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(GARY WEST PHOTO)

The five contestants vying for New Hamburg Fall Fair Ambassador included, from left, Kenzie Wilde, Nicole Lowry, newly crowned ambassador Erin Jackson, runner-up Lydia Koch and Reese Moore. Turn to page 6 for the full story and more New Hamburg Fall Fair coverage.

Ontario investing more into paramedic services in Waterloo Region

MPP says money will reduce wait times

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Ontario has announced a \$32-million investment in the region to “connect more people to emergency care faster and increase the availability of paramedics and ambulances in the community,” according

to a press release from Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris.

Just under \$31 million is for base funding to cover increased operating costs with \$1.5 million going to the Dedicated Offload Nurses Program (DONP) to hire more nurses and other eligible health professionals. Its goal is to reduce delays

paramedics run into when dropping off patients at hospitals.

“Our government is boosting land ambulance funding in Waterloo Region by 14 per cent so paramedics can respond faster and get back on the road sooner,” Harris said. “These investments mean quicker care in

Continued on page 3

Local home targeted in brazen break-in and vehicle theft

Police release suspect descriptions

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

An early morning crime on a quiet Tavistock street has struck some fear into the victims and neighbours.

One of the victims, who we are calling Jim in this story, agreed to talk to the Gazette on the condition of anonymity. Jim is not his real name.

“It was 1 a.m. almost on the nose. My wife and I were in bed sleeping and I heard a big bang. We were still laying there thinking it wasn’t a big deal and then I heard scuffling and realized it was in the house,” he said.

Jim flew out of the bedroom towards the door in their Westwood Avenue home where he saw his wife’s SUV leave the driveway.

“That’s how quick it was.”

The stained-glass door window was smashed with an object, allowing the thieves to get in the house and grab a key fob on a hook in the front hallway.

“My neighbour was actually awake next

Continued on page 2



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Tavistock break-in leaves residents shaken

Continued from page 1

door reading and saw the guys coming to the door and went outside. She was standing on the grass and asked what they were doing but came to her senses when she realized they could have weapons.”

Both Jim’s wife and the neighbour called 911 and waited for police to arrive. He said they don’t feel safe in their own home anymore.

“You’re completely violated, even in the house we thought was our safe haven, so it makes sleeping a little difficult even though the door is boarded up and as strong as it should be. Knowing someone would do that to get a 2014 vehicle; it’s not like they were stealing anything valuable.”

Provincial police are conducting an investigation and are appealing to the public for help identifying the suspects. They are described as two white males, approximately 18 years of age. Both were wearing dark-coloured ski masks while one was wearing a black hoodie and the other a grey hoodie. There was also a white, four-door sedan observed in the area just prior to the incident.

Anyone who may have information that could assist with the investigation is asked to contact the Oxford OPP.

OPP Const. Randi Crawford said this type of crime isn’t the norm in rural areas of the county.

“We aren’t finding people breaking into homes to steal keys. These people are typically from larger, organized-crime organizations,” she said.

She added the thieves are dropped off and check for unlocked vehicles, and sometimes people leave their keys in them.

“There are also organized-crime groups with tablets that are able to read programs on vehicles. They are also able to get the signal from key fobs.”

Crawford is advising vehicle owners to purchase signal blockers to reduce the chance of a fob signal being stolen. Other tips include parking cars in garages where possible and alerting police to suspicious behaviour.

“These people tend to do some scouting out ahead of time so that’s why it’s so



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

A Tavistock home was recently broken into. Thieves stole a key fob and made off with a vehicle within seconds. The owner said he and his wife are shaken and plan to install cameras.

important to call police or send a message to Crimestoppers about suspicious people and vehicles.”

She explained people will drive up to a farmhouse to see if anyone is home, fully prepared to use a lie such as asking for directions or gas.

“When those people leave, try to get as much information as possible such as a license plate, what they looked like, things like that. Call us and let us know. Then we can mark it in our system as suspicious,” Crawford said.

Oxford residents can access a program called Safeguard Ontario where trained auxiliary police can come to a home or business to perform a safety audit.

“They can provide suggestions on how to make a home or business safer and it

is free of charge to all residents of the county.”

The majority of this type of crime occurs in larger centres such as the GTA, and Jim admitted he was surprised to see it happen in a small town. He plans to step up security at his home.

“I’ll be putting cameras up and so have half the neighbours. If anything happens on the street, we’re going to know, whether it helps us or not is another story. Make sure you lock your doors and install a camera. It’s at least going to be a deterrent.”

Neighbours and the victims say there were door-to-door salespeople on the street about two weeks before the incident, something not lost on Jim who recently installed a new front door.

“It’s funny they picked us. You can’t

see the keys there through the door. Either they knew they were there or took a pretty good guess.”

The stolen vehicle was eventually located in Brant County, not far from Paris. The couple say they do not know yet if it sustained any damage.

The Gazette reached out to Doug Reinhart from Nitehawk Security in Woodstock for advice on what homeowners can do to protect themselves against these types of crimes.

“People should not leave purses, wallets, valuables or keys sitting by the door. People do it all the time but you’re better off having them out of plain sight. A lot of people hang keys by the door because it’s convenient. Criminals see those keys from outside and it’s an open invitation.”

When it comes to salespeople showing up at the door, Reinhart said it is a good idea to check their identification and ask for a number to call to authenticate them.

“You are also under no obligation to answer the door and let them inside your home. We are vulnerable to so many things and so many people think of so many new scams every day of the week. It’s unbelievable,” he said.

He added a security system is always a good idea since they result in an almost unbearable sound when a door or window is breached.

“Motion sensors inside are also helpful and there are quite a few things you can do in terms of intrusion alarms, but once again, you have to get your stuff away from the door so you aren’t involved in a smash and grab.”

Reinhart said cameras serve a purpose but they aren’t a visible deterrent to crime.

“People doing bad things will generally cover their face by pulling down a hat or wearing a hoodie and work in the dark. To be honest with you, I’m probably the worst camera salesperson in the world and I point out the negative things about them because I have seen just about all of them.”

He explained it’s not very often a good, clean photo or video can be taken from a camera, but buying more expensive technology usually provides a better product.

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Province invests \$32M to boost paramedic services

Continued from page 1

emergencies and stronger frontline health care for families in our community.”

According to a press release, the program allows paramedics to get back out into the community faster and respond to their next 911 call sooner, and has played a significant role in reducing ambulance offload times and increasing ambulance availability for 911 patients across the province. As a result of this investment and the dedication of health-care professionals, provincial ambulance offload time has been reduced by approximately 65 per cent since its peak in October 2022.

John Riches, the region’s chief of paramedic services, explained the additional funds will help cover rising costs to deliver services.

“The cost of supplies, equipment, vehicles and maintenance has increased and this increase assists in accounting for this. Through the Land Ambulance Service Grant provided by the Ministry of Health, the province has committed to funding 50 per cent of the cost to operate the paramedic service. The 14 per-cent increase reflects the provincial commitment to covering their share.”

Riches added the DONP program streamlines the transfer of care from paramedics to hospital staff, and it aims to increase ambulance availability and improve overall access to urgent care.

“All three hospitals have this program in

place currently with a notable decrease in ambulance offload times since implementation,” he said.

Region of Waterloo data shows paramedic services averaged 107 minutes for a patient offload at its three hospitals in 2023, resulting in 15,280 lost service hours. The numbers reduced to 83 minutes and 11,600 hours in 2024 and 39 minutes along with 2,550 hours from Jan. 1 to Sept. 1 this year.

Riches said he and his staff continues to collaborate closely with hospital to streamline processes that help paramedics return to the community more quickly, ensuring they are available to respond to 911 calls for medical emergencies.

“We sincerely appreciate the Ministry of Health’s ongoing investment in both the DONP and the Land Ambulance Grant funding as these investments help us ensure paramedic resources are available to respond to those in need,” he said.

“We’re grateful to the provincial government for this increase in land ambulance funding and the continued support of the DONP,” said Waterloo Region chair Karen Redman. “Reducing offload delays means our paramedics can return to the community faster – responding to emergencies, supporting patients and saving lives. Thank you to our local hospital partners for their continued support of the program, which plays a vital role in improving patient flow and emergency care.”

SHOW US YOUR WILMOT



(PHOTO COURTESY OF SHOW US YOUR WILMOT)

Jen Christensen recently shared this photo of the morning light shining through some trees at Foxwood Golf Club to the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook page.

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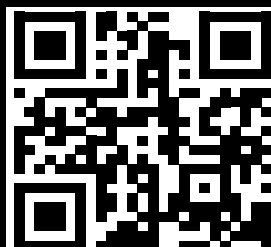
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Louis ready to get back to work on Parliament Hill

MP sitting on procedure and house affairs committee

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Members of parliament spent their summers on what is affectionately called the “barbecue circuit” among members of the media.

Tim Louis, MP for Kitchener-Conestoga, said he spent his time at events across the riding listening to what his constituents had to say.

“I get to hear from a lot of people, which is great. I spent the summer listening and here I am calling from Ottawa, taking their voices back.”

Louis said what he’s been hearing is no different from what other MPs have been told from their constituents.

“Protecting our sovereignty, our security, housing and housing costs, and the economy; those are the things I hear about most. There are always more, but those are the main ones.”

Louis’ riding covers Wilmot, Wellesley and Woolwich Townships. The Liberal MP said while the issues are the same in rural areas, the lens is slightly different.

“The solutions are also slightly different. I sit on the Liberal rural caucus and we are having discussions about housing and about more infrastructure spending in the smaller communities. Unlike the cities, land isn’t an issue but it’s usually the infrastructure to support housing and building out communities.”

He added public transit looks different in smaller communities as does homelessness, addiction and gender-based violence.

“These things all exist in rural communities; they just have a different lens and a different focus on addressing those challenges.”

The House of Commons resumed this week and the first Question Period kicked off on Monday a little after 2 p.m. with somewhat of a friendlier tone since former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Conservative Leader Pierre Pollièvre battled. Louis said he’s more than open to collaborating with the opposition.

“It’s in my nature to work together. I look forward to working with colleagues across party lines and I’m committed to working in good faith. Good ideas can come from all sides and Canadians expect us to work together because we have some common challenges.”

Recently, Canadians have been speaking out about the need for bail reform as violent criminals out on bail continue to reoffend. The Liberals have committed to tabling a bill to address the issue, but the Gazette asked Louis if he would be willing to consider supporting Oxford MP Arpan Khanna’s soon-to-be-released Bail not Jail private members bill.

“I haven’t read Arpan’s bill yet, but I know we are working on legislation ourselves as a government that is coming forward very quickly that will improve the bail system and ensure greater penalties for serious crimes. We will do everything we can to keep communities safe,” Louis said.

Louis added criminal-justice reform

should be non-partisan and agreed stronger laws are needed across the county.

“I have shared ideas with the minister of justice and minister of public safety. We have had discussions on this issue for months on the legislation that is coming on the government side. I wouldn’t be surprised if there are some similarities between what we are proposing and what Arpan’s bill is likely to propose.”

Committee hearings begin this week in Ottawa and Louis has been selected to be a Liberal member of the procedure and house affairs committee (PROC). It is one of the most influential standing committees as it deals with the rules, procedures and function of the House of Commons.

It reviews and recommends changes to standing orders, which is the rulebook for the House of Commons, and examines issues related to parliamentary privilege. It also oversees the work of Elections Canada and the chief electoral officer which includes reviewing recommendations for the redrawing of riding maps. The PROC makes decisions on how MPs debate, how committees function and how elections are run.

“During the last sitting, I was on three committees; one being the standing joint committee for the scrutiny of regulations (REGS). You need that behind the scenes to deal with procedural regulations behind the scenes. It’s all important and committee work is an important part of what we do here.”



(TIMLOUISMP.CA PHOTO)

Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis says he spent the summer listening to constituents before returning to Ottawa.

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Individualized and community support at New Hamburg Anytime Fitness key to sustaining healthy lifestyle

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

According to Hunter Livy, a personal trainer at Anytime Fitness in New Hamburg, the key to sustaining a healthy lifestyle, both at the gym and in everyday life, is having a plan and supports that work for you and being part of a community that keeps you accountable.

For members of the local Anytime Fitness, Livy and the gym's other personal trainers make it their goal to ensure their clients are engaged and having fun while they're getting healthy. While Livy says the pieces of every person's health and fitness puzzle may be the same, they certainly don't fit together the same way and each person's plan needs to reflect that.

"I'm very passionate about making sure that the programming and the time I'm investing in aiding the individual is focused on their specific needs and their specific goals because not everybody's the same; in fact, everybody's different," Livy said. "So, the approach you take for one person isn't necessarily going to work for somebody else. It's a situation where all the puzzle pieces might be the same, but they fit differently."

"For example, I have two individuals whose primary goal is to get healthier and lose weight. One of them works a desk job, so they're very, very sedentary. The other one is a PSW, so she's a lot more active. The end goal is the same for both of them but the approach is different because one individual doesn't move a whole lot, so we want to increase general movement, and the other individual moves quite a bit, so we try to focus on movements and exercises that are going to help her perform her duties at her job with more ease to just increase longevity and make sure

she's living an active and healthy life."

According to Livy, part of creating individualized plans for each client and helping them stick to those plans is ensuring there is just the right amount of fun incorporated to keep them on track. And that goes for both exercise – like joining a sports team for cardio instead of running on a treadmill – as well as developing a healthy meal plan.

As Livy puts it, if he were to tell his clients exactly what they need to eat every day for the rest of their lives, no one would stick with it. What's life without a little pizza now and then?

But the biggest factor for why members of Anytime Fitness New Hamburg continue to come to the gym on a regular basis and sustain that health and fitness routine is the community they get to be part of.

"The sense community here is unlike anything I've seen at other locations that I've worked at. It's one of those things where because of the fact we're in such a small town, a closeknit community, the options for gyms around here are limited, so most of the time, individuals around the area who are into fitness or thinking about it either already know somebody who goes to this gym or are aware that the gym exists, which makes things a lot easier."

"In addition, everyone here talks and it's a very welcoming community and everybody here knows each other," Livy continued. "... And I'm very much an open book when it comes to my clients. I always provide all my clients with my personal cell number if they have any questions outside of our sessions. I look at it as I'm at their disposal in general, not just here while they're working with me at the gym. There's a lot of aspects of that journey that take place outside of the gym. The general consensus is



(GALEN SIMMONS PHOTO)

Personal trainer Hunter Livy emphasizes the importance of individualized and community support to help members of Anytime Fitness in New Hamburg reach their personal health and fitness goals.

getting healthy is a lot of physical work, but it's a lot of mental work too. If I can ensure my clients know I'm a resource that's available to them for anything that's going on in this journey, I've found that I've been able to help them."

In some cases, like with Livy's client who works a desk job, that professional relationship can even become a friendship as Livy works with his clients toward their health and fitness goals.

"Often times, that's what people do need; not necessarily the physical part and the physical push, but someone to listen and just be there for them," he said.

Thanks to an ongoing promotion, anyone who would like to become part of the Anytime Fitness New Hamburg community can join as a member now for just one dollar. For more information, visit www.anytimefitness.ca/gyms/3904/new-hamburg-on-n3a-1t6/ or call 519-340-3242.

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Erin Jackson crowned New Hamburg Fall Fair Ambassador

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The New Hamburg arena was filled Friday evening for the annual opening ceremonies of the New Hamburg Fall Fair, as five young women competed to become the 52nd Wilmot Agricultural Society Fall Fair Ambassador.

The contestants delivered both prepared and impromptu speeches before a supportive audience of family, friends

and community members.

Outgoing ambassador Madilynn Cressman, who held the title for 2024-2025, delivered her farewell remarks, calling the role an unforgettable experience. She said she was confident any of the five contestants would make a strong ambassador.

After 40 minutes of deliberation, judges Heidi Danen, Samantha Wagler and Mano Watsa announced Erin Jackson as

the 2025-2026 ambassador.

In her acceptance speech, Jackson thanked the New Hamburg Board of Trade for sponsoring her, praised her fellow contestants for making the competition close and expressed gratitude to the Wilmot Agricultural Society for its encouragement.

"I'll do my best to live up to expectations and promote the good work of the agricultural society throughout the year," she said.

Other awards presented during the evening included Wilmot Citizen of Year Awards:

- Community service: Krista Straus
- Culture: Lisa Hagen
- Seniors: Dean Peachey
- Mayor's Award (presented by Mayor Natasha Salonen): Township of Wilmot
- Sunflower Bursary: Ashley Woolcott
- Margaret Snyder Bursary: Madilynn Cressman



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

An emotional Erin Jackson thanked her family, friends and supporters after being named the 2025-2026 Wilmot Agricultural Society Fall Fair Ambassador. Runner-up Lydia Koch smiles in the background.

Riders in the sky thrill at New Hamburg Fall Fair



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

A freestyle rider launches 30 to 40 feet into the air during the Pro-Riders motorcross show Friday night at the New Hamburg Fall Fair, thrilling a packed grandstand.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Wilmot Agricultural Society and its directors deserve plenty of congratulations for once again bringing the New Hamburg Fall Fair to town without a hitch — unless it was during the horse pulls.

As anyone who has helped organize a fair knows, hundreds of volunteers must work in unison to pull together four days of excitement year after year.

On Friday evening, following the popular Ambassador Competition, the Pro-Riders Freestyle Motorcycle team took to the track in front of the grandstand for a show like no other. With flips, sideways crossovers and jumps that seemed to defy gravity, the two young riders wowed the crowd.

The grandstand erupted in screams and applause throughout the performance as fairgoers marvelled at how the riders executed their daring tricks flawlessly.

New midway proves a hit at New Hamburg Fall Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The annual New Hamburg Fall Fair was a hit with visitors over the weekend, thanks in part to a new midway and ideal weather.

Fair president Stephanie Szusz credited the agricultural society directors and dozens of volunteers for their hard work in making the event a success.

"I have an excellent team working together, and that's what makes my job that much easier," she said.

The fair continues to attract more out-of-town visitors each year, and planning is already underway to make next year's edition even more exciting.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

The midway at this year's New Hamburg Fall Fair lit up the night for both kids and adults.

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Amazing Garden Wilmot Junior Gardeners show their best at the New Hamburg Fall Fair

JANICE WAGLER

Gazette Correspondent

Garden Wilmot had five first-time Junior Gardeners enter displays at this year's New Hamburg Fall Fair.

The Junior Gardeners were provided with Ice Queen Zinnias and Bachelor's Buttons and their choice of carrots or beets. There were 70 amazing entries at the fair despite the drought and extreme heat this summer.

Garden Wilmot Youth Appreciation Night was held on Sept. 9 with speaker Shey Smith sharing his incredible photographs of birds in southern Ontario.

Michelle Beaupré brought greetings on behalf of Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis, and Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen sent her regrets that evening. James Graham, past Ontario Horticultural Association president, encouraged the Junior Gardeners to persist and continue with their amazing efforts. He assisted youth leaders Sandra Cressman and Janice Wagler in presenting awards and prize money.

Each of the 22 Junior Gardeners received a goodie bag filled with items from Louis, Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris, Domino's Pizza, Pharmasave, Milk Producers, the OPP, the Egg Marketing Board, Dentistry on Lawrence, Barentz and Bios.

Domino's generously provided pizzas to celebrate the Garden Wilmot Junior Gardeners' accomplishments.



(JANICE WAGLER PHOTOS)

Chloe Thompson was presented with a trophy for growing a junior garden with Garden Wilmot for five years.



A spectacular display of creative arrangements and harvest baskets by Garden Wilmot creative gardeners Katelynn Cressman and Tyler Thompson at the New Hamburg Fall Fair.



Katelynn Cressman and Zach Schwartzentruber were recipients of certificates from Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis and Wilmot Township for their outstanding creative gardens.



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Waterloo Region 4-H dairy calf show shines at New Hamburg Fall Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Under sunny skies, the annual Waterloo Region 4-H dairy calf championship show

took place Saturday at the New Hamburg Fall Fair.

This year's event saw 41 club members present their projects with confidence, from the youngest handlers to the most

experienced. Leaders credited not only the 4-H members for their hard work but also their families and friends for providing support throughout the year.

While the fair marks the culmination of

achievement day for many, some competitors will advance to additional shows, including the TD 4-H Dairy Classic at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto in November.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Judge John Martin of Oxford Centre handled the judging duties at this year's Waterloo Region 4-H dairy calf show at the New Hamburg Fall Fair. He is pictured walking through his first- and second-place class winners before selecting his champions.



Grand champion went to Addison Kuepfer, right, with her spring heifer, Trinity Master Kiwi. Reserve champion was Julia Van Bergeijk with her fall heifer, Quiet Oak Bullseye Flowrider. Honourable mention went to Colton Martin with his fall heifer, Poplarvale Bullseye Lympia. Ribbons and prize money were handed out by contestants from Friday night's Ambassador of the Fair competition.

4-H beef show draws a crowd at New Hamburg Fall Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Saturday's 4-H beef show was a highlight of the New Hamburg Fall Fair as club members proudly presented their beef

heifer projects.

The competition took place in a show ring set up beside the midway, where a large crowd of spectators gathered to cheer on the young handlers and their animals.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

The grand and reserve champion beef heifers from the Waterloo Region 4-H beef show were shown Saturday at the New Hamburg Fall Fair.



A Waterloo County 4-H beef club member shows a Hereford heifer during the busy Saturday afternoon competition.

Kids visit with snakes at the New Hamburg Fall Fair



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Look closely and you will see the boa constrictor around Rayne Adair's neck while her daughter, Charlie, wanted to hold onto it too. The Pawly Reptile show owner holds the snakes tail looking on. The mother and daughter live in Stratford and said they always love coming to the New Hamburg Fall Fair where there's so much to do for younger kids.



Shown below on Saturday at the New Hamburg Fall Fair is a mother and daughters enjoying the Pawly Reptile show. Mom, Amy Poll, along with her two daughters, Allie and Breanne Poll, loved handling this white snake, but were sure they didn't want to take one home. Just feeling it slither through their hands was something to remember at this year's fair.

Horses shine under sunny skies at New Hamburg Fall Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Warm, late-summer weather made for a perfect day at this year's New Hamburg Fall Fair horse show.

A variety of horses and their owners turned out to compete in light and heavy horse classes, drawing a large and appreciative crowd. Prize money was up for grabs as exhibitors proudly showcased their animals under the bright sun.



Electra, a 12-year-old Percheron mare, stands patiently while being hitched by Vicki Keen of Squirrely Acres Percherons, owned by the James Fleming family of Burgessville. From left are 16-year-old Alyssa Keen with her friend Spencer Colterman, also 16, of Burgessville.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

A high-stepping Hackney horse claimed the red ribbon in the single pleasure class at the New Hamburg Fall Fair horse show.



Draft horse judge Jim Beemer of Plattsville takes a close look at entries in the single-horse, lady-driven Percheron class. A large crowd gathered to enjoy the light and heavy horse shows.



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Morningside Red Hats visit Plattsville Museum



(PHOTO COURTESY OF DENISE TEW)

The Plattsville and District Heritage Society was pleased to host the ladies of Morningside Red Hats at the Chesterfield Museum and Archives on Friday, Sept. 12. Oh, what fun was had at The Retro Rewind to the '70s & '80s exhibit. Thanks for visiting!

Embro Fall Fair's Ambassadors

LAURA GREEN

Submitted to the Gazette

The competition for Embro Fall Fair Ambassador was held on Saturday, Sept. 13, at the Embro Community Centre and hosted by the Embro and Zorra Agricultural Society (EZAS).

Junior Ambassador Alyssa Hewitt is a Grade 8 student at Zorra Highland Park School. She is member of the Zorra

Skating Club and volunteers as junior coach helping the beginning skaters.

Senior Ambassador Hailey Lupton is a Grade 12 student at Huron Park Secondary School in Woodstock. Her sponsor was Quehl's Restaurant & Catering in Tavistock. Lupton is just starting her third year working at Quehl's, so drop in for a coffee and congratulate her in this accomplishment as ambassador for EZAS.



(LAURA GREEN PHOTO)

aking a break between assisting with the Baby Show and Pet Show at the Embro Fall Fair on Sunday are Senior Ambassador of the Fair 2025-2026 Hailey Lupton and Junior Ambassador 2025-2026 Alyssa Hewitt.

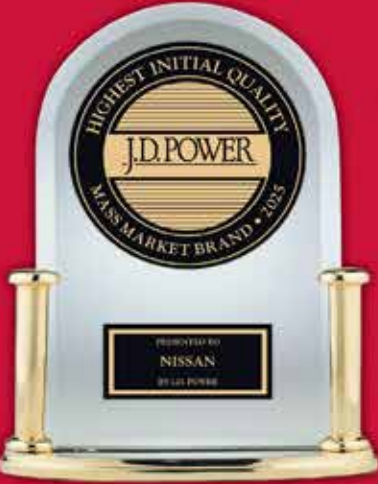
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Embro Fall Fair celebrates 40 years of pumpkin tradition

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Embro and Zorra Agricultural Society marked a milestone this year at the Embro Fall Fair — the 40th anniversary of the Pumpkin Prince and Princess competition.

The contest, first introduced in 1985 by Anne Innes, then homecraft president and a member of the school and children's fair committee, has become a cherished tradition for local families.

"I always wanted to give each child in this community something to look forward to when coming to the Embro Fall Fair," Innes said.

With roots in her family's own farming background, Innes saw the competition as a way to teach students about agriculture — from planting a small seed to nurturing it through weather challenges and other obstacles, just as Oxford County farmers face each season.

Over the years, the competition has instilled values of patience and responsibility. Children may only enter pumpkins grown from the official seeds distributed by Innes, which are specially ordered each year.

To celebrate this year's anniversary, students at Embro Highland Park Public School and A.J. Baker Public School in Kintore received four regular pumpkin seeds along with one "mystery seed." The



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

From left, Pumpkin Prince Jack Vanderhorn-Goodale, Pumpkin Princess Anna Green and contest founder Anne Innes celebrate 40 years of the pumpkin competition at the Embro Fall Fair.

surprise varieties added to the excitement, as no one knew what would grow.

Every entrant received a teddy bear, and special draws were held at each school for a trophy.

On Saturday, the East Zorra Agricultural Society recognized Blythe Dale Sand and Gravel for sponsoring the competition for four decades, along with Anne and Grant

Innes for their continued dedication.

This year's competition drew 120 entries. Winners included:

- **Pumpkin Princess:** Anna Green (A.J. Baker Public School), 8.72 kg pumpkin
- Dale Vanderhorn-Goodale (Zorra Highland Park), 7.12 kg pumpkin
- Elnora Coates (A.J. Baker), 5.94 kg

pumpkin

- **Pumpkin Prince:** Jack Vanderhorn-Goodale (Zorra Highland Park), 9.18 kg pumpkin
- Max Green (A.J. Baker), 8.02 kg pumpkin
- Landon Innes (Zorra Highland Park), 7.08 kg pumpkin



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Soybean harvest underway

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

With warm, dry weather in the region, soybean harvest is moving quickly across Oxford, Perth and Waterloo counties.

Shakespeare-area farmer Dave Wilhelm

was combining soybeans on Monday for North Easthope farmer Brian Bell.

In some years, rain and wet fields delay harvest, but this year's conditions are producing more dust than mud. Farmers say the beans are smaller and drier than normal, a reflection of the hot, dry summer.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Dave Wilhelm operates his Case IH combine in a soybean field owned by Brian Bell off Perth Road 37 in North Easthope. Fall colours are beginning to show in the background.



A view from inside the cab of Wilhelm's combine during Monday's harvest.



North Easthope farmer Brian Bell surveys his harvested field, hoping this year's crop covers his costs with some profit left over.

Shakespeare's tallest and bushiest sunflower?

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Anyone who wanders the back streets of local towns and villages this time of year will notice sunflowers in full bloom, but Shirley Wilhelm of Shakespeare may have the tallest and bushiest one around.

The stalk of her massive plant measures

between three-and-a-half and four inches thick, strong enough to support its impressive cluster of blooms.

Wilhelm said she never planted it — it came up on its own. Beside it, a soybean plant has also sprouted from a stray seed, producing dozens of pods packed with beans.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Shakespeare's Shirley Wilhelm, who stands about five-and-a-half feet tall, marvels at her towering sunflower, which has grown higher than her roof.

Wheat seed cleaning for fall planting

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

With a record amount of wheat being grown in Oxford, Perth and Waterloo counties, some growers are choosing to clean and treat their own seed for planting this fall.

Last week, Doug Snyders of Bornholm was in the Tavistock area, busy cleaning wheat seed and adding a treatment to ensure proper germination.

Now in his 20th year of seed cleaning, Snyders says he processes tonnes of wheat annually for area farmers, who agree "it sure beats the small fanning mills of days gone by."

When not cleaning seed on the farm, Snyders also runs a duct-cleaning business serving homes across Perth County. He can be reached at 519-347-4032.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Bornholm's Doug Snyders shows his mobile wheat seed cleaner, which also treats seed as it moves through the process. The finished product is then transferred into a gravity bin, ready for planting after bean harvest.

Wilmot run marks 45th anniversary of the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

The Wilmot Terry Fox Run was held on Sunday, Sept. 14, from 9 a.m. to noon, at Schmidt Woods Trail, located behind the Wilmot Recreation Complex in Baden.

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope. The event began with a warm welcome and land acknowledgment delivered by organizer Clayton Jubb, followed by the singing of "O' Canada" led by Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis. Kristy Chambers from Evoke Fitness in New Hamburg led participants in a fun, motivating warm-up before the run began.

Organizers for this year's run were Jubb, Lindsay Heilbron and Dave and Kim Carr. Jubb and Heilbron moved to Baden from Milton three years ago and took over organizing the run from Nigel and Cheryl Gordijk, who had led it since 2013.

Jubb shared that his family became involved with the Terry Fox Run after his cousin was diagnosed with leukemia at just three years old. The Jubb family believes she survived thanks to advancements in

cancer research that were made possible by the Terry Fox Foundation. The family celebrated her wedding four years ago.

This was the second year the run was held at Schmidt Woods Trail. The trail is ideal for walking and running, and the rec complex offers plenty of parking and access to washrooms. The ideal gathering spot for the run is near the tree that has been planted on the grounds in Terry's memory, along with a plaque that reads, "The answer is to try and help others. -Terry."

Eight teams, made up of local families and businesses, registered for the run. While approximately 40 participants signed up officially, many brought along friends and family, bringing the total to around 60. With the addition of the Morningside Walkers, nearly 100 people took part in this year's Wilmot Terry Fox Run.

Ross and Jane Eichler live in the Morningside Village community where they lead the Morningside Walkers Team. Both Jane and Ross Eichler are cancer survivors. Jane Eichler fondly remembers Terry Fox running down Highway 7&8 past New Hamburg 45 years ago. The couple remains deeply committed to carrying on Terry's legacy and are dedicated supporters of the Terry Fox Foundation.

Jane Eichler asked Heilbron what percentage of donations go directly to research. After looking into it, Heilbron learned that the Terry Fox Foundation has an A+ rating and that 75 per cent of every dollar raised goes to cancer research, a very high percentage compared to many other charitable organizations.

The Terry Fox Run has become a proud Canadian tradition. Each year, nearly 600 communities across the country take part to raise money for cancer research. Terry once said, "I want to set an example that will never be forgotten." Terry's example has definitely not been forgotten. Before Terry Fox passed away on June 28, 1981, he had already reached his goal of raising \$1 for every Canadian. Since then, the Terry Fox Run has raised more than \$850 million, helping researchers and giving hope to millions of people.

This year, the Wilmot event organizers set a goal to raise \$1 for every resident of Wilmot, aiming for \$22,000. As of the morning of the event, online donations had already reached \$19,731 and organizers were confident they would surpass their goal.

The 2025 campaign slogan for The Terry Fox Run is "Finish It!" The slogan reminds us that although Terry didn't get to finish his cross-country run, we can all help finish what he started by raising money for cancer research and continuing the fight. Heilbron shared,

"We hope to grow the event in future years by encouraging people from nearby communities without their own run to take part in Wilmot's," Heilbron said. "By joining together, we can continue Terry's fight against cancer."



(DIANE DANEN PHOTO)

Event organizers Clayton Jubb, Lindsay Heilbron and son Hunter Jubb, along with Dave and Kim Carr, stand by the tree planted at the base of the Schmidt Woods Trail in honour of Terry Fox.



Team ODG (Ontario Drive and Gear) participates in the Wilmot Terry Fox Run for the second year. Brendan and Elisse Purcell with their son Callum and dogs Sawyer and Remy proudly represent ODG in support of this important cause.



Tanja Hall with Remi and Kristy Chambers from Evoke Fitness in New Hamburg.

New Hamburg veterinarian convicted of sexual exploitation involving another local vet

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A retired New Hamburg veterinarian has been sentenced to two years conditional house arrest after pleading guilty to a charge of sexual exploitation of a fellow New Hamburg vet who was working for him as a veterinary student at the time.

James Hambleton, 73, was sentenced by Justice Ian Smith in Waterloo superior court on July 25 after pleading guilty to the charge on Feb. 24. Based on a joint submission from the defence and Crown, Hambleton, the former owner and veterinarian at Nith Valley Animal Hospital, was given a conditional sentence of two years less a day followed by three years probation.

According to the facts of the case, the complainant, whose name the Gazette has agreed not to publish, began working at Hambleton's veterinary practice in 1996 so she could gain experience and be accepted into veterinary school. She worked at the practice for two years without incident, but in 1998 when she was 17 and Hambleton was in his 40s, he began a sexual relationship with her while he was still her employer and in a position of trust.

During this time, Hambleton provided gifts to the complainant and spent time with her family, often attending church and family functions with them. Smith said Hambleton told the court he now sees he was grooming her at the time. The relationship came to an end in 2004 when she was accepted into veterinary college.

"(The complainant) has publicly read a powerful victim impact statement to the court. I applaud her courage in doing so and thank her for sharing her profound story," Smith said before issuing his sentence. "... Her statement is reflective of the various types of harms that are so depressingly common when cases of sexual criminality come before the courts.

"The Supreme Court of Canada in the case of 'R. v. Friesen,' 2020 SCC 9, referred to these harms as the 'ripple effects' of sexual abuse. They include impaired social and family relationships, depression and other mental-health issues, isolation and, very sadly, the loss of trust in other human beings. When sexual offences are committed against children, those children lose the ability to choose the time and place, and nature of their own sexual awakening. It is for all these reasons that sexual offences are so grave and why sentencing in these cases is generally severe. But there are exceptions and ... counsel are jointly of the view that this case is an exception to the general rule."

Based on the sentencing submissions from the defense, Smith noted that Hambleton is a cancer survivor and has a collection of health issues that would make an ordinary jail sentence especially difficult. Hambleton has no criminal record and a history as a well-liked, productive member of the community.

"He has had a successful career as a veterinarian, a career now lost to him," Smith said, referring to the fact Hambleton sold his veterinary practice and retired after police charged him with sexual exploitation. "He has sought out and continues to attend therapy, which appears to have been successful so far."

Smith also noted that Hambleton chose to plead guilty with the intent of sparing the complainant from testifying and being cross-examined before a jury in what would have been a week-and-a-half long trial.

As part of the sentence, Hambleton is prohibited from being 25 metres from anywhere he knows the complainant to live, work or attend school. He is subject to 24-hour house arrest at his home in Wilmot, where he must remain with several exceptions. He is allowed to travel on Bridge Street to get from one piece of his property to the other, and he is allowed to leave for medical emergencies involving either himself or his wife, for volunteering or to attend religious services as approved by his conditional-sentence supervisor in advance after the first year of his sentence, for medical and dental appointments, and to purchase groceries or other necessities between noon and 4 p.m. every Wednesday.

After the first year of his sentence, Hambleton will be allowed to leave his property for other reasons, including to attend vintage car shows within less than a day's travel, with the advance permission of his conditional-sentence supervisor.

In her victim impact statement, the complainant detailed how the abuse of trust and the sexual crime committed against her has impacted her life for more than two decades and continues to impact her today.

"Since the time I terminated my employment under the defendant, I have been terrified of encountering him or a member of his family in my home community," she said. "This means that going to my local grocery store, going to my bank up the street from his office, eating at local restaurants, even crossing the street all became scary events for the past 20 years.

"... This makes it difficult for me to pay complete attention to a friend at a coffee shop without watching the doors and windows to make sure we are in a safe crowd. As a result, I've chosen to patronise only facilities outside of the village if it was possible, avoiding any chance of encounter with the defendant or his family. My involvement in the community has been affected by the fear that I have."

Continuing with her statement, she told the court about the toll her trauma has taken on all aspects of her life, from the triggers she experiences regularly working in a veterinary office and her fear of running into Hambleton at industry conferences to her inability to be present while spending time with her family at home.

She has undergone therapy to work through that trauma, and it was that therapy

that led her to take her case to the Waterloo Regional Police Service in March 2022 to further her healing process.

"As a result of the crimes committed against me, I have been diagnosed with major depressive disorder, general anxiety disorder and complex post-traumatic stress disorder," she told the court. "These conditions have rendered me unable to work either partially or completely over the past number of years. My family has experienced a loss of income as a result of my missing work from weeks to months at a time.

"In order to treat my medical conditions, I have been receiving both counselling therapy and medications. These treatments have created a financial expense. I'm currently seeking non-pharmaceutical treatment for PTSD. The recommended treatments include inpatient care over several weeks. It will not only cost a significant amount financially but will also pull me out of my family."

In response to the complainant's victim impact statement and the sentencing submissions from both the defense and the Crown, Hambleton told the court it was "an oversimplification" to say he's sorry for his actions.

"It's perhaps a stretch, but I believe that I'm remorseful," Hambleton said. "I don't understand my decision-making. I regret that I caused harm. This has torn apart families. This has destroyed people. I don't understand how it happened and all I can ask for is that I be given not really a second chance, but an opportunity to live out my life in a more productive way than what it seems to have been for the last bit anyways, and certainly wish everybody could heal and that they, too, will have a productive and happy life.

"I think that's probably saying enough in that I just – the word sorry keeps coming up but it's more than sorry. I just don't believe this myself and I wish it had never happened, and I wish I had acted as a person in authority should have acted."

In speaking with the Gazette about Hambleton's sentence, the complainant said she had been prepared for lenience from the judge, noting his hands were tied by case law, and expressed disappointment in the justice system as a whole.

She said she requested the Gazette publish this story to help encourage other victims of sexual crimes to speak out about their own experiences, whether that be in front of a therapist, with friends and family, or with the police, as she did.

"Ultimately, the true sentencing happens the moment he loses the secrecy of what he did and when people know him for what he did," she said. "... If by sharing my story, one person in an abusive or in a vulnerable situation knows that they are not alone, that would be a win. I hope to encourage or to help give a voice to people who have been victimized so they can get help either before or after the abuse happens. I want to bring to light and truth that



(INSTAGRAM PHOTO)

Retired New Hamburg veterinarian James Hambleton was recently convicted of sexual exploitation and sentenced to two years house arrest and three years probation.

sexual crimes are taking place so that victims don't need to feel the embarrassment and shame, and criminals no longer have any secrecy.

"... After living in silence because of feeling ashamed and embarrassed as though the abuse was my fault, I learned that my healing included sharing my story. More than 20 years after the abuse, I told my parents. I felt more understood and was able to communicate better and start restoring relationships that had been affected by the abuse. ... As I sat with the special victims unit detective, I told my story and he listened with compassion. The moment he told me that he believed me, I was relieved with the feeling that I should have had as a teenager knowing I hadn't done anything wrong and the adults and authorities would take care of things for me. This contributed significantly to my healing; to have lawyers believe me and also want to help me was a benefit."

She said the opportunity to share her story and how she and her family have been affected physically, emotionally and financially with the court and with Hambleton present was a big step in her healing journey.

In that journey, she said the support and assistance from the Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region was invaluable and it was through conversations with her therapists and counsellors at the centre that she decided to come forward to police with her story.

Though she knows that may not be the right path for every victim of sexual crimes, she encourages anyone who may be in a vulnerable position or those who are the victims of sexual crimes to reach out to the centre by calling 519-741-8633 or learn more about the services they provide by visiting www.sascwr.org.

She also spoke favourably about the assistance she received in navigating and understanding the court process from Victim Services Waterloo Region. For more information about that organization, call 519-585-2363 or visit www.vswr.ca.

Finally, she encouraged friends and family members of people who may be victims of sexual crimes to speak openly with their loved ones about those concerns and offer their unconditional love and support, whether they're ready to take that next step towards healing or not.

Stratford Writers Festival to feature “Fireside Chat” with former Beacon Herald summer intern

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Though she went on to write more than 20 books in her career, including her latest, *Walking with Beth*, author Merylin Simonds got her start as a writer working as a summer intern for the Stratford Beacon Herald newspaper.

Simonds, who will be back in Stratford for a fireside chat about *Walking with Beth* with award-winning poet and founder of the Stratford Writers Festival Heidi Sander on Sept. 27, said that while she was born in Winnipeg, she spent her formative years half an hour down the road from Stratford in Plattsville.

“I was born in Winnipeg, but my parents left when I was three months, so that doesn’t really count,” Simonds said. “And I lived in Plattsville from the age of three months to seven, when my parents moved to Brazil, and then from seven until I left for university – I guess I was 17 or 18. And I went to Waterloo-Oxford high school, which is near New Hamburg.”

Knowing she wanted to be a writer from the time she was a teenager, Simonds applied for the summer intern position at the Beacon Herald to gain some real-world experience before she headed off to university.

“I learned from (the editor) that the Stratford Beacon Herald hired a journalism intern and their policy was to hire a fourth-year journalism student from Western,” Simonds recalled. “So, I started

applying in Grade 11 and every year, I sent a letter saying, ‘Ok, I am still intent on being a writer and I really, really, really want to come work for you.’ Finally, by first-year university, he hired me and it was just to get rid of me, really. He had to hire me to get me off his back.

“I worked at the Beacon Herald for a summer and I did ... the great, big, fat (Stratford) Festival supplement. I wrote everything in that and edited it. ... I did it all, but it was a fantastic job because I was at the Festival all the time, I interviewed all the actors and directors and people who later became famous, people who were already famous. At that time, I was trying to decide between English literature and drama – I ended up getting a degree in both because I love theatre – but it was one of those lifechanging experiences for me.”

Simonds says she is excited to return to Stratford, where she got her start as a writer. This time, however, she will be sharing her experience and insights as a now well-established author, specifically with regard to her book, *Walking with Beth*.

The book is based on conversations Simonds, who is in her 70s, had at onset of the COVID-19 pandemic with her friend, Beth, who is now 105 years old. Her book is described as a lyrical meditation on friendship, memory and time. In her fireside chat with Sander, Simonds will explore the intertwined themes of aging, friendship and creativity through the poetic lens that runs throughout the book.

“Beth and I have been friends for years

as part of the Kingston literary community,” Simonds said. “I never really cared about birthdays, but when I was about to turn 70, I thought, ‘Oh dear, this feels different somehow.’ So, I thought, I want to talk to somebody who’s older, who’s been through this, and I thought of my friend, Beth, who is exactly 30 years older than I am. She had just turned 100. So, I called her up and I said, ‘Let’s get together,’ and she, in her wisdom, said, ‘It’s COVID, let’s go for a walk.’”

“So we went for a walk and our conversation was so stimulating, we said, ‘Let’s do this again next week.’”

During the countless walks and conversations that followed, Simonds and Beth mulled over some of life’s great questions surrounding how we live, how we remember and how we make meaning from loss, all of which Simonds recorded and became the foundation for her book.

“Beth is just such a remarkable individual,” Simonds said. “She worked until she was 99. ... She strongly believes in following your passion and in having a passion. And if you have a passion that isn’t necessarily the money work that you do, when your job ends, you will have something else to carry you forward. She has tremendous curiosity in the world, she lives entirely in the present, she’s not one



(PHOTO COURTESY OF MERILYN SIMONDS)

Author Merylin Simonds, who got her start as a writer working for a newspaper in Stratford, will return to the Festival City on Sept. 27 for a fireside chat with poet Heidi Sander as part of the Stratford Writers Festival.

of these older people who lives in the past ... and I just thought I don’t want to be the only one who knows Beth. I want other people to know Beth because she is just such an amazing person.”

For more information and to purchase tickets for the Charlie Mountford Fireside Chat with Merylin Simonds, visit <https://tinyurl.com/3j28aycj>.

Wilmot Lions/Lioness celebrate members’ years of service



(PHOTO COURTESY OF WILMOT LIONS/LIONESS CLUB)

At their September dinner meeting, the Wilmot Lions/Lioness celebrated years of service for the following members. Pictured from left are Jim Miller, 47 years, Tricia Miller, Carol Massel, Reta Klassen, 45 years, and Don Myers, 55 years. Congratulations to these Lions on their service to Lions and many more years to come.



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NEAT Club visits Wellesley's Schmidtsville Restaurant

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

For their final tractor run of the year, members of the North Easthope Antique

Tractor Club (NEAT) motored into Wellesley last week with dozens of antique tractors, stopping at Schmidtsville Restaurant, one of western Ontario's most famous diners.

Sunshine and blue skies made for perfect conditions as members filled a room reserved for them, enjoying a hearty breakfast served by Miriam Kuepfer and her staff.

Club members, young and old alike, said they always look forward to their annual visit to the landmark Wellesley restaurant.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

The Schmidtsville breakfast crew paused for a September photo with two senior NEAT members who had driven their tractors from New Hamburg and Tavistock. Two young Wellesley day-care visitors also joined in. From left are Heidi Martin, Lavinia Sauder, Jaelynn Knoll, Jody Zehr, Linda Jantzi and owner Miriam Kuepfer.



NEAT club member Gerald Zehr of Poole shares a smile with his granddaughter, Jody Zehr, who works at Schmidtsville, during the club's visit to the well-known Wellesley diner.

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Local family grows pumpkins and young entrepreneurs

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

What started as a fun family project during the COVID-19 pandemic has turned into a yearly tradition and a hands-on business for the Hart family.

Jodi and Dave Hart, along with their three children Lincoln, Leo and Camilla, began growing pumpkins five years ago as a way to teach their kids about hard work, money management and responsibility.

Since then, the young entrepreneurs have taken part in every step of the process from planting seeds in the spring to harvesting in the fall. They even save seeds from the current year's pumpkins to replant next season.

This year was more challenging than previous years. A cool spring followed by high summer temperatures and dry weather led to a smaller harvest, down about 35 per cent from past years. Still, Jodi Hart sees it as a valuable learning opportunity.

"It's a life lesson, especially about farming," she said.

Farming is nothing new for the Hart family. Dave Hart grew up on a farm in North Easthope and has been involved in agriculture his entire life. He works in the family business doing custom work for area farmers.

The Harts grow the pumpkins in North Easthope on the family farm but sell them from their home in Stratford.

"The setup is mostly self-serve unless you catch the kids haggling with a customer in the driveway!" Jodi Hart laughed.

Through hard work and a bit of fun, the Hart family is showing that farming, even on a small scale, can teach big life lessons.



(JODI HART PHOTOS)

Camilla, five, Leo, nine, and Lincoln, 11, proudly show off their pumpkin harvest at 290 St. Vincent St. S in Stratford.



Lincoln, Leo and Camilla display the sign for their family business.

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Upgraded end-unit bungalow townhouse with a barrel roofline, oversized front porch, and open-concept design. Kitchen has quartz countertops, induction stove, and lighted tray ceiling, flowing into the living and dining area. Primary suite offers tray ceiling, walk-in closet, and spa-like ensuite. Finished basement offers a family room with fireplace, 3rd bdrm, full bath, and bonus room. Outdoor living includes a covered porch with ceiling fan, cozy patio, and 1.5-car garage with extra storage. MLS#X12394949	PRICE \$799,900	Charming detached bungalow on a spacious corner lot in a quiet cul-de-sac. This move-in-ready home features a bright main floor with quartz countertops, large bdrms (including a 3-piece ensuite), main floor laundry, and an open layout. Partially finished basement offers a family room, 2 bdrms, office, 3-piece bath, and oversized storage room—plus a 100" TV for movie nights (value \$6,000). Fully fenced yard with raised gardens in a desirable, peaceful neighbourhood. MLS#X12118079	NEW PRICE \$749,900
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New Hamburg seed dealer and farmer hosts open house

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Local Pioneer seed, corn and soybean dealer Matt Drummond and his partner, Emma Brooks, welcomed hundreds of farmers and their families to an open house at their farm west of New Hamburg on Highway 7 and 8 last Friday evening.

Guests were treated to a farm tour and a summertime treat of locally made ice cream.

The couple operate an on-farm grain- and corn-drying system, complete with an elevator and modern storage facilities. They also raise broiler chickens and grow wheat, corn and soybeans as cash crops.

After graduating from the University of Guelph, Drummond became a Pioneer seed advisor, helping area farmers with their corn and soybean seed decisions. He also offers custom planting and spraying services.

Brooks, a graduate of university and teachers' college, is an educator at Zorra Highland Public School near Embro in Oxford County.

With couples like Drummond and Brooks, Ontario agriculture is in good hands for the future.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Emma Brooks and Matt Drummond, a young farm couple west of New Hamburg, hosted an open house Friday evening, inviting local farmers for a tour and a taste of local ice cream.

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2022 Nissan Rogue S FWD  \$24,999 OR \$180 B/W LOW KMS - 61,758 KM + HST & lic.	2022 Hyundai Tucson SEL AWD  \$26,495 OR \$190 B/W MILEAGE - 109,437 KM + HST & lic.	2022 Subaru Crosstrek PREMIUM AWD  \$30,495 OR \$219 B/W LOW KMS - 37,645 KM + HST & lic.		
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Wellesley Mennonite Church celebrates 50 years of faith and community

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

A recent anniversary celebration at Wellesley Mennonite Church marked 50 years since the church was established.

In 1974, a few families from nearby churches began exploring the idea of starting a new church in Wellesley. By September 1975, the founding congregation began worship services, and the rest is history.

The congregation has been celebrating its 50th anniversary throughout the year, and this past weekend marked the highlight of that celebration. It all began last fall when members started brainstorming ideas about how to make the anniversary year truly memorable. An anniversary planning team was established and the team came up with many ideas, including an anniversary choir, a special banner, outreach activities and community celebrations.

The celebrations started early in 2025 with a worship series that looked at both the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism and the 50th anniversary of the church. The missions committee launched an Easter giving project to support COMPASS, and the women's ministry hosted a lively trivia night. Later in the year, a special joint service with two other churches was held. Everyone received a handmade tealight holder crafted by members of the congregation as a memento of the celebration.

This past weekend, church members and pastor Matthew Bailey-Dick hosted a series of events, starting on Saturday, Sept. 13, with a free community barbecue



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF DELORES SCHWARTZENTRUBER)

Following the service, the congregation gathered outside to plant a 50th anniversary tree, placing handwritten hopes and dreams into the soil as part of a meaningful act called "Rooting for Hope."

that drew over 200 guests. The menu featured hamburgers, hot dogs, salads and ice cream. Kids enjoyed face painting, sidewalk chalk, bubbles, cornhole and a marble racetrack.

Wellesley Mayor Joe Nowak joined the celebration, offering congratulations on the

church's half-century of service. Musical entertainment was provided by local gospel-bluegrass band, Rescue Junction.

The celebration continued on Sunday, Sept. 14, with a worship service attended by approximately 125 people. Greetings were shared by Marilyn Rudy-Froese from

the Mennonite Church of Eastern Canada (MCEC) and the new anniversary banner was unveiled. Former pastor Ray Martin delivered a sermon titled, "Rooted and Grounded in Love, to Live in the Fullness of God."

As part of the service, Pastor Matthew invited everyone to write down a hope, dream, or vision for the church's future on biodegradable paper. These messages were later planted beneath a tree in a symbolic outdoor ceremony called "Rooting for Hope." A potluck lunch followed, offering a chance for everyone to come together and enjoy food and fellowship.

Members of Wellesley Mennonite Church were especially delighted to celebrate with the wider community, many of whom expressed appreciation for the warm hospitality and good food. Pastor Bailey-Dick expressed heartfelt thanks to all who joined in and helped make the weekend so memorable.

"The congregation looks forward to connecting with members of the community again soon at the upcoming Apple Butter and Cheese Festival," said Delores Schwartzentruber.

Church members and volunteers will be making and serving their well-loved apple fritters at this popular event.

Celebrating 50 years has encouraged Wellesley Mennonite Church to reflect on its journey and look ahead with renewed purpose.

"The anniversary has inspired the congregation to stay grounded in faith while continuing to hope, dream and grow into the future," Schwartzentruber said.



Entertainment was provided by Rescue Junction, an award-winning bluegrass band from the area.



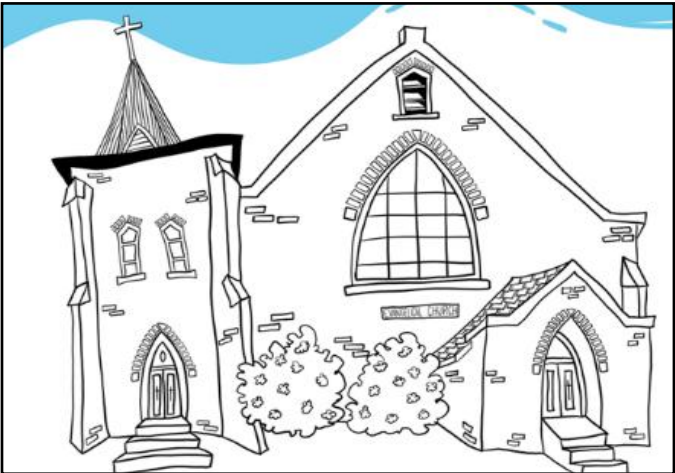
The barbecue was offered at no cost, with guests invited to make a freewill donation in support of the Wellesley Community Food Cupboard.

Zion United Church in New Hamburg participating in Doors Open

ZION UNITED CHURCH
Submitted to the Gazette

Zion United Church in New Hamburg is celebrating its 186th anniversary in November. To kickstart this celebration as well as the United Church's 100th anniversary, Zion United is opening its doors to the public as part of Waterloo Region's Doors Open day on Sept. 20 from 10 a.m.

to 4 p.m. During the day, visitors can view historical documents and program displays, ring the tower bell, play the hand chimes, and enjoy refreshments and a concert at 2 p.m. featuring pianist Jack Wyndham. It is also an opportunity to meet our new minister, Rebecca Whiting, whose ministry with Zion United began in July 2025. Please join us.



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Remembering and loving you always,
Kim, Brad & Katie, Myles & Natalie, Mitch & Tori,
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May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.



Sorry For Your Loss

OBITUARY

KALBFLEISCH: Lois (nee Ledger)



Passed away peacefully at Stratford Rotary Hospice on Tuesday, September 9, 2025. Lois Kalbfleisch of Tavistock in her 83rd year.

Loving mother of Barry Kalbfleisch (2024) & wife Julie of New Hamburg, Bryan and wife Polly of Kearney, Krista and husband Ed Faddies of Toronto. She was deeply devoted to her grandchildren, Cameron, Emily, Jameson (Lauren), Max (Emma), and Graham, faithfully attending everyone of their events and supporting them in every stage of their life

Predeceased by her parents Alfred and Edna Ledger and her sister Merle Freel.

She loved to read and moved on to audio books when she lost her sight. She LOVED to travel to far off locations or even just the shores of Lake Huron. She loved to play cards whether it be with her friendly bridge club or her grandchildren. In addition to working at CIBC, she was the Secretary at Northwestern Highschool (right after her own high school graduation) and also worked in the office at the Stratford Country Club.

A private graveside service will take place in Avondale Cemetery. Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Francis Chapel of the Glendinning Funeral Home, Tavistock

Special thanks to Dr. Rondinelli, Dr. Sugimoto and his team at London Health Sciences, the nurses on the Cancer floor at Stratford General Hospital, Care Coordinator Sarah Ostrowski and the Care Partners Home Care Team, Nurse Stephanie, the nurses on the Surgical Recovery floor at Stratford General Hospital, the team at Rotary Hospice and her amazing friends including the bridge ladies, the coffee ladies, MaryAlice Roth and many more. Thank you to everyone who supported the family during this journey.

As expressions of sympathy, donations can be made to Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth or the Oxford County Libraries (Tavistock Branch) and would be appreciated by the family. Personal condolences can be shared at www.francisfh.ca



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ANSWERS FOUND ON THE CLASSIFIED PAGE

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

By Jake Grant

- What famous actress married baseball player Joe DiMaggio in 1954?
- What is the name of Roger's dalmatian in the Disney movie '101 Dalmatians'?
- Which country is Madrid the capital of?
- What is the most expensive spice in the world?
- Who directed the 2018 movie 'A star is born'?
- What is Prince William the duke of?
- Who wrote the dystopian novel '1984'?
- Roughly how long does it take for the sun's light to reach Earth?
- Animals that eat both vegetables and meats are called what?
- What was the robot's name from Interstellar?

Answers found on the classified page

The Old Gazettes

By Sydney Grant

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

September 16-23, 2020, Edition (5 years ago)

One year ago, Emma Pullen said she was surprised to have been named Ambassador for the Tavistock Fall Fair. Chosen from four contestants in the 34th annual Fair Ambassador Competition held on Friday night, Sept. 6, 2019, in the Tavistock Memorial Hall, Emma was escorted to the stage by Joyce Hill, president of the Princess Elizabeth Women's Institute, her sponsoring body. This year, due to COVID-19 and the resulting virtual fair, Pullen has been asked to continue as Ambassador until the 2021 fair.

Raleigh, Supercycle, Giant, Trek, even Pure brand bicycles were part of the latest shipment by Bart Danen of Sebastopol/Tavistock to Canadian Food for Children (CFFC) initiative warehouse in Mississauga. As a retired farmer, Danen has already shipped over 1,100 bicycles since starting the project about five and a half years ago. Years before that, he would salvage old bicycles from the dump and the roadside and refurbish them in his shop. Then, he met a missionary couple from London who were taking items to Africa to sustain a new school; he donated more than 30 bicycles for the cause. This week, Bart will be dropping off 40 bicycles to a friend in Thorndale who, in turn, takes a trailer laid with various supplies to the CFFC Mississauga warehouse.

Members of the Tavistock & District Skating Club held a Pizza Fundraising Night at New Orleans Pizza in Tavistock on Thursday, Sept. 17 with \$5 from every \$20 order going back to the club. There were 48 qualifying orders over the course of the evening. "That means the club received 48x\$5 = \$240 from this first fundraiser," said Tricia Hendry, past president of the skating club. The club plans fundraising events every October and again in February, and provides their skating families with a fundraising package and asks for their help.

September 15-22, 2010, Edition (15 years ago)

Everybody loves flowers and it was evident at Saturday's fall fair parade that flowers was a theme that everyone could relate to. Flowers hanging from rear view mirrors, flowerpots on floats and colourful flower petals around cute young faces were everywhere as the Tavistock Agricultural Society hosted their 159th annual fall fair this past weekend. The New Hamburg Concert Band led the parade and made their rounds on the route from the Tavistock

Dairy Sales, up Woodstock Street, then down Maria Street to the fairgrounds at Queen's Park, leaving and re-entering the lineup several times.

Founding committee member Ruthanne Wettlaufer couldn't have asked for a better 25th anniversary gift at this year's fair ambassador competition. Her granddaughter, Stephanie Lupton, was chosen to represent the fair board for 2010-2011 and compete at next year's CNE contest. Lupton, 17, was sponsored by the Optimist Club of Tavistock and escorted on stage by president Jim Bender. "Just like flowers, the Tavistock Fall Fair continues to be the perennial event of the year," said Lupton in her speech to the Friday night crowd.

The Oxford County OPP is warning residents in Tavistock after four unlocked homes were broken into overnight Sunday. Three of the homes were occupied with the homeowners asleep inside. Three homes were entered through unlocked doors. The fourth entry was through an unlocked "man door" of the garage. Once inside the garage, a "hidden" key to the side door was found and used to gain entry into the house. One homeowner on William Street North woke up after hearing a noise and scared the intruder(s) off. Unlocked vehicles in driveways were also entered and rummaged through. Stolen property included purses, wallets, "thumb drives" for computers, change and keys.

September 20-27, 1995, Edition (30 years ago)

The Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce (CIBC) Tavistock Branch added to the corporate donations of the Tavistock Arena Fund last week with a check for \$8,000. Jerome Grant, district manager for the Ontario southwest region, along with Tavistock branch manager Ron Bolton, made the presentation last Friday afternoon to corporate fundraising committee member Ken Sommers.

There were 30 entries in the Hickson Summer Reading Programme Colouring and Design-a-Bookmark contest this year open to youngsters in preschool to Grade 4 and up. The theme "Reading takes you places" had the younger ones (preschool to Grade 3) colouring a scene while the older students (Grade 4 and up) made their own bookmark. First prize was a \$9 gift certificate to Merrifield's Bookstore, Woodstock, second prize a \$5 gift certificate and third a \$3 certificate. Third prize winners: Meaghan McKay, Megan Lightfoot, Scott Slager, Jill Roth and Evan Culbert. Second-place winners: Bethany Joosse, Chantel Van Ryswyck, Amy Roth, Tammy Berg and Melissa Murray. First place winners: Amanda Slager, Emily Walton, Aimee Cromwell, Sarah King and Kathryn Walton.

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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

PJHL roundup: Braves off to solid start with a pair of victories

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

If the first two games of the season are any indication, the Tavistock Braves will compete for the top few spots in the Provincial Junior Hockey League's (PJHL) Doherty Division.

They also might end up having one of the top lines around.

Carter Arseneau, Evan Palubeski and Yann Raskin combined for nine points in the team's 6-2 season and home-opening win over Paris, and six points in Saturday's rematch on the road.

"We will obviously take the four points. The boys did a good job in third periods to get the job done," said head coach Zac Berg. "Outside of the third period in both games, I didn't think we played up to our expectations at all. There is a lot to improve on in all three zones of the ice, specifically the D-zone as we cannot rely on our goalies to be perfect every night."

The Braves signed a pair of new goalies this season after inconsistent play in 2024-2025. Berg said the team has confidence in both newcomers and they are off to great starts.

"I thought Richard (Blake) brought

his calm veteran presence on Friday night and didn't allow many second opportunities. (Andrew) Torchia on Saturday kept us in that game and made some big, key saves throughout that whole game. That was his first junior win of many."

Arseneau leads the Braves with six points, good for second in the league. Berg said his alternate captain put in the hard work during the summer.

"He appears to have had a very productive off-season and looks quicker this year. He understands the important role he plays for our team, and maintaining consistency throughout the season will be key for him."

Palubeski, the former Cambridge Redhawk, picked up five points on the weekend while Raskin added four. Nolan Miller and Tucker Otto also scored their first junior goals.

Berg explained winning is always a good way to start the season and it's great for morale.

"We were excited to get the two points in our home opener and then steal two points on the road in theirs. At the same time, the group knows we've got another level to our game. It's only the first weekend, so we can't

get too high on ourselves. The focus is on building and getting better each night."

Next action for Tavistock is Friday night at home as they host Wellesley.

New Hamburg dropped both of its opening weekend games. The Firebirds dropped a 7-6 decision in Norwich on Friday in overtime, then lost 3-2 in overtime in Wellesley on Saturday. New Hamburg trailed the Merchants 5-0 by the 14-minute mark of the second period but roared back to tie the game at six with five third-period markers.

Stuart Sinclair scored the game-winning goal for the Applejacks two minutes into the extra period on a pass from Ian Gedney. Spencer Davidson and Ben Morton gave Wellesley a 2-0 lead before Sachary Olson and Owen Bruder scored for the Firebirds to force overtime.

Wellesley opened the season in Woodstock and lost 7-3 to the Navy Vets. Morton, Rhyse McCloskey and Luke Schofield scored in the losing effort.

The Applejacks host Woodstock on Saturday while the Firebirds take on Hespeler on Friday.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Tavistock alternate captain Carter Arseneau played a key role in two weekend victories for the Braves. He picked up three goals and six points in two victories over the Paris Mounties.

Applejacks utilize offseason player movement change to recruit Lebold expects elevated play from entire division

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

The Wellesley Applejacks finished fourth in the Provincial Junior Hockey League's (PJHL) Doherty Division last season and a solid playoff run has the head coach optimistic about this year's campaign.

Head coach Derek Lebold said the team lost nearly a dozen players after last season.

"We have a lot of new faces. Our management team did a fantastic job and it was a busy offseason. There were some new rules implemented with some dropdowns from junior B. I think every team was working the phones a lot in June and July."

He added the three veterans Wellesley was able to acquire through the loosening of transfer rules will give the team a boost.

"We knew them from the Kitchener-Waterloo area, so

we have a high degree of comfortability bringing them in."

Among the new faces is six-foot-two, 225-pound, Waterloo native Ian Speiran from the Elmira Sugar Kings who has three assists in two games. Speiran's teammate, Rhyse McCloskey, has also joined the team along with Ian Gedney who was a part of a strong St. Marys Lincolns team last season. Riley Noble also has several years of junior experience, playing two seasons in the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League (GOJHL) and two more in the Ontario Junior Hockey League (OJHL).

"I was skeptical about the rule change at first," Lebold said. "I thought it was going to create a lot of discrepancy in skill level but every team in our division did a phenomenal job in our division looking at the guys they got. For the overall fan experience, it is going to be fantastic hockey."

Lebold added the pace against Woodstock on Friday night was as fast as he's seen around the league since each team has three or four more players with a higher level of junior experience.

"It's a good thing for the league, overall. I am always going to be an advocate for letting guys play hockey as long as they can and the rule allows for players to age out at 21 in the PJHL. Overall, I think it's going to be a good thing," he added.

Wellesley played in front of nearly 700 fans in Woodstock to open the season, though Lebold figured it was a few hundred more than the official number. The

Applejacks won the Schmaltz Cup three seasons ago at the Woodstock District Community Complex, something Lebold, as an assistant with Wellesley at that time, has fond memories of.

"It's a great atmosphere, that's a great hockey team and we are excited about the opportunity to answer back on Saturday at home against them."

Overall, Lebold said he and his staff are pleased with the team's first two games but there is certainly room for improvement.

"We had leads in both games and wanted to establish ourselves more defensively. We had a 3-2 lead in Friday's game (against Woodstock) and spotted them five goals with some undisciplined play, so we have a lot to learn from in that regard."

Wellesley had a 2-0 lead on Saturday against New Hamburg before letting the Firebird tie it up, though the Applejacks did win in overtime.

"I was really proud of the resiliency our guys showed and it's never easy on the tail end of a back-to-back against two good teams to open the season. They showed a lot of passion to win a hockey game in that one."

The only change in the Wellesley coaching staff is the return of Brock Gerber, who led the team to the PJHL title a few seasons ago as general manager.

"He's going to help with the forwards as an assistant coach. We've brought some additional experience and he's been great so far."

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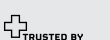
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What a card

VINTAGE VIEWS

By Tim Mosher

Tavistock and District Historical Society

The early Tavistock Gazette published very brief notes every week about local communities. In the June 12, 1902, edition, the column about New Hamburg said, "Raymond the magician is showing here this race week." The Gazette of Sept. 6, 1944, under the tiny title, "Fair Opened," wrote, "Magic tricks by Clifford Wettlaufer," performing as part of local entertainer Fred Funk's program of singing, tin-whistle numbers and a dance with Mr. Funk conducting an orchestra at the Tavistock Fall Fair.

This photo is most likely of young Raymond as the clothing and photography give a lot of clues. His very formal wing-tip collar was common in 1900, and he might be wearing a stiff,

one-button bosom (a fake shirt-front), sometimes called a dickey. Dickey came back in fashion to a certain extent about 65 years later when I remember some boys in my public school wore false turtlenecks under their open shirt collars (a small piece of fabric over the chest, attached to a rounded neck to give the impression of wearing a full turtleneck).

The studio setting and posing stool are consistent with the earlier period. By the 1940s, men's suits, collars and photo studio settings were vastly different. Also, this photo was made on a glass negative, which was the international standard of picture taking 125 years ago, whereas by the 1940s celluloid/film had almost entirely replaced the heavy, fragile, light-sensitive glass negative type.

The photographer was very likely Adrian O. Murray, who operated a photo studio in Tavistock from 1896-1903.

Little is known about both magicians/illusionists, but Wettlaufer is a well-known surname in the Tavistock area. If you have any information or photos of either



(PHOTO BY ADRIAN MURRAY; LSC SCAN #0038)

Local magician Raymond had a variety of tricks up his sleeve. Here, he's creating the illusion of a card floating midair.

Raymond (which could be a stage name) or Clifford Wettlaufer, the magicians, please contact me at the email address below.

This week's history mystery: This question is open to all ages.



(PHOTO BY ADRIAN MURRAY; LSC SCAN #0039)

Raymond played on the stereotype of the magician who pulls a rabbit out of a (top) hat.

How does Raymond's illusion of holding the playing card mid-air work? Note that this is not a trick photo; the card really is between his hands "floating." The first reader to send the correct answer



(PHOTO BY ADRIAN MURRAY; LSC SCAN #0037)

Card tricks and illusions were clearly an important part of Raymond's act.

to me at tim_mosher@hotmail.com will have their name and the name of their community or rural route number published in the next edition. All answers must be received by 10 a.m. Sept. 30.

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Maples Home for Seniors celebrates Engagement Day

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Long-Term Care Community Engagement Days were celebrated across Ontario last week, including at The Maples Home for Seniors in Tavistock.

The event offered an opportunity for residents, staff, families and community leaders to connect, share stories and recognize the vital role long-term care homes play in communities across the province.

Guests at The Maples enjoyed an afternoon of music performed by Stratford's Conn Smythe, along with refreshments. Executive director Joan Hergott welcomed visitors and led tours of the facility. She was joined by East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor Phil Schaefer and deputy mayor Brad Smith. Regrets were received from Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman and MP Arpan Khanna.

"All politicians agreed that long-term care homes are vital members of their communities, supporting the local economy as major employers and as users of local businesses," said Hergott.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)
Maples resident Mary Brooker enjoys the outdoor celebration with local dignitaries.

She added everyone has a role to play in improving the lives of Ontario's seniors, noting The Maples is fortunate to have the ongoing support of Tavistock and area residents.



Maples resident Raymond Ramseyer chats with East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor Phil Schaefer and executive director Joan Hergott during Community Engagement Day in Tavistock.



Sharing in Engagement Day activities are, from left, East Zorra-Tavistock deputy mayor Brad Smith, Al Gunn, Ken Mogk and Wally Schmitt. Standing are Maples caregivers Katelyn Gingerich and Crystal Finch, with Mayor Phil Schaefer.

Gazette Puzzles

HELLO AUTUMN

A	T	I	Q	U	A	P	G	I	N	Z	A	Q	G	E	A	M	R	O	H
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Celebrating cinnamon, the spice with all things nice

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



Cinnamon is a sensational spice derived from the inner bark of several tree species from the genus *Cinnamomum* in the family Lauraceae. Heaps of holistic health help are found in “true cinnamon” or Ceylon cinnamon, which originated in Ceylon or today’s Sri Lanka.

Cassia, meanwhile, is the affordable most widely used supermarket spice, native to China. Cinnamon was imported to Egypt as early as 2000 BC, it is symbolic and ceremonial in The Bible, a prized gift among nations, traded through the Middle Ages, and it continues century after century to be a valuable commodity. In 2023,

world production of cinnamon was at an astounding 238,403 tonnes.

Cinnamon is an all-natural alternative supporting the body inside and out from top to toe. This amazing aromatic spice is rich in an array of antioxidants, helping combat free radicals throughout the body and, in turn, decreasing inflammation.

Ready, set and go with a few fast facts. Cinnamon, one super spice, supports healthy blood sugar by increasing insulin sensitivity. One to six grams of cinnamon daily, whether in a high-quality supplement or added for mega-mealtime magic, is a fabulous medication-free option to help

drop blood sugar. Be patient, as slow and steady wins the race when using herbs courtesy of Mother Nature.

Cinnamon is showing promise with improving memory and cognitive function. Cinnamon may also lower LDL or the lousy cholesterol and support healthy blood pressure. Simply sprinkling cinnamon love freely on top your favourite foods may help lower the risk of a stroke or heart disease. Cinnamon has antimicrobial and anti-fungal properties, proving why it’s an all-star ingredient in chemical-free toothpastes for treating bad breath and toothaches.

Cinnamon is not limited to inside the body. For a warm and welcoming home, boil cinnamon sticks on the stove or place a few drops of cinnamon essential oil in a diffuser. Either is a one-way ticket to tease the senses guilt-free without indulging in baked goods.

Cinnamon is used in cooking culinary creations across the globe. This warming and comforting spice is a taste sensation whether the dish is

savoury or sweet. From sunrise-surprise in oatmeal, homemade granola, pancakes or French toast, cinnamon doesn’t stop there. Add to coffee, tea, apple cider and stupendous smoothies for delightful drinks. Cinnamon is the crowned jewel in apple pie, crisp, oatmeal raisin cookies, rice pudding, strudels, apple muffins and the all-mighty cinnamon bun. And of course, who can forget Mexico’s world-renowned churros?

Cinnamon is not just for desserts, but a staple in savoury meat-based dishes in Morocco. Travel the globe at home and cook Greece’s kapama, Mexico’s cochinita pibil tacos and any dish seasoned with China’s famed five-spice powder. Persia’s jeweled rice and Indian biryani boast this flavour booster for palate-pleasing perfection.

As a Canadian, I love cinnamon in all my fall favourites; it’s a staple served during sweater-weather get-togethers with family and friends. From pumpkin-spice dessert and drinks to chili to roasting root veggies alongside maple syrup, the ultimate



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Try Nith Valley Apiaries’ cinnamon-infused pumpkin-spice honey and cinnamon honey for your daily dose of this all-star spice.

sidekick, cinnamon, is a one-stop spice.

Supporting local farm-to-table goodness is always in style, and this holistic nutritionist is enamored with Nith Valley Apiaries’ cinnamon infused pumpkin spice honey and classic cinnamon honey for the perfect scone spread.

Happy fall harvest days full of cinnamon kisses!

Real estate myths

EXPERT REAL ESTATE ADVICE

By Isabel Livingston



To those who don’t frequently follow the market, it can be challenging to separate the myths from the truths, and that can be unsettling, especially if you are thinking about getting into the market.

Assurance and confidence are the first two steps to creating a positive experience, and what better way to have those things than by gaining the knowledge to make an informed decision. Today’s article is all about that; what is true and what is simply a myth when it comes to the real estate market?

“Home renovations will increase my profit when I sell.” Many sellers I have worked with are often under the impression that spending tens of thousands of dollars will increase their profit when they go to sell. While this can be true, in some cases it

isn’t. Sometimes sellers will see a higher purchase price but will only ever break even or sometimes even take a loss. It can feel challenging to know how much to put into your home to get the best return. This leads us into our next myth.

“If I have a realtor over, I have to sell.” This is absolutely not true. I have, first-hand, taken appointments to help clients gauge where their home stands in the market. We can help guide you through deciding if now is a good time to sell or not, if there are any home improvements that will help your profit or even just help you see where you stand in the local market. Knowing the value of your biggest asset is never a bad idea. Having a professional that studies the market will help you see where you land and what will be most beneficial for you!

(Oftentimes these appointments are free!)

“Realtors only help with buying and selling homes.” So many investors aren’t aware that many realtors help with tenant placement. We are able to assist a landlord with listing exposure and tenant screening. We are also able to help a tenant find the perfect place to call home. We know the areas and fair market value! Ask local realtors to see if they might be able to help you out with this process.

“The highest offer is always

the best offer.” While this is true sometimes, sometimes it is not. There are many other factors that play a role in what makes a strong offer. While price is important, conditions and closing dates can also play a huge role. Oftentimes, sellers are willing to take a small hit on price if it means a sure sale. (By no means am I suggesting you submit an offer with no conditions. When the time comes to submit offers, your realtor will help guide you with what path is the best.)

Buying and selling real estate

doesn’t need to leave you feeling uncertain. My goal is to help you feel informed and educated so no matter when the time comes for your next move or which agent you choose to work with, you can feel confident!

For questions or future article suggestions, don’t hesitate to reach out! You can reach me at 226-232-4236 or ilivingston-sells@gmail.com.

Isabel Livingston is a sales representative at Gale Group Realty Brokerage Ltd.

AUGUST REAL ESTATE STATS					ISABEL LIVINGSTON REAL ESTATE
	AVERAGE SALE PRICE	NUMBER OF SALES	NUMBER OF NEW LISTING	AVERAGE DAYS TO SELL	
WILMOT TOWNSHIP	\$915,381	16	28	32	
EAST ZORRA TAVISTOCK	\$535,750	5	6	55	
WELLESLEY/ WOOLWICH	\$861,885	31	44	33	
PERTH EAST/ SHAKESPERE	\$649,490	10	9	58	

Unexpected delights in a “drive-through province”

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



The exact numbers are tough to authenticate, but the trend is very clear; a lot of Canadians are opting not to visit the United States and are choosing, instead, to travel within Canada.

For example, some statistics suggest that up to 30 per cent fewer Canadians visited the U.S. in the first months of 2025, while at least 10 per cent more are vacationing here at home.

If you are among those planning in-Canada vacations in the next year, you will not be disappointed. I've had the opportunity to travel in eight provinces in the last year and a bit, and I enjoyed every visit. And I especially appreciated my time spent in three of Canada's less-visited provinces.

It's probably no surprise to know that the most popular provinces for visitors are Ontario, Newfoundland, Québec, British Columbia and Nova Scotia, but there are three provinces that are seen as “drive-through destinations” – places to pass through on your way to something more interesting. I am referring to New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Well, I have to say that if you are not stopping to explore these destinations, you're making a big mistake. Each of them holds amazing surprises for travellers, and each is worth a lengthy stay.

This week, I want to focus on something that was a complete

revelation to me during my visit to Saskatchewan a couple of months ago because, as an avid if generally inconsistent golfer, taking a golf holiday in Saskatchewan would never have occurred to me.

Wrong.

I got the chance to play in three unique settings north of Saskatoon, and each offered a terrific golfing experience. With a small group of travel/golf writers, I played Dakota Dunes Golf Links on the Whitecap Unceded Dakota Territory; Cooke Municipal in Prince Albert; and the three nine-hole courses at Elk Ridge, described as “Saskatchewan's premier destination resort.” I also stayed at Dakota Dunes and Elk Ridge.

And I have to say, for any golfer planning a golfers' group getaway, an itinerary including these three courses would be a guaranteed hit with your golfing companions.

What makes this special is the three golf courses are entirely different, one from the other.

We started at Dakota Dunes. Its full name is “Dakota Dunes Golf Links,” which may seem odd, since “links” courses are supposed to be beside the ocean and Saskatchewan is a fair distance from any salt water! But I think the name is appropriate – this is a “prairie links” course, with lots of sand, high-grass rough and plenty of challenges. It's also beautiful, presenting amazing scenes unlike

anything you would find in Ontario, and I guarantee golfers will be pleasantly distracted by the prairie dogs, striped squirrels and unique flowering plants that are some of the delights of the course.

And speaking of delights, our dinner at Dakota Dunes' Moose Woods Home Fire Grill was over-the-top amazing. The restaurant has a farm-to-table menu that features local ingredients; this being Saskatchewan, local ingredients include bison, elk, Bannock and more amazing tastes. We were presented with planks of roasted meats and vegetable, and I thought I had died and been transported to foodie heaven.

Our next golfing stop was Cooke Municipal. It's a lovely course, but for an Ontario golfer looking for something different, it was the least interesting of our choices simply because it is a beautifully care-for parkland style course that you might find at one of the finer courses in Ontario. That being said, it's in remarkable condition for a municipal course and I would recommend including it in your itinerary.

Last stop was Elk Ridge, where we had the chance to play all three nines – and repeat one, if we chose. The Elk Ridge courses are in the heart of Saskatchewan's northern boreal forest and the course designers have taken full advantage of the breath-taking opportunities that landscape offered them. That landscape is home to lots of wildlife; we saw deer during our rounds and it's not rare to spot the elk for which the course is named.

Personally, I loved it. So much so that on day two, when it started to rain as we finished the first nine of the day, I opted to replay nine I had already played the day before while the others hustled off to have a beverage in a warm and dry restaurant. I got soaked, but then the sun came out and by the end of the game, I was as warm and dry as my better-refreshed friends.

In addition to the golf, a highlight of our visit to Elk Ridge was a seminar on creating and preparing cocktails – an opportunity offered (for a fee) to visitors to Elk Ridge. By the time we finished mixing, sampling and resampling our cocktails, it was probably a good thing I had skipped the earlier drinks.

So, if you love food, drink, scenery, wildlife and even golf, don't just drive through Saskatchewan. Stay and discover one of the best destinations our country has to offer.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The unique “prairie links” topography at Dakota Dunes.



Dakota Dunes offers a unique experience for Ontario golfers.



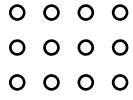
The incredible selection of “local ingredients” at Dakota Dunes.



Cooke Municipal golf course in Prince Albert.

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Apply by September 23, 2025, at 4:00 p.m.

Resumes are only accepted via email at hr@oxfordcounty.ca. Include the competition number and patrol location(s) in the subject line.

Roads Lead Hand opportunities may be available. Please note in your application if you are interested in filling this role.



To view the full job description and qualifications, please visit:

www.oxfordcounty.ca/careers

 **OxfordCounty**
Growing stronger together

Perth-Waterloo Holstein Show draws thousands to Stratford

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The annual Perth-Waterloo Holstein Show drew thousands to Stratford's Rotary Complex on Friday, with many calling it "one of the best-quality Holstein shows that Stratford has hosted in years."

The show, hosted by the Perth-Waterloo Holstein Breeders along with the Stratford and District Agricultural Society, saw numbers climb well above last year, with more than 180 head shown before judge Brian Carscadden of Blondin Sires in Guelph.

Up until three years ago, the event was limited to breeders from Perth and Waterloo counties. Since opening the show to entries from other regions, it has grown into one of the premier county Holstein

shows in Ontario.

The heifer classes were particularly strong with Canhope Holsteins of Palmerston taking junior champion honours with Canhope Major Blissful. Reserve junior champion went to Parallel Genetics of Mildmay with Fraeland Alpha Precious.

By night's end, the Oxford County farm of Charlie and Joanne Lupton, located on Embro Road just south of Stratford, claimed both the grand and reserve grand championships. Their four-year-old cow, Upridge Alleyoop Freezie, was named grand champion, while their red aged cow, Sweetview Avalanche Mitsou, earned reserve grand champion.

Honourable mention went to Carldot Delta Lambda Lilah, a spring two-year-old shown by Carldot Holsteins of Larry Krantz, South Easthope Township.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

From left, associate judge Jenn Carlton, Tyler Canning with reserve grand champion Sweetview Avalanche Mitsou, and Michael Lupton with grand champion Upridge Alleyoop Freezie, alongside judge Brian Carscadden, at the Perth-Waterloo Holstein Show in Stratford.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2025

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Tree Planting

9 a.m. to 12 noon

Come to add a greater variety of native trees to this lovely park for beauty and shade. Details and registration: <https://letstreewilmot.ca/events/>

New Dundee Community Park
667 Main Street

DOORS OPEN Waterloo Region

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Talented pianist, Jack Wyndham, will be performing a concert at 2 p.m. There will be displays, refreshments, and an opportunity to ring the tower bell. We hope you will support this event and bring your friends and family too!

Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

Tavistock Braves Smoked Pork Chop Dinner

Serving from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Advanced tickets only. Available from executive members or call Steve 519-320-8985
Queens Pavillion
Tavistock

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

Gospel Music Concert

6:30 p.m.

4 One Quartet from Mi. No Admission. Free Will Offering taken
Rosebank Church
1434 Huron Road, Petersburg

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

Wilmot special council meeting, pre-budget

6-9 p.m.

Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road West Baden

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

TOPS - Taking off Pounds Sensibly Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

TOPS is a non-judgmental weight loss support group. Need help on your weight loss journey. For info call Cathie 519-662-9273.
St James Church, Baden

Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship.

12 noon

Please register and buy your tickets by Sept. 19 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900.
Linwood Community Centre,
5279 Ament Line, Linwood

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Wilmot Council meeting

7-11 p.m.

Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road West Baden

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Wellesley Council meeting

6:45 p.m.

Council chambers
4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill

NATIONAL
DAY FOR TRUTH AND
Reconciliation
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 1

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting

9 a.m.

Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7

Perth East council meeting

7 p.m.

Council chambers
25 Mill Street East, Milverton

STAMP CLUB

Oxford Philatelic Society

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2-4pm) and 4th Tuesday (7-9pm)

September to May

If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection.

Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com
Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>
Church of the Epiphany
560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S1C7

MUSEUM/ARCHIVES EXHIBIT

"Retro Rewind to the 70's & 80's"

Every Saturday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. or by appointment until September 13

Donations appreciated.
Chesterfield Museum/Archives
816661 Oxford Road 22, Bright

FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES

Tavistock Seniors Activities

Pickleball Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon, 12-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052

Cards Monday, Wednesday afternoon 1-4, euchre, crib (bring board), etc. Just drop in to play, good to bring someone. Contact: Bob Routly 519-301-2118

Shuffleboard @ arena, Wednesday 12:30-4 and Thursday 10-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052.

VON Smart Seniors Exercise, Tuesday and Thursday morning 9-10; Village Manor 10:25-11:25. Contact: 519-539-1231 x 6285
Tavistock Memorial Hall
1 Adam St. Tavistock ON

EVERY WEDNESDAY

TOPS - Taking off Pounds Sensibly Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

TOPS is a non-judgmental weight loss support group. Need help on your weight loss journey. For info call Cathie 519-662-9273.
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The
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Gazette

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

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW:

- The Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:
 - Coming Events Word Ad 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

Shakespeare Optimists hear tips on preventing auto thefts

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Members of the Shakespeare Optimist Club came away from last week's meeting better informed on how to prevent vehicle thefts in Perth County.

OPP Const. Brad Keffer delivered an informative talk on the issue, noting that vehicle thefts continue to cause major problems for owners and insurance companies.

In February 2024, Keffer was assigned to the newly created Perth County Auto Theft Team, funded by the Province of Ontario through the Local Police Services Board. The team includes Keffer and analyst Laurentiu Cociu, who focus on prevention through community engagement and intelligence-led policing.

Keffer said auto thefts are increasingly happening in small villages and rural areas, not just

large metropolitan centres. Many of the thefts, he added, are tied to organized crime, with stolen vehicles often destined for overseas shipping within days or even hours.

Popular targets include Dodge Ram pickups, Chevrolet Silverados, Ford F-150s, Toyota RAV4s and Honda CR-Vs.

"It's how accessible and how quickly they can steal the vehicle without being noticed," Keffer explained.

He urged farmers and rural residents to be especially careful, as work trucks are often left with tools inside, parked in driveways, barns or fields with the keys still in them. Installing cameras and parking vehicles out of sight in a garage are strong deterrents, he said.

"Always take the keys or key fob out of the vehicle and lock it," Keffer said. "That is your first line of defence."



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

OPP Const. Brad Keffer, who leads the Perth County Auto Theft Team, explains prevention strategies to members of the Shakespeare Optimist Club.

UPCOMING EVENTS

TAVISTOCK FALL GUN SHOW

Sunday, October 5th 8:00am – 12:00pm Tavistock District Memorial Hall

3 Adam St., Tavistock.

Admission: \$5

(children 5 and under free).

The kitchen will be open with food, coffee, etc available

Weekly Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1. Marilyn Monroe | 6. Cambridge |
| 2. Pongo | 7. George Orwell |
| 3. Spain | 8. 8min, 20sec |
| 4. Saffron | 9. Omnivores |
| 5. Bradley Cooper | 10. TARS |

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6	8	3	1	7	4	9	5	2
3	1	6	7	4	9	8	2	5
5	4	7	2	3	8	1	6	9
8	9	2	6	5	1	4	7	3
7	6	9	4	8	2	5	3	1
1	5	8	3	9	6	2	4	7
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This property features a large corner lot, 2 main floor bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, a partially finished basement with 2 additional rooms, plus a family/rec room. Single detached garage. Go to Kiji Ad ID 1724804443 or Facebook Marketplace, search "72 Carrall Street" for all of the details and photos. Must see! Contact 519-570-6931 or kristafrancisishere@hotmail.com.

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