

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1321

Thursday, July 9, 2026

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Canada Day storm downs trees, causes power outages across St. Marys and beyond



CEMETERY TREE DAMAGED BY STORM (WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

A large century tree in the St. Marys Cemetery was severely damaged by the Canada Day storm. St. Marys town staff say the town had an arborist in last week to assess whether the tree would need to be taken down entirely or if it could be saved. See more on page 8.

Council rejects integrity commissioner's recommended sanctions for Ehgoetz

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Perth County council has declined to formally reprimand Coun. Rhonda Ehgoetz or suspend her pay after the county's integrity commissioner found she breached multiple provisions of council's code of conduct stemming from a contentious forestry-bylaw debate earlier this year.

Instead, following a presentation by integrity commissioner John Mascarini and lead

investigator Meghan Cowan of Aird & Berlis LLP at its July 2 meeting, council voted only to require Ehgoetz to remove the Facebook posts that formed part of the investigation. Council voted against recommendations to formally reprimand Ehgoetz and suspend her remuneration for 20 days.

The investigation arose from three formal code-of-conduct complaints related to Ehgoetz's actions before and after a special council meeting on Feb. 12, when council

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

A powerful storm that swept across southwestern Ontario on Canada Day left behind downed trees, power outages and scattered property damage in St. Marys and across the region, though the community's Canada Day celebrations escaped unscathed.

The severe thunderstorms rolled through the region late in the afternoon on July 1, bringing high winds, torrential rain and frequent lightning. Across Ontario, Hydro One reported roughly 170,000 customers without power Wednesday evening as the storm toppled trees and hydro lines throughout much of the province.

In St. Marys, the storm arrived after the town's Canada Day festivities had wrapped up.

"(Director of culture, tourism and engagement) Amy (Cubberley) has informed me zero impact," St. Marys director of public works Jed Kelly said. "The event ended at 3 p.m. Cleanup was done around 4 p.m., storm hit at 4:45 p.m."

The storm brought down between six and eight large trees across the community, along with numerous large branches.

"Looks to be about six to eight trees with various limbs additionally throughout town," Kelly said. "Some trees came down on power lines, creating various outages throughout town. Town staff were in yesterday and in contact with Festival Hydro who responded extremely promptly. Traffic lights were affected for a period because of the power outages."

Town staff quickly shifted their focus from Canada Day cleanup to storm response.

"We had the parks staff sweep town parks and trails for smaller branches; larger cleanups have been queued," Kelly said. "Public works staff focused on the large, downed tree cleanups near road allowances, sidewalks and near our triath-

CONTINUED TO PAGE 8

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COMMUNITY

Council rejects integrity commissioner's recommended sanctions for Ehgoetz

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

debated the future of the county's forestry bylaw. Those complaints focused on an email Ehgoetz sent to all members of council before the meeting outlining the motion she intended to introduce, as well as subsequent Facebook posts and comments she made to Grant Haven Media that were published in the St. Marys Independent, among other papers, criticizing Warden Dean Trentowsky and alleging the meeting recording had been "doctored."

"To be absolutely clear, the recommendations are actually the only matters before council for consideration this morning," Cowan said. "Council is the decision-making body and is entrusted with enforcing its code of conduct. As noted, we have investigated the complaint and have produced a report that details its findings and conclusions. We saw fit to make recommendations in this case."

In their report, Mascarini and Cowan concluded, on a balance of probabilities, that Ehgoetz contravened multiple sections of the county's code of conduct, including provisions requiring councillors to act in good faith, respect council's decision-making process, refrain from making derogatory comments and exercise sound judgment when communicating publicly. The investigators found no breach of the code's workplace harassment provision.

The report found Ehgoetz's Feb. 11 email, sent to all members of council

ahead of the special meeting, amounted to "a deliberate attempt ... to get 'in front' of the debate" by advancing council business outside of a public meeting.

"As an experienced member of council, and indeed as the former warden of the county, the councillor ought to have been very well aware of the procedures expected of members of council," the report states.

Investigators also rejected Ehgoetz's assertion that Warden Dean Trentowsky bullied her during the Feb. 12 meeting after he warned council about the potential implications of her email.

"We do not agree at all with this view," the report states. "In our opinion, the warden was making council aware of an issue that he believed was a concern and, as chair of the meeting, he was entitled to do so."

The report further concluded Trentowsky "remained calm but firm and did not disrespect the councillor," adding Ehgoetz "overreacted in labelling the warden a 'bully.'"

Investigators also found Ehgoetz's public allegations that county staff had "doctored" the council meeting recording were unsupported and should never have been made without first seeking clarification from staff.

"If the councillor had concerns about the recording and posting methods of council meetings, she could have made appropriate inquiries with staff," the re-

port states. "She did not and instead repeated her unfounded assertions without taking steps to attempt to educate herself about the process."

In recommending sanctions, the integrity commissioner noted Ehgoetz's long experience in municipal government, including her previous service as county warden, her refusal to apologize and the fact the Facebook posts remained publicly accessible months after they were made.

The report recommended council formally reprimand Ehgoetz, suspend her remuneration for 20 days – 10 days for sending the email and 10 days for her public comments – and request she immediately remove the Facebook posts.

"The only thing I have to say is I do not agree with the recommendations, and I have nothing more to say," said Ehgoetz at the July 2 meeting.

Earlier in the meeting, the councillor and Perth East mayor declared a conflict of interest with the agenda item and did not vote on the matter but was given a chance to comment on the integrity commissioner's recommendations. The warden, meanwhile, stood down as chair of the meeting, handing proceedings over to past Warden Doug Kellum, while the integrity commissioner's report was being discussed.

In response to the report, Ehgoetz provided written submissions to the integrity commissioner defending her actions, maintaining throughout the investigation that her email was intended only to point

out what she believed was a procedural discrepancy regarding the forestry bylaw and not to influence council's decision. She also reiterated concerns about how the Feb. 12 meeting was handled and argued the integrity commissioner should also have examined the conduct of the warden and county staff, though the report notes those matters were outside the commissioner's jurisdiction because no complaints had been filed against them.

Following discussion, council rejected the recommended reprimand and pay suspension, opting only to direct Ehgoetz to remove the Facebook posts identified in the report.

"Unfortunately, we're in a position that does not put the county in very good light, I believe," Coun. Bob Wilhelm said. "I think that probably Coun. Ehgoetz has been through enough and I don't agree with any of these recommended penalties."

"... I think Rhonda's been through enough."

Council's decision brings the integrity commissioner's investigation to a close, though the findings remain part of the public record.

Ehgoetz announced on her personal Facebook page earlier this year that she would not run for re-election as Perth East mayor in the Oct. 26 municipal election, making this term her last as a member of Perth County council unless she seeks re-election again in the future and is once again appointed by Perth East council to serve on county council.

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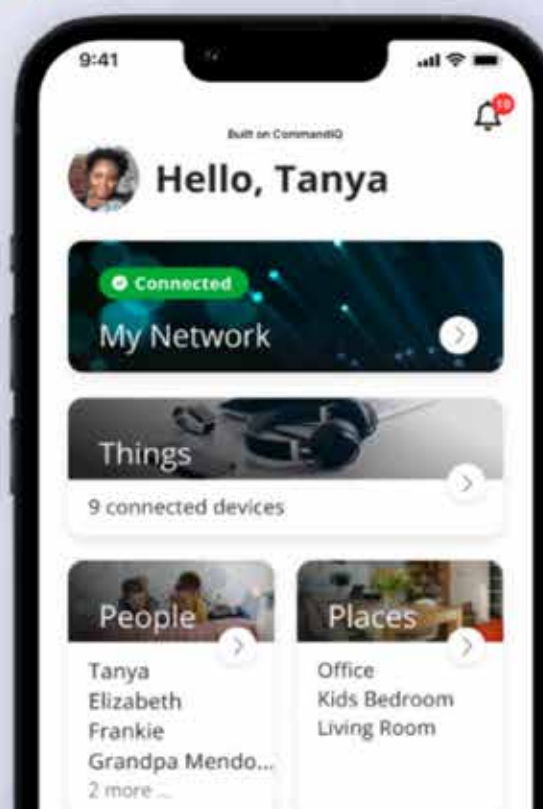
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EDITORIAL

Make those summer memories around the campfire

WENDY LAMOND
Independent Reporter

When I was sitting on my front porch this weekend, I watched as many camping trailers drove by and I couldn't help but wonder where they are heading or where are they coming from.

It made me feel happy for the memories that are being made and I couldn't help but feel a bit nostalgic for our old camping days. I still remember the plan-

ning and packing to get prepped and ready. Camping is not for everyone, but if it is your thing, you know what I mean when I talk about the frustration of backing a trailer into a small space, trying to figure out where you can buy firewood and making sure you have everything tied down in case of some bad weather.

What stands out the most is watching kids learn how to ride their bikes, swimming, cooking meals over an open fire, sharing your favourite things and stories

around the fire and, of course, s'mores.

One thing our crew planned were theme days. We planned meals and games around themes like pirates, Christmas in July, the Greek Olympics and even a tribal theme. The kids all still have fond memories of these trips and still talk about it. Let's hope they will carry on these traditions with their families.

Yes, there are mosquitos, racoons in your garbage when you forget to put it away, countless times telling the kids to walk around the chairs instead of right by the fire, getting home with a tired family and having to put things away while airing everything out, however, the pros well outnumber the cons.

The memories made during these times are like nothing you will ever get to do again and the value of all the hard work to put this together is priceless. Enjoy your summer and make those great memories.

Bravo	Boo
We have 4 Bravos this week 1) Bravo to the St. Marys Horticultural Society for the time, energy and care they dedicate to maintaining the beautiful gardens around the Hospital Gazebo. It's such a peaceful place where patients, families, staff and volunteers can rest and relax. 2) Bravo to the Independent Grocery Store owner and staff for offering iced bottles of water (for free) to customers on Friday, July 3 during the hot weather. It was much appreciated. Hey, only in St. Marys, right! 3) Bravo to the neighbours and passersby that helped my brother back to his feet on Sunday after he had fallen. I am so grateful to live in a community where people care and don't hesitate to help. 4) Bravo to the Hitching Post. Your sign out front always brings a smile to my face. Your positive humour is wonderful!	We have no Boos this week

*Please note all Boos and Bravos must be signed in order to be considered. Bravos and Boos are submitted by community members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the St. Marys Independent.

Quote of the Week

"There will always be forces that want to divide us. They forget this country's founding insight: that unity is not uniformity, that our differences are strengths to nurture rather than risks to manage, and that our values serve as an unshakeable foundation. When we show kindness, kindness grows. When we seek unity, unity grows. When we are Canadian, Canada grows. Happy Canada Day."

- Prime Minister Mark Carney celebrating our country on Canada Day

Overheard
AT THE COFFEE SHOP

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Apparently, I'm a soccer (football) fan now.

Trump's meddling with FIFA made Belgium's win over USA so satisfying.

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others? Either email them to us at info@stmarysindependent.com with the title "Overheard at The Coffee Shop", call 519.284.0041 or drop by the office to let us know!

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Thoughts
OF THE WEEK

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The most wasted days are the ones without laughter.

There is a crack in everything, that is how the light gets in.

Tears fall for a reason, they are your strength, not your weakness.

If you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours.

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Prairie drama *Ruby in the Dust* to be performed at Snapping Turtle

EMILY STEWART

Independent Reporter

A new play about workers' rights by Laughing Cactus Productions will have its one-night-only run at local coffee shop Snapping Turtle Coffee Roasters.

Laughing Cactus Productions will present Robin Taylor Wright's *Ruby in the Dust* at the Snapping Turtle on Aug. 7 starting at 6: 30 p.m. *Ruby in the Dust* is about Polish-Canadian coal miner Eddie Zabrowski and his daughter, Ruby, finding refuge in the home of childless farmers Abner and Jo Ballantyne. Jo's brother, Walter, tries to start a revolution, but Eddie isn't interested in marching nor does he want the family to develop a closer relationship with Ruby.

"It has a little bit of humour, it has some heart, it pertains to subject matter that I think affects us all," said Wright, playwright. "It is set in the 1930s during the depression but there's this universality about how we're all overworked and underpaid, so I think that speaks to what we're all going through now."

The prairie drama is inspired by the 1931 Estevan Riot, where three Ukrainian workers were killed by the RCMP.

The production will be similar to a radio drama where actors, including those familiar to St. Marys like Chet Baker, Derek Roberts and Rosemary Radcliffe, will perform the story and there will be sound design like voiceovers and old-time radio sound effects.

"It can be a real auditory experience because there's no time for rehearsal or memorization, so we're just going to lift something off the page and tell a story that's hopefully entertaining for people," Wright said.

He also encourages St. Marys residents to check out a new and authentic piece.

"In an age where I'm seeing a lot of generative AI happening, I'd really like to strive to bring something that is hu-



man-made and something a little more organic and prone to change because plays are alive, breathing organs, so you're going to see something where it's at right now, problems and all, you get to see the process of a new show and everything," Wright said.

The *Ruby in the Dust* production will be the first time Laughing Cactus productions will be in the Town of St. Marys. Wright, who uses he/they pronouns, had part of their upbringing in Stratford but remembers St. Marys from the late '90s and early 2000s, and acknowledge the town has changed since. Baker recommended the Snapping Turtle as a venue to Wright, who found it's the ideal venue for appreciating the play compared to a bar that focuses on alcohol sales more than the performance.

"They seem to be more open to the artistic and collaborative aspect and something for everybody," they said.

Ruby in the Dust will be first-come-first-served with limited seating. There are no tickets but it is a pay-what-you-can event.

"Even if you have a couple of nickels, just come see a show," Wright said.

STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



ELECTION NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Nomination packages are available for pickup by appointment only during the construction of the Church St. stairs at Town Hall. Please call 519-284-2340 ext. 212 or email clerksoffice@town.stmarys.on.ca.

Municipal nomination forms must be filed in person (by appointment) at St. Marys Town Hall by Friday, August 21 at 2 PM. Nomination forms for school board candidates shall be filed with the respective municipalities.

More details: townofstmarys.com/elections

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Cool off this summer at Canada's largest outdoor freshwater swimming pool. The Quarry is open daily from 11 AM to 7 PM. Splash, climb and slide at the Super Splash St. Marys inflatable park (tickets sold separately).

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STONETOWN HERITAGE FESTIVAL

There's fun for everyone at the annual Stonetown Heritage Festival on Saturday, July 25! This free event celebrates the cultures, stories and histories that shape the past and present of St. Marys. The festival features family-friendly activities, heritage tours, art, vendor's and farmers' market, and live music and dance.

Learn more: discoverstmarys.ca



TOWN HALL STAIR RECONSTRUCTION

Town Hall's outdoor staircases are currently undergoing construction. Access to the Town Hall service desk and public washroom will be closed for approximately six weeks. Services usually offered at Town Hall will be provided online, by phone or at other municipal facilities.



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Senior of the Week



Our Senior of the Week is Laura Prekup. Laura has lived in St. Marys for 54 years and enjoys family, being an excellent homemaker, cutting her grass, following the Blue Jays games, a little bit of shopping and her visits to Joe's Diner. Laura doesn't seem to age but just celebrated her 90th birthday. Keep smiling, Laura!

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, contact us at 519.284.0041 or info@stmarysindependent.com.

Perth Road 139 culvert replacement to close road near St. Marys for up to three weeks

Perth County ONTARIO • CANADA

GALEN SIMMONS

Regional Editor

Drivers travelling southeast of St. Marys can expect a temporary road closure later this summer as Perth County replaces a deteriorating culvert on Perth Road 139.

At its July 2 meeting, Perth County council awarded the construction contract for the culvert replacement project to Wellington Construction Contractors Inc. after the company submitted the lowest compliant bid of \$322,000, excluding HST. The work is part of the county's 2026 capital program for repairing and replacing small culverts.

"This asset is prioritized for remediation under this contract to repair an existing road crossing, which is comprised of concrete and stone box culvert structure with corrugated steel-pipe extensions on each of its ends," director of public works Bill Wilson told council.

The project will see crews repair and replace portions of an aging culvert located on Perth Road 139, in the Township of Perth South just southwest of Line 2 near Prospect Hill. The work will replace the damaged culvert sections, repair the existing concrete and stone structure, restore proper water flow and protect the roadway from future erosion and undermining.

"Engineering field reviews indicated that the CSP culvert ends are badly deflected, the east end of the cul-

vert structure has effectively failed and remediation of the asset is critical in order to replace the compromised components and stabilize the barrel of the structure."

To complete the work safely and efficiently, Perth Road 139 will be fully closed at the construction site for a maximum of 21 days.

County staff considered maintaining one lane of traffic during construction, but determined a full closure would reduce project costs, improve worker safety and shorten the overall construction schedule.

The closure will take place sometime between July 15 and Oct. 30, though an exact construction start date has not yet been announced. Environmental regulations governing work within the watercourse prevent construction from beginning before July 15, while the contract requires the project to be completed by Oct. 30.

During the closure, motorists will be directed around the work zone using a signed detour along Perth Line 4, Perth Road 151 and Whalen Line.

The county says it will provide advance notice of the closure through project signage, electronic message boards, its website and social-media channels as construction approaches. Residents can also expect updates throughout the project as work progresses.

The culvert replacement is expected to be completed within the approved \$600,000 project budget for small culverts in the county's 2026 capital budget.

WEEKEND QUIZ

By Jake Grant

1. What year did Doug Ford become premier of Ontario?
2. Who plays Rick Grimes in The Walking Dead?
3. What element makes up the majority of Earth's atmosphere?
4. Which animal was the most sought after during the fur trade era?
5. Who says, "Th-th-th-that's all folks!"?
6. What is botany the study of?
7. What prominent facial feature is Hello Kitty missing?
8. Where is the lowest elevation point in California?
9. Michael Stipe was the lead singer of which band?
10. What is the roman numeral for 10?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

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Stratford police catch two dangerous drivers in Perth South

ST. MARYS INDEPENDENT
Staff Contribution

Stratford police are reminding drivers to follow the rules of the road after nabbing two dangerous drivers in Perth South recently.

On Tuesday, June 30, shortly after 8 p.m. during a patrol of Perth Line 20 in the Township of Perth South, a uniformed officer from the Stratford Police Service (SPS) stopped a black Mazda 3 that had been observed travelling 141 km/hr in the posted 80 km/hr zone.

As a result of this traffic stop, the 20-year-old female driver from Fergus was charged with stunt driving under the Highway Traffic Act. The driver's licence was subsequently suspended for 30-days, and the vehicle was impounded for 14 days.

On Wednesday, July 1, shortly after 4 a.m., the same officer observed a blue

Ford F150 pickup truck entering the roundabout on Perth Road 119 at Perth Line 20 in the Township of Perth South in what police describe as "an uncontrolled manner." The vehicle was then observed travelling at 135 km/hr in the posted 80 km/hr zone on Perth Road 119.

The officer stopped the vehicle and police allege the driver was observed to be under the influence of alcohol. The driver, a 34-year-old male resident of St. Marys, was arrested for impaired driving and transported to Stratford Police Headquarters. Breath tests were provided, which police say confirmed the driver was impaired by alcohol.

The driver of this incident was charged with operation while impaired, operation while impaired – blood alcohol concentration – and stunt driving. The vehicle was impounded for 14 days and the driver received a 90-day suspension of his licence. A court date was set for Aug. 17.

East Nissouri Union Church hosts fundraising car wash



George Quinn and Leanne Turner share a smile at the welcome table. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

WENDY LAMOND
Independent Reporter

On Saturday, July 4, the East Nissouri Union Church held its first fundraising car wash.

The event was held at the Cooper Farm on Perth Line 119 north of Uniondale. Along with the car wash, there were also hot dogs for sale, a bake sale and a pie auction. The fundraiser ran from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and, luckily, the rain held out for

the hardworking volunteers.

"Thank you to all those who came out to help wash cars, serve hot dogs and sell baking," organizer Wayne Cooper said. "Also, thanks to those that donated baking, to Tremblett's Independent for donating the buns, and a special thank-you to all of those who came out to support us."

The church was able to raise \$3,000 from Saturday's car wash

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Canada Day storm downs trees, causes power outages across St. Marys and beyond



(PHOTOS COURTESY OF PETE NEAL)

A 436-by-48-foot shed built by Pete Neal at his property on Line 14 in St. Marys to generate hydro through solar panels installed on the roof was completely destroyed by a powerful wind gust during a storm that hit St. Marys and the surrounding area late in the afternoon on Canada Day.

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

lon route this weekend. Cleanups will likely continue into next week.”

While no injuries were reported in St. Marys, Kelly said there was some damage to vehicles caused by falling trees and branches.

The storm also inflicted significant damage to at least one mature tree at St. Marys Cemetery.

“Another larger – likely a century tree – took some significant damage at the cemetery. We have our arborist coming in for review of damages; not sure if the rest will have to come down,” Kelly said.

Across southwestern Ontario, high winds downed trees and power lines in Perth, Oxford, Middlesex and Huron counties, leaving thousands of customers without electricity into Thursday. Hydro

One crews continued working to restore power throughout the region, with officials urging residents to stay at least 10 metres away from any downed power lines.

Despite the storm’s strength, Kelly credited the town’s ongoing tree-maintenance program with reducing the amount of damage in St. Marys.

“I think for the most part, our quad-

rant-pruning tree-maintenance and inspection program is paying dividends,” he said. “We can see it when we have storm events like this with minimal clean-up required.

“I do feel fortunate that we have the internal resources and equipment to respond effectively. Additionally, I’d like to thank my staff who are working through the cleanups in this heat.”



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

A storm that hit much of southwestern Ontario late in the afternoon on Canada Day moved in so quickly, some golfers had to take shelter inside the bathroom by the green on Hole 5 at River Valley Golf Club.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Wayne and Sherri Barber, who live on Glass Street East, lost one complete tree and half of two trees that will eventually be coming down, and one big branch on a fourth tree during the storm that hit St. Marys on Canada Day. It was a busy day of clean up but thanks to help from family and friends, it made a big job easier.


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St. Marys Canada Day Parade marches through town under sunny skies



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

This year's Canada Day parade was full of colour, music and, of course, the Shriners. It's always a crowd favourite watching them circling around in their little cars.



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

The Mitchell Legion Band braved the heat and were on hand to share their musical talents.



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

The Shriners also enjoyed the day in their classic cars.



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

Another popular float that is always full and colourful was the Stonetown Karate float.



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

Members of the St. Marys Legion Branch 236 Colour Party marched at the beginning of the parade on Canada Day.



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

A Canada Day parade in St. Marys is not complete without the presence of a variety of local tractors.

St. Marys Canada Day Parade marches through town under sunny skies



(NANCY BICKELL PHOTO)

Children waited patiently in the heat for the parade to begin. Pictured from left to right are Nyla Berger, Sylvier Cookson, Beau Wamboldt and Lily Berger.



(NANCY BICKELL PHOTO)

The Town of St. Marys' Canada Day event in Cadzow Park was well attended with many people who came out to celebrate Canada Day and enjoy the parade, music, activities, food and the very warm day.



(NANCY BICKELL PHOTO)

Pictured are Gayle and Larry Beattie all decked out in their very red attire celebrating Canada's birthday.



(NANCY BICKELL PHOTO)

Pictured from left, Avery King, Elena King, Harvey Sadler, Leona Sadler and Lindsey Sheldon enjoy a cool treat on a hot day.



(NANCY BICKELL PHOTO)

Deputy mayor Brogan Aylward and Nancy Bickell took time out of their busy day to pose for the camera.



(WENDY LAMOND PHOTO)

Another musical entry in the parade was the Bethel Church float.

Annual Canada Day breakfast brings friends and neighbours together near Avonton

GARY WEST

Independent Reporter

For many years, friends and neighbours have gathered at the farm of Alex and Verna Strathdee near Avonton to celebrate Canada Day with good food, great company and plenty of Canadian pride.

The annual mid-morning breakfast has become a cherished tradition, drawing a large crowd to the picturesque Downie Township farm each July 1.

Guests arrived with lawn chairs in hand and enjoyed the hospitality beneath the property's mature shade trees, which offered welcome relief from this year's hot and humid weather.

Fortunately, the powerful windstorm and rain that swept across

much of southwestern Ontario later that afternoon held off until after the breakfast had concluded, allowing everyone to enjoy the annual gathering uninterrupted.

Before the meal begins, local singer-songwriter John McIntosh led the crowd in a spirited rendition of "O' Canada," a tradition that has become a highlight of the event.

Many attendees proudly wore red and white as they celebrated Canada's birthday and reflected on the freedoms and opportunities they enjoy while living in Canada.

The annual breakfast continues to bring together generations of family members, neighbours and friends in a celebration of community and national pride.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Friends and neighbours gather for the annual Canada Day breakfast hosted by Alex and Verna Strathdee at their farm near Avonton. Pictured, from left, are Dave Standeaven, Bob McIntosh, Dana Standeaven, Lenore Mountain, David Mountain, Denise Gibson, Mike Dunn, Narissa Connolly, Mary McIntosh, Hollie Wouters, Alex Gibson, Sue Lindsay, Eva McKay, Kathy Blake, Jim Tyler, John Blake, Mike Lindsay, Ron McKay, Sharon Baker, Paul Quinn, Jim Ross, Pat Froud, Marnie Ready, Bob Doupe, Mary Ross, Elton Baker, Marion Jackson Tyler, John McIntosh, Darlene Doupe, Bob Ready, Brenda West, Bob Wood, Elaine Standeaven, Barb Coffey, Laurel McIntosh, Bob Sparling, Verna Strathdee, John Froud and Alex Strathdee.

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Please note: The clinic will be **closed to the public from July 13-17, 2026** while we relocate our services.

Parking and Accessibility

- Patient parking is available in the Green P parking lot in front of Foodland.
- An accessible parking space will remain available in our office driveway, with a ramped route to reception, dispensing, and an examination room.
- An accessible washroom will also be available on-site.

If you have an upcoming appointment, our reception team will contact you with parking and check-in instructions.

If you have mobility concerns or require assistance during your visit, please call **519-284-1540** before your appointment so we can make the necessary arrangements.

If you experience an eye emergency while the clinic is closed (July 13-17), please visit your nearest emergency department or the **Stratford General Hospital Emergency Department**, where ophthalmology on-call services are available.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we improve our clinic. We look forward to continuing to provide you with exceptional care throughout the renovation.

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Annual Mountain Family BBQ continues to support Wellspring Cancer Support Stratford

GARY WEST

Independent Reporter

The annual Mountain Family BBQ once again brought together supporters of Wellspring Cancer Support Stratford for a day of food, fellowship and fundraising in support of local individuals and families affected by cancer.

For many years, David and Lenore Mountain have opened their Downie Township property north of St. Marys to host the popular fundraiser, which has grown steadily in both attendance and the amount of money raised.

Lisa Stacey, manager at Wellspring Cancer Support Stratford, said the event's continued success is made possible through the generosity of donors, volunteers and community partners.

Each year, the barbecue raises about \$20,000 to help fund Wellspring's free cancer-support programs.

Guests enjoy a homemade Perth County pork chop dinner prepared by dedicated volunteers, complete with all the trimmings and dessert donated by Karen Barter and Dairy Queen Stratford.

The event also features a popular raffle with prizes donated by local businesses,

including wine tastings, tours and other experiences, with organizers expressing their appreciation to the many businesses and individuals who contribute each year.

"Wellspring is a warm and welcoming place," Stacey said. "This event reflects the incredible community spirit that helps us continue supporting individuals and families affected by cancer."

Wellspring Cancer Support Stratford provides its programs at no cost to participants and operates without core government or hospital funding, relying instead on community donations and fundraising events.

This year's barbecue also recognized Stratford resident Samm Simon, who recently raised \$15,000 for Wellspring by running from Stratford to Tobermory.

Simon said he was inspired to undertake the fundraising challenge after seeing the support Wellspring has provided to his wife, Christine Bossence, as she undergoes cancer treatment.

The annual Mountain Family BBQ remains one of Wellspring Stratford's signature fundraising events and continues to demonstrate the generosity of Perth County residents in supporting those facing cancer.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Supporters gather at the annual Mountain Family BBQ, hosted by David and Lenore Mountain north of St. Marys, to raise funds for Wellspring Cancer Support Stratford. Pictured are, from left, Robin Mountain, Jane Landreth, Heather Galloway, Pat Turnbull, Julia Elliott, Wellspring manager Lisa Stacey, Bonnie Hueston, Karen Barter, Kathy Blake and Joan Sef-tel. Kneeling in front is Stratford resident Samm Simon, who recently raised \$15,000 for Wellspring by running from Stratford to Tobermory. To support Wellspring Cancer Support Stratford, email lisa@wellspringstratford.ca or call 519-271-2232.

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Avonbank Church restoration campaign preserves piece of Perth County history

GARY WEST

Independent Reporter

Thanks to the dedication of local volunteers and generous community support, Avonbank Community Church has remained a landmark in Perth County for more than 130 years.

Originally built in 1890 as a Scottish Presbyterian church, the historic building became Avonbank United Church in 1924. Although regular worship services ended in 1968, the church has continued to serve the community through the efforts of volunteers committed to preserving its history.

In 2016, local residents purchased the building from the United Church of Canada and incorporated it as the Avonbank Community Church, ensuring it would continue to be maintained as a community gathering place.

Among the volunteers leading the restoration effort are neighbours David and Lenore Mountain, who, along with many others, have helped oversee significant conservation work over the years.

Past restoration projects have included replacing the roof, repairing plaster, repainting the interior, repointing the brickwork, rebuilding the windows and upgrading the building with an indoor washroom, a new furnace and a sound

system.

During a major restoration campaign in 2008-2009, generous donations from local families helped raise more than \$20,000, funding extensive window restoration and other structural improvements.

Annual fundraising events, including the popular pork chop barbecue hosted by David and Lenore Mountain, along with ongoing donations, have helped cover maintenance costs and keep the church heated and powered.

More recently, however, volunteers discovered significant deterioration beneath the church's lower floor.

Working alongside local contractors and suppliers, volunteers removed the deteriorated flooring, installed new supports and footings, and poured a new concrete floor. While many services and materials were donated or discounted, the project has nearly exhausted the church's financial reserves.

Church secretary-treasurer David Mountain said volunteers are taking advantage of the renovations to complete additional improvements, including replacing the aging kitchen, updating electrical wiring and installing a new ceiling in the lower level.

Organizers are now hoping to raise an additional \$18,000 to complete the project and continue preserving the historic church for future generations.

Charitable tax receipts are available for donations of \$40 or more.

Donations can be made to: Avonbank Community Church, care of Marion Ready, 4741 Line 15, RR 7, St. Marys, Ont., N4X 1C9.

The Avonbank cemetery, established in 1845 beside the church, also continues to be maintained by dedicated volunteers.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Built in 1890, Avonbank Community Church continues to stand as a cherished landmark in Perth South.

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St. Marys Independent SPORTS

Ahrens, Cunningham, Foran, Lemmons win SMGCC Four-Man Scramble

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Independent Sports Reporter

The team of Jim Ahrens, Andy Cunningham, Jeremy Foran and Rob Lemmons shot 17-under-par July 4 to win the St. Marys Golf and Country Club's (SMGCC) Four-Man Scramble tournament.

The tournament featured 24 foursomes competing in the tournament. According to Cunningham, his team's success was rooted in their strong play on the greens.

"I think golf scrambles come down to putting," Cunningham told the Independent. "All four in our group have similar putting styles, and each of us contributed with key putts to keep the momentum going."

Cunningham added their putting prowess was backed up by strong shooting further up the fairway.

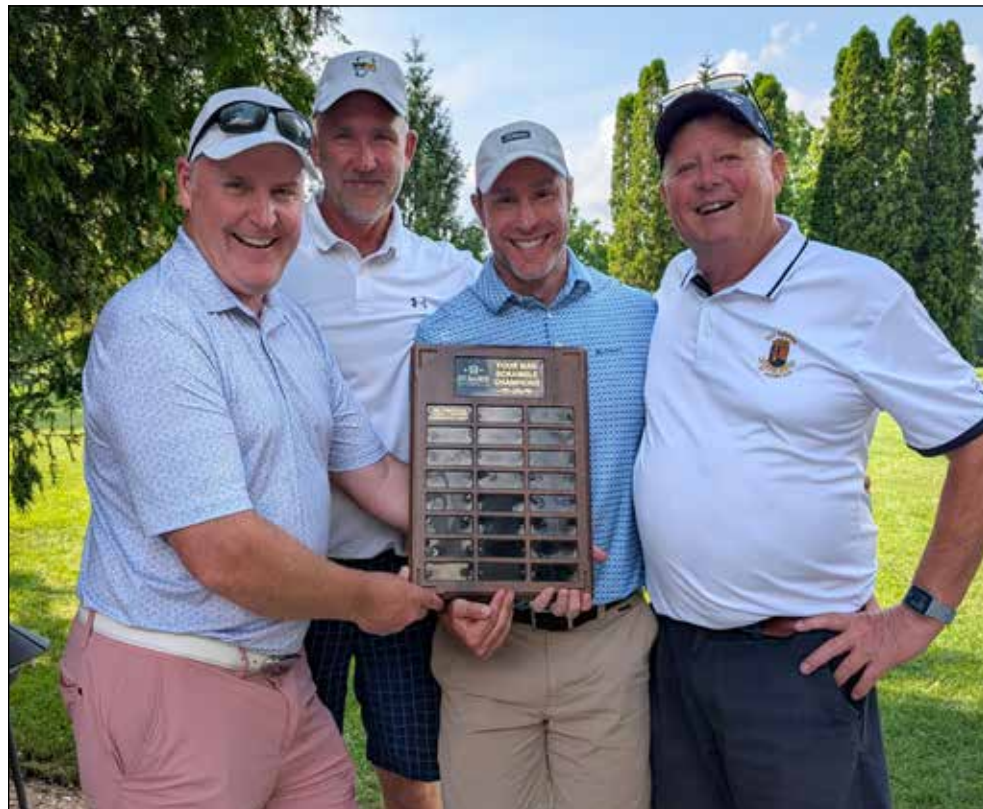
"Of course, the closer you are to the hole, the easier those putts are to make, and we had numerous kick-in birdies throughout the round. Our team is anchored by one of southwestern Ontario's best amateur golfers in Jeremy (Foran),

followed by the big-hitting Jim (Ahrens) from West Haven (Golf and Country Club), and arguably the best putter in St. Marys with a 20 handicap in Rob (Lemmons). I'm just along for the ride."

Their 17-under-par result was an especially strong finish after a shaky start for the foursome.

"We started on the most difficult hole on the course, the par-three second, and opened with a messy bogey," said Cunningham. "But we bounced back quickly on the next hole with Jim (Ahrens) making a three for an eagle all on his own. Perhaps the most memorable shot of the tournament came on the par-five 15th where Jeremy (Foran) stuck our second shot to a foot-and-a-half for a tap-in eagle."

The winners of the A flight was the team of Dan Anderson, Kellen Fifield, Rick Fifield and Matt Hopkins, who won their flight with retrogression after shooting 14-under-par. In the B flight, Peter Csanyi, Steve Csanyi, Steve MacDonald and Kris Whetstone took the top spot with a 12-under-par score.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Pictured from left to right are Andrew Cunningham, Jim Ahrens, Jeremy Foran and Rob Lemmons, who won the St. Marys Golf and Country Club's (SMGCC) Four-Man Scramble tournament July 4.

Science Hill G&CC celebrates Canada Day



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Science Hill Golf and Country Club celebrated Canada's 159th birthday with their annual Canada Day tournament. July 1. Pictured on the left with the Canadian flag painted on the golf course, from left to right, are Tiffany Knight, Justine Travnicek, Melissa McCloud, and Amanda Cooper. On the right, from left, are Jim McCann, Nan McCann, Linda Coddington, and Helen Harrigan. The team of Mark Hedberg, Brett Stacey, Cody Oakes, and Scott Watson won the tournament with 15-under-par, and as part of the tournament, Science Hill also had poutine and s'more and cherry cheesecake beaver tails offered on the course and a 50/50 hockey stick putting competition with the club's 50 per cent being donated to the food bank. Each player brought in donations for the food bank as well, with the club matching the donation.

Over 120 athletes come to St. Marys for Stonetown Triathlon



The Town of St. Marys and Balance Point Triathlon Club of London hosted the Stonetown Triathlon in St. Marys July 5. The event hosted athletes from around Ontario and the United States swimming, cycling, and running throughout St. Marys, beginning at the St. Marys Quarry. Athletes ranged from eight to 19 years old in the youth divisions, with an adult division also competing in the triathlon.



After swimming in the Quarry, athletes then cycled through St. Marys before returning to the Quarry area for the run. Eight St. Marys residents competed in the Stonetown Triathlon, including Hannah Schmidt (sixth in 12-13 division), Everett Crummer (seventh in 10-11 division), Harper Schmidt (eighth in 12-13 division), Pete Anderson (13th in 10-11 division), Monica Hinz (14th in 10-11 division), Briland Cunningham (16th in 14-15 non-draft division), Rylee Cunningham (18th in 14-15 non-draft division), and Mason Mueller (sixth in the adult division).



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTOS)

The triathlon's third leg was a run down the riverside walkway after the athletes completed their bike ride. Garth Jansen, a coach and key driver of the Stonetown Triathlon, said after the event, "I don't think it could have gone off any better." The competition featured over 120 athletes.

Town proclaims July Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame Month

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Independent Sports Reporter

The Town of St. Marys announced July 2 that town council has proclaimed July as Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame Month in St. Marys, recognizing the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum's (CBHFM) significant contributions to Canadian baseball, tourism, and the St. Marys community.

The CBHFM welcomes thousands of visitors each year and celebrates the achievements of Canada's baseball legends.

As part of this special month, the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum will offer free admission for St. Marys residents July 28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., providing an opportunity to explore the museum, enjoy the grounds and cheer on local teams.

Scott Crawford, director of operations at the CBHFM, was appreciative in response to the announcement by the municipality.

"This is a wonderful commitment by the Town of St. Marys to continually show their support to us here at the hall of fame," Crawford told the Independent. "We are proud to be in St. Marys and can't wait to celebrate baseball together."

St. Marys CAO Brent Kittmer highlighted the hall's importance to St. Marys and the pride the town has in the national landmark as a driving force behind the proclamation.

"Council's proclamation of July as Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum month in St. Marys recognizes the town's long history and tradition of baseball, and the importance of the CBHFM in the community," said Kittmer. "The Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame is a source



(PHOTO COURTESY OF CANADIAN BASEBALL HALL OF FAME AND MUSEUM)

The Town of St. Marys proclaimed July as Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame Month, with free admission for St. Marys residents being offered July 28.

of pride for St. Marys. Council is always happy to support the CBHFM's efforts in connecting our community to the rich history of baseball in Canada while wel-

coming visitors from across the country to experience the spirit, stories and traditions that they hold within their walls."

Stonetown Karate's Master of the Ring tournament returns March 13, 2027

EMILY STEWART

Independent Reporter

St. Marys dojo Stonetown Karate Centre's Master of the Ring Tournament will include all World Karate Commission (WKC) age group categories starting next March.

Stonetown Karate Centre announced the annual Master of the Ring Tournament will take place at the Stratford Rotary Complex on March 13, 2027.

The tournament will include the adult black belt veterans division for those 48 years and older for the first time. Stonetown Karate's Master of the Ring Tourna-

ment will be one of the few that offers all WKC age categories.

"It's a pretty cool thing really," said Jeremy Lorentz, owner of Stonetown Karate Centre.

Stonetown Karate's Master of the Ring tournament is the last tournament before the provincial tryouts for WKC. National tryouts take place after provincials.

"Because the provincials and national tryouts for Canada run with those age categories, we want to make sure our event have them all so all the competitors can compete against the people they're going to see at provincials and/or nationals or worlds, for that matter," Lorentz said.

Stonetown Karate runs basic karate programs where all children begin, as well as elite classes for those looking for more advanced training. Lorentz noticed improvement in his students of all ages and skill levels post-tournament.

"Those that go to tournaments do well and excel way better in the dojo as far as belt levels, accuracy, the discipline, just everything, the respect of things, school, grades, all that stuff. The tournaments just bring that out in all the kids and the adults," he said.

To register for the 2027 Master of the Ring tournament online, visit www.stonetownkarate.ca/stk-tournament.

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(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)

Ashton Ropp releases a pitch during the St. Marys Firefighters U11 WOBA Red St. Marys Rockies game this past Sunday.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)

Brody Pearson sends the ball flying into the air with a hit during last Thursday's Stonetown Electric U11 HL Red St. Marys Rockies game.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)

Liam Barker swings and records a hit during the St. Marys Optometry U15 HL Red St. Marys Rockies game this past Monday.



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTO)

Rowan Marchand launches the ball up the field during this past Sunday's U11 Boys Tier Two St. Marys Storm game.



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Tribe, Bomberadoes sitting atop men’s slo-pitch league



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTOS)

As of July 6, the Tribe sit first in the ‘A’ division of the St. Marys men’s slo-pitch league, while the Bomberadoes occupy the top spot in the ‘B’ division. Pictured on the left is Justin Bowles getting a hit for the Diamondbacks, who are in third place in the ‘A’ division as of July 6, during one of the team’s games July 2. Pictured on the right is Austin Small making a catch for the Bomberadoes, who sit first in the ‘B’ division, during a game July 2.

Bringin’ The Heat, Free Agents lead ladies’ slo-pitch league



(SPENCER SEYMOUR PHOTOS)

As of July 7, Bringin’ The Heat occupied the top spot in the St. Marys ladies’ slo-pitch league standings. The Free Agents sat in second, just one win back of the first-place spot. Pictured on the left is Jenn Carradine getting a hit during the B-Brew’s game July 6. On the right is Jillian Smith throwing the ball back to the infield for the Shenenigals.

ST. MARYS MEN’S SLO PITCH LEAGUE STANDINGS	
(as of July 7th) (W-L-T)	
‘A’ Division	‘B’ Division
1. Tribe (9-2-2)	1. Bomberadoes (10-2)
2. Flyers (9-2)	2. Jets (10-4)
3. Diamondbacks (9-4)	3. Bears (8-5-1)
4. LA Batts (8-4)	4. Autobots (5-9)
5. Merchants (7-4)	5. Sox (5-10)
6. Royals (7-5)	6. Rangers (4-10-1)
7. Isotopes (7-7)	7. Thunder (3-11-2)
8. Macindrivers (6-7)	8. LSD (3-11)
	9. Pats (0-13)

ST. MARYS WOMEN’S SLO PITCH LEAGUE STANDINGS	
(as of July 7th) (W-L-T)	
1. Bringin’ The Heat (9-0-1)	9. Snappers (4-5-0)
2. Free Agents (8-1-0)	10. Exterminators (4-6-0)
3. B-Brew (7-1-0)	11. Field of Queens (3-7-0)
4. Resting Pitch Face (7-2-0)	12. Wombats (2-8-0)
5. Comets (6-3-1)	13. Basic Pitches (1-9-0)
6. Shenenigals (5-4-0)	14. Pitches (0-8-0)
7. Mad Batters (4-5-0)	
8. Wannabees (4-5-0)	

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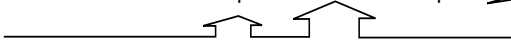
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COLUMNS

UKRAINIAN CORNER: The Summer Manifesto – why it's never too late to switch gears

ALONA VASYLIEVA

Independent Columnist

I hope you didn't get too tired of my travel notes over the last three weeks because, let's be honest, nobody really likes watching other people relax.

This week, however, I want to explore the concept of "a calling," or how we come to understand our true destiny in life. Every year around this time, these thoughts seem to hit me. Watching young kids graduate always makes me ask myself over and over again, what age is the right age to figure out your profession and the path you want to take?

I used to believe there was a specific age when you became mature enough to choose your field. But now, I've completely changed my mind. You don't have to become a lifelong expert in just one specific field or dedicate your whole career to a single company just so others can label you as "reliable" and "stable." The reality is different. I believe you are allowed to try something new again and again – to enjoy it and then to move on when you're ready. Or, if you don't enjoy it, to simply quit. You are allowed to be perfectly good at something and still find it boring.

As people get older, they tend to regret the choices they made when they were younger. But what if? You will never truly find out unless you try.

Ukrainians who arrived in Canada as forced immigrants know this all too well. In "survival mode," you suddenly discover a wealth of skills and knowledge you never knew you possessed. True growth only happens when you are forced out of your comfort zone. For instance, my husband, Sergii, never imagined he would be able to give haircuts to our son, Alex, or even to himself. Back when life was comfortable and a trusted barber was just around the corner in Ukraine, there was simply no need to worry about such things. It's just one small example of the transformation that so many newcomers go through.

What I am trying to say is that you don't have to stick strictly to a "serious" profession. We cannot predict the future. As an immigrant, for example, you might have to



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

As graduation season wraps up, a reflection on why finding your true calling has no expiration date and why you don't have to stay perfectly stable to be happy.

spend years evaluating and certifying your diplomas to work as a doctor or a teacher. And that is absolutely fine. While you are going through that process, you can make a living using other skills you already possess – even those you haven't fully developed yet.

I hear so many stories from people who dedicated their lives to a serious career just to please their families, only to end up completely burnt out. They didn't enjoy it, even though it provided a good income. Others feel they are simply too old to start from scratch. I completely understand that fear; it can be terrifying. But I am certain they will regret it later if they never try.

I am not trying to lecture anyone on how to live – I have plenty of my own fears. What I really want to say is that summer is basically a mini lifetime. When the daylight stretches until 9 p.m., everything feels different. It feels like you have more time and more motivation. With longer days, extra vitamin D and no school – even if you graduated years ago – summer always keeps that special, nostalgic feeling.

This means you can start absolutely anything you want right now. Take an online course, arrange late-evening get-togethers, enjoy meditation, catch a workout at sunrise or sunset, develop your gardening skills, or explore a new trail.

Who said you can only try out multiple sports or hobbies when you are young? Yes, you might not become an Olympic champion at this stage in life, but so what?

And let me tell you, it is an entirely different feeling when you choose a sport or a hobby as an adult, compared to childhood when you are simply signed up for everything by your parents. Choosing something entirely for yourself later in life comes from a genuine gut feeling – like suddenly deciding at, say, 58 years old, that you want to take up partner dancing with your husband. You don't need to become a competitive dancer; you can stay at an amateur level and be completely happy.

I know for sure that when you feel an abundance of energy, you can achieve anything. You can do it. And it is totally fine to change your mind and switch to something else later. Don't beat yourself up over it. It is only in your head that you think others will judge you as immature for switching gears. You are human. You don't have to be perfectly stable all the time.

And finally, remember that not everything has to be done for a practical, useful result. Doing something purely for fun is just as important.

Straight From The Shelves

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Come to Kin Park tomorrow for our second Funday Friday of the summer; Four Paws Flying Entertainment will be on hand to present their "Dog Agility Show" from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. World-class dogs will show off disc catching, high-flying freestyle tricks, impressive jumps, speedy agility runs, and adorable trick routines that are sure to wow the whole family. To attend this free program, please register on ActiveNet: tinyurl.com/SMPL-ActiveNet. Please note that participants under the age of 7 must be accompanied by a caregiver who is at least 12 years old.

UP THIS WEEK

- Fri., July 10: Funday Friday – Dog Agility Show** (11 a.m. to 12 p.m.)
- Sat., July 11: Dungeons & Dragons (10 a.m.), Edith's Storytime Adventures (10 a.m.)
- Mon., July 13: Picnic in the Park** (12-1 p.m.), Discovery Den* (3:15 – 4:30 p.m.)
- Tues., July 14: Reading Help* (10:30 – 11:30 a.m.), Crafty Kids* (1:45 – 3 p.m.), Capital Campaign Committee Meeting (6:30 p.m.)
- Wed., July 15: EarlyON Play & Read (9:30 – 10:30 a.m.), Picnic in the Park** (12-1 p.m.), Mahjong~ (1-4), Imagination Station (2-4 p.m.), Reading Help* (2:30 – 3:30 p.m.), Teen Program* (6-7 p.m.)
- Thurs., July 16: Mini Makers* (10:45 a.m. to 12 p.m.), Fluency Fitness** (2-3 p.m.)

*Registration Required | ^Held at Kin Park (109 James St. N)
~Held at the Friendship Centre (317 James St. S.)

Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett • 519.272.5742 • jtsquote@gmail.com

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



Dear Arborist,

My spruce tree is dropping a lot of sawdust with all the high winds lately. I am kind of concerned. Am I over-reacting or is this a problem?

Thanks, Ben

Dear Ben,

Sawdust at the base of a tree means the tree has quite a bit of decay and insects such as

carpenter ants are now using the tree.

Yes, this is a concern. In some trees like maples it's not an immediate concern and sometimes you have time. But with spruce trees it's normally compromised and a real concern.

Normally the only option in a case like this would be removal.

Sincerely, The Arborist

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HISTORIC ST. MARYS: Lakeside, part two

MARY SMITH

Independent Columnist

As we have been experiencing a long stretch of hot, humid weather, the very name “Lakeside” is appealing. Who wouldn’t want to be beside a lake during a hot spell in July! As last week’s column explained, that’s exactly what William Dalrymple was counting on in 1908. He was a farmer whose property included a section of shoreline where he developed the Lakeside Summer Resort. He offered swimming and boating facilities and a large pavilion for dances. An open grassy area near the beach was perfect for conventions, reunions, church picnics and, on occasions, the Lakeside Fair. Dalrymple even built a track for harness racing, always a popular draw. Families arrived by horse and buggy, in their new Model T Fords, or by the CPR passenger train that ran between St. Marys and Woodstock, with Lakeside as one of the station stops.

But in the years following World War I, the Lakeside Summer Resort’s popularity waned. People owned better automobiles. The province was building a system of paved highways, especially in southwestern Ontario. It was now easy to drive to Lake Huron or Lake Erie for a day at the lake. Dalrymple sold the property in 1923. The new owners tried to keep it going but it was closed by 1930. The buildings were dismantled or relocated, and the circular racetrack was ploughed up and planted with potatoes. Today this part of Lakeside is private property with summer cottages and several year-round homes.

But even as Dalrymple’s resort was closing, another entrepreneur stepped up. John Sinkins was willing to take a chance that a park beside this lovely lake could still attract visitors. John Alfred Sinkins was born in 1868 into a large family on a farm just north of Medina. In 1892, he married his neighbour, 20-year-old Charlotte Martin. According to census records, they made their home on Lot 25, Concession 11, East Nissouri Township. John and Charlotte had three children: a daughter, Hilda, and two sons, Lawrence and Lovell. By the 1921 census, John was listed as a merchant, the keeper of a general store in Lakeside. His two sons worked with him as clerks.

In 1928, John Sinkins sold his business, but he was just 60 years old and not ready for retirement. He owned property in Concession 12 at the southwest corner of the lake, but it was undeveloped. He cut down trees and cleared brush to make space to build a new dance pavilion. As the 2012 East Nissouri history book explains, Sinkins announced the grand opening of his pavilion on the Thanksgiving holiday Monday, celebrated in 1930 on November 10. “Under the auspices of the Five-Piece Thistle Orchestra. Lunch at 11:30. Dancing 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Admission: \$1.00.”

At first Sinkins’ dance pavilion was his new park’s main attraction. Dancing was to live music, provided by area bands. The story that London’s famous Guy Lombardo played there is rather suspect. By the early 1920s, Lombardo and his orchestra had moved to the United States where they became famous as the Royal Canadians. It is much more likely that he and his talented family played at William Dalrymple’s Lakeside Summer Resort in the early 1920s. By the time the Sinkins’ pavilion opened, Guy Lombardo was only in London when he came back to visit family and friends. But people who are longtime residents of this area will recognize the names of members of other bands. They include Stan Skipper, Jared Vining, George Quinn, Louis Cappa, Jack Wilson, George Harris, Rick Tevlin, and Hubert Uren who regularly played at the pavilion from the 1940s onward.

The resort and the dancehall went through several incarnations. When it first opened, there was a promenade around the dance floor where people stayed behind a railing to listen to the orchestra and watch the dancing. Actual dancing was “jitney style” – patrons paid 5¢ to



Beach at Crystal Park, Lakeside, Ont

(PHOTO COURTESY OF REG NEAR POSTCARD COLLECTION, R. LORNE EEDY ARCHIVES, ST. MARYS MUSEUM)

Enjoying a swim at Lakeside in the 1950s.

enter the floor for three dances. After these were over, the floor was cleared and other dancers paid their nickel to take a turn. John Sinkins died in 1938, and the new owners changed the name from the Lakeside Resort to the Lakeside Casino, emulating the popular Lakeview Casino at Grand Bend and the Port Stanley Casino that predated that community’s famous Stork Club. Today in Ontario, a casino is a gambling venue. But in the 1930s, it was a trendy name with a broader connotation – a room meant for pleasurable activities that included dancing and musical entertainment.

In 1948, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil McCordic from Sarnia became the new owners. Crystal Lake Park, as the resort was now called, became much more than a dancehall. There were several small cabins to rent by the week, and benches for sitting by the water. According to the East Nissouri history book, “Every weekend, the population of Lakeside would increase dramatically as folks arrived at Crystal Lake Park for picnics, fishing, swimming, boating, water skiing and dancing.” It was popular for company picnics and for family reunions or for individuals or small groups who wanted a nearby location to cool off with a swim. The photograph with this week column was taken in the 1950s. Three little boys are enjoying the shallow water at the edge of Crystal Lake while the women wearing bathing caps are preparing to go deeper. An older woman, maybe a grandmother, is sitting on a bench in the shade, relaxing and watching the fun.

Under the McCordics, the dancehall remained an attraction. In 1960, Cecil McCordic started Thursday evening dances for teenagers at the camp and from nearby summer cottages. Music was provided by a record player. Later, under the subsequent ownership of Eldon and Reid Richardson, there were regular Friday night teen dances to live music. Adult dances were held on Saturday nights. Although the teen dances were later discontinued, the regular Saturday adult dances went on for decades. The pavilion’s attraction was the wooden floor that the dancers preferred. With wood laid on wood – no concrete underneath – the floor was more cushioned and comfortable for dancing. In the 1970s, the resort ran advertisements during the season in the weekly St. Marys Journal Argus: “Dance Lakeside: Come every Saturday and Have Fun!” Each week, the band playing that Saturday night was listed. The orchestra leaders included the Bobbie Downs from London, Stan Skipper from St. Marys, and Elroy Desjardine from Zurich. Through the years, the pavilion was renovated and the dance floor was replaced several times. With added features, such as Sunday Night Jamborees and New Year’s Eve galas, the dancehall remained popular, especially with older cou-

ples, well into the 21st century.

Today, Crystal Lake is called Lake Sunova, and the old resort is now Lakeside Family Camping. It has a good website showing pictures of the beach, the snack shop, the playground and picnic facilities. It lists the prices for day visitors and for the various types of overnight camping. The resort is the location of the annual Lakeside Triathlon, to be held this year on September 12 and 13. This June, Sean Camp took a stunning group photograph of the St. Marys DCVI graduates on the beach at the Lakeside resort with the quiet waters of Lake Sunova in the background. There were fireworks over the lake on Canada Day. The resort is a busy, well-used facility.

There is still a sign at the entrance for “Danceland,” the final name given to the pavilion. But a search for its website brings up a notice in a red banner: Permanently Closed!

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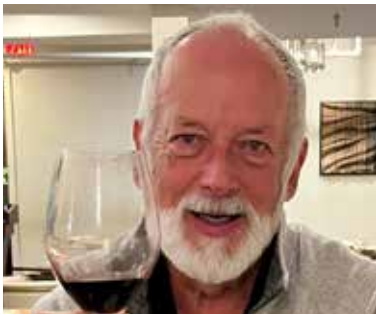
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OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: An undiscovered treasure: Richmond's Olympics Museum



PAUL KNOWLES
Independent Columnist

The first exhibit you encounter makes the point immediately. It's a display of 20 different and unique Olympic torches, including examples from the 1976 Montreal Summer Olympics, the 1988 Winter Games hosted by Calgary and the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

The information panel reads: "The Olympic flame is a symbol of peace, friendship, tolerance and hope. The Olympic Torch Relay reminds us that we are part of something bigger – a global community." It immediately occurred to me this was a message much forgotten in our current, fractured world and reminders like this one, at the Richmond Olympic Experience Museum, are even more important today.

I was in Richmond, B.C., for the 2026 Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) conference. I arrived in the city flat out ignorant about the place. I knew from looking at a map that Richmond was south of Vancouver, but close enough that the Vancouver airport is actually in Richmond.

Media members of TMAC get the option of doing a "pre-tour" – spending a few days being guided around the conference's

host city, for example. So, for four days, I learned a great deal about Richmond.

And one of the most striking experiences was our visit to the Olympic Oval, home to the Olympic Experience Museum and much more. Visitors are welcome to come to the Oval, to tour, to visit the museum, or, for a modest price, to use the outstanding athletic facilities now housed in the place. The "Oval Drop-in" pass, which allows you to use everything for the day, is \$23. Adult admission to the museum is \$16, less for kids and seniors.

Those facilities are certainly impressive. In 2010, the building housed the Oval, home to Olympic speed skating competitions as well as spectator facilities, media centres, VIP areas and all the features that come with a world-class venue. But the Oval was designed to serve the community for decades to come and it does so in amazing fashion. There are ice rinks, basketball courts, table tennis facilities, state-of-the-art gyms, a terrifying rock-climbing wall and more.

The place is pretty special. It features the largest cantilevered wooden roof in Canada. More significantly, 2010 marked the first time Indigenous groups – the Coastal Salish – had been involved in planning and participating in the official opening of an Olympic facility.

The Oval continues to be a key training facility for national teams including Canada's Women's National Volleyball Team. It also boasts a world-class training area for para-athletes.

I will admit that for this relatively non-athletic writer, the

athletic facilities offered only a certain level of interest. But the Olympic museum experience was amazing.

Gregory Huzor showed us around the museum. He's the enthusiastic manager of the Richmond Olympic Experience.

He told us the Richmond museum is one of 36 official Olympics museums, located in 25 countries on five continents. Headquarters of the Olympic Museums Network is the museum in Lausanne, Switzerland. The Richmond museum is the only one in Canada.

The Oval is also designated as an "Olympics Legacy Site," which allows the facility to proudly display the much-protected Olympic rings symbol and other Olympic-branded material.

The museum itself offers visitors a whole menu of hands-on activities, and I was surprised how immediately available they were because the place was not busy. In fact, I think I could categorize the Richmond Olympic Experience as a hidden gem, one just waiting to be discovered by visitors who will be thrilled by their find.

There are fascinating exhibits in the museum, highlighting both Canadian involvement in the Olympics and the global vision of the games. Visitors can enjoy an array of virtual experiences – careening down a bobsled run, experiencing ski jumping, kayaking through rapids, or walking a balance beam – conveniently located about 20 centimetres off the floor level, so even an unbalanced guy like me could give it a try without risking injury.

This is very much an inter-



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The Olympic Oval, home of speed-skating competitions during the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics.

active facility. In addition to the virtual experiences, visitors can hoist an Olympic torch, don replica Olympic medals and even dress in Olympic hockey jerseys.

The entire Oval facility was designed to be of ongoing use to the community, and to welcome visitors from around the world. And more than that – Huzor told us, should the opportunity arise, the Oval could be transformed back into a competition site for a future Olympics!

The multi-purpose facility is a testimony to the vision of Richmond's leaders. The Oval was originally supposed to be located at Simon Fraser University, but Richmond made an offer that could not be refused – the Oval eventually cost \$178 million,

and Richmond guaranteed to fund all costs over the \$60 million mark.

Huzor echoes the comments of many Richmond residents who, 16 years later, think the \$118-million investment has paid dividends far beyond the original price.

Visitors will find the people who planned this Olympic venue deserve a gold medal for foresight.

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.



As an Olympic Legacy site, the Oval can continue to display the Olympic rings.



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Andrew L. Hodges

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FROM THE GARDEN: Planting for pollinators



NANCY ABRA

Independent Columnist

In recent years, there has been a strong push for people to grow plants that support pollinators. But why does it matter?

Pollinators such as insects, bees, butterflies, birds, and small mammals are essential to global ecosystems and food security. Between 75% and 90% of all flowering plant species, more than 180,000 species worldwide, rely on pollinators for reproduction and seed production. In agriculture and horticulture, 1,200 food crops depend on pollinators. Without them, we would lose staples such as apples, berries, almonds, coffee, and chocolate. Beyond

making fertilization possible, pollinators help farmers achieve higher-quality yields and more flavourful fruits. Simply put, one out of every three bites of food we eat exists because of pollinators.

Pollinators also contribute to healthier natural landscapes. They help stabilize soils, clean the air, buffer against severe weather, and support other wildlife — all vital functions that keep ecosystems resilient.

So how can we help our pollinators?

Pollinator populations are facing severe declines due to habitat loss, climate change, and chemical pesticide use. Planting a pollinator-friendly garden is one meaningful way to help. Even adding a few native plant species such as coneflower and milkweed to an existing perennial bed can make a difference. Eliminating synthetic chemicals and insecticides in your yard is another important step in keeping foraging pollinators, especially bumble-

bees and other beneficial insects, safe.

What to plant to attract pollinators?

Flowers use a combination of bright colours, enticing scents, and sweet, energy-rich nectar to attract pollinators. These signals or cues are designed to match the sensory strengths of their visitors.

Bright petals act as long-distance visual cues. Bees are drawn to blues, purples, and ultraviolet light, while hummingbirds favour red and orange blooms. Flowers such as balloon flowers, cranesbill, and violets feature “nectar guides”, lines or patterns inside the petals that direct insects toward the centre. Some are visible to us, but many are ultraviolet patterns that act like runway lights for bees. Black-eyed Susan and poppies have centres that absorb UV light and petals that reflect it, creating a target only pollinators can see. Lupines even use a colour-changing trick to signal when a

flower is full of pollen and ready to offer nectar.

As for fragrance cues, flowers emit distinct scents to attract various pollinators. Bees and butterflies prefer sweet, fresh fragrances. High-nectar flowers such as sweet alysium, marigolds, calendula, and cosmos are excellent pollinator magnets in vegetable gardens and they double as companion plants that deter harmful pests. Flat-topped or open blooms like verbena, zinnia, and lantana are ideal for butterflies. Nocturnal moths and bats are drawn to heavy, sweet aromas released at night. Some flowers even emit rotting odours to attract carrion beetles and flies.

Ultimately, the main incentive for pollinators is food. Flowers provide protein-rich pollen and sugary nectar, essential energy sources that keep these creatures thriving. Bees and butterflies require a water source as they too get thirsty. A simple shallow dish of water or damp sand patches in your gar-

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den will also be beneficial. This summer, consider planting with a purpose. Every bloom, whether a single coneflower or a full pollinator patch, becomes part of a larger, life-sup-

porting network. When we nurture pollinators, we nurture the landscapes we depend on. And that is a beautiful way to grow.

Source: <https://www.pollinator.org/pollinators>

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I'm cold, sweet, and come in a cone. On a hot day, I'm everyone's favourite. What am I?
Ice cream!

I have sand but I'm not a sandbox. I have waves but I'm not saying hello. What am I?
The beach!

You wear me on your head to block the sun. What am I?
A hat!

I fly high in the summer sky. I need wind, but I'm not a bird. What am I?
A kite!

I splash and sparkle, and you swim in me. I'm bigger than a bathtub! What am I?
A pool!

I'm yellow on the outside, sour on the inside, and make a tasty summer drink. What am I?
A lemon!

You put me on your skin before going outside so you don't get a sunburn. What am I?
Sunscreen!

I'm striped, juicy, and full of seeds. I'm a favorite picnic fruit. What am I?
Watermelon!

- Word Search -



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SUMMER ACTIVITIES

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

- Hit the beach
- Swimming
- Canoeing
- Kayaking
- Camping
- Road cycling
- Mountain biking
- Hiking
- Golf
- Skateboarding
- Horseback riding
- Fishing
- Tennis
- Pickleball
- Canada's Wonderland
- Calgary Stampede



The **Riddle Kid**
OF THE WEEK

What does a cloud wear under its raincoat?



Thunder wear!

Owen Plociennik (7)

Hey Kids... Every Riddle Kid that appears in the paper gets a FREE MILKSHAKE at the Sunset Diner!

St. Marys Veterinary Clinic is pleased to be the sponsor of the

PET OF THE WEEK



As the school year ends and summer begins, families get busier - but don't forget your pets! Extra activities, travel, and visitors can be stressful for furry friends. Make time for walks, play, and a calm routine to keep tails wagging all summer long.
Happy pets make a happy summer!



FENWICK

Our Pet of the Week is Fenwick, the lovable pup of the Campbell family. Fenwick is always ready for an adventure, a belly rub, or a snack. When he is not busy growing and napping, he enjoys visiting St. Marys Vet Clinic where his mom Katty works and everyone loves to see him. With his big personality and even bigger heart, Fenwick brings smiles wherever he goes.



Thorndale News

A section within the
St. Marys Independent



AUGUST 22 AND 23 1PM

RAM RODEO & COUNTRY MUSIC SHOWCASE

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Thorndale's cooling spot is the place to be this summer

NANCY ABRA

Independent Reporter

Thorndale's public splash pad is a popular cooling spot for area families this summer.

With the first major heat wave last week, temperatures reached well into the mid 30s. As for this summer, according to Environment & Climate Change, this area is expected to be hotter than average with heat and daytime humidex values well about seasonal norms.

And with the heat, that will fuel local-

ized intense thunderstorms and brief downpours.

In extreme heat events, watch for signs of heat exhaustion, headaches, nausea, dizziness and changes of behaviour in children. Stay hydrated. Cooling spots like the Thorndale Splash Pad can offer some relief along with a little fun for families.

For more information on how to stay safe during extreme heat events, check out www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/climate-change-health/extreme-heat/how-protect-yourself.html.



(NANCY ABRA PHOTO)

Thorndale's splash pad, located at the community park on Upper Queen Street, is always a hub of activity on hot summer days.

Thorndale's King Street closed for construction and upgrades

NANCY ABRA

Independent Reporter

Middlesex County Road 28, better known as King Street at the west end of Thorndale, is closed for construction until November.

The project involves upgrading this section of King Street to meet Middlesex County urban design standards and modifying the street elevation to improve drainage and water shedding toward the road surface where feasible.

Announced in 2024 with a homeowner survey, along with a public information meeting held at the Thorndale Lions Community Centre in June 2025, this construction will be divided into three stages over the course of the next four months.

The construction will incorporate new concrete curb and

gutter infrastructure, a dedicated centre turning lane and 1.5-metre sidewalk complete with tactile warning plates at the intersections. Also included are pedestrian safety upgrades with a new crosswalk at Brooker Trail and Aspen Circle, and installation of electrical conduits and pole bases at the Nissouri Road intersection to accommodate future pedestrian-activated traffic signals.

The project will also include subsurface utility improvements for upgraded storm sewer system and new private drain connections extended to each property line.

During this construction project, access into Thorndale from the west will impact both residents and the local businesses. I Love Thorndale's board of directors urge all residents and the community to continue to support our valuable businesses and shop local.

Thorndale Masons present 60-year service pin



(PHOTO COURTESY OF MOUNT OLIVET 300 MASONIC LODGE)

The Mount Olivet 300 Masonic Lodge in Thorndale presented a 60-year service pin to Bro. Verne Johnson (left). Presenting the pin is Bro. John Nichol. On the occasion, Nichol said the following: "It is our privilege tonight to pay a tribute of respect and esteem to an honoured member of this lodge, Mount Olivet No. 300. Freemasonry has always taught proper reverence and veneration for those whose years have brought them to places of eminence in the Craft. Happy indeed is the occasion when years of age stand united with years of service and when honour may be conferred upon a Brother who is both worthy and esteemed."

A summer toy drive for Christmas?

NANCY ABRA

Independent Reporter

"Christmas in July? Why not?" said Sheena Ball.

"Christmas is my favourite holiday and I strongly feel it is important that every child gets a toy at Christmas. So why not start our shopping early?"

Since 2021, Sheena Ball, a registered massage therapist at 160 King Street in Thorndale, organized a toy drive at Christmas, partnering with the Thames Centre Fire Department, Thorndale Station 2. Normally, this toy drive starts Nov. 1 and runs to mid December. But she thought this year she would get a jump on the season.

"The reason for organizing an early toy drive campaign

is to make it easier on people's wallets," said Ball. "Besides, there are more options and better sales on toys, games and sporting goods this time of the year."

There are many benefits of a community toy drive, no matter what time of the year. From fostering a sense of unity and lessening financial pressure on struggling families to ensuring children experience joy at Christmas.

New, unwrapped toys for kids up to age 16 can be dropped off at Ball's office, upstairs at 160 King Street until July 25. These donations will be stored at Thorndale Station 2. Then, starting on Nov. 1, the toy drive campaign will resume up until mid December when all these toys will be given to the Dorchester Food Bank for delivery to children for Christmas.

ANNIVERSARY

Happy 50th Anniversary

Happy 50th anniversary on July 10th Moira. Here's to another 50, Love you

IN MEMORIAM

Megens

In memory of a loving Father, Grandfather, Great Grandfather and Great, Great Grandfather John J. Megens who passed away July 14, 1998

Though your smile is gone forever,
And your hand we cannot touch,
Still we have so many memories,
Of the one we loved so much.
Your memory is our keepsake,
With which we'll never part,
God has you in his keeping,
We have you in our heart.

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THANK YOU

Copeland

I want to express many thanks to my friends and neighbours for all the cards, food and phone calls after my knee surgery. Special thanks to my family for taking care of me during my recovery and to the Doctors and Nurses at Stratford Hospital. It was all much appreciated.

Sincerely
Verla Copeland

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IN MEMORIAM

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

John Douglas Shaw

A hard working, caring and protective dad and grandfather, as well as beloved husband to Marjorie (d. 2021) who left us on July 7, 2025.

A year has passed since we said goodbye, but not a day goes by that you are not in our thoughts.

You had a lifelong passion for cars, fixing things, and helping a friend or neighbor in need. You took pride in every project you tackled, but more than anything, you loved your family. Your kindness, wisdom, sense of humor and unwavering support created memories that we will cherish forever. Though you are no longer with us, your lessons, your love and your spirit continue to guide us each day.

Forever loved, forever missed, and forever remembered.

Love Barb, Sandy, Lauren, Brayden and Dani.

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Solutions on pg. 31

GRANT
HAVEN
MEDIA

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OBITUARY



Craig

With profound sadness and deep love, we announce the passing of Florence Grace Craig (née Godden), a resident of St. Marys and formerly of Thorndale, who peacefully left this world with family at her side at Stratford Rotary Hospice on June 26, 2026, at the age of 82.

Born on February 11, 1944, in Tavistock, Ontario, Florence grew up in Shakespeare before the family moved to the farm outside of St. Marys and then settled in St. Paul's. Florence lived a life defined by love, kindness, strength and unwavering devotion to her family.

She was the oldest daughter of Margaret (Dietrich) † and Mervin Godden † and the beloved sister of Robert Godden † (Tress), Gerald Godden † (Joanne), Donald Godden † (Linda), Carol Walker (Greg) and Joan Norton † (Paul).

She was a cherished mother, a proud grandmother and great-grandmother, a loving partner and a loyal friend whose gentle spirit and generous heart touched everyone fortunate enough to know her. She is lovingly remembered by her children Kimberley Vey, Christine Kramer (Al), Gord Craig and Mike Craig (Krissie); her 12 grandchildren Rebecca, Felicia, Brandi, Travis, Aimee, Ashley, Connor, Alexis, Eric, Kalen, McKenzie and Colton; and her seven great-grandchildren Cole, Rain, Nash, Grace, Navy, Lilly and Dean.

Her devoted partner, Floyd Stacey, was the love of her life. Together they found companionship, joy and comfort, proving that love can blossom at any stage of life. He will deeply miss her laughter, her strength, and the countless moments they shared as a couple watching hockey, spending time with family at her trailer in Prospect Hill, and enjoying the company of good friends while playing cards or sharing a hot dog at the Legion.

There are many other family members, including nieces, nephews, cousins and many dear friends, who will smile through the tears when they remember Flo. Though our hearts are broken by her absence, we find comfort in knowing that her love, values and beautiful legacy will continue to live on through each of us.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Stratford Rotary Hospice staff for their compassionate care and support. We are also deeply grateful to the many friends and family members who surrounded Mom with love, kindness and encouragement since her diagnosis in the fall. Your visits, phone calls, texts, prayers and acts of care meant so much to her and to our family.

Throughout her life, she embraced many roles with determination and grace. She worked at FAG Bearings, then attended hairdressing school, and later worked at Northern Telecom. As her family grew, she moved from London to the farm on Oliver Side Road outside of Thorndale, where she drove a school bus part-time and became a farmer. She enjoyed all aspects of farm life, raising chickens, rabbits, cows, pigs and horses, while also growing sweet corn and operating a pick-your-own strawberry patch.

Her life then took her to Woodstock, where she returned to school at the age of 62 to become a Personal Support Worker (PSW), a career she continued until she was 78 years old. Her clients were treated with the greatest care and compassion. Her hard work, resilience and willingness to learn were an inspiration to all who knew her.

Her greatest joy was her family. She created a home filled with warmth, laughter, compassion and unconditional love. As a mother, she offered wisdom, encouragement and endless support. As a grandmother, she delighted in every hug, story, celebration and precious moment shared with her grandchildren, leaving them with memories they will treasure forever.

Flo found happiness in the simple pleasures of a lifetime spent with her loved ones. She enjoyed clogging and travelling with friends to conventions, was a member of Eastern Star, raised Clydesdale horses, quilted, sewed, attended church, shared meals, celebrated milestones, and always offered a comforting word or helping hand to anyone in need.

She was also an enthusiastic hockey fan, cheering with joy and passion for the game she loved, whether watching her favourite NHL players, her sons, her grandsons or the local Junior B Lincolns. She carried a quiet joy for life's simple pleasures—flip-flops in every season and bare feet in the grass whenever she could. She was always ready for her next outing with curlers in her hair and lipstick in her purse. Her joy for life, grace, resilience and quiet strength were an inspiration to all who knew her.

We will forever miss her gentle smile, her sparkling blue eyes, her warm embrace and the unconditional love she gave so freely. Her life was a blessing, her memory a treasure, and she will remain forever in our hearts.

“Those we love never truly leave us. They live on in the kindness shared, the love they gave and the memories we hold close forever.”

Family and friends are invited to the ST. MARYS UNITED CHURCH, 85 Church St. S., St. Marys, on August 29, 2026. At 11:00 a.m., the Order of the Eastern Star will conduct their funeral ritual, followed by the Memorial Service officiated by Rev. Dr. Pirie Mitchell.

A Celebration of Life Open House will follow from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the ST. MARYS LEGION Br. 236, 66 Church St. N., St. Marys. Private family interment will take place in Zion Hill 7th Line Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to My Sister's Place in London or the Ontario Student Nutrition Program Huron-Perth.

Online tributes may be made at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

OBITUARY



Boreham

It is with profound sadness that the family of Leonard John Robert Boreham announces his passing on July 3, 2026, in St. Marys at the age of 85. Len was a beloved husband, devoted father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother and friend, who was well known for his jokes and one-liners.

Born in Toronto and then at the age of 13, he was welcomed into the McLean family from St. Marys. Len's bond with the McLeans became one of the greatest gifts of his life. Len started his career with the Great Star Flour Mill and later joined The Hitching Post, where he worked until his retirement at the age of 70.

Len's work ethic was second-to-none and he always found joy in helping others. Len was a dedicated member of the St. Marys Volunteer Fire Department for 30 years, where he formed life-long friendships. His favourite pastimes were lawn bowling, tending to his gardens, bringing Christmas joy to so many as Santa Claus and watching his grandchildren at various sporting events. His love for food was undeniable, and he enjoyed taking his family out to eat regularly. His motto was “I don't eat to live; I live to eat.”

Len is survived by his wife of 60 years, Margaret (Maggie) and his sons Robert (Connie), Paul (Tara), Brian (Cassandra), and his grandchildren Courtney, Brandon, Brent, Alicia, Victoria, Blake, Kirk, Wil, Grayson, and his great-grandchildren Bailee, Brody, Dalton, Amelia, Coyte-Noah, Lily, and Elora. Also, remembered by his brother-in-law Ron McGuffin and sister-in-law Brenda Boreham. He is predeceased by his parents Sydney and Jessie, brothers Ron and Jim, brother-in-law Joe White and sisters-in-law Barb Hedberg and Elizabeth (Libby) McGuffin. Deeply cherished by his adoptive McLean family: Ralph and Violet (both deceased), Lloyd and Helen (both deceased), Bruce and Erma (both deceased), John (deceased) and Marlene, Jean Foster and Earl (deceased), Murray and Lynda (deceased), and Doris Forman and Ray.

Len lived a unique and worthy life. He leaves behind an admirable legacy and will be deeply missed by everyone who loved him. Visitation will be held at the Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home, 47 Wellington St. S., St. Marys, on Thursday, July 9, 2026, from 6 to 9 p.m. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the charity of one's choice.

Online tributes at www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca.

OBITUARY



Crisp

Sheila Crisp(Hearn)
January 4, 1943 – December 17, 2025

Sheila Crisp passed away peacefully on Wednesday, December 17, in Nashville, Tennessee, after a fierce and courageous battle with cancer. She was content, surrounded by love, and true to herself until the very end.

Sheila's love of family began early, growing up in a close-knit household rooted in the dairy milk business. A hairdresser by trade, Sheila maintained her professional status well into later life, though her true calling was always family. Her family tree continued to grow, as nearly everyone she met soon came to regard Sheila as “family.”

Sheila was not one to collect possessions, but upon reflection, she collected something far greater: lifelong friends and unforgettable memories wherever her life's travels took her. Through that lens, she was a passionate, vigorous, and remarkably successful collector.

St. Marys, Ontario, was her official home, but Sheila took great pride in making a home wherever life and family careers led. She had a rare gift for making people feel welcome, comfortable, and truly at home, no matter the place.

“Terry and Sheila” were a partnership marked by strength, devotion, and shared success across many arenas, including hockey. Though Sheila's name was never engraved on the trophies, together they achieved remarkable accomplishments, including three Stanley Cups. Terry and Sheila were, without question, a powerful and dynamic duo.

Sheila is lovingly survived by her children: Tony Crisp and his wife Jenny, and their children Maggie, Trent, Kyle, Rosie, and Harlee; son Jeff Crisp and his wife Trish, and their children Tom and Kale; daughter Caley (Crisp) Remington and her husband Ryan, and their children Georgia, Charlotte, and River. She is also survived by her sisters Donna Aldis and Linda McKay; her brothers-in-law Randy Crisp and his wife Karen, and Dennis Crisp and his wife Marsha; and her sisters-in-law Myrt Hearn and Gail Clark. Sheila is also fondly remembered by all her beloved nieces and nephews.

Sheila was predeceased by her Parents: Eileen and Rolston “Kelly” Hearn, Her brother Barry Hearn and sister Shirley Boyd, brothers-in-law, Jim “Dusty” Aldis, Jack Boyd, Clare Clark, her mother and father-in-law Margaret and Nesbeth “Nibs” Crisp.

Sheila Helen Crisp will be deeply missed and forever remembered for her warmth, loyalty, strength, and unwavering love for those fortunate enough to be part of her world.

A casual Celebration of Sheila's life will be held at River Valley Golf Course on Sunday July 12th at 3-6 pm with short words of remembrance at 4:30 pm.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the St Marys HealthCare Foundation.

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All collectibles including sports cards, beanie babies, Funko pops and stamps. Highest prices paid. Free appraisals. Are you downsizing or need an estate clean out? We can help. We are at the Pinery Market at Grand Bend every Sunday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Call or text Stan anytime 519-868-3814.

WANTED

I will pay cash for antiques and collectibles. Coca Cola, Pepsi or any pop company. Brewery items - Kuntz, Huether Labatts, etc. Old radios and gramophones, wristwatches, pocket watches, old fruit jars - Beaver Star, Bee Hive etc. Any old oil cans and signs - Red Indian, Supertest etc. Any small furniture. If you are moving or cleaning out stuff please contact me at 519-570-6920.

FOR SALE

Shade Trees; Maples, Oaks, Birch, Beech, Honey Locusts, Elms, Magnolia, Hydrangea Tree, Tulip Tree, Crab apples, Ivory Silk Lilac, Chanticleer Pear, Golden Weeping Willows and more. Apples, Pears, Peaches, Plums, Apricots, Nectarine, Blueberry, Haskap etc. Lots of healthy strong Spruce, Cedars and White Pine for your privacy hedges and windbreaks. Hundreds of flowering shrubs. Reg Hours: 7am- 6pm Mon-Sat at Martins Nursery c/o Emanuel Martin. 42661 Orangehill Rd., Wroxeter, ON

WANTED

\$ Cash Paid \$ for your RECORDS and LPs. Jazz, Blues, Rock, Pop, Folk, Soundtracks, and more. Selectively buying CDs, Cassettes, Turntables, and Stereo Equipment. For more information: Diamond Dogs Music 114 Ontario St. Stratford / 226-972-5750

JUNK REMOVAL

Junk Removal - Garbage, Basements, Yards, Dump Runs Call Mike 519-276-7766

FOR RENT

2 bedroom apartment for rent with balcony, fridge and stove included. Laundry on site. \$1800.00/month plus utilities. Please message Jamie at 519-274-0205

FOR SALE

'96 Starcraft Hardtop Tent Trailer- 12/24, sleeps 6, 2 pullouts, 3 burner stove, sink, fridge, hydro and water hook up and more. \$2000. Please Call 519-349-2415

HOUSE/PET SITTING

Weekend Away? Week at a Cottage? Let me take care of your beloved dog (s) in their familiar surroundings, all sizes. Experienced, caring, trustworthy, references available. 1 or 2 days to one month. Call Janet at 226-261-3660 (Longtime St. Marys Resident)

QUIZ ANSWERS

- 2018
- Andrew Lincoln
- Nitrogen
- North America Beaver
- Porky Pig
- Plants
- Mouth
- Death Valley
- R.E.M
- X

SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

THE WEEK AHEAD



SPONSORED BY: McDonald's St. Marys
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PRC & Friendship Centre events – See the Stonetown Crier on Page 5

St. Marys Public Library events – See Page 22

FRIDAY, JULY 10

- Ilderton 150 celebration – Concert at 7 p.m.

- A.N.A.F. meat draw – 6 p.m.

- A.N.A.F. Bavarian Garden – 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Sarcastic Oignons

SATURDAY, JULY 11

- St. Marys Farmers Market at Milt Dunnell Field – 8 a.m. to Noon, The Whites are serving breakfast

- Ilderton 150 celebration – 10 a.m. parade and opening ceremonies

Royal Canadian Legion meat draw – 5 p.m.

- A.N.A.F. Bavarian Garden – 2-6 p.m. Harmony of Friends, 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Straight Up

SUNDAY, JULY 12

- Ilderton 150 celebration – 8 a.m. pancake breakfast

- Legion Bingo – Doors open 11:30 a.m., Early bird 12:45 p.m., Game time 1-4 p.m.

MONDAY, JULY 13

- McCully's Hill Farm day camp begins July 13-17, Pre-register at www.mccullys.ca

THURSDAY, JULY 16

- Nourish Market at St. Marys United Church – 2-4 p.m.

Looking Back

AMY CUBBERLEY

Independent Columnist



Walkerton fallout

25 years ago (2001)

The cost of providing a glass of good drinking water has gone up in the town, with a potential \$2.2 million upgrade to its water system. A report on the water system, mandated as part of a province-wide initiative following the Walkerton water tragedy, was presented to council last week by consulting engineer Steve Burnes. The \$20,000 report outlined what will have to be done to the three deep wells the town relies on for drinking water to meet provincial standards.

Helen Youlton said goodbye to South Perth Centennial School and her teaching career on Tuesday to begin a well-deserved retirement. Youlton worked as both a teacher and librarian during her 17 years at South Perth.

50 years ago (1976)

What could be a worthwhile theft deterrent has been made available at a local police department. A new development in the form of an invisible marker may now be purchased in which all valuables, including clothing, may be marked. In case of policy recovery of items, a black or ultra-violet light at the police office can pick out such identification, making the return of stolen articles a relatively simple matter.

The ready-mix concrete drivers' strike is having an impact locally with a number of lay-offs resulting for labourers, carpenters, and some other trades at the new cement plant location in the St. Marys Cement south quarry.

75 years ago (1951)

The De Long Hook and Eye Co. plant is closed this week while all employees are on holidays.

Mrs. Wm. Warnock, mother of Mrs. R.M. Sparling of Park Street, arrived here by T.C.A. from her home in Winnipeg last Thursday to spend a few weeks. Mrs. Warnock, who is 94, made the trip by air alone and intends on going home the same way. She has 38 great grandchildren.

100 years ago (1926)

Miss Jessie Oliver, a St. Marys young lady who is doing pastoral work for the United Church in Kenogami, Quebec, is holidaying with relatives in this district. Her congregation is recruited from the English-speaking population.

A special meeting to fill the vacancies on the Public School Board was held Tuesday night. A number of applications for the position of Principal were received and, after consideration, the choice fell upon W.J. Kelly, Assistant Principal of the Sarnia Public Schools, at a salary of \$2,500/year. To fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Miss Esther Mitchell, the Board appointed Miss Helen Northgrave to the staff at a salary of \$1,000.

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