladle" distinction. There is no cost for the meal but the following donations for

Nutrition for Kids will be gladly accepted: cash, individual apple sauces, yogurt tubes, cheese strings or melba toast. Thank you to the members of St. James for once again hosting this fun evening of great food and wonderful fellowship for the community.

New Dundee Board of Trade Annual Pancake Breakfast

Everyone is invited to join the New Dundee Board of Trade for their annual All You Can Eat Pancake Breakfast on Sunday March 16 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the community centre. Enjoy some wonderful food and great fellowship with family, friends and neighbours. Menu includes A+ pancakes, farmer's Sausage, scrambled eggs, apple sauce, real maple syrup and beverages. Cost is \$15 for adults, \$7 for children age five to 12 and pre-school-aged kids are free. Proceeds go to New Dundee community improvement projects. For more information visit www.new-dundee.ca or call John Scott at 519-696-2832.

Craft and Gift Show

The Optimist Club of Wilmot will be hosting its annual Jump-Into-Spring Craft and Gift Sale on Saturday March 15 upstairs at the Wilmot Rec Centre from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Several local artisans will have their creations on display and for sale. Optimist members will be supplying homemade treats for the bake table. Home made soups and sandwiches will also be available to purchase for lunch. There is no cost for admission. Money raised from table rentals, sale of baked goods and lunch items will be used for future youth and community projects.



Optimist Youth Appreciation and Adult Hero Award recipients are, in the back row from left to right, Gord Perrin (Adult Volunteer Hero), Matthew Tsetsekas and Téa Rogers (Waterloo Oxford DSS), Ryan Rowland and Ethan Martin-Root (New Dundee Beautification Committee). In the front row from left to right are Gabby Hallman (New Dundee Public School), Stan Tilt (Sir Adam Beck Public School), Edwin Kokkelink (New Dundee Public School), Clara Russell (Sir Adam Beck Public School).

Tavistock Optimist Club Supports Coldest Night of the Year for Oxford County's Operation Sharing



(MEGAN YANTZI PHOTOS)

Optimist walkers gather before the two-kilometre Coldest Night of the Year walk in Tavistock. From left, Ryan Yantzi, holding Adley Yantzi, with their bundled-up dog, Gryff; Marie and Scott Strickland; Aileen and Richard Skimson with their golden retriever, Gordie; Ken Meadows; and Megan Yantzi, smiling in the forefront.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Members of Tavistock's Optimist Club braved the cold to support the Coldest Night of the Year (CNOY) walk, raising funds for Oxford County's Operation Sharing, a charity helping those experiencing homelessness, hunger and hardship.

The local Optimist team raised \$3,056.25, with donations still coming in as the story goes to press. The funds will help provide support and services to vulnerable residents in Oxford County.

"We couldn't have done it without the

support of our great Optimist membership and the community we live in," said Optimist Ryan Yantzi in a statement.

Members, along with their families and even their pets, stepped out of their warm homes to complete a two-kilometre walk around Tavistock, shining a light of compassion and solidarity.

Those interested in viewing the results can visit cnoy.org and search for the Optimist Club of Tavistock under Coldest Night of the Year. Donations are still being accepted until March 31, and the club expressed gratitude for the community's ongoing support.

Perth East snow-plow operator clears the way

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Winter's heavy snowfall has kept highway, township and city plows working overtime across Perth County, and Perth East operator Corbin Van Straaten is no exception.

The 21-year-old, who spends the warmer months farming with his family south of Wartburg, has been logging long hours this season, ensuring village residents can safely navigate local sidewalks.

"I love my job because I know it keeps people safe," Van Straaten said. "Before, residents had to clear their own sidewalks. Now, we make sure they're taken care of."

Operating a trackless snowblower equipped with a plow attachment when needed, Van Straaten clears sidewalks in Milverton, Shakespeare, Sebastopol, Sebringville, Rostock, Brunner and Newton.

Working for Perth East has been a rewarding experience for him and he hopes to continue serving the community for years to come.

"It's a great job and I'd love to keep working for the county in one way or another," he said.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Perth East operator Corbin Van Straaten clears sidewalks in Shakespeare last week using a trackless snowblower, ensuring safe pathways for residents.

Gazette Puzzles

FEBRUARY NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

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

Canada Wins
Donald Trump
Elon Musk
Family Day
Ford Majority

Four Nations Cup
Friedrich Merz
Groundhog Day
Liberal Leader
Ontario Election

Philadelphia Eagles
Planet Parade
Super Bowl
Tariff Threats
Volodymyr Zelensky

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Pet of the Week

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Meet Hugo, a big-hearted, playful pup who's been waiting over 75 days for his perfect match! At just one year old, this 58-pound bundle of energy loves people and thrives on companionship. Hugo is working on his separation anxiety and needs a patient adopter ready to support his training journey. He enjoys outdoor adventures, puzzles, and playing with other high-energy dogs. His ideal home is active, with older kids and no shared walls. With the right guidance, Hugo will be a loyal, loving companion ready to take on life by your side. Could Hugo be your perfect match? Apply for Hugo today at kwsphumane.ca.



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Pile on the parsley

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



The magic of March is in the air. Before too long, the snow will begin to melt away as gads of gorgeous, green springtime sprigs seek the sunshine. Home gardeners are eagerly awaiting the thaw in aspiration of planting the perfect backyard produce patch. Herbs are holistically helpful, supporting the body inside and out. Rosemary, thyme and basil are summertime essentials but this holistic nutritionist loves parsley.

Parsley or garden parsley, also known as curly along with flat leaf, are a species of the flowering plant native to Greece, Morocco and the former Yugoslavia. Slowly, the herb has made its way from England around 1548 to North America.

Parsley is a breeze to grow indoors on the window sill and in the great Canadian outdoors. Whether you plant seeds or repot

seedlings in a bougie clay patio pot, or let it go wild alongside the house, parsley is perfection.

Parsley is widely used across the world in cuisine, favoured for its fantastic flavour, vibrant colour and neutralizing odours in garlic dishes. This herb is often passed over but 100 per cent spotlight worthy. Parsley is way more than a plate decoration and breath-boosting buddy. Just two tablespoons of chopped fresh parsley contains a mere two calories. It's a keeper for anyone watching their waistline but also looking to add nutrient-dense greens to meal planning.

Parsley contains crazy K, a whopping 154 per cent of the recommended daily allowance. Vitamin K supports heart and bone health. It's absolutely essential for proper blood clotting. Astounding A is a part of the A-C-E trio of

key immune-supporting vitamins, as well as being an exceptional eyesight helper. Vitamin C is your link to combatting a cold while fighting free radicals throughout the body. Stress, whether chronic or acute, releases cortisol, causing inflammation and the precursor to disease. Do we need another reason to pile on the parsley?

The array of available antioxidants is abundant, suggesting parsley may reduce blood sugar. One study on rats with Type 1 diabetes found that rats given parsley extracts showed improvements in pancreatic function. More studies are needed but no need to wait for the results. Did I mention parsley contains the nutrients magnesium, potassium, folate, iron and calcium?

Parsley is a natural diuretic, blood cleaner and also helps remove heavy metals from the body.

With all the health-related reasons to plant parsley or peruse the produce aisle, here's my top picks for adding pizzazz to your menu planning. Go for the garnish! Mexican dishes are an easy way to please the palate of plant-based or meat lovers. Choose chimichurri, a rich herby sauce served with backyard barbecued favorites but also a rad



(VECTEEZY PHOTO)

Parsley perfection! This vibrant green herb is more than just a garnish—it's a nutrient-packed powerhouse ready to elevate your meals and your health.

rice and bean topping for vegans. Middle Eastern cuisine serves up tabbouleh, a side dish comprised of bulgur, various raw vegetables, spices and a squeeze of fresh lemon. Flat-leaf parsley is the superstar in pasta aglio e olio and gremolata, a classic Italian sauce, I love serving on cod. Falafels are first rate but chickpea flour with parsley is a welcome flavour booster.

Parsley can be chopped into salads, add green to chopped egg or tuna for a sensational sandwich filling or used in any marinade.

Superstock the typical green apple, beet, ginger and celery smoothie with parsley! There's no shortage of ways to add nutrients to simple family favourites. Try blending the herb into soups and stocks to hide from finicky eaters.

Healthy is always in season. I'm looking forward to sharing soon-to-be springtime, homegrown, garden-fresh, farm-to-table foods!

Just an FYI, my healthy followers; parsley can be frozen for months for fresh-garden goodness.

Wellesley junior ambassador visits local dairy farm

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Wellesley Fall Fair's junior ambassador, Manni Hayer, recently took time to visit a local dairy farm, learning more about the region's farming community while introducing herself to area farm families.

Hayer, accompanied by fair board member Joanne Stewart, participated in the Waterloo County Holstein Car Tour. Despite uncooperative weather, they were able to visit Riverline Farm, owned by Rick and Erin Koch and their family,

located on Carmel-Koch Road.

Hayer learned that the Koch family has been farming for six generations and built a new dairy barn in 2018. Today, they milk 60 Holsteins in a double-10 swing milking parlour.

Due to severe weather conditions, Riverline Farm was the only stop they were able to make out of six planned farm visits. However, organizers hope the ambassadors will have a chance to tour Mountainoak Cheese, south of New Hamburg, later this year, along with visiting some of the missed farms



Erin Koch, Junior Fair Ambassador Manni Hayer and Rick Koch stand together at Riverline Farm, where Hayer gained insight into the family's dairy operation.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Wellesley Junior Fair Ambassador Manni Hayer admires the purebred Holstein herd in the free-stall barn at Riverline Farm, owned by Rick and Erin Koch near Wellesley.

Finding all the answers about Alexander Graham Bell ... except one

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



Frankly, it's a conundrum and we can't exactly call the guy up on the phone to ask for clarification, even though he did invent the darned thing because Alexander Graham Bell has been gone for just over a century – he died in 1922.

The question is, “Where did Bell invent the telephone?” The folks at the Bell Homestead National Historic Site at 94 Tutela Heights Rd., Brantford, Ont., say they know the answer.

“The Brantford home (is) where Alexander Graham Bell invented the telephone on July 26, 1874.”

Perhaps this is so. One online source reads, “Bell himself said that the telephone was invented in Canada but made in the United States.”

Other sources insist the telephone was invented in the United States. There is no argument that the telephonic communication of the human voice occurred in Boston, on March 10, 1876, when Bell's voice was carried over a telephone wire to his assistant, Thomas Watson.

“Mr. Watson, come here. I want to see you.”

And the world has been a busier and noisier place ever since.

When I visited Baddeck, N.S., I learned a great deal about Mr. Bell, his life and his inventions. And while I did not definitively discover where the concept of the telephone was first envisioned – though, as a Canadian I'm happy to stick to the Brantford story – I was surprised by a lot of what I learned there.

Baddeck is home to the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site. It's in Baddeck because Bell and his wife, Mabel, built a summer home in Baddeck following a visit to the seaside town in 1885. The house – which is not part of the museum – was named Beinn Bhreagh, a nod to Bell's Scottish heritage.

It was there, I learned the surprising fact that Bell lived in Brantford for only one year, arriving there in 1870 as a 23-year-old with his parents and leaving for a teaching position at the Boston School for the Deaf just a year later. So, if he invented the tele-

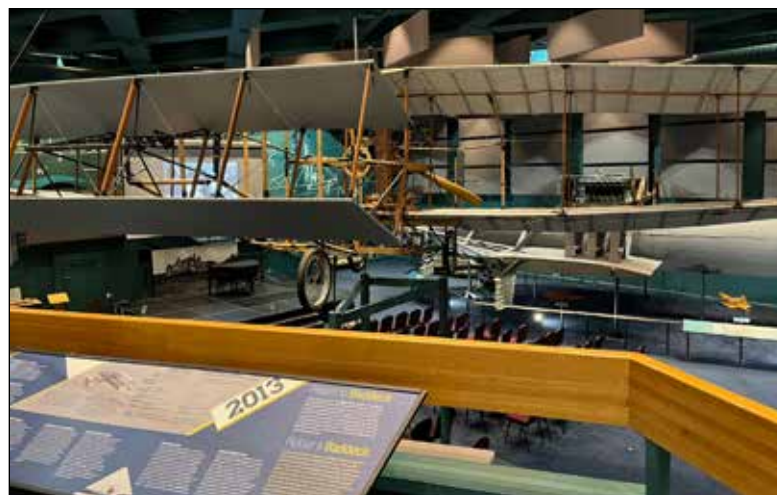
phone in Brantford, the self-proclaimed “Telephone City,” he did it while on a visit back home.

The Baddeck museum is a rich treasure trove of information about the famed inventor who, incidentally, was never a Canadian citizen. He was born a Scot and became an American citizen after his move to Boston, but both Alec and Mabel are buried in Baddeck.

Visitors to Baddeck can walk through the high points of Bell's life, both by following an information-panel pathway that answers virtually every question you might have and by visiting the various exhibition spaces filled with Bell's inventions, telephones through the ages and more of his remarkable creations, including flying machines.

During our visit, a highlight was watching a patient mom trying to explain a dial phone to her young daughter, who was struggling mightily to understand how this clunky, black-corded device related to her sleek smartphone.

The details of Bell's life are every bit as fascinating as his inventions. His parents came to Canada in an effort to save Alec's life. Two of his brothers died of tuberculosis in Scotland and, when Alec also became ill, his family fled to what was seen as the healthier climate of southern Ontario. It worked and Bell was able to resume his exploration of the world of sound. His fascination with sound is what led him to become a teacher of deaf children and eventually to assume a position as professor of vocal physiology and elocution at Boston



The Silver Dart, the airplane that made history in Baddeck.

University.

And his commitment to improving the lives of deaf people improved his personal life – he married one of his pupils, Mabel Hubbard – and the lives of countless others, including Helen Keller. In 1887, Bell was asked for advice by Keller's parents and he introduced her to Annie Sullivan, who helped Keller surmount the challenges of being born both deaf and blind. Keller dedicated her autobiography to Bell.

But Bell's interests reached far beyond the classroom. He was a co-founder of the National Geographic Society. He was constantly inventing and the Baddeck National Historic Site is filled with devices he created, some of great historical significance, some bordering on the whimsical.

Among the most important, one such invention arose from his interest in flight, and his collaborations with others of the same ilk. Bell had founded a group called the Aerial Experiment Association (AEA) in 1907, four years after the Wright Brothers had made their first flight in Kitty Hawk, N.C. Bell had been experimenting with flight – at first, tetrahedral kites – since 1898, and subsequently joined with AEA colleagues like designer J.A.D. McCurdy to build the Silver Dart, the airplane that made the first powered flight in Canada at Baddeck in February, 1909. The Silver Dart is on display at the Baddeck museum.

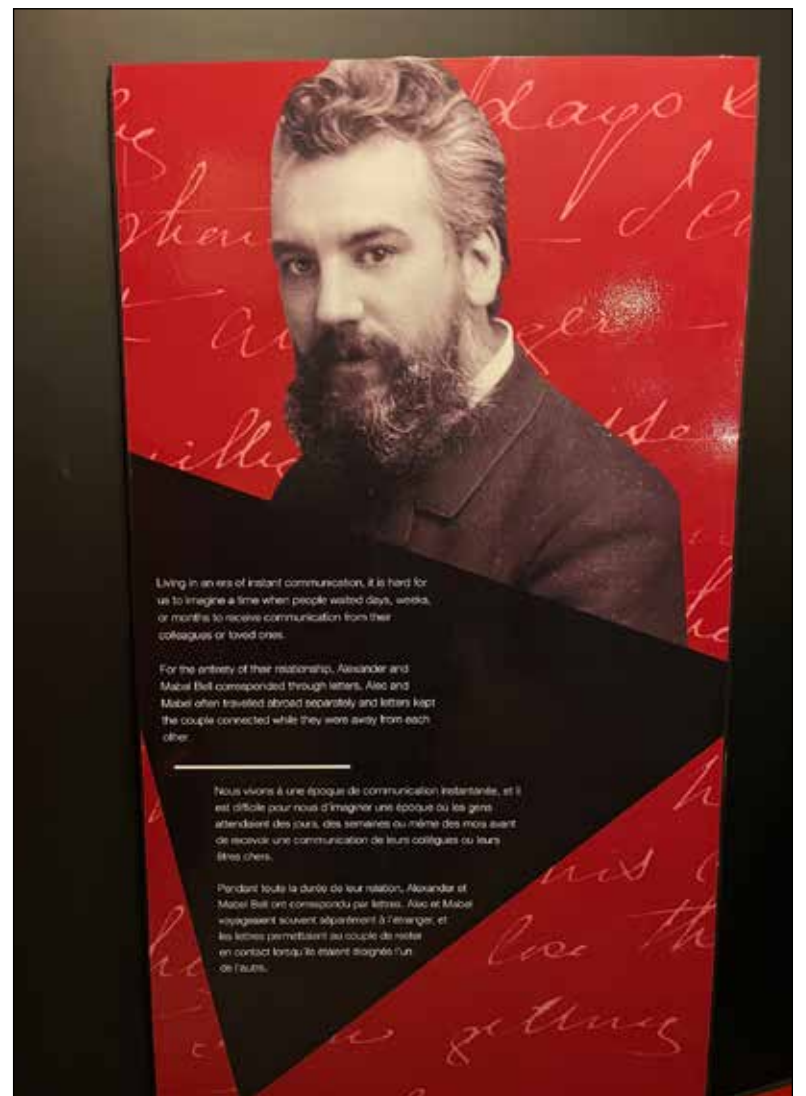
The precise, geographic origins of the telephone may still be slightly clouded in mystery, but for answers to everything else concerning Alexander Graham Bell, you'll want to call on the fascinating Bell museum in Baddeck.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site in Baddeck, N.S.



The inventor, Alexander Graham Bell, himself.



Bell's Baddeck office, as recreated at the National Historic Site.

King Charles III Coronation Medals handed out in Oxford

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Chee Peng Tan and OPP Const. Randi Crawford couldn't have chosen more different career paths but they, along with 28 other Oxford County residents, were awarded King Charles III Coronation Medals Tuesday night.

The medal program was created to mark the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. It recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to a particular province, territory, region, or community in Canada or attained an outstanding achievement abroad that brings credit to our country.

Those recognized came from all walks of life, including first responders, military veterans, volunteers and business owners. Each recipient had a brief biography read aloud, including Tan, who is the owner of Tavistock Gas and Variety.

"Chee Peng Tan is a dedicated small-business owner and community supporter in Tavistock, actively involved in local initiatives and young adult scholarships through organizations like the fair board, chamber of commerce and Rotary Club," the biography says.

"I am definitely honoured and lucky for being nominated and



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTOS)

Oxford OPP Const. Randi Crawford, left, and Tavistock Gas and Variety owner Chee Peng Tan were two of the 30 recipients of King Charles III Coronation Medals at a ceremony in Woodstock March 4.

awarded this award," said Tan. "Many other community volunteers are also deserving. By nature, we all want to live in a community that is cared for, friendly and respectful. Tavistock provided such an opportunity for us to contribute easily and make it happen, and we are thankful."

Tan added he and his family are committed to enhancing young lives through learning.

"Education is a tool that enables the learning of life skills, thus providing citizens with better life for themselves and the community. We were helped in the past during our education journey and will gladly contribute in any way that will enhance the education opportunities for future generations."

Crawford, the Oxford OPP's

community safety and media relations officer, was chosen for her dedication to making the county a better place to live.

"Police Const. Randi Crawford has dedicated more than a decade to the Ontario Provincial Police, combining front-line service, community engagement and public safety to foster trust, strengthen connections and make a lasting, positive impact in Oxford County," reads Crawford's biography.

She said receiving the award was humbling and gratifying and she was quick to share it with others.

"This means the world to me; I can't even find the words to describe how grateful I am. It's a sign I am going in the right direction. My commitment to the community is making people feel safe and

special, happy and healthy. I share this award with everybody I represent – my peers, the volunteers, my family and friends who support me so I can go out and do these wonderful things in the community."

Crawford was also grateful to media outlets in Oxford County.

"All of us work together because we do care about the community. I feel so fortunate to be in this role."

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna handed out the medals and coins, and explained it was an honour for him to be able to say thank you in such a special way.

"It's beautiful. Today, we recognized 30 people from Oxford County who have gone above and beyond and sacrificed so much to help neighbours, friends and the community. They've done the

hard work so we can enjoy our communities."

Along with the medals, recipients were also given the new Oxford Service Coin. Khanna added recognizing people for doing good deeds doesn't happen often enough.

"It's just one day we thank them for their service. We get so busy in our lives and we stop showing gratitude. If you look around us, there are superheroes around us every single day. As a public servant, I hear their stories and we heard 30 amazing stories today. It inspires me to keep going and fight for my constituents."

Khanna pointed to the amount of division currently happening in the world.

"There is a lot of hate and division in our country right now. We've brought people together from all over Oxford County. We had different demographics, different walks of life. Everyone's story is unique and that's what makes Oxford strong. It's the people who roll up their sleeves, put the BS aside and get things done for our great community."

The King's Coronation Medal ceremony, held at the Market Centre Theatre in Woodstock, was attended by over 200 residents of Oxford.



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STRATFORD NISSAN



New Hamburg Legion honours 10 deserving local recipients of the King's Coronation Medal

SCOTT DUNSTALL

Gazette Correspondent

The King Charles III Coronation Medal is a commemorative award established to mark the coronation of His Majesty King Charles III.

In Canada, approximately 30,000 medals are being distributed to individuals who have made significant contributions to the country, their province, territory, region, or community, or whose achievements abroad have brought credit to Canada. The last time a coronation medal was bestowed was 1953 for Queen Elizabeth II's coronation.

Locally, the New Hamburg Legion Branch 532 was tapped by MP Tim Louis to choose 10 recipients for the King Charles III Coronation Medal. A three-member selection committee was struck by Legion president Brad Sword.

Those members included Larry Roth and Pam Hallman (both past presidents of the branch) as well as local historian and memorial banner chair Marie Voisin.

Of the 10 medal recipients chosen, nine were local veterans and one was a branch executive member. Once the list was made, it was returned to Tim Louis's office which in turn was sent to the governor general's office for final approval.

Not a simple process and so it shouldn't be for such a prestigious award.



(SCOTT DUNSTALL PHOTO)

Pictured are eight of the 10 local recipients of the King Charles III Coronation Medal who were in attendance at a ceremony at the New Hamburg Legion March 1.

The recipients include:

In attendance

Bradley Sword: Three-time branch president with executive service since 2000.

Charles Bronson: Enlisted since 1974 and served as range safety officer with Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment. Past Sergeant in Arms at Branch 532 and 40-year service award recipient

Michael Disney: British Army light infantry. Legion member since 1969 and 25-year pin recipient.

Chadwick Gravid: Governor General

Footguards. Retired Royal Highland Fusiliers of Canada. Played pipes for many Legion events.

Sgt. Julian Lautenslager: Legion member since 1974 and retired from active service in 2014. Received his 50-year Legion member service pin this past year.

Robert Neubauer: Retired Lloyd Strathcona Horse First Hussars. Enlisted in 1965 as Sergeant. Joined Legion in Sarnia during the 1980s and transferred to New Hamburg in 2008. Veteran Service Officer for the branch for 17 years and

still serving, and a 15-year service pin recipient.

Jonny Svartsjo: Retired military police officer after 13 years. Current Sergeant at Arms for Branch 532 New Hamburg.

Donald Taylor: Thirty-five-year service pin recipient with 30 years of service to the Toronto Police Force and 17 years of service for the Core of Commissionaires.

Not In Attendance were Mayor Les Armstrong and James McBride.

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Wellesley-North Easthope agricultural society continues community crochet project

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Wellesley-North Easthope Fall Fair directors launched the Crochet Square Challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to stay connected with the community.

The initiative quickly gained momentum, with participants contributing hand-made squares that were transformed into beautiful afghans and lap blankets.

In its first year, the challenge followed a flower-garden theme, resulting in enough 12-inch squares to create three large afghans, which were raffled off to support the Wellesley Fall Fair.

The project became known as “Community Unity,” a name that has stuck ever since.

In the second year, the theme shifted to fall colours, and participants submitted

enough squares to make five afghans, which were donated to PeopleCare nursing home in Tavistock.

Last year, the project required nine-inch squares in shades of blue and white, yielding 138 squares, which were used to create 14 lap blankets. These were distributed to Nithview Home in New Hamburg, PeopleCare in Tavistock, and Parkwood Veterans Hospital in London in partnership with the Royal Canadian Legion.

This year, the challenge returns to 12-inch squares with two themes:

- “Vibrant Hues of Summer”
- “Winter’s Palette”

Once submitted, the squares are judged by a qualified homecraft judge, then passed to Barb Nowak, an art teacher, who sorts them by colour and organizes them into individual lap blankets.

The Brodhagen 4-H Crochet Club will



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Some of the handmade crochet squares being produced and organized by Wellesley Fall Fair directors and community members.

participate again this year, and the agricultural society welcomes other 4-H clubs and community members to get involved.

Those interested in contributing to this fundraising initiative can contact Wendy Richardson at 519-656-2961 or wrichardson@bell.net.

Music brings joy to seniors at The Maples

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Residents at The Maples in Tavistock were tapping their feet and singing along March 1 as Elizabeth Finch filled the room with music.

The talented musician played a range of instruments – including the banjo, violin, autoharp, ukulele and piano – while performing classic favourites.

“I love sharing a variety of music, from folk to Celtic,” said Finch, who engaged the audience with well-known songs such as “You Are My Sunshine,” “Amazing Grace,” “This Little Light” and “Danny Boy.”

She also led the crowd in a birthday singalong for residents celebrating in February.

Finch, who has lived in the area for years, now resides in Kitchener and teaches piano at Sound Factory Music Studio in Waterloo. She frequently performs in Stratford and Tavistock and enjoys hearing her audience participate.

According to staff, the musical afternoon was more than just entertainment; it was a welcome distraction for residents.

“Music helps residents forget about their aches and pains, even if just for a little while,” a staff member said. “Moments like these truly make a difference in their lives.”



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Elizabeth Finch entertains residents and staff at The Maples Home for Seniors in Tavistock March 1, playing a variety of instruments.



Residents at The Maples enjoy an afternoon of music as they are entertained by Elizabeth Finch.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - MARCH/APRIL 2025



TUESDAY, MARCH 11

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

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships
12:00 p.m.
Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by March 7 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Wellesley Recreation Complex, 1401 Queen's Bush Rd., Wellesley

March Break Movie: Arthur The King
2:00 pm
No Charge. Free Popcorn. Non-perishable food donations to the Zion Food Pantry would be appreciated.
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg, ON.



WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19

Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships
12:00 p.m.
Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by March 14 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Wilmot Rec Complex
1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting
7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships
12:00 p.m.
Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by March 21 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Linwood Community Centre
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

SUNDAY, MARCH 30

Tree Pruning with Mike Yost
1:30 - 3:30 pm
Free workshop will cover all aspects of tree pruning. For details and registration go to letstreewilmot.ca/events.
Mannheim Community Center
1467 Mannheim Road

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting
9:00 a.m.
Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI) Annual Meeting
7:00 pm
For more info contact chairman Frank Meconi; fameconi@rogers.com
Tavistock Men's Club Hall
78 Woodstock St N, Tavistock



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- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:
 - Coming Events Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst
 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
 - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - \$35 + hst

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This photo of a snow-covered tree with what looks like a crown on top was taken by Rose Marie Osborne on Bleams Road, near Shingletown, and shared recently on the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook page. Photo courtesy of Show Us Your Wilmot

Weekly Quiz Answers

- | | |
|------------|-------------|
| 1. Monaco | 7. Saint |
| 2. Smith | Stephen's |
| 3. 10,080 | Day |
| 4. Delta | 8. Rome |
| 5. 42 | 9. Africa |
| 6. Heights | 10. Redwood |

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