

Tillsonburg POST



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Integrity commissioner clears BIA official of wrongdoing

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg's integrity commissioner found no wrongdoing by the former chair of the board of the Downtown Tillsonburg BIA and its executive director during a recent investigation.

In a report to council that was accepted as information by council at Monday's meeting, John Mascarin of Aird and Berlis outlined the complaint and decision in a report dated March 9.

The report stated: "It alleges that the former Chair of the Board, Allison Biggar (the "former member"), and the board's Executive Director, Mark Renaud (the "director"), contravened subsection 5(1) of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act by failing to declare conflicts of interest and recusing themselves from participation in the consideration of a matter at that meeting." It alleges that former member and director had indirect pecuniary interests in that the applicant, Chrissy's Catering, asked for support for its Canada Day breakfast planned for 2026, which the Station Arts Centre receives, and that Biggar should have declared a pecuniary interest at a board meeting as she is also the treasurer of the Station Arts Centre board.

In his report, Mascarin stated the application was filed improperly as it requests a ruling under the municipality's Code of Conduct – as the BIA board is appointed by council – and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. He said it is not possible to investigate both and the investigation continued under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. He also ruled a complaint can't be filed against the director as this position is not a board member appointed by council.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

MAPLE SYRUP SEASON

John Danbrook checks buckets for the amount of sap during a cold March morning. The plastic buckets replaced the traditional tin ones, which were soldered. The family produces about 300 liters of syrup per year. Story on page 10.

Retail plaza planned for former Peavey Mart location

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The developer behind Tillsonburg's Northgate Plaza will transform the former Peavey Mart store into a new retail hub with multiple retailers.

Chilliwack, B.C.-based Kermar Holdings has purchased the building and plans to turn it into a 25,000-square-foot retail plaza. Plans are to create up to nine units, with the exact number depending on the size requested by the tenants.

Asked about expanding his investment in the Tillsonburg commercial market, Casey Kerkhoff of Kermar Holdings, answered, "There is some space for more. There's quite a few establishments that should be there (Tillsonburg), that are not."

The units in the plaza will range from 1,500 square feet to 12,500 square feet. The roofed-in area without walls at present will be enclosed.

"We're going to remodel the total façade so it will look like a new building," he said.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

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New plaza to add several commercial spaces

CONTINUED FROM FRONT



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

The former Peavey Mart store will be converted into a plaza with multiple retail storefronts. The open area that was the garden centre will be closed in as part of the work.

Giant Tiger?

Being more specific about establishments that are not in Tillsonburg and should be, Kerkhoff said he has had numerous requests from Tillsonburg residents to bring Giant Tiger to town.

“It’d be a great place for Giant Tiger, but that’s up to Giant Tiger,” he said, stressing there is no deal with Giant Tiger at this point.

Kerkhoff mentioned other possible

tenants, including a shoe store, appliance store, clothing store, pet store, food retailer, and additional restaurants. He did say they will be cautious not to overload the town with certain business types where the market is saturated, mentioning pharmacies as one example.

His hope is to start renovations within 90 days and to have some retailers open a few months later.

A zoning change will need to be completed for the property, said Rob Koppert, broker of record with Royal LePage R.E. Wood Realty. He explained that the current zoning is quite specific. Although Peavey Mart was a retailer, and using Giant Tiger as an example of a general retailer, Koppert said it wouldn’t be allowed at present. He also stressed there is no deal with Giant Tiger, but wanted to compare retail to retail.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

An artist’s rendering shows what the former Peavey Mart could look like after renovations into the Tillson Plaza.

“We’re applying to open up the zoning to allow more uses,” Koppert said. “That will take some time, likely six months.”

Kerkhoff revealed North Gate is fully rented. He couldn’t yet discuss the details of the tenant for one of the units, but said a clothing store will go in the other.

Called WillFlower Kids, the clothing store will sell baby/kid’s clothing, gear, cribs, strollers and accessories. The other part, known as WillFlower Play and Café, will be a café, play village and soft play area. The store will also have a community closet.

Integrity commissioner finds no wrong doing with complaint

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The issue centres around the applicant requesting funding for a Canada Day breakfast, although the Station Arts Centre as a non-profit organization, did receive funding. Biggar responded to that request on Aug. 7, denying the funding. The applicant continued to communicate and asked to speak to the entire board. That meeting was to take place on Oct. 1, but did not due to a lack of quorum. The director informed the applicant the meeting was rescheduled to Oct. 9, but a representative from Chrissy’s Catering did not attend, according to information provided from the BIA. Mascarin contacted the applicant to see if this position was contested, but no response was received.

Mascarin concluded there was enough evidence to proceed with an investigation against the member, but found no wrong-doing.

“In the absence of a real and discernible pecuniary impact on the Arts Centre arising from the Board’s consideration of the Sponsorship Request, there is no factual basis upon which we can conclude that the Former Member, by virtue of her position as a director and officer of the Arts Centre, had

a real and discernible indirect pecuniary interest in the Sponsorship Request within the meaning of section 2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act,” he wrote in the report.

Further, he said if an indirect pecuniary interest did exist, it would only come into play if the matter was considered by the board, which it wasn’t as the first meeting was cancelled due to a lack of quorum and a representative of Chrissy’s Catering did not attend the rescheduled meeting.

The Municipal Act allows the applicant to file an application directly with a judge with the Ontario Superior Court of Justice to fur-

ther contest there was a contravention of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Although he wasn’t named personally in the report, Chrissy’s Catering co-owner Marcel Rosehart was surprised his business was named in the report, as well as there were numerous references to “he”. In previous complaints to the integrity commissioner about Tillsonburg councillors, the identity of the complaints was not revealed.

“I am curious why my name was listed when in previous complaints they never listed the name of the complainant,” Rosehart said. “I was shocked.”



Rob Koppert
Broker of Record/Owner



Brandon Koppert **



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EDITORIAL

Local agriculture is not just an industry, it's the backbone of our communities

There are few better places to live and work than rural southwestern Ontario when it comes to access to local food.

In our communities, fresh meat, eggs, milk, produce and grains are not abstract products shipped in from far away. They are grown, raised and harvested by our neighbours. They are the result of generations of knowledge, hard work and stewardship on the farms that surround us.

That kind of proximity to our food system is something many people elsewhere in the world and in our country no longer have, and it is worth recognizing and protecting.

Local agriculture feeds our families, but it also does much more than that.

Farmers help drive the local economy by supporting local businesses – equipment dealers, feed mills, veterinarians, seed suppliers, processors, truckers, retailers and countless other small businesses. They sponsor local sports teams, donate to community fundraisers, volunteer with service clubs, support fairs and 4-H, and consistently show up whenever their communities need them.

In many ways, the strength of our rural communities is inseparable from the strength of the farm families who live and work among us.

That's why supporting local agriculture cannot be limited to a slogan or a feel-good message during planting and harvest season. It has to mean something real. With

spring planting around the corner, farmers are grappling with increased fertilizer costs and higher fuel prices due to global situations.

There needs to be an understanding of the pressures farmers face every day, from fluctuating commodity prices, high input costs and uncertain economic conditions to labour shortages, shifting government policy, severe weather, climate change, pests, disease and the simple reality that much of what determines a farm's success is outside a farmer's control.

It has to mean recognizing farming is not just a lifestyle, but a business built on slim margins, long hours and enormous risk.

And it should also mean giving farmers the support they need not only economically, but personally. If we value fresh local food, vibrant rural communities and a strong local economy, then we must value the people who make all of that possible.

Local farms keep money circulating in the local economy and the farmers who work day and night to keep those farms running support community life far beyond the farm gate.

Agriculture is central to the identity of our local communities and farmers face real pressures that deserve public understanding and support. Supporting farmers means buying local when possible, advocating for fair policy and recognizing their broader contribution to community life.



Tundra swans - spring migration.

(ALIYAH HELSDON PHOTO)

PHOTOGRAPHERS WANTED

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

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

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

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www.tillsonburgpost.com

A child's perspective on appreciating the little things in life



EVERYONE HAS A STORY TO TELL

ROBIN KRAFFT

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

The Tillsonburg Fair Mini Queen, seven-year-old Lily Wegg, has been enjoying her reign. She's made many public appearances: at the Festival of Lights, in the parade and at the Founders Festival.

"I get to do lots of cool things," Lily said. "I got to ride a pony with my sash and crown. I got a VIP bracelet and went on the rides for free. My favorite is the giant UFO, the Gravitron. It spins you around so fast you stick to the wall! I've been trying to win for a while."

Lily had to answer questions from a panel of judges including MPP Ernie Harde-

man, MP Arpan Khanna, and Mayor Deb Gilvesy. They wanted to know about her favorite subjects ("math and science"), her favorite thing in town ("the fair") and what she planned to do after the question period ("go on as many rides as I can for as long as I can"). The judges were clearly impressed with her answers.

Lily is in Grade Two at Annandale Public School, and she's very involved in her community. She volunteered to decorate smile cookies for the sixth time this year.

"I started when I was four or five," Lily said. "It's fun, and I get to meet people. I like making happy faces. I do them a lot when I'm drawing."

She volunteers at the cotton candy booth on Canada Day, and she's also a Girl Guide.

"Girl Guides, it's really a volunteer thing," Lily said. "We get to sell cookies and raise money for events. We make crafts and learn about new things. We made posters about what we'd like to happen, and I made a poster about world peace."

Lily is creative and inquisitive. She has a special art box to store her creations, enthusiastically describing a moon drawing that she recently completed with pur-

ple scented marker for the crescent moon surrounded by flowers and leaves "in teal and pink." She enjoys scavenger hunts and science, too, using her imagination to mix and experiment.

Lily described her favorite trips and vacations, including the salty ocean waves in Cuba, a souvenir coin machine in Niagara Falls, and catching a big catfish at Long Point with her papa, but the common denominator was making friends.

"I made a new friend in Cuba," Lily said. "We played together by the pool. I always make a lot of friends when I go camping with my Papa. I've never gone camping once when I didn't make a friend."

Congenial Lily enjoys lots of social activities like swimming at the community centre pool, bike riding, and skating.

"My mom works at the Senior Centre, so we go to the pool quite a bit," Lily said. "My Papa and Bama have a pool too, and an ice rink. I've been skating since I was about three."

For her seventh birthday, Lily had a specific theme in mind based on her favorite singer, Olivia Mae Graham. Lily has been to several of Graham's concerts. She wrote

to Graham and invited her to the party. The country-pop singer/songwriter arrived at the party with a gift, some of her merchandise, and laces for Lily's new birthday boots so that they could match.

"She came and played a song for us," Lily said. "She had some cake, it was a giant boot, and she brought a present. I'm inspired by her. She makes a lot of nice songs. I listen to her song "Mean Girls" over and over. I like it because it's about how she was bullied and she doesn't want that to happen to other kids."

Lily has given some thought to what she might like to do in the future, including being a singer herself.

"I wanted to be a vet," Lily said. "It would be fun, I would get to see a lot of animals, but then I thought some might be aggressive. I think I'd like to be a teacher the most."

Kind, considerate, friendly Lily would be a wonderful teacher but for now, she's enjoying school, her pet cats Ory and Gus, family time, and friends. Tillsonburg is great place to grow up, and there's something to be grateful for every day. That's a lesson for us all.

The story of Canada's national animal: the beaver



**THE
STAGE
IS THE
WORLD**

LAUREL A. BEECHEY

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

This Tillsonburg Post's publishing date is March 26, 2026. Using it, we will slip back 51 years and 2 days ago when a very large rodent became Canada's national symbol on March 24, 1975.

A rodent? Why not the Caribou? The mighty moose? Polar bear? Grizzly bears? Perhaps, thinking big and powerful, would send the wrong message? If it had to be a rodent, could they have at least used our little, cute, and fuzzy rodent, the chipmunk? I suppose that isn't a serious enough description of Canada either.

Who suggested Canada's biggest rodent, the beaver [castor canadensis] and why? We can thank Sean O'Sullivan, who at just 20 years-old was the youngest Member of Parliament elected to the House of Commons.

In late 1974, New York State Senator Bernard Smith planned to declare the beaver as their state symbol. That was when the beaver hit the fan, so to speak and ratcheted up the people on either side of the boarder declaring exclusive rights of the beaver. Sean, while working as a MP, also continued his part-time studies at Brock Uni-

versity

The CBC program 'As It Happens' told the story and thousands of Canadians wrote back to 'Keep the Beaver Canadian.' Petitions were started, post cards, drawings and letters written to the government and newspapers loved it! One letter from A Mississauga, writer begged the minister to act forcefully: "Don't let them Yanks steal everything from us. They already have our land, businesses, oil, water etc. etc. Please don't let them take our beaver."

Passions were taking over, but fortunately, no war was declared over the beaver.

Senator Smith spoke to 'Sean, "I see no reason why Canada and the State of New York cannot share the same animal, who happily lives in our respective geographical areas."

He was correct as there is no difference between our and their beavers, as the species exists across North America and not to just one country.

When Smith's legislation proceeded and eventually passed, the president of the Oregon State Senate wrote humorously to the New York Times, that the citizens of his state protested the New York action by "raising their tails in protest," asking the state, tongue-in-cheek, to "keep your hands off our beaver."

What attributes does the beaver have that were so important to two countries? Perhaps the most notable is, that besides humans, the beaver is the only mammal known to manufacture its own environment. The beaver is an ecosystem engineer, and its building and logging activities are key to maintaining the health of our wetlands.

The Canadian Wildlife Federation's website describes the beaver as the following: "Industrious and Hardworking: Known for its relentless work ethic (the "busy beaver"), it represents a hardworking Canadian spirit.

"Nature's Engineer: Beavers are unique in their ability to significantly alter their environment by building dams, demonstrating ingenuity and environmental impact.

"Hardiness and Resilience: Thriving in cold, northern climates, the beaver symbolizes survival and strength.

"Historical Significance: The beaver was central to the fur trade, driving early Canadian economic development and exploration, which literally drove the beaver to the brink of extinction! Fortunately, the species recovered.

"Distinctive Identifier: With its unique tail and powerful teeth, it is recognized as a quintessential Canadian icon."

Sean prepared a one-sentence bill to recognize the beaver as a symbol of the sovereignty of the Dominion of Canada. He and MP Joe Clarke presented this private member's bill C-373, "to protect the beaver as a popular symbol, reserved to Canadians by declaring the beaver a national symbol." The bill received extensive media coverage and public support. It was debated in the House of Commons on January 24, 1975.

At the second reading debate in the House of Commons, February 21, 1975, Sean spoke, saying: "There must be more to life than just financial facts and figures. There must be things to touch one's soul, heart, and emotions if we are to be complete persons and a whole nation. That is the importance of symbols".

Senator Muriel McQueen Fergusson, spoke in defence of the bill, quoting everyday Canadians who had written to their MPs, such as Constance McDermid of St. Catharines, who noted that the beaver "stands for industry and faith. And "The little creatures build well." Janice Newton of Halifax asked to "keep the beaver Canadian. It is as Canadian as the maple leaf. Maybe even more."

The bill was officially passed on March 24, 1975. That same year Sean graduated with distinction. Thank you, Sean!

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Nominations open for citizen of year

Nominations are officially open for the 2026 Tillsonburg Citizen of the Year Award.

This award shines a spotlight on individuals who bring energy, generosity, and heart to our community. Whether their impact has been felt over the past year, or through years of quiet dedication, we want to hear their story.

Anyone who has made an outstanding contribution to Tillsonburg through volunteerism, leadership, or meaningful community involvement.

The deadline for nominations is Friday, April 17, 2026 at noon.

Learn more and submit your nomination at: www.tillsonburg.ca/citizen

Tillsonburg POST

Guiding Principles

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Oxford MP's Jail Not Bail Act to be voted on this week

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna's Jail Not Bail Act will be voted on this week in the House of Commons.

The bill, which is co-sponsored by Brant MP and Shadow Minister for Justice and the Attorney General Larry Brock, aims to put an end to repeat offenders who are released on bail to commit another crime.

A release on the second reading pointed to "failed Liberal criminal justice policies", growing violent crime, and a "deeply concerning rise" in extortion.

The intent is Bill C-242 "would restore public confidence in the justice system by ensuring that individuals accused of serious, repeat, and violent offences face stricter bail conditions and are not routinely released back into communities to reoffend."

"Communities across this country are dealing with the real and immediate impacts of catch-and-release justice," said Khanna. "The Jail Not Bail Act is a common-sense response that prioritizes victims, restores accountability, and ensures that dangerous individuals are kept behind bars."

The bill had its second reading vote on Wednesday, after press time for the Post.

"I am cautiously optimistic," Khanna said on

Monday of its chances of passing after debate earlier in the day.

Although this is a Private Member's Bill and should be a free vote, Khanna expects Liberal members to be whipped.

"I understand the Liberal party like to play games with this stuff, especially when their failed policies have caused this problem," he said.

Khanna has been reaching out to members of all parties with stories of the impacts of the current policies that let previously convicted criminals out on bail. These include the impacts on victims of crime, victims' families, and police officers.

He noted that crime impacts people non-partisanly, with a bullet not caring about a person's political leanings. Khanna emphasized there is still a presumption of innocence with his legislation, but this bill will address those who commit crime after crime, even when out on bail.

"This is for those repeat offenders who have chosen a life of crime, and that's who were targeting with this bill," he explained.

The Liberals brought forward Bill C-14, which the Conservatives supported, that tinkered with bail, but did not go far enough.

"With extortion and violent crime at alarming rates, Canadians cannot afford further delay," added Khanna. "This is an opportunity for all parties to come together, put public safety first, and deliver real results for Canadians."

Pratt to be induced into OCNA Hall of Fame

STAFF

Grant Haven Media

On March 18, the Ontario Community Newspapers Association (OCNA) announced Bill Pratt (1928-2025) was one its four 2026 Hall of Fame Inductees.

The OCNA Hall of Fame recognizes and celebrates individuals who have made exemplary contributions to Ontario's community newspapers. Inductees are respected community news professionals who have remained passionate about the industry throughout challenges, opportunities and changes.

Bill Pratt was one of those individuals. A man who loved his community, and his community loved him.

Nominated posthumously for the OCNA Hall of Fame recognition by The Tillsonburg Post and Grant Haven Media, Pratt mentored generations of journalists, many crediting him with shaping their careers.

Named Tillsonburg Citizen of the Year in 1980, an honour his wife Marion shared in 2012, Bill received the Paul Harris Fellow Award, the Queen's Golden and Diamond Jubilee awards, the Confederation Medal, and the Holland/Canada Medal for his service.

Bill and Marion were the inspiration for the Pratt Gallery at Annandale National Historic Site. He was involved in the startup of many institutions and organizations in Tillsonburg. He was a co-founder of the Tillsonburg Great Ride 'n' Stride fundraiser in 1969, one year after the event originated in nearby Thamesford. The Great Ride 'n' Stride in Tillsonburg raised nearly \$600,000 in its first 49 years

and Pratt was its driving force, often the event's top individual fundraiser. He had won the trophy for top individual fundraiser for the 31st time in the 38 years since the trophy was first presented.

As editor/partner of Otter Publishing, Bill served as President of both the OCNA and the CCNA (Canadian Community Newspaper Association). As noted in his obituary, he felt it was his "duty to publicize and support people and their efforts to make good things happen."

Bill had graduated with a degree in journalism in 1950. He started his full-time career as a reporter for The Tillsonburg News after graduation, and took on the role of editor two years later in a newspaper career that spanned some 40 years.

"One of the duties he cherished, and detested, was writing the lead editorial for the Tillsonburg editions," said former Mayor and Tillsonburg News publisher Cam McKnight. "Unfailingly, as the deadline approached, Bill - with a cigar burning in his office ashtray - would be pounding on his old typewriter searching for the words to encourage or admonish Tillsonburg residents and municipal leaders. He would put the News' editorial sway, and it was considerable in those days, either behind or against local affairs and explain his reasoning for it."

Expanding on Pratt's influence, McKnight said, "Bill had the unique ability of being able to make his point without making an enemy. That trait followed him beyond just the newspaper arena and allowed him to influence many major projects in this town."

Decades after retiring, Pratt continued to take photos at annual town events, sharing them with the Post and the community.

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Former Norwich retirement home worker pleads guilty

LEE GRIFFI

Post Contributor

A former employee of the now shuttered Trillium Care Retirement Home in Norwich is scheduled to be sentenced in April.

Court documents show Julie Vitias has pleaded guilty to one count of fraud over \$5,000 under Section 380(1) (a) of the Criminal Code. A judge will hand down the sentence, which carries a maximum of 14 years in prison.

There is no mandatory minimum sentence, but other options include probation, a fine, and restitution. The judge will take into consideration the amount of money involved, whether there was a breach of trust, the offender's criminal history, and the impact on victims.

The now 51-year-old Tillsonburg resident is charged with one count of fraud over \$5,000 in February of 2025, following a six-month investigation by the Oxford OPP. Police found 26 people linked to Trillium Care Norwich had lost more than \$190,000.

A former employee who talked with other former Trillium staff expressed concern about the upcoming sentencing.

"As a group, we have spoken about these questions. The first one is a hard one. Yes, we are glad she is an-

swering for what she has done. But how we feel about it will depend on whether she actually has any consequences. The families of our residents deserve answers, and (Vitias) should have to pay them back. The families need closure, and they deserve it."

The statement added the group would not break confidentiality with family members of victimized residents they speak with. They added their biggest fear is Vitias won't get a harsh enough sentence.

"We are concerned about her not actually facing the consequences she deserves. Those families deserve public acknowledgement and a public apology for what she has done to them. She should have to reimburse them. And serve some time. Let her see what it's like to live under someone's control."

According to reporting and allegations from family members of residents, families were instructed to pay monthly fees via e-transfer. Instead of using an official company email, payments were allegedly sent to a personal email associated with Vitias. Families said they did not receive receipts or proper lease documentation.

The Post's sister paper, the Woodstock/Ingersoll Echo was first alerted to potential wrongdoing at the home by Ingersoll resident Miranda Guitard, who is married to the grandson of a former Trillium resident. She said rent payments were made via e-transfer, but the payment was

sent to a non-company address.

"I was very specific on every e-transfer I made. I would put a note for all the dollars I spent. The email she gave me was a Gmail, and I got a security question. She would fill in the answer and accept the money."

She added at that time, any email address of any employee was a name followed by @trilliumcarecommunities.ca.

"I never got any receipts. When I look back at it, holy s@#t on me," added Guitard.

Residents of a long-term care or retirement home are required to get income tax receipts at the end of the year for income tax purposes as well as monthly receipts following payment.

Vitias was removed from her position at the home in August of 2024 when police were notified and opened an investigation. Trillium closed on Nov. 11 of the same year and provided two weeks' notice to 18 residents and families, giving them little time to find new accommodations and jobs. The company sent an email to residents saying a lack of financial resources to sustain daily operations was the cause.

Vitias is expected to be sentenced on April 14 at 9 a.m. in Courtroom 2 at the Woodstock Courthouse at 415 Hunter Street. Several impact statements are expected to be delivered.

Straw Boss expanding and creating five new jobs in Mount Elgin through \$3.2 million investment

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

The Straw Boss, an Ontario producer of clean chopped straw and pellet bedding for the equine, poultry, and farm retail industry, is boosting local manufacturing and creating five new jobs in Mount Elgin.

The investment was announced by MPP Ernie Hardeman in a news release on March 10.

"By supporting strategic investments from regional businesses, our government is protecting Ontario's workers and creating the conditions for a strong, stable, and resilient economy that can weather any storm," said

Hardeman. "The investment by The Straw Boss will support growth and innovation across the local manufacturing sector and create more good-paying jobs for workers and families in Oxford."

With this investment, The Straw Boss will be expanding its Mount Elgin facility by 6,800 sq. ft., adding new equipment, and increasing power supply to the mill. These upgrades will increase efficiency and output to meet growing market demand for its products across North America.

In support of the investment, the Ontario government is providing The Straw Boss with \$483,136 in funding through the Regional Development Program's South-

western Ontario Development Fund (SWODF).

"These funds supported a 6,000 square foot expansion, helped us secure new equipment and allowed us to hire 5 new staff," said Mike Hendriksen, owner of The Straw Boss. "We're excited to continue growing and expanding while creating good-paying jobs in the province."

To date, the Ontario government has supported more than 180 projects through its SWODF program, leveraging more than \$2.6 billion in new investments and helping to create over 5,500 jobs.

Straw Boss products can be found locally through regional feed/farm stores and pet suppliers, as well as Home Hardware in Canada.

*Tillsonburg Post is available for free
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WEEKEND QUIZ

by Jake Grant

1. What 1994 film features a character describing a Quarter Pounder with Cheese as a "Royale with Cheese" in France?
2. What legendary musician wrote "Purple Haze," "Little Wing," and "Voodoo Child"?
3. The Pyramid of Giza is the only ancient wonder still standing today — what other ancient wonder was also located in Egypt?
4. What is the name of the galaxy closest to our Milky Way?
5. In the Bible, who is the eldest son of David?
6. Which country is known as Suomi?
7. How many lines are in a limerick?
8. Do you male or female toads croak?
9. What magical phrase did Ali Baba use to open the cave?
10. In Toy Story, what is the name of the boy who owns Woody and Buzz?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

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Empowering Communities: \$36,800 in grants available for food security programs

The Oxford Community Foundation is thrilled to announce the availability of \$36,800 in grant funding from The Maple Leaf Community Fund to support capital-related initiatives that strengthen food security programs—initiatives that promote dignity while building individual and community capacity across Oxford County.

Honouring a Legacy of Food and Community

The Maple Leaf Community Fund was established in honour of the late Harvey and Erma Beaty of Thamesford. Harvey founded Cold Springs Farm in 1949, guiding its growth from a small family farm into a significant agri-food enterprise that later became part of Maple Leaf Foods. Maple Leaf Foods' rich history spans more than a century, rooted in the amalgamation of several of Canada's most notable food companies.

This fund reflects the Beatys' enduring legacy and their belief in strong, resilient communities built around access to nutritious food.

Supporting Community Resilience Through Food Security

The \$36,800 in available funding will support capital-related initiatives for food security programs that promote

dignity and foster long-term community well-being. Grants are intended to support initiatives aligned with one or more of the following focus areas:

1. Food literacy – Supporting access to information, knowledge, and skills that enable individuals and families to provide healthy food for themselves (e.g. nutrition education/food safety/meal planning)
2. School and other nutrition programs – Promoting access to healthy meals through education and direct programming. (e.g. school breakfast, lunch, or after school programs; nutrition and fitness programs.)
3. Sustainable initiatives beyond conventional food bank models – Strengthening long-term food security and self-sufficiency (e.g. social enterprises supporting food security; community gardens; social profit enterprises offering food-related training for unemployed individuals, at-risk youth or single parents)

The application portal opened Feb. 9 and closes April 10. Organizations can apply by visiting www.oxfordcommunityfoundation.org where additional details and application guidelines are available.

Tillsonburg well goes through upgrades

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg Well 7A is going through some upgrades.

Located on Broadway, the well was drilled in 1977 and redrilled in 2009. There has been an ongoing issue with environmental arsenic in the well, and now the Housing Enabling Water System Fund is allowing for updates to deal with the arsenic at the source.

Don Ford, Senior Manager of Water and Wastewater Services, explained under Ontario drinking water guidelines, up to 10 parts per billion is acceptable. Currently, Well 7A averages 1.3 ppb. The water from the plant is piped to the Fairview Treatment Facility on Langrell Ave, and off of Quarter Line Road.

"In the past the water from this well could be utilized but it had to go to the Fairview Treatment Facility," Ford said.

The funding will allow installation of a new filter system to remove the arsenic at the Well 7A site, instead of piping it and then treating it. This will allow using the full capacity of Well 7A without having to

blend it with other water. Water from Well 7A will still go to the Fairview facility, but only for UV treatment.

"You remove that barrier, you can use all the water directly from the well without blending it," Ford said.

Speaking more to arsenic, Ford said it is a naturally-occurring substance which can have negative health impacts. It is often found in deep wells closer to rock. County staff constantly test the water to ensure arsenic levels are within acceptable limits.

"It's safe now but this is going to improve operations, make everything more resilient and add to what we can provide," he explained.

Work at the well commenced in November and will be complete by December. The project involves reconstruction of the building to allow room for the new filter, installing a pressurized filter and updating computer controls.

The cost is \$6.8 million. This will be offset by the provincial grant of \$2 million, with the remainder funded from county water development charges and Tillsonburg water reserves



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Tillsonburg's Well 7A is undergoing significant upgrades to install a new arsenic filter in the plant. The work is expected to take until December to complete. The water has always been within guidelines for safe drinking water, but the upgrades will increase efficiency and capacity.

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New hospital board is recruiting for board of directors

HOSPITAL HAPPENINGS

LISA DAHM

Integrated Executive Assistant, AHI/TDMH

Have you ever wondered what the hospital board of directors is responsible for? What do they even do?

First, some background. In Ontario, hospitals are separately incorporated not-for-profit corporations, required to be governed by an independent, local, voluntary, and skills-based board of directors. This is mandated by the Public Hospitals Act, which sets out the framework within

which hospitals operate and the responsibilities of their boards. Public hospitals are regulated by, and accountable to, government and other partners, primarily by way of legislation, governing documents and contract or funding agreements.

Alexandra Hospital, Ingersoll (AHI) and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital (TDMH) are lucky to have had many committed and forward-thinking members on their boards over the past several decades. You know them - they are your neighbours and fellow community members, volunteering their time to make sure our local hospitals continue to provide the best care possible,

close to home in our communities.

Hospitals boards are responsible for overseeing the quality of patient care and ensuring that hospitals function efficiently, effectively and economically. They provide the leadership necessary to ensure that hospitals offer the best patient care possible while functioning within the legal and regulatory framework, providing governance oversight of operations through the work of the President & CEO, and the Chief of Staff.

In 2013, the individual boards of AHI and TDMH entered into what they called a "joint venture agreement" to strategically explore opportunities for integration between the

two hospitals. Before that, each hospital's board had operated completely separately.

Since that first joint agreement, the AHI and TDMH boards then agreed to operate as a joint board, holding combined board meetings at which matters of both hospitals were discussed but decisions were made separately for AHI and for TDMH. In June of 2026, the AHI and TDMH Boards, in preparation for upcoming integration, made the decision to become a "common" board. This means that the board of each hospital consists of the same elected members, while AHI and TDMH remain two separate legal operating corporations.

When AHI and TDMH formally integrate on April 1, 2026, the common board of directors will hold a meeting during which they will officially become one fully integrated board of directors of the new organization, Rural Roads Health Services (RRHS). Integrating two organizations into one is no small task and there has been a lot of strategic governance work over the past several years by past and current board members to get to this point.

The work of the board never really ends! The RRHS board of directors will be recruiting to join the board for the 2026-2027 year. The board is composed of members

collectively possessing knowledge and experience in governance, strategic planning, the health field, business management, financial and legal matters, collaboration, risk management, patient advocacy and volunteer leadership and/or public service.

If you are a dynamic person, who wants to play a part in community leadership and would enjoy being involved in strategic planning, governance, and ensuring the quality of patient care in your local health-care organization, please apply to join the group of wonderful volunteers currently on the board. More information on the board of directors page at www.RuralRoadsHealthServices.ca.

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Immerse yourself in Canada Reads



OCL BOOK TALK

HEATHER MATHERS

Community Librarian, Oxford County Library

Are you familiar with Canada Reads? Five books, five champions, one winner. Canada Reads is an annual “battle of the books” organized and broadcast by the CBC. Each year books are chosen by celebrity panelists and are based on the panelists’ preferences and profiles as readers. Here are this year’s books and champions:

A Minor Chorus by Billy-Ray Belcourt, Championed by Elle-Maija Tailfeathers

Intelligent and beautifully written, *A Minor Chorus* is the autofictional debut novel of queer Cree poet, Billy-Ray Belcourt. The novel follows an unnamed narrator who abandons his doctoral thesis and returns to the town where he grew up. The text is mainly made up of conversations turned into stories that bring modern queer and Indigenous experiences into focus. Champion Elle-Maija Tailfeathers is a writer, director, producer and actor. She is a member of the Kainai First Nation (Blackfoot Confederacy).

Searching for Terry Punchout by Tyler Hellard, Championed by Steve Glynn

Funny, sarcastic and poignant, *Searching for Terry Punchout* is about returning to your hometown and realizing you’re not as different as you hoped you were. A father and son reconnect after years of estrangement when the protagonist returns to his hometown to write an article for *Sports Illustrated* detailing his father’s uniquely violent history as a hockey player. As he spends more time with family and friends, he begins to realize that the sleepy town and people he left behind deserve more credit than he ever gave them. Champion Steve “Dangle” Glynn is the host of the Steve Dangle Podcast, a podcast that blends conversations about hockey with the latest in pop culture.

The Cure for Drowning by Logan Paylor, Championed by Tegan Quin

The Cure for Drowning is not only a brilliant, boundary-pushing love story but a Canadian historical novel that boldly centers queer and non-binary characters in unprecedented ways. The story is founded on a love triangle: there’s Kit, born Kathleen, who wears boy’s clothes and tries to outrace trains on horseback; there’s Rebekah, a posh French-German girl from Montreal; and, there’s Landon, Kit’s older brother, who is brutish to Kit but refined with Rebekah. This love triangle rips their families apart and sends them all on their own paths to war. Champion Tegan Quin is one half of the pop-indie twin duo Tegan and Sara.

Foe by Ian Reid, Championed by Josh Dela Cruz

This psychological thriller told in Ian Reid’s evocative style examines the nature of domestic relationships, self-determination, and what it means to be (or not to be) a person. *Foe* takes place in an old, isolated farmhouse in the not-so-distant future. The house is inhabited by Junior and his wife Hen, and their peaceful lives are interrupted by the arrival of a man in a business suit. Junior has been randomly selected for a scientific program and will be leaving home for the indefinite future, while his wife stays home with a companion. The shock of this announcement, coupled with his increasingly distant wife and the intruder’s vague explanations, sends Junior in a tailspin as he races to figure out what’s really going on. Champion Josh Dela Cruz is an actor, singer and dancer.

It’s Different This Time by Joss Richard, Championed by Morgann Book

In this second-chance romance, a twist of fate forces two former roommates to move back into their beloved New York City brownstone and face the events that led to their estrangement — and confront their unresolved feelings for each other. Raw and relatable, this debut novel will have you believing in second chances. Champion Morgann Book is one of Canada’s biggest book content creators.

Canada Reads will air on CBC from April 13 to April 16. Each day, one book will be eliminated until a winner is declared Canada’s must-read book of 2026. Want to be part of the hype? Read these titles yourself and select your favourite. These titles are available at the Oxford County Library and can be reserved today by visiting www.ocl.net.

Heather Mathers is the Branch Services Librarian at the Oxford County Library’s Tillsonburg Branch.



Alexandra Hospital Ingersoll
Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital

NOW RECRUITING VOLUNTEER BOARD MEMBERS

Recruiting for board members for Rural Roads Health Services (RRHS), representing Alexandra Hospital, Ingersoll, and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital.

The Alexandra Hospital, Ingersoll and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital are your community hospitals. We strive to provide excellent patient care and promote health and wellness for those we serve. As of April 1, 2026, our hospitals have integrated as Rural Roads Health Services in order to keep healthcare close to home.

RRHS Board members have a unique opportunity to help shape healthcare for our community. The Board’s governance responsibilities include oversight and accountability for both hospitals:

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We encourage applicants with a broad range of skills and experience to apply for consideration. Applicants should be prepared to attend 2-4 meetings per month. Successful candidates will reside or conduct business in Ingersoll, Tillsonburg or the surrounding catchment areas.

If this opportunity interests you, please forward a completed application form found at <https://www.ruralroadshealthservices.ca/about/board-of-directors/> plus your resume and references to:

Attention: Board Chair, Rural Roads Health Services
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The sweet taste of spring and continuing family traditions

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

One of the quintessential Canadian rites of spring is the making of maple syrup.

For the Danbrook family, making maple syrup means everyone pitching in to carry on a long-standing family tradition. The Danbrook family has been making maple syrup since John's great-grandfather started making it in Mapleton, where they lived at the time. Syrup production on the farm where the family lives now, outside of Tillsonburg, started when John's dad Keith, moved there in 1974.

After Keith moved to the long-term care home and John's son Tyler, purchased the home, syrup production continued there until the equipment expired.

"I bought new equipment, moved it over here, and we've been doing it together since then over here," John said, indicating his home across the street.

Making maple syrup could be called a labour of love, as it is labour-intensive. It starts with installing 450 taps in trees in the woodlot behind John's house. Each is food-grade, and the spiles are sprayed with alcohol before drilling holes to minimize the spread of bacteria and potential damage to the tree.

Collection is a family effort between John's wife, Jenny, children Tyler, Trevor, and Nichole, plus the grandchildren. Even with the big team, it still takes two to three hours. When the bucket system is used, sap collection should be done at the end of the day, as daytime warmth promotes sap flow.

"When it's running, you have to collect it every day," John said.

When he gets home after work, John oversees the boiling of the sap. Although this starts at the end of February, wood for the boiler needs to be cut and split beforehand. The boiler is stainless steel, and all the equipment is food-grade.

Boiling sap is not a small task, as it takes 40 liters of sap to yield 1 liter of maple syrup. Temperature is crucial; it must be 7° Fahrenheit above the boiling point of water, which changes with barometric pressure. The syrup then needs to be filtered and bottled.

Typically, the sap stops running at the end of March, and it's time for the family to enjoy the fruits of their labour. Usually, the end result is 300 liters of sweet maple



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Filtering maple syrup is one of the last steps before bottling. The entire Danbrook family pitches in to carry on the tradition of maple syrup production.

syrup.

"My dad's saying used to be when you can hear the frogs in the woods at night,

you're done," John said, adding when miller moths are found in the buckets, it's another sign.

Tillsonburg Teen Beat hosts special events just for teens

ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Contributor

Anita Foy, creator of Tillsonburg Teen Beat and Events, has been planning and hosting events for teens since 2021.

Foy and her children moved to Tillsonburg for a fresh start, but her teens found it hard to adjust at first. The pandemic influenced mental health, and young people who couldn't socialize with their peers for a prolonged period missed important formative experiences.

"Teen's mental health was affected by COVID," Foy said. "I had always volunteered at my kids' school, and the neighborhood kids called me Mom. There were always kids showing up at my door. When we moved here, I realized that there are so many kids out there that missed out; they're living via social media."

She planned a Teen Egg Hunt in 2024 to encourage socialization and to give youth an activity of their own. The event was held at Lake Lisgar Waterpark, adjacent to, but separate from, the Tillsonburg Kinsmen Club Easter Egg Hunt. Foy was grateful for their support and cooperation.

"It allowed us to grow and explore this opportunity," she said. "We couldn't have done it without the initial backing of the Kinsmen Club."

That first year she noticed a lot of kids spread out and hunting for eggs on their own, doing their own thing. By the second year, the event had tripled in size, with over 160 teens attending and socializing. She received many donations and she and her team of volunteers stuffed 4,800 eggs with treats, creating a veritable rainbow in the grass and among the trees.

"There are ten people who organize, set

up and clean up after," Foy said. "It's family-run. Me and my kids, friends, and some teens help out for their volunteer hours. Tim Hortons put in a prize basket, and Zehrs donated goodies to take home."

As Foy finalizes the planning for the third Teen Egg Hunt, donations of plastic eggs and foil covered eggs are gratefully being accepted. Details about the event will be provided on the Tillsonburg Teen Beat and Events FB page.

"It's great for homeschooled teens," Foy said. "It's an opportunity to make friends and socialize with others they might not otherwise meet. There are a lot of single parent families too, and kids have to be more self-sufficient, and this gives them a chance to enjoy something just for them. My idea and vision came from my kids."

The Teen Santa Potluck, held at The Spot in the Tillsonburg Town Centre, was a big hit last year. Teens brought food or treats, and a wrapped gift (\$20 limit) dispersed during a Christmas bingo game.

"It's an all-inclusive environment," Foy said. "I make sure all the kids are addressed; we engage with everyone. Our events are lighthearted, welcoming. It's for fun!"

Many parents follow the FB page looking for events for their teens and she's had numerous kids and parents approach her with gratitude for planning and hosting events. She welcomes their input and ideas for future activities.

Foy is looking forward to Teen Beat's first Teen Karaoke on March 15 at the Copper Mug, and a Luau in July. She would also like to plan a parent and teen summer event.

"Kids are still bonding with you in their teen years," Foy said. "Kids need connections even more. Teens still need you. I try



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Anita Foy, creator of Teen Beat and Events, plans special events for young people to socialize and celebrate in Tillsonburg.

to be who I needed when I was young."

Foy added that planning and helping out at events is a strong lesson for her kids, now aged 17 and 21. She knows they'll remember these traditions and events, and they enjoy seeking out anyone who seems to be having trouble joining in.

"If someone is alone, you go talk to them, that's where you make a difference," Foy said. "There's a stigma that we need to break. It doesn't matter what you look like, who you are, or where you come from. You fit in somewhere, and if you feel like you don't fit, you fit with us."

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TOWNSHIP OF NORWICH NEWS



Norwich eyes arena improvements

LUKE EDWARDS

Post Contributor

Norwich Township will seek outside help to determine how best to replace failing boiler systems in the arena at the community centre, all in an effort to extend the life of the building.

Councillors supported a staff recommendation at the March 10 council meeting to hire a mechanical engineer/hydraulics specialist to determine the appropriate scope and needs for the boiler replacement project. The specialist will

consider things like size, configuration, venting pathways, water-quality mitigation and flushing requirements. They'll also provide a budget estimate for tender.

"I'm not one to always hire contractors but I think this is one of those situations where we may need to turn to an expert," said Coun. Shawn Gear, adding the township should be looking at ways to keep the arena operational as long as possible since new arenas are costly.

The boilers in the arena's north-end system have been in a declining state

for a few years, and a staff report said failures mean they can no longer meet the needs of the arena, including the ice resurfacing machines.

Staff provided two other options, including foregoing hiring the specialist and simply replacing the boilers, or attempting to repair them. They estimated a \$125,000 price tag, though CAO Matt Smith said it was a very preliminary estimate.

Coun. Adrian Couwenberg suggested, based on some research he did, that the replacement could be done for far

cheaper and that he didn't see the need to hire a specialist. Smith said the specialist would help fine tune cost estimates.

Other councillors were comfortable with hiring the specialist.

"I think spending \$3,500 to make sure we're doing it right makes sense," said Coun. Karl Toews.

At the meeting, councillors also approved a staff report recommending replacement of two doors at the community centre, which a fire inspection found deficient.

New monument planned for Norwich Pioneer Cemetery

LUKE EDWARDS

Post Contributor

The Norwich and District Historical Society has been given the green light to move a sign at the Norwich Pioneer Cemetery and replace it with a monument they say will be more appropriate.

Councillors approved the plan following a presentation from the historical society's curator Matthew Lloyd at the March 10 meeting. The monument will act as a map of sorts showing the burial sites for those interred in the cemetery. Given its age, many of the grave stones are no longer legible, making it difficult for descendants

or members of the public to determine who's buried where.

A sign that's currently up at the cemetery and highlights some of the families who were the first settlers in Norwich, will be moved to the museum. The sign was installed in the 1960s and made sense at the time since Norwich didn't have a museum then.

"Now it confuses people because it doesn't relate to who's actually buried there," he said.

"The point of the monument would be to list everyone buried in the cemetery."

The project will be entirely funded by the society through grants and donations, Lloyd said.

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SPORTS

Homick, Buelow looking to build on ISU World Junior ice dance experience

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

Summer Homick and Nicholas Buelow's results may not have been what they wanted at International Skating Union Junior Ice Dance Championships March 6 and 7 in Talinn, Estonia.

But they will help the pair focus on what they need to do in order to advance up the sport's international rankings.

"The big idea was to go and get a lot of experience," said Homick. "I think we did that, we learned a lot last week."

"There is going to be a lot of good lessons we're taking away from this," Buelow agreed.

Previous international competition helped a pair at their first worlds, appreciating Talinn's beauty while realizing they were there with purpose.

"When we get fully into competition mode, we were locked," said Homick.

They opened with a strong 2.5-minute rhythm dance performance skated to the Back Street Boys Larger Than Life and Everybody, with one slight exception. Their feet hit during a no-touch step sequence, a momentary thing which would have been difficult to pick up with the naked eye. It was, however, caught in technical review and resulted in a seven-point deduction.

"We didn't fall or anything," clarified Buelow, happy with their overall skate apart from that notable exception.

"We thought we skated well and performed well," agreed Homick. "But that one thing cost us a lot of points."

Their rhythm dance score would be 49.38, the loss of those seven points effectively taking a top-10 finish off the table.

"A tough pill to swallow," admitted Homick. "It was hard to sleep that night."

Heading into the free dance portion of the competition the following day not where they wanted to be after the free dance, they still managed to put together a solid performance, garnering 76.48 points. That total reflected one other minor error on a twizzle (simultaneous, moving one-foot multirotational turns) segment which again, cost them.

Once again, however, the crowd's response to their routine was enthusiastic, spectators subsequently informing them it had brought them to tears.

"It made it better to know that despite some mistakes, people were rooting for us," said Homick.

Their 126.22 point total placed them 15th overall. Scores were reportedly down in general said Homick. Canadian Junior Ice Dance gold medalists Layla Veillon and Alexander Brandys finished fourth at junior worlds with a score of 160.58, roughly 10 points off their 'Canadians' total.

In the moment, there was disappointment. But time and a shift in perspective has helped them look back on an immensely successful season. Despite only being together two years and Homick battling injuries leading up to Canadians, they finished second there with a personal best performance, advancing to the world stage. While their overall performance fit in well, a couple of mistakes cost them in the standings. It was a measure of adversity, which however has only enhanced their determination to return and continue their skating journey.

"I think that's the most important part," said Homick. "We made it there and stuck together as a team."

"We've learned and need to be better."

"Now we go back to work for next season and prepare what we can," Buelow added.

A week after world juniors, they already were back on the ice in Barrie, working on basics and elements, beginning preparation for 'drilling down' segments of their new program.

"I think there is a little bit of fire in our bellies now to get going," said Homick. "I think the biggest motivation for success is disappointment."

"When you get knocked down, you get back up again."

Beyond working on next year, the pair is looking forward to performing at the Tillsonburg Skating Club's Ice Show 2026: Dancing with the Stars On Ice. Three shows are scheduled, Friday, April 17th at 7 p.m. and Saturday, April 19th at 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. In a sense, it's an opportunity for a personal thank-you in respect of much-appreciated ongoing support.

"The clubs do so much for us as well," said Buelow.

"We definitely feel that love," Homick concluded. "I think it's so special to have a community behind us."



(WILMA ALBERTI PHOTO)

Summer Homick and junior ice dancing partner Nicholas Buelow felt community support at world juniors.

Edward Jones

Looking for direction
in today's market?



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Financial
Advisor

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keegan.alvestad@edwardjones.com

Thunder come back to win against Erin, down two

MIKE HOLLY

Post Contributor

As of the last paper, the Thunder had forced a Game 7 versus the Erin Outlaws on the Monday night. Both teams were tired after playing on Saturday's 4-3 Thunder overtime win, and Sunday's 5-3 Thunder win.

Game 7 in Erin looked to be another battle between the two evenly-matched teams.

But the Thunder had gained the series momentum and was riding high going into the tilt. Erin opened the scoring in the first period but that seemed to enflame the Thunder. The Thunder responded with two goals in response. First Luke Sinclair, unassisted, and then Luke added another, his sixth of the playoffs, from Danny Attridge and Andrew Oosterveld, on the power play to take the Thunder to a 2-1 lead after one.

Nicolas D'Agostino from Tye Johnson and Kurtis Heggie on the power play was the only marker of the second. Nicolas D'Agostino From Mike Stolar and Matthew Oosterveld unassisted added two in the third, while Erin responded with a late goal to secure the 5-2 Thunder game win, and the 4-3 series win. It got pretty chippy towards the end of the game as several misconducts were given out to both teams.

Next year looks to increase the rivalry between these two teams that really did not know a lot about each other...We both know allot now.

Waiting in the north for the series winner between Tillsonburg and Erin was the Saugeen Shores Winterhawks. It was 2020 the last time the Thunder and Winterhawks faced each other.

Tillsonburg came away with the series win.

The series opened in Port Elgin last Friday night. This is the only Friday night tilt as players that work have a difficult time making the -three hour drive to get to the game. Thus Tillsonburg went up with only two lines.

I won't go into the details as the Winterhawks walked away with an 11-2 win. Matthew Oosterveld, from Tye Johnson and Jaden Van Sevenant, and Kurtis Heggie, from Justin Abraham and Kane Johnson, had the Thunder markers. Thunder tender Ben Blacker even got

chased out of the net after one period.

Game 2 in the Thunderdome looked to be different. The Thunder dominated the game from the start. Andrew Oosterveld, from Sinclair and Kane Johnson, from Kurtis Heggie and Matthew Oosterveld, opened the scoring but Saugeen responded with a power play goal with 30 seconds left in the period for 2-1 score.

The Winterhawks added another in the second to tie the game.

Kane Johnson, from Mathew Oosterveld and Nigel Abbott, put the Thunder on top again. The bane of the Thunder has been the final seconds of games, and Saugeen tied it with 12 seconds left leading to overtime.

Sometimes the hockey gods giveth, and sometimes they taketh away. In this case, Saugeen scored off a Thunder shin pad to steal the victory.

Game three is on Saturday, March 28 at 7:30 in Port Elgin. Game 4 is in Tillsonburg on Saturday, April 4 at 7:30.

Come cheer on the Thunder as they look to even up the series!!



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Saugeen Shores' Brent McDermid is stopped by Tillsonburg Thunder goalie Ben Blacker Saturday night at the Kinsmen Memorial Arena.



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Tillsonburg Thunder's Jaden Vansevenant hunts for the puck Saturday in Game 2 of their OEHL series.



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Thunder's Luke Sinclair evades a check from Josh Urbshott on his way to the Saugeen Shores net Saturday night in Tillsonburg.



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Luke Sinclair's pass to Tillsonburg Thunder's Hunter Monkhouse in front of Saugeen Shores goalie Clayton Fritsch just missed Saturday night in overtime.

B-Line completes sweep for B consolation championship

JEFF GWYN

Post Contributor

The season is winding down for Club Oxford with championship series underway, and the B consolation already decided with B-Line taking the crown.

March 15
A Division

ReMax 2, Health Hut 1

ReMax played well and had a bunch of rush chances. They buckled down defensively in the second to hold onto the win. Health Hut had a bit of a flat first period but they stepped it up in the second. Some late pressure couldn't get the scoring chances they needed.

Brian Velthove had a goal for ReMax. Kevin Verbruggen had a goal for Health Hut.

Apple Shack 5, Fody's 4 OT

Apple Shack pulled off the series comeback. They played their game and bided their time in this one. They spread the scoring around and that helped them with the win. Fody's looked to be in control of this one. They had a solid lead, but couldn't keep Apple Shack from chipping away. A tough way to end the season.

Jake Jeffries had three points for Apple Shack. Christian Clifford had three points for Fody's.

B Division

B-Line 2, Carquest 0

B-Line is playing an all-around solid game. They are getting their chances and delivering while also breaking plays up for Carquest. A tidy crease keeps the chances low. Carquest is struggling to find their offence. They had secondary

scoring throughout the year and will need to rely on that to stay in this series.

Kris Bradfield had two points for B-Line. Mark Gignac had the shutout.

Glass 2, Source 1 OT

Glass fought hard in this one. They took their time and made some good rush chances. Defensively they didn't let Source get much going in close. Source played a very good first period. A short bench led to some fatigue in the second. A solid series by both teams so far.

Adam Matthews had 2 points for Glass. Jason VanThuyne had the goal for Source.

March 18

A Division

Apple Shack 2, ReMax 1 OT

Apple Shack keeps finding ways to win as they have buckled down defensively and took advantage of their breaks in this one. ReMax had some trouble getting shots on the net, but had plenty of chances. Overtime had a couple good chances, but it didn't bounce their way.

Matt Casquette had two goals for Apple Shack. Rob Smith had the goal for ReMax.

B Division

Source 4, Glass 1

Source came out strong in this one. They had a ton of pressure in the second and bombarded Glass with shots. They were able to stifle any Glass chances as well. Glass was there in the first but were on their heels in the second. They didn't get many chances and it turned into a lop-sided affair.

Brandan Sullivan had two points for Source. Adam Matthews had a goal for

A DIVISION PLAYOFFS

FODY'S AUTOMOTIVE (1) VS APPLE SHACK (4)
APPLE SHACK WINS 3-2

REMAX REALTY (2) VS THE HEALTH HUT (3)
REMAX WINS 7PTS TO 3PTS

A CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

REMAX REALTY (2) VS APPLE SHACK (4)
APPLE SHACK LEADS 1-0

B DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP

SOURCE FOR SPORTS (1) VS TILLSONBURG GLASS (4)
SOURCE WINS SERIES 23-2

JEFF PROUSE MORTGAGES (2) VS ROYAL LEPAGE REALTY (3)
PROUSE WINS SERIES 3-0

B CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL

SOURCE FOR SPORTS (1) VS JEFF PROUSE MORTGAGES (2)
SERIES STARTS MARCH 22

B DIVISION CONSOLATION

CARQUEST AUTO PARTD(5) VS AIRMOUNT FARMS (8)
CARQUEST WINS SERIES 3-0

B-LINE TRUCKING (6) VS RND CONSTRUCTION (7)
B-LINE WINS SERIES 3-0

B CONSOLATION FINAL

CARQUEST AUTO PARTS(5) VS B-LINE TRUCKING (6)
B-LINE WINS SERIES 3-0

Glass.

B-Line 4, Carquest 0

B-Line played a strong series. They had plenty of rush chances in this one and even had a shorthanded goal. They frustrated the Carquest offence in every game. Carquest ended up frustrated and

it took them off their game a bit. They couldn't get their offence going like they were used to. Some good chances ended up being turned away by B-Line goalie Gignac.

Ryan Simmons had two points for B-Line. Mark Gignac had his second shutout of the series for B-Line.

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(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Tillsonburg Tornados U13-1 VanQuaethem Farms defeated Waterford 4-2 in a March 9 semifinal at the Kinsmen Memorial Arena, advancing to the local league final against Simcoe U13-2, who eliminated Burford in their semifinal. VanQuaethem Farms and Simcoe were scheduled to play Tuesday, March 24th in Simcoe.

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(STUART BLOWER PHOTOS)



U11 LL3 Birds Golf players Finn Yarmie, Austen Wallis, Griffin Richardson, Bryson Christo clear the puck away from goalie Lucas Kendrick's in a games against Burford Coyotes.



It was three on one, as U11A Vernes attempt to keep the puck from a Delhi-Norwich 59ers player. Left to right are: Eli Sanders, Emmett Douwes, and Tarek Hajjou.



Tillsonburg U13 LL2 E&E McLaughlin player Lucan Beaumont out stick handles an Ingersoll Express in recent U13 play.



U13 E & E McLaughlin player Tyler Crossett takes a shot on the Ingersoll goalie despite two Ingersoll defenders being right on him.



He shoots, he scores . . . Sterling Masson of the U13 South Oxford Storm's Funnell Insurance Group team beat the Twin Centre Stars goaltender in recent rep play.



U 15 Lightning's Eryn Gradish is down for the save as defenders Jorja Thompson, and Savannah King attempt to clear the puck from Woodstock Wildcats forwards.

SCOTCH DOUBLES BONSPIEL

Scotch Doubles Bonspiel 'biggest in club history'

CHRIS ABBOTT

Grant Haven Media

There was a much bigger trophy beside the Scotch Doubles Bonspiel trophy in Tillsonburg this year.

Enormous, in fact.

The Scotch Doubles trophy at the Tillsonburg Curling Club does have

weight – it includes a curling rock – but it could not match the height and width of the Ontario Tankard trophy brought by Scotch Doubles convener Jayden King, who went on to play in the national Montana's Brier.

"Third annual Scotch Doubles Bonspiel," King

noted on March 15. "Some other clubs in the area (within a 90-minute drive) do it quite successfully, as a season-ender, and we were looking for something new and fun to do here. So a couple years ago we tried it and it was an instant hit.

"It's great to bring people to Tillsonburg, get people

in Tillsonburg together. It's especially great given all the support we've had the last couple of weeks at the Brier, to be able to come back to play in Tillsonburg and do something good for the club.

"Some people we meet for the first time on Friday night, some people learn to curl on Friday night and they play the weekend. Most people, once they get the hang of it, they love it. It really is just getting people in the door. Understanding that curling 'is a thing,' first off, and then where and how to find it. It's been really good."

This year's Scotch Doubles Bonspiel, March 13-15, had 52 teams in three divisions (rec, intermediate and competitive), two players per team.

"The first year we had 24 teams, the second year 36. This year's event was the largest bonspiel the club has ever hosted..."

"Probably the largest in club history," nodded Walter Kleer, who was volunteering at the bonspiel.

"Because it's doubles, there's less curlers on the



Dan Hamm's 'in the house.'

(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

ice at a time, and games only take an hour," said King. "Games move quick, six ends, three rocks by player one, three rocks by player two.

"It's a little different from Olympics doubles, but the speed of the game is the same. For us, it's a good switch from the normal 'fours' that we play year-round, and it's great to see so many club curlers that like it recreationally. They come out, have fun, and on Sunday their competitive juices start to go. There's some competition this weekend, but it really is – especially in the rec – about having fun. It's really just focused on enjoying the game."

The recreational division was the biggest with 28 teams.

For King, who also played in the Scotch Doubles' competitive division with teammate Owen Henry, his season summit was the Montana's Brier.

"It just sums up your whole (men's) season. That's where every curler wants to get to, and obviously everyone wants to win the Brier and hopefully the Worlds a couple weeks later, but if you can't be that successful team, then you can reflect on your year and look at how you can build up for next year.

King said his immediate plans after the Scotch Doubles included catching up on school and work.

"Today (March 15), just relax, make sure things are still running, study for my mid-term tomorrow, and play.

"I am lucky enough to have a good group of volunteers here that help run this. It takes about 20 people who are giving up their time, because we're here all weekend from 7:30-8 a.m. to 1 a.m. It has almost wrapped the clock."



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Gary Hall's standing 'in the house' calling shots during a Scotch Doubles Bonspiel semifinal in Tillsonburg.



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Courtland's Jayden King, left, shown with Tillsonburg Curling Club president Diane Kleer, brought the Ontario Tankard Trophy to the annual Scotch Doubles Bonspiel he convenes at his home club in Tillsonburg.



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New museum exhibit celebrates town's sports history

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

A new exhibit at Annandale National Historic Site is highlighting Tillsonburg athletes who have competed at the Olympic and international stage.

Called "A Celebration of Tillsonburg Sports History", the exhibit highlights the accomplishments of the Livvies – the town's basketball team that won the senior men's title and went on to be the core of the Canadian team at the Olympics – as well as the accomplishments of Olympic contender Evan Van Moerkerke, NHL vice-president Colin Campbell, and others.

The exhibit opened earlier this month and will continue until Oct. 18.

The exhibit came about in a roundabout way, one that involved another local sports legend, high school basketball coach Brian O'Rourke. During an anecdotal conversation several months ago with the editor of the Post, who was an English student of his years ago, O'Rourke mentioned a tale of notoriety associated with a flag stolen during the 1952 Helsinki Olympics that is in Annandale House's collection. The former teacher took advice from his former student about sharing this important piece of history with the museum staff, conversations took place, one thing led to another, and the exhibit.

"Tillsonburg is a sports town," O'Rourke said. "Tillsonburg has a disproportionate number of Olympians for its size. This is a history we've got to celebrate, and teach Tillsonburg about."

O'Rourke coached the Glendale High School boys' basketball team for 21 years, being at the helm as it went to the OFS-SA provincial championships three times at the AAA level and won silver medals, despite the school's single A student population level. The team also played an exhibition game prior to a Detroit Pistons game at the Pontiac Silverdome.

During O'Rourke's time, he coached the sons of former Livvie player Bill Coulthard, David, Chris and Bruce, all of who played university basketball and represented Canada on international university-level teams. Although he didn't coach daughters Betty and Carol, he gave

both credit for being players responsible for Glendale championships on the girls' basketball side.

How did a town of less than 10,000 people in those days come to have a basketball team that won the Canadian men's championship? Tillsonburg industrialist Gerry Livingston brought players to work at Livingston's and play on the team. Ambi Gardner, Red Curran and Bill Courthard were amongst them.

O'Rourke remembers reading about the 1952 Olympics as a youth in Chatham.

"That team was the heart and soul of Tillsonburg," he said. "That was the place to be and everyone came here and cheered for them."

The story that was the genesis of the exhibit was some members of the Livvies team decided it would be fun to sneak into the stadium and steal the Olympic flag in Helsinki. When they succeeded, they tried again a second night, were caught and arrested. Those wanting to know their fate will need to visit the exhibit to find out.

Not only did O'Rourke spark an idea for the exhibit, he assisted with collecting items for it. He knew Van Moerkerke's family and came to know Campbell through sporting events in town.

The display includes many pieces of memorabilia from the Livvies team, and is a prelude to a full exhibit on the team planned for next year on the 75th anniversary of the 1952 Olympics.

Campbell has an impressive history in his 50-plus years associated with professional hockey. He played for the Peterborough Petes from 1970 to 1973, was drafted by the Pittsburgh Penguins in 1973, and played for the Colorado Rockets, Edmonton Oilers, Vancouver Canucks and Detroit Red Wings. He started his coaching career with the Red Wings as assistant coach, before moving to the New York Rangers, where he was part of a Stanley Cup-winning team. In July 1998, he became Senior Vice-president of the NHL and Director of Hockey Operations. Today, he is the Executive Vice-President of Hockey Operations.

Campbell's son Gregory, who won Stanley Cup rings as both a player with the Boston Bruins and a member of the Flori-



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Brian O'Rourke discusses some of the attributes of the memorabilia in the exhibit "A Celebration of Tillsonburg Sports History" with Annandale National Historic Site curator Kate Bakos as he received a tour of the display. O'Rourke was critical in assisting with bringing the exhibit together.

da Panthers coaching staff, is also featured in the exhibit.

Van Moerkerke was part of the Canadian Olympic swimming team in 2016, and finished seventh in the 4 x 100m relay. He was a silver medalist at the Pan-Am games and carried the Pan-Am games torch as part of the relay from Mexico to Toronto in 2015. The exhibit includes some of his

medals, his Olympic jacket and the torch from the Pan-Am games.

Seeing the exhibit for the first time, O'Rourke remarked, "They're going to love this."

Museum staff are working on including more Tillsonburg athletes of note in the exhibit, including former Olympic trap shooter Sam Vance.

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MARCH BREAK

(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTOS)



Landon Vandepoele works on a tic-tac-toe travel bag at the Station Arts Centre during March Break. Registration for Station Arts youth summer camps open soon!



Eric Van Moerkerke skates with his grandchildren, Griffin, Connor and Ellia Gillespie, during Friday's March Break public skating at the Kinsmen Memorial Arena.



Friday was a rainy Travel/Pajama Day at Station Arts Centre's March Break camp. Green Mattison decorated a tic-tac-toe travel bag.



Sophia Cardoza, Chloe Braun and Tavgun Haus try a yoga breathing exercise Friday during the March Break camp at Indigo Lounge.

Mindfulness matters at Indigo youth camps

CHRIS ABBOTT

Grant Haven Media

It was another good week for March Break camps in Tillsonburg.

At Indigo Lounge Wellness & Eatery, they annually host week-long camps for March Break and Winter Break, and they run a series of summer camps.

"I think our camps are just a little bit different," said Kelly Spencer, owner of Indigo Lounge, Friday during the 2026 March Break. "All camps do arts, crafts, games, activities... we focus on themes that are character building and we

do activities that enhance mindfulness – yoga and meditation."

Camp ages are 4-11, consistent with their weekly Young Kids Yoga mindful programs/classes, which includes yoga, meditation, breathing, singing, dancing and crafts.

Children respond 'naturally,' she said, to the yoga/meditation programs.

"Mindfulness, in general, I think is becoming part of school curriculums. It has been proven to assist kids to focus, to be more compassionate, to have better inter-personal skills, better emotional regulations and

stress management. They love it.

"With the mindfulness and kids, we'll talk about 'what stresses you out?' Because everybody feels stress. What stresses a kid? Getting up in front of the class and talking. When my friend gets mad at me and won't talk to me. My sibling. Whatever it is, we say 'OK, those things create stress... let's talk about the effects stress might have on you.' They make me sad or I can't clear my mind and I have trouble sleeping."

The kids learn breathing techniques or things to do to calm their nervous system.

Classes, indoors, are typically limited to 12. In the summer, usually they'll have 18-20 participants daily.

"About half of them booked the entire (March Break) week, and the other half selected specific days.

"We keep all of the kids together, no matter what age they are, and we give the older kids a leadership role. So we teach them about setting an example and being a leader. Sometimes we even give them a title (group leader) and they love it."

At the Indigo Lounge camps, they also try to get the kids outside when the

weather is good. It wasn't ideal Friday with off-and-on rain.

"Today it'll be tough," she smiled, "but we watch the hourly (forecasts). It's one of our focuses, fresh air, because you just don't see kids outside like they used to."

During summer camps, they spend a lot of time in shade under trees, unless it's exceptionally hot when they go indoors.

Arts, games and crafts are still featured in their camps with themes like Beach Party or St. Patrick's Day or Pajama Day.

"We'll also do themes of nature and connection to be-

ing outside – why it is good. With a nature theme, we'll try to do a craft accordingly. Like that one," she said, nodding toward art in her office, flowers hammered on a wax sheet. "Those are real flowers with ink parts. That one, we painted the leaves white, then pressed them.

"A lot of the colouring might be something like a yoga pose."

The camps, especially summer camps, have been a 'go-to' program at Indigo Lounge since it opened 15 years ago, and Spencer plans to continue that tradition.

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Calling all turtle artists for annual competition

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The Station Arts Centre is calling for artists of all types to submit their turtle art for this year's art competition in connection with Turtlefest.

Called Shell of a Place, the exhibit opening will be held in conjunction with the opening ceremonies for Turtlefest, which the Station Arts Centre is hosting.

"It was nice because it was celebrating community and there were a lot of artists participating," said Tabitha Verbuyst, Station Arts Centre executive director and curator.

Last year saw 25 entries in a variety of media, including paintings, photographs, wood burning, print making and others.

"That's what we're hoping for this year," she said.

Verbuyst liked the collaboration between the contest and the opening last year as it drew out more people for the opening. It also showed more about the community's culture.

Speaking more to the theme this year, she said, "It can be more about the nostal-

gia and feeling of what is home."

Explaining it further, she said turtles carry their homes on their backs, and "in a way we do as well". The theme could also incorporate the legend of George Tillson coming back as a turtle or turtle habitat. She said the theme could also be conceptual in how a home makes one feel.

"There are a lot of ways to interpret it, which is nice," she said.

The contest will be open to all mediums and artists of all ages. It's a juried competition where all works must be submitted online to ensure the entries meet gallery standards. Visitors to the exhibit can vote on their favourite in a people's choice competition with a prize of \$250. Verbuyst said as long as the standards are met, they will be accepted.

"As long as people are interested in showcasing their work, we want them to be able to participate."

More information on entry is available at <https://www.stationarts.ca/shell-of-a-place>

Shell of a Place will open with Turtlefest on June 19 between 4 and 6 p.m., and run until July 24.



(FILE PHOTO)

Visitors to last year's Turtlefest art competition check out the art on display during the opening ceremonies of both Turtlefest and the art competition. The event was such a success it's going to run again this year.

Rotary taking a second 'quack' at duck race fundraiser

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Which duck is the fastest?

The person who knows the answer to that question in regard to the Rotary Club of Tillsonburg's annual duck race will be \$2,500 wealthier. The second-fastest duck will pay off \$750, and the third will be worth \$250.

After the initial event last year, the Rotary Club is holding another duck race on

Saturday, May 23 at 11 a.m. in Coronation Park, adjacent to The Mill. Ducks are for sale now through the website duckrace.rotarytillsonburg.ca, from Rotary members, or at the book fair in the Tillsonburg Town Centre in early May.

Last year saw 710 of a possible 1,000 ducks sold. Funds were used to support the Rotary Club's community pantry and youth projects, including scholarships, bursaries for school, and other Rotary youth programs.

"It seems positive so far again this year," said Rotary member Kristofer Layman.

New this year will be flock options, where instead of paying \$20 for one duck, supporters can purchase three for \$50 or a larger flock of six for \$100. Layman said this option is attracting a fair amount of interest.

Rotary members decided last year's event was a success.

"The benefit is it raises awareness and allows us to engage with the community with people we may not otherwise engage with," Layman said.



This QR code takes potential purchasers to the duck race website.



(FILE PHOTO)

A large flock of ducks was launched from the pedestrian bridge in Coronation Park last year for the Rotary duck race fundraiser. Duck handlers had to corral and net the ducks downstream. The event will again be held this year.



(FILE PHOTO)

Volunteers with the Tillsonburg Rotary Club rounded up several hundred ducks after the rubber ducks made it to the finishing line at last year's event.

Glendale robotics team wins gold medal

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Glendale High School's robotic team's robot doesn't have a name, but if it did, it could be called the transformer.

The fledgling team was started last year by teacher Dana Roberts after she saw robotics teams at other schools where she had worked. The team won a gold medal at county and district competitions, qualifying it to compete at the provincials. Team members came away from the provincials without medals.

Going into its second year, a larger team has already earned a gold medal in the county championship. Building the robot meant starting over from scratch, since its task is different from last year's. Roberts explained that robotics teams globally are given a task for the robots to complete each year.

"New design, new build, new challenges," she said. "Essentially, what it has to do is quite different."

This year's challenge is for the robot to collect six-inch diameter balls. The robot will have a bin to hold the balls, and then it has to shoot the balls into a tower, reminiscent of basketball.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

The Glendale High School Robotics team has one gold medal to its credit and is working to qualify for provincial championships. Members of the team include, left to right: Jim Hopkins, Nicholas Whelan, Matthew Devos, Zachary MacRae, Sota Hashiura (Rotary exchange student), Dagon Thibodeau, Ellis Cole, Veena Projapati, Maylina Wall, teacher Dana Roberts, and teacher Mackenzie Colvin.

"It's a bit of a keep-away game," Roberts said. "You want to keep as many of these balls as possible away from the other team and then shoot them."

Another element of the challenge is for

the robot to be able to hang on a ladder.

"The more experienced teams will climb the ladder, because there are three tiers to it," she explained. "We're just hoping to get to the first tier."

Many of the parts from last year's robot, though, are being transformed into this year's edition, hence why the name could be Transformer.

"We're pretty good at reusing the materials we had," she said. "As a second-year team, we don't have a lot of parts and resources."

What's new for the team this year is its support resources. They are being assisted by a mechanical designer from Marwood International Inc. Mackenzie Colvin, the transportation technology teacher who is also a licensed mechanic, is also assisting.

Roberts was glad to see the team grow to 15 members this year, from nine last year. Many of the students are interested in some aspect of STEM, whether it's mechanical, electrical, or building.

"And then there's the whole business side who are doing the marketing and fundraising," she added.

There is no funding provided from the school board, meaning the team depends entirely on the money it can raise.

The team will be competing at Georgian College in Barrie, March 27 to 29, and in Windsor, April 7 to 9. It needs to earn a medal at one of those regional competitions to qualify for provincials.

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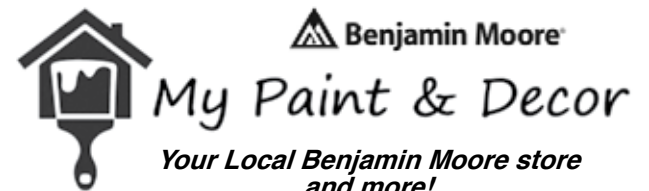
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Jude sings a sad song and makes it better



MUSIC CORNER

BEN ADDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Few performers in the region can match the range, experience and sheer presence of Tillsonburg's own Jude Coyle. She returns to the stage for a hometown show this Thursday, March 26th for a special Jude Sings Requests night at The Copper Mug.

For over 30 years Jude Coyle has been a fixture in Southwestern Ontario's music scene, building a reputation as a dynamic and fearless vocalist. Jude has an impressive background in live performance starting from childhood theatre productions to commanding stages in front of thousands. Along the way she has developed a rare versatility of comfortably moving

between rock, pop, country, disco, funk, soul and even rap.

Much of that adaptability was sharpened during her two decades as a karaoke host where consistency met creativity night after night.

"As a karaoke host, I made a point of singing at least one song I had never sung before at every show," says Coyle. "I know people have their favourites but I like to keep things fresh by regularly introducing new songs, artists and arrangements."

That commitment to growth is evident in every performance. Jude is known for her powerful four-octave vocal range and charismatic stage presence where she does not just sing songs, but inhabits them.

"The performers that have influenced me all have incredible passion when they sing. Lyrics are also important to me," Coyle explains. "I want to embody the spirit of the songs I sing so the audience gets the full live music experience. I'm fortunate to have an instrument that allows me to do that."

Her influences are as iconic as they are varied, drawing inspiration from legends like Freddie Mercury, Karen Carpenter and Chris Cornell. Jude has also paid tribute on stage to powerhouse performers

such as Stevie Nicks and Janis Joplin by channeling their spirit while maintaining her own distinct identity.

"Unless I am paying tribute to a particular artist, I want to put my own spin on the songs and how I move on stage," she explains. "Those talented women had an appealing style of their own, both vocally and visually. It's important for me to watch videos of my own performances so I can see if what I'm doing is working for me."

Beyond music, Jude's background in theatre has added another dimension to her performances. A seasoned live theatre performer since childhood, she has a particular flair for comedy, notably portraying Miss Hannigan in Annie. She has also worked behind the scenes as a choreographer and performance coach helping others refine their craft.

In recent years her talent has earned wider recognition. Jude was named the 2023 Fantasy Band Vocalist winner at the Forest City London Music Awards, which is a distinction that has seen her perform alongside some of London's top musicians on major stages. She has also become a staple at large scale events, including annual New Year's Eve and Canada Day celebrations where she serves as a core mem-

ber of the FCLMA All Stars Band.

This Thursday's show at The Copper Mug offers something a little different from those large festival stages. The Jude Sings Requests format puts the audience in control which creates a more intimate and unpredictable evening.

"This Thursday will be a Jude Sings Requests night. Unlike a show with a live band, the audience is in charge of the repertoire. It is an intimate and interactive evening and folks really love to test my range. You never know what might happen," Coyle says with a chuckle. "When I perform with a live band it is a high energy performance both musically and visually. There is nothing better than live music regardless of what form it comes in."

With a career defined by passion, adaptability and connection, Coyle continues to prove that great live music is not just about hitting the right notes, but more so it is about creating moments. Tillsonburg audiences will have the chance to experience that firsthand this Thursday, March 26th at The Copper Mug. This free event starts at 8 p.m. and is the perfect way to start your weekend early. You can find out more about Jude at her official website at www.juderocks.com

UPCOMING SHOWS

MARCH 26 - JUDE COYLE

The Copper Mug
No Cover - 8 p.m.

MARCH 27 - BATES & STUDDY'S SYSTEM OF A DOWN TRIBUTE

The Copper Mug
8 p.m.

MARCH 27 - SDN COMEDY

Birds Golf Sports Lounge
Free - 9 p.m. - 19+

MARCH 29 - KICKN KOUNTRY

The Copper Mug
5 p.m.

APRIL 2 - SUGAR KINGS

The Copper Mug
8 p.m.

APRIL 7 - ABSOLUTE BEGINNERS (THE CLASH TRIBUTE) W/ WHERE'S SHANE

Paddy's Underground
\$15 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

APRIL 8 - EUCHRE NIGHT

The Copper Mug: 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 15 - SPOOKEY RUBEN W/ THE HALF SMOOKES & TREVOR KOSTYRIA

Paddy's Underground
\$15 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

APRIL 17 - MUDMEN

Tillsonburg Legion Branch #153: \$30 - 8 p.m. - 19+

APRIL 18 - TILLSONBURG'S ONLY REGGAE DANCE PARTY W/ THE HUMAN RIGHTS

Paddy's Underground
\$25 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

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Pride of ownership is evident in this bungalow in the adult community of Hickory Hills. This home features hardwood floors throughout and has been well maintained with many recent updates. The front bedroom offers a Murphy bed and cheater ensuite, ideal as an office or guest room. The living room features a gas fireplace and access to the composite deck and landscaped gardens. The primary bedroom includes double closets and an ensuite with accessible tub, walk-in shower and skylight.

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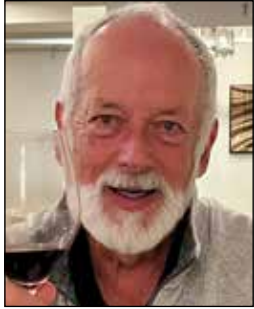
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**OH,
THE
PLACES
WE'LL
GO!**

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Let's be honest: there are an increasing number of would-be travellers who are getting rather chilly feet about venturing abroad. Many of us have chosen not to travel to the U.S. Others are understandably nervous about popular destinations like Mexico, after the cartel uprising; Cuba, with its collapsing infrastructure; or Egypt or Turkey, considering their proximity to the current war in the Middle East. As well, several African nations are doubling down on their oppression of LGBTQ2+ folk.

And then there are the issues that don't involve personal dangers, such as the new requirements in the U.K. for pre-travel documentation or (if you were born there), a British passport. This sort of clearance before arrival in countries is also being initiated in many European countries.

As a travel writer, I will admit that I still plan to travel. My near-future plans include Italy and even Mexico, with other trips in the works.

But I do understand that we are all looking for alternatives. So, as we get closer to Spring, I want to suggest a few drivable destinations that don't involve leaving the province, but will, I promise, provide visitors with a great vacation.

Let's start with the Niagara peninsula. I don't say "Niagara Falls" because while this wonder of the world is undoubtedly the biggest draw on the peninsula, there is so much more to explore, here. Although it

might be wise to consider staying in Niagara Falls, proper, because now, in the off-season, many of the hotels offer great deals on rooms, which often come with discounts on dining and even a casino voucher. If you're heading toward the Falls, check out those options.

But if you go, don't spend all your time in Niagara Falls. Niagara on the Lake is one of my favourite towns in Ontario, where you can browse in interesting shops, dine in good restaurants and pubs, and wander a couple of blocks off the main street to the banks of the Niagara River for terrific views of Lake Ontario, the riverscape, and our neighbouring country that sadly shall not be named.

My favourite pastime in the Niagara Region – as regular readers will know – is visiting wineries, and there are dozens to choose from. Many also have good restaurants, and some offer unique accommodations. For a full and informative list of wineries, see winecountryontario.ca. And please note that the Niagara peninsula has now been divided into two official wine regions – Niagara Benchlands and Area, and Niagara-on-the-Lake and Area. If I had to choose only two in each, it would be Fielding and Ridgepoint in the Benchlands; Bighead and Konzelman in Niagara-on-the-Lake region.

Now, let's head east. It will also not be a surprise to regular readers that I recommend a getaway to our nation's capital, Ottawa. I simply don't think there is any equivalent destination in Canada, with as much to see and do, almost all accessible on foot.

Highlights, for me, include two art galleries (the phenomenal National Gallery of Canada, and the unexpected Ottawa Art Gallery, with a terrific Group of Seven exhibition). I recently wrote enthusiastically about the National War Museum, and I haven't changed my mind – it's really enthralling. In total, Ottawa is home to seven of Canada's national museums.

I always enjoy the quirky artifacts at Laurier House, which housed two Prime



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Fielding winery is one of the best in the Niagara Benchlands wine region.

Ministers – Wilfrid Laurier and later, William Lyon Mackenzie King. The display of memorabilia from King's immersion in the occult is worth the price of admission.

There are many unique sites open for tours in Ottawa, from the temporary House of Commons and the current home of the Senate (once the railway station), to the Royal Canadian Mint and Rideau Hall, home of the Governor General.

For my last "stay-at-home" alternative to foreign travel, I am going to suggest a vacation that covers a distance of less than an hour and a half – the region that runs along the north shore of Lake Ontario and the western end of the St. Lawrence River, from Quinte West to Gananoque, including Kingston. We've had the chance to explore this region in the last couple of years, and there were a lot of unexpected delights throughout the area.

I would probably opt to stay in Kingston, because this historic city offers some unique and special bed and breakfasts and

inns. And over the course of my week or so in the area, I would be sure to visit the truly fascinating National Air Force Museum in Trenton, and the Great Lakes Museum in Kingston (with a note that the highlight, there, the S.S. Keewatin, is not open for tours until May). I would also join Kouri's Kopters in Gananoque for one of their breathtaking helicopter tours of the Thousand Islands (also starting in mid-May).

All of the communities in this lake-side stretch offer unique dining experiences, local live theatre and concerts, and on-the-water adventures in the warmer months.

So if you are eager to travel, but hesitant to leave the comfort of your own province, these three areas provide terrific travel experiences. I have been there, I have done that, and I truly intend to do it all again.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The Canadian Senate chamber in its temporary quarters in the old railway station is open for tours; reservations necessary.



A Vimy warplane at the National War Museum in Ottawa.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)



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Tips For your Wedding Attire

The Groom should be unique from the groomsmen by selecting different colours for their suit-tuxedo, neck attire differentiation

There are 122 various shades of white. Groom and groomsmen should have exact same shirt otherwise colour variations will show in pictures.

Sometimes a groom may want a second shirt for the special day, especially in hotter days or those that tend to sweat more.

Colour of groomsmen neck accessories should be the same as bridesmaids' dresses

Colour of shirts should not comprise colour of wedding dress. If the gown is off white or a darker shade of white, DO NOT wear white shirts - otherwise dress will look dirty and be exaggerated in pictures

We are open 7 Days a week and late on Thursdays and Fridays and also available by appointment.

Parents and grandparents should be the second-best dressed people at the wedding.

How to remember and honour loved ones at a wedding

A wedding is a happy day in a couple's life together. Couples who have lost loved ones in recent years, whether it's parents, grandparents, close friends, or siblings, may find their happiness mixing with feelings of loss. It can be challenging to fully celebrate in the absence of a beloved loved one who was supposed to be there joining in the happiness.

Responding to feelings of grief and loss on a wedding day can be challenging, but there are ways couples can pay homage to late loved ones during wedding celebrations to make the loss a little easier to bear. Here are different ways to remember the special people who are there in spirit.

- **Save a seat.** Reserve a seat at the ceremony and reception with a small placard that reads something along the lines of "In loving memory of the mother of the bride. She is forever present in our hearts."

- **Include a note.** Include an In Memoriam note in the wedding program with special words about the person who is missed.

- **Light a candle during the ceremony.** The officiant can say a few words and invite someone to light a candle in honor of a late relative or friend.

- **Carry a special memento.** Whether in the bouquet or in the pocket of a tuxedo, carrying a small souvenir that represents the deceased loved one. If there is an item that belonged to the loved one, it can be worn during the

wedding. It could be a dress, a piece of jewelry, a pair of cufflinks, or even an embroidered handkerchief.

- **Toast with a drink.** The atmosphere at a reception is more lively than during a ceremony. Offer a toast to the person who is missed or serve their favorite food at the buffet.

- **Play a special song.** If the deceased loved one would be featured in a signature dance, like the father/daughter, mother/son traditions, play a song that was meaningful to that person and enlist someone to stand in for the absent person.

- **Request donations.** Set up a memorial table and make mention of the person's favorite charity. Ask guests to donate in the loved one's honor.

Remembering a special person who has passed on at a wedding can ensure that individual is honored and included in a couple's big day.



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The many ways to incorporate floral arrangements

Flowers showcase the beauty and pagentry of the natural world. Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "The earth laughs in flowers," and Lady Bird Johnson is quoted as saying, "Where flowers bloom, so does hope." Flowers are inextricably tied to some of the most important events in a person's life. Flowers wish people well, console those who are mourning, and symbolize love and affection.

Flowers are an essential component of wedding day celebrations. Flowers symbolize love, fertility and new beginnings. According to The Knot 2025 Real Weddings Study, the average cost of wedding flowers in 2025 was \$2,723, which serves as a testament to how important flowers can be on these special days. Flowers are incorporated into many facets of a wedding. Couples planning their weddings can give thought to the many ways flowers can enhance this special day.

Bouquets

Wedding bouquets are some of the first arrangements people think of when planning a wedding. Historically, wedding bouquets contained herbs that were designed to ward off evil spirits. Today, one is much more likely to find a gathering of many beautiful flowers tied at the stems with ribbon. Bridesmaids carry bouquets as well, and flower girls toss flower petals along the aisle during the processional. Bouquets typically coordinate to the theme of the wedding and the color scheme. A bride's bouquet tends to be similar in design to her bridesmaids' but may feature more muted colored blooms to complement her gown.

Boutonnieres and corsages

Boutonnieres and corsages are customarily bestowed upon wedding party members and the parents of the happy couple. They also may be gifted to additional special people attending the wedding, such as grandparents or other guests of honor.

Altar arrangements

Floral decorations also may be placed around or near the altar for the wedding ceremony. Jewish celebrants may place flowers on a chuppah to add beauty and elegance. Flowers also are commonly used in Muslim wedding ceremonies,



appearing in floral arches or even as a stunning floral wall during the Nikah to separate the bride and groom. During religious ceremonies, couples should heed the requirements of the house of worship and ensure that flowers are modest and within the parameters set for the faith.

Aisle decorations

Flowers may be used on the seatbacks or on the sides of pews. Small flowers, ribbons and greenery are hung to enhance the ambiance of the space.

Centerpieces

Flowers are a focal point during wedding receptions, taking up prime real estate in the center of tables. Knowledgeable florists can create pieces that are beautiful and will not obstruct the view or comfort of guests when seated. Additional floral arrangements may be included to enhance additional areas of the reception space, such as floral arches for photographs, vases placed near the seating chart and even flowers in the restrooms to make these spaces even more inviting.

Toss bouquet

If a couple decides to adhere to traditional wedding customs, the bride will toss a smaller bouquet to eager single women ready to catch it. A tossed bouquet may feature fresh flowers or artificial silk flowers. This decoy bouquet enables the bride to return home with her actual bouquet to preserve it, but still participate in this classic tradition.

Flowers enhance a wedding with their beauty, symbolism and aroma.



"From Vineyard to 'I Do': The Wine Cellar & Cheese Shop Experience"

Your wedding day is a special occasion filled with love and joy shared with family and friends.

At The Wine Cellar & Cheese Shop in Ingersoll, you can turn your wedding into an extraordinary experience. Imagine serving wine that you've made yourself—this unique touch adds a personal and memorable element to your celebration. With their ferment-on-premises process, you can choose your varietal and take part in the magic of winemaking in their expert bottling room.

These handcrafted wines, made with fewer preservatives, provide a sustainable and

meaningful addition to your big day. Along with a variety of over 60 quality wines, The Wine Cellar & Cheese Shop offers a variety of local and imported cheeses, perfect for pairing.

Sourced from Oxford County and beyond, their selection enhances any gathering, whether it's a bridal shower, rehearsal dinner, or wedding reception. Experience a taste of the cheeses & charcuterie as you bottle your wine, and order a similar experience for your guests during cocktail hour, on one of their giant live-edge boards!

Looking for the perfect gift? Their gift cards are a great way to share the joy of winemaking or cheese tasting with newlyweds or bridal parties.

Located at 188 Thames Street South in Ingersoll, The Wine Cellar & Cheese Shop provides more than just products—it offers an unforgettable experience that adds a special sparkle to your celebration. Raise a glass to love, laughter, and lifelong memories!

188 Thames Street South, Ingersoll
519-425-4999
winecellaringersoll.com



A grand selection of ferment-on-premise wine varietals as well as local artisan and imported fine cheeses!

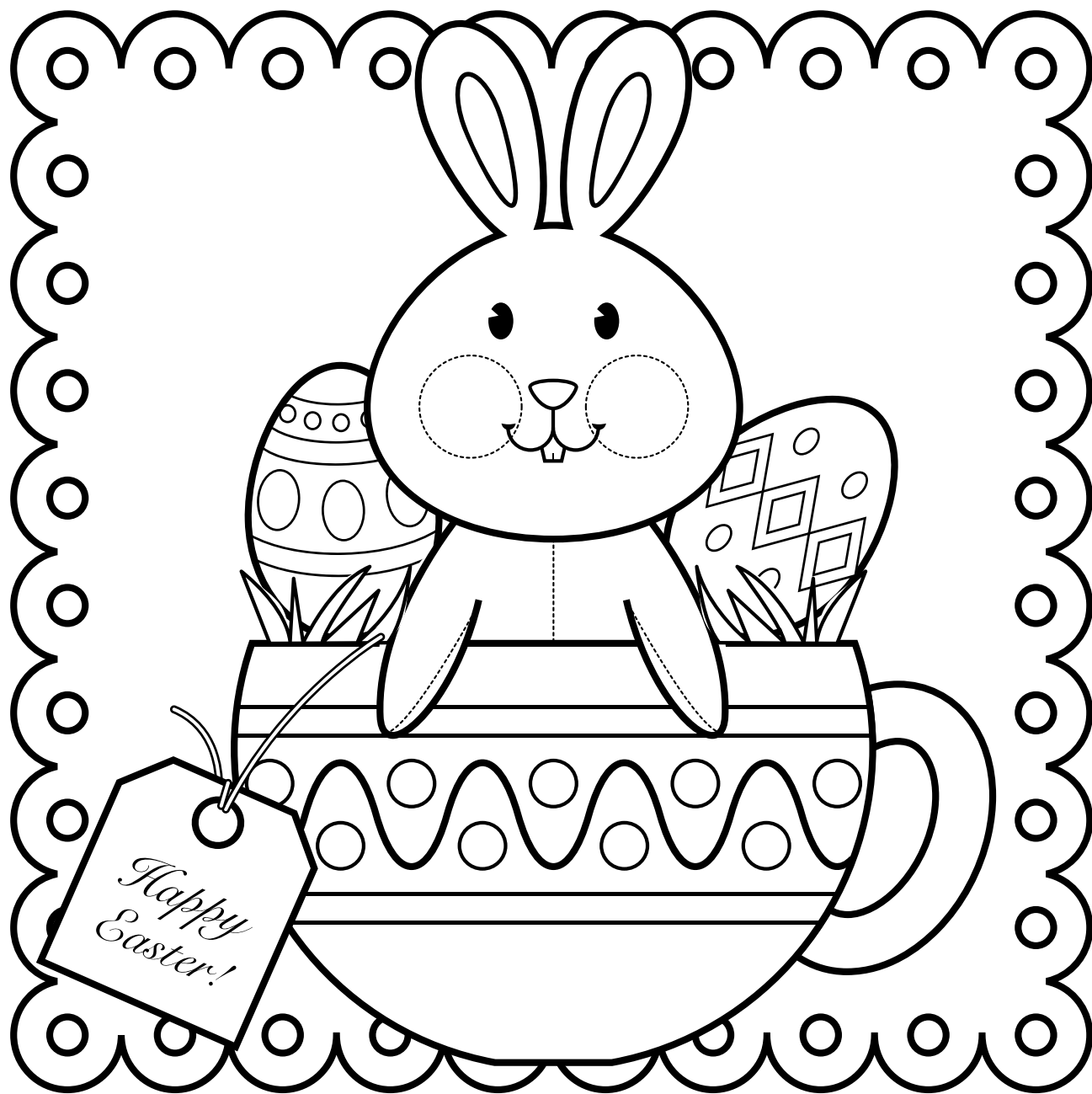
Specializing in Cheese & Charcuterie grazing boards, charcuterie cups and cheese wedding cakes for your cocktail hour.

Come and see us to craft your favourite varietal of red, white or fruit wine to serve at your wedding dinner and reception!

We are happy to offer cheese tastings, pairing suggestions for your dinner and consult with you to make your vision come to life.

188 Thames Street South, Ingersoll | 519-425-4999
www.winecellaringersoll.com

Everybunny's Favourite
EASTER COLOURING CONTEST



We're on the hunt for
EGG CELLENT
artists!

Let's hop to it:

Decorate this Easter picture with your favorite colors, then **drop it off before 9 p.m. on April 2nd** to:

Sobeys

678 Broadway St.,
 Tillsonburg

Winner gets an Easter basket full of goodies!

Let your creativity shine!



Colouring Contest Rules:

1. Contest is open to children ages 4-10. Relatives of newspaper employees or contest sponsors are not eligible to win.
2. Contestants may use crayons, markers or coloured pencils to colour the pictures. Adults may assist in completing the contest entry form, but may not assist in coloring. **Winners will be selected by random draw and will be contacted via phone/email.**

Name: _____
 Phone #: _____
 E-mail: _____



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The height of my feet, is around 6 feet. What am I?

Giraffe

I jump when I walk and sit when I stand. Who am I?

Kangaroo

I stay awake at night and sleep during the day. Who am I?

Owl

I am a king without a crown. Who am I?

Lion

While the alphabet goes from A to Z, I go from Z to A. Who am I?

Zebra

I have horns but cannot beep. Who am I?

Goat

I am three things. A fruit, a bird and a group of people. Who am I?

Kiwi

SUDOKU

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

Solutions on Page 31

Level: Beginner

PET OF THE WEEK



SUNNY

SPONSORED BY:

Your
**Family
Pet Centre**

**107 E Concession St. E.,
Tillsonburg, ON
N4G 4W4**

519-688-2672

HOURS:

**Sun: 11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Mon - Fri: 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Sat: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

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

WORD SEARCH

SPRINGTIME ANIMALS

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

- RABBIT
- DUCKLING
- LAMB
- CHICK
- FAWN
- BUTTERFLY
- BEE
- FROG
- ROBIN
- CARDINAL
- BLUE JAY
- RACCOON
- SQUIRREL
- DEER
- GOOSE

COMING EVENTS

**MARCH 28 | 5 - 6:30 PM
SPAGHETTI SUPPER**

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

St Paul's United Church AOTS FELLOWHIP Club, Tillsonburg invite you to a Spaghetti Supper. Tickets \$15 for adults, children under 10 \$8 available from members, at the Church Office or at the Door. Takeout Available. All Welcome.

**SAVE THE DATE
JULY 5**

COURTLAND LIONS ANNUAL CAR SHOW

Courtland Lions Park, Courtland, ON

Registration: 8 am – 12 noon Fee: \$15.00 Public Admission: \$2 Adult, Children FREE. Food Available, Music, Door Prizes, Trophies, Fun for Everyone! For more information call; George Mikula (519) 582-2758

MARCH

MARCH 27 | 1-4 PM

TILLSONBURG LEGION DANCE FEATURING KEN LIGHTHEART AND THE NORTSHORE RAMBLERS BAND

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

\$7 cash at the door. Cash bar available.

MARCH 27 | 5-7 PM

TILLSONBURG LEGION CHICKEN DINNER

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

While quantities last for \$18.00 per person. Includes mashed potatoes, gravy, veggies, dessert, tea, and coffee. All Welcome! Cash bar available.

MARCH 28 | 2 PM

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

6209 Plank Rd., Vienna ON

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

**MARCH 29 - APRIL 5
EASTER SERVICES**

St. John's Anglican Church 46 Ridout St. (519) 842-5573

All are welcome to join us in a spiritual journey from the dark towards light this Easter at these services: **PALM SUNDAY - 8:00 AM, 10:30 AM; Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 10:00 AM; MAUNDY THURSDAY - 7:00 PM, Come for supper on Maundy Thursday at 5 p.m. (freewill offering); GOOD FRIDAY - 10:30 AM; Holy Saturday - 7:30 PM; EASTER SUNDAY - 8:00 AM, 10:30 AM.**

APRIL

APRIL 4 | 1 - 4:30 PM

TILLSONBURG LEGION DANCE FEATURING KICKN KOUNTRY BAND

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

\$8 cash at the door. Food available from 12-2pm. Cash bar available. All Welcome! Doors open at noon!

APRIL 4 | 10 AM - NOON

IT'S RAINING CATS AND DOGS @ MESSY CHURCH

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

Fun crafts, music, stories, games and a hot lunch. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

APRIL 11 | WORKSHOP 1 - 4:30 PM, PERFORMANCE 7 PM

CELEBRATE 65 YEARS WITH THE BRANT MEN OF SONG: A DAY OF CHORAL SINGING

Hope Christian Reformed Church, 64 Buchanan Crescent, Brantford

The Brant Men of Song are inviting all individuals and groups interested in singing to an afternoon workshop. There is no charge for this workshop. Participants may also sing with the Brant Men of Song in an evening performance starting at 7 pm. Financial contributions will be collected for the Brantford Food Bank. Come sing with us and enjoy the sound of many voices.

APRIL 17 | 8 PM

MUDMEN AT THE TILLSONBURG LEGION

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

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

APRIL 25 | 9 AM - 1 PM

TILLSONBURG CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

St. Mary's Church, Tillsonburg, ON

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

MAY

MAY 3 | 2 - 4 PM

KC AND THE SUNSHINE GIRLS Mt Elgin Community Centre, 333204 Plank Line, Mount Elgin, ON

Put on your Boogie Shoes for an afternoon of dance hits of the 70's & 80's. This Tribute Show is being hosted by Mt Elgin United Church. Tickets are available by calling Joanne 519-485-1988 or Dawne 519-421-6836.

JULY

JULY 17 & 18

BRANTFORD UKULELE FESTIVAL

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

ONGOING CLASSES, CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

3RD TUE. OF MONTH | 6:30 - 8:30 PM

CAREGIVER CONNECTION

Revel Realty Woodstock, 111 Huron Street (Virtual/hybrid options available)

Are you worried about your child or youth? Parents and Caregivers for Mental Health (PCMH) is here to listen, support, and walk alongside you on this journey. Our free Caregiver Connection peer support groups offer parents and caregivers a community of support. Can't make it in person? Join one of our virtual or hybrid groups! Visit

family.cmho.org or email oxfordcounty@pcmh.ca for more information.

OXFORD COUNTY DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM

Appointments are available at Alexandra Hospital Ingersoll and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital and by phone

Are you looking for support with your Diabetes? Our Team of Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and a Social Worker is here to support YOUR goals. We can help with medication adjustments, lifestyle and diet changes, stress management, weight reduction strategies and more. **SELF REFERRALS ARE WELCOME.** Please call 519-485-9611 to book an appointment. Let's work together!

MONDAYS | 9 - 11:30 AM

OTTER VALLEY TAI CHI

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

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

MONDAYS | 7 - 9 PM

MODERN SQUARE DANCING IS FOR YOU!

Thames Valley Dance Club

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

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

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

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY

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

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

3RD WED. OF MONTH | 10 AM - NOON

LYNN RIVER PROBUS CLUB

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

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

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 7 - 9 PM

SATURDAYS | 10 AM - 12 PM

LEARN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU (BJJ)

North Broadway Baptist Church

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

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM

SPRING INTO THE INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE

Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S., Ingersoll

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

FRIDAYS | 1 PM

INTERESTED IN BRIDGE?

JOIN US AT THE TILLSONBURG DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB

Tillsonburg Senior Centre - 45 Hardy Ave, Tillsonburg

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

1ST AND 3RD TUES. OF MONTH

TILLSONBURG LIONS

The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their dinner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Community Centre.

If you are interested in giving back to your Community contact Jim at 519 409 0876 for more information.....all are welcome.

1ST WED. OF MONTH | 7 PM

WAGNER MEMORIAL TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526 - MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING

The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON

Not a member? Contact us to join. For More Information Call, the Legion 519-443-5588. www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

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

The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON

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

VON OXFORD GRIEF CARE: FREE MONTHLY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

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CHAMPION THE TRUTH.

QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Pulp Fiction
2. Jimi Hendrix
3. The Lighthouse of Alexandria (Pharos)
4. Andromeda Galaxy
5. Amnon
6. Finland
7. Five
8. Both
9. Open sesame
10. Andy

SUDOKU

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

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EASTER
DEALS!



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4⁸⁸
LB



MAPLE LEAF OR SCHNEIDERS BACON

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\$4



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SAVE 29%

2⁷⁵



SCHNEIDERS LUNCHMATE LUNCH KITS OR STACKERS

SAVE 33%

\$2



ATLANTIC SALMON FILLET

ONLY

9⁹⁹
LB



BOURSIN CHEESE

SAVE 37%

4⁶⁷



ZIGGY'S FRESH PASTA

SAVE 33%

\$3



GREEN SEEDLESS GRAPES OR RED SEEDLESS GRAPES

SAVE 40%

1⁷⁷
LB



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1⁴⁴



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2⁹⁹

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