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Esther Buck shared this photo of a cooper's hawk to the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook page recently. Photo courtesy of Show Us Your Wilmot

Wellesley Township to take first step in long process for determining what to do with old arena lands

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

In 2025, Wellesley Township will likely take the first step in what will be a long process for determining what to do with the old Wellesley Village community centre and arena lands.

After discussions about what to do with the portion of the former arena and community

centre lands north of Maple Leaf Street were deferred to budget deliberations by council earlier this year, the subject was once again brought forward by staff during the township's Dec. 5 budget meeting.

"(Township staff) reached out to a planning consultant just to discuss the whole project and potential options for how we might want to move forward on it," director of planning Tim Van Hinte said during the

budget meeting.

"We had a really good meeting. ... Really, at the 30,000-foot level, the first step, we feel, is to create a scope and work for the cost of whatever we're going to do that moves us from general ideas – we have a number of general ideas, you all have them and we've solicited them from the public – to some type of conceptualized plan or

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Wilmot budget presented to council and public

One councillor asking for a detailed report on past financial decisions

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The 2025 budget was officially presented to members of Wilmot council and the public who attended the township's first budget meeting either virtually or in person on Monday evening.

Following the budget presentation by interim CAO Greg Clark, councillors were permitted to ask questions of staff. Township residents will get their say at a public meeting on Jan. 7 at 7 p.m. that is sure to get plenty of attention.

The financial situation the township finds itself in has led Coun. Harvir Sidhu to prepare a motion for the next township council meeting on Dec. 16.

"I feel like the residents should know how we got to where we are; something we can all learn from – a comprehensive document that can be referenced, mainly to add greater transparency," he said.

The 264-word motion draws attention to the challenging financial position and a significant infrastructure gap.

"Whereas members of the public do not have a comprehensive document to reference outlining the historical position of Wilmot Township; whereas to better inform council and the public about the factors that have contributed to this situation, it is essential to compile a comprehensive historical report on the township's financials. This report will provide valuable context, highlight trends and identify key policy decisions that have influenced our

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Merry Christmas

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Wilmot budget presented to council and public

Continued from page 1

current financial standing,” said a portion of the motion.

It goes on to ask staff to prepare a report outlining the history of Wilmot’s financials including a high-level summary providing an overview of the status of reserves over time, debt levels and contributions to reserves among other budget lines. It also asks for the township’s current financial position including debt levels, revenue sources and expenditures. Sidhu is hoping staff can deliver a report to council after budget deliberations, if not sooner.

During the meeting, Coun. Kris Wilkinson expressed his concern regarding population growth when compared to the size and cost of government.

“Looking at our financial statements as far back as 2005, we had a population of 17,500. At last report in 2022, we had 22,157, so we saw an increase of 5,000. Expenditures ... went from \$6 million in 2005 to \$24 million in 2022 and this year it’s being proposed at \$33 million.”

He added there hasn’t been much population growth but a massive increase in expenditures over the last 20 years and an increase in staff from 48 full time in 2005 to 85 in 2022.

“What I see is a spending problem. What I am asking for – and I can appreciate all

the requests – (is) the justifications for this and I totally get where you’re going. I don’t see this being affordable for the residents of Wilmot and I don’t think it’s something we can work with as is.”

Wilkinson asked township staff for a comprehensive list of programs along with what they cost, how they are being accessed and utilized along with options for service cuts. Interim CAO Greg Clark explained Wilmot doesn’t have a spending problem but rather a revenue problem.

“When you ask about bare bones cutting out services, if council wants to identify which services they’d like us to look at, we are more than willing to look at those things. When we look at the budget holistically, there is no fat to be trimmed.”

He added the budget is scraped to the bone more than anything he has seen in his 10 years working in municipal finance.

“Where we are starting from is a very, very lean budget. If council would like to direct us to look at particular services and bring back a proposal on what cutting back services would look like, we are open to that suggestion.”

Clark added he is hesitant to bring in a budget with a 10 or 12 per cent increase, mainly due to the large capital increase he said is needed.

“We can get it to 10 per cent. It just means



Wilmot Township’s acting CAO Greg Clark, left, presented the 2025 draft budget Monday night to members of council and the public. The document, if passed in its entirety, would see a 51 per-cent tax increase. Wilmot council screenshot

we don’t do capital.”

The Gazette reached out to Wilmot Township and asked for the tax increases over the last 10 years. Fourteen years worth

per cent in 2013. On the high end, the increase was 6.98 in 2020 and 9.17 in 2023 along with last year’s 10.8 per cent.

What to do with old arena lands in Wellesley Township

Continued from page 1

options, you could say, up to three options. That could be really anything. ... We think the first step is to establish an overall direction and intent.”

The old Wellesley Village Arena and Community Centre were closed when the new Wellesley recreation complex opened. Council passed a resolution in 2019 that the green space in the village’s downtown would remain as parkland, leaving the area where the buildings sit for potential redevelopment.

A survey was conducted in January of this year to obtain public feedback on the potential redevelopment of this land. It was an anonymous survey and 419 responses were received. The most common theme coming from the survey responses was that a mixed commercial-residential use is the most preferred option for that portion of the property.

While council reviewed the results of the survey – which also included feedback around the establishment of a new library building or child-care centre on the property – at the time, councillors weren’t ready to move the project forward and calls for more public engagement were made.

“The first step is establishing a concept, some principles and objectives, and this step really involves existing information sources ... and the consultation results we already have (as well as) understanding what council’s objectives are, what are local concerns, community needs and potential outcomes for, I’m going to say, redevelopment of the land, but it doesn’t necessarily need to mean entire redevelopment of the land,” Van Hinte said, noting that first step and each of the two subsequent steps to follow in this process will involve additional public consultation and engagement.

Once that information and any feedback collected on potential options for the property is compiled, Van Hinte said a report will then be brought back to council for the development of no more than three concrete

concepts for further discussion and public feedback. Following public engagement, council will identify a preferred concept, which may be one of the original concepts or a mix of two or more of them.

The final step in the process will involve the analysis of costs, market conditions and the process for seeing that preferred concept to fruition before a final decision is made and the real work begins.

For now, however, Van Hinte asked council to give the go-ahead so staff can bring back a report and costs for that first step in the process at the next budget meeting Dec. 18 so it can be included in the township’s 2025 draft budget.

“I think it’s really important that in Step 1, there is more community engagement on it,” Coun. Derek Brick said. “I don’t feel that the one online survey that we’ve done, we can call engagement on a project of this scale. For me to support it, I want to make sure community engagement is part of it, and that’s in-person sessions in other communities, not just Wellesley (Village), that allow people to come and talk about it and give their perspective. The feedback that I’ve heard is, ‘We weren’t heard in the original survey.’”

Several members of council, including Mayor Joe Nowak, also expressed concern with using the word “redevelopment” when communicating with the public about the future of the old arena and community centre lands. Instead, council landed on the word, “reimagine,” to ensure all potential options for the property are considered, including the potential for adaptive reuse of the arena and community centre buildings, as the project moves forward.

Council ultimately agreed to have staff bring back a report on the first step in this process so it can be considered for 2025, whether it’s officially included in the draft 2025 budget or brought forward as an additional item in the new year.

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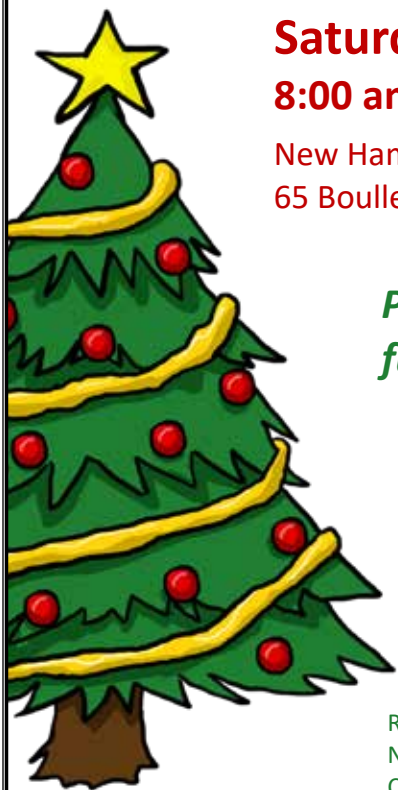
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Tavistock LCBO targeted by group of thieves

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Members of the Oxford OPP are searching for suspects after they stole a large quantity of alcohol from the LCBO on Hope Street West in Tavistock.

The incident took place late Sunday afternoon when no patrons were in the store. Police say \$4,700 worth of booze was taken and they released a photo array of the alleged suspects earlier this week on Facebook.

The Gazette reached out to the LCBO's media relations department and received a statement.

"Shop theft is an unfortunate reality in the retail industry, and we are continuously looking for ways to minimize its impact while keeping our employees and customers safe," the statement said.

The organization said it takes several steps to try and reduce the amount of stolen goods in stores across Ontario.

"We employ many measures to mitigate or prevent theft including CCTV, security guards and a plain clothes task force, and are committed to piloting new initiatives which help to mitigate theft in our stores

and create a safer environment."

The Tavistock store has not utilized security guards in the past and a follow-up question inquiring if they would now was not answered by press time.

The LCBO trains employees to help bring perpetrators to justice.

"Our employees receive regular, mandatory training in theft detection, deterrence and reporting. This training focuses on personal safety, observation and gathering information to support police investigations. LCBO employees who physically confront shoplifters put themselves, their colleagues and our customers at risk," the statement reads.

Workers are forbidden to take any action even when they see someone stealing alcohol or other products from a store. The LCBO explained it works to help police solve crimes.

"Just because someone walks out of LCBO with a bottle, doesn't mean that they get away with the crime. Through our collaboration with police services across the province, we continue to hold criminals accountable even after they have left the store," the LCBO said.



Oxford OPP is looking for suspects after a large quantity of alcohol was stolen from the Tavistock LCBO on Sunday afternoon. Photo courtesy of Oxford OPP

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North Perth deputy mayor acclaimed as Perth County warden for 2025

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

North Perth deputy mayor Todd Kellum has been acclaimed as Perth County warden, taking over from outgoing warden and current Perth East Mayor Rhonda Ehgoetz after two one-year terms in the position.

Kellum, who has served on county council for a decade, including most recently as deputy warden, took his oath of office and accepted the warden's chain and gavel from Ehgoetz during the annual Perth County warden's election Dec. 5 at the Arden Park Hotel in Stratford.

"I am delighted and honoured to serve as the 154th warden for Perth County this year," Kellum said. "I appreciate the trust you've placed in me as I step into this important role. ... It's an exciting time to step into this role in Perth County. This past year, we've achieved some significant milestones. The new official plan is complete and it has been submitted to the province for review.

"This is a big step forward for the county. Once approved by the ministry, it will mean great things for the future growth and development of our region."

Kellum also spoke about the near-complete connecting-link addition at the country courthouse campus in Stratford, which will connect the recently renovated Perth County courthouse with the renovated former land-registry office at 5 Huron St. into one unified Perth County headquarters building.

"This renovated space will provide a new and expanded home for county staff," Kellum continued. "This year will be an exciting time as administrative staff settle into this new space. I'd like to thank county staff for their continued hard work, dedication and patience, particularly during the construction."

Kellum thanked each of the four delegates who wished him well in his new position before he took his oath of office. Those delegates included Perth-Wellington MP John Nater, Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae, Stratford

Mayor Martin Ritsma and St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee.

"I'm proud of the relationship we have with Perth County," Ritsma said, congratulating Kellum ahead of his official appointment as warden. "I think about the shared agreements that we have that are a benefit to our residents – both a benefit with regards to the services they provide and the cost efficiencies. ... We do have challenges and I think collectively we need to continue to work with our federal and provincial counterparts to meet the needs of our residents in Stratford and Perth County ... whether it's housing, homelessness, infrastructure costs, or policing."

"I want to congratulate Rhonda Ehgoetz as the former warden for her tremendous leadership and certainly her strong leadership throughout the county," Strathdee said during his remarks. " ... Congratulations to the new warden and ... we looking forward to continuing to work together to make the region better."

All four delegates expressed their condolences over the recent passing of Perth South mayor and former Perth County Warden Jim Aitcheson, who died after a brief battle with cancer on Nov. 21. Kellum also spoke about the impact Aitcheson had on him while working together on county council.

"Jim was a wonderful colleague to have on council and he will be deeply missed by all," Kellum said. "He served in this role as warden of Perth County for three years during the pandemic, which were some of the most challenging times we've seen in our region. I learned a lot from watching him and I hope I can live up to the hard work of Jim and all the past wardens who have served in this role before me."

West Perth deputy mayor Dean Trentowsky also took his oath of office as the 2025 deputy warden during the warden's election after being acclaimed to the position. Trentowsky was appointed by West Perth council to serve on Perth County council in 2022.

During the election ceremony, president of Perth



North Perth Mayor Doug Kellum was acclaimed as Perth County warden and West Perth deputy mayor Dean Trentowsky was acclaimed as deputy warden at the annual Perth County Warden Election Dec. 5. Photo courtesy of Perth County

County's Past Wardens Association and Perth County Coun. Bob Wilhelm presented Ehgoetz with her second past-warden pin marking the end of her second term as warden.

The election of Perth County's warden and deputy warden is held annually. County councillors were given an opportunity to put their names forward for the positions at their Nov. 7 meeting. As only Kellum put his name forward for warden and Trentowsky put his name forward for deputy warden, both were acclaimed to the positions and an actual election was not held.

In previous years when two or more candidates from county council have put their names forward, a vote of county council is held during the warden's election ceremony to appoint both positions.

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Anytime Fitness New Hamburg's recent enhancements helping locals reach their fitness goals

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Thanks to the recent and ongoing additions of new trainers with specific and individualized expertise, more clients of Anytime Fitness New Hamburg are reaching their fitness and health goals than ever before.

Earlier this year, Anytime Fitness New Hamburg manager Christian Beckner shared with the Gazette that the gym had brought on several new trainers, each of whom prides themselves in providing that personalized touch for their clients, learning about their lives and the barriers they may have in their way of achieving their fitness goals. By having those trainers ready to offer guidance, support and motivation at every step in their clients' fitness journeys, Beckner said many of their clients have already begun to see extraordinary results.

"We've had some pretty amazing results from some of our clients," Beckner said, noting those clients gave permission to Beckner to share their results. "We've had a gentleman who started with us and since he joined in February, he's lost over 100 pounds, which is pretty remarkable. He's been working with our trainer, Brayden (Allan) ... and it's been just an awesome union between those two.

"... We also had another gentleman as well. He lost about ... 90 pounds and that's in that same timeframe, so in this year we've had two gentlemen who've had 100 and nearly 100-pound weight loss. Some of the feedback we've had (from them) is, 'Everyday life just feels better.' Hearing that from those guys, knowing that's the kind of impact it has had, is really the reason why we do what we do."

And New Hamburg Anytime Fitness continues to grow its roster of trainers who are available as early as 6 a.m. and as late as 9 p.m. and can work with you to achieve those fitness goals in whatever way works best.

"It's like an athlete working with a coach. Even at the top level, these athletes still have coaches and trainers helping them to improve on a day-to-day basis," Beckner said. "When working out and when going on your fitness journey, there's going to be ups and downs and progress isn't going to be completely linear. Having somebody there who understands what the ups and downs mean, how to navigate them, how to keep you motivated and moving forward is something that makes a world of difference.

"... Our training team here; we pride ourselves in going above and beyond. ... If you have questions about how to grocery shop successfully, how to meal plan successfully, do all that kind of stuff, we have trainers who will literally



The team from Anytime Fitness New Hamburg rides on their float in this year's New Hamburg Santa Claus Parade Dec. 1. Photo courtesy of Anytime Fitness New Hamburg

meet you at the grocery store and walk you through where to shop, what to do, what to buy, how to save money and still eat healthy, and that is something they've done for multiple clients."

As Beckner says Anytime Fitness New Hamburg's clients are more like a tightknit community than members of a gym, it's important for the gym community to give back to the wider New Hamburg community. This year, as it has done in the past, Anytime Fitness New Hamburg has partnered with the Wilmot Family Resource Centre for its Holiday Toy and Food Drive. Gym members have until Dec. 20 to bring in non-perishable food items and new toys for those in need this holiday season.

To get locals started on their fitness journeys, Anytime Fitness New Hamburg will also run its Join For A Dollar promotion in the new year along with specials on all of the gym's six-week challenges. Those who sign up for the six-week challenge will work with a trainer to set attainable, individualized goals they can meet by the end of the challenge at a cost of roughly \$300 for all 12 personal-training sessions.

Also in the new year, Anytime Fitness New Hamburg will be celebrating its 10th anniversary.

"We are super excited to be celebrating our 10-year anniversary and we're incredibly grateful to be part of the community," Beckner said. "We can't wait to see what the next 10 years look like."

For more information on Anytime Fitness New Hamburg, visit www.anytimefitness.ca/gyms/3904/new-hamburg-on-n3a-1t6/.

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Santa set to make a splash at Wilmot Recreation Complex

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

thewtgazette@gmail.com

On Saturday, Dec. 21, Santa will don his red trunks as he returns for another swim in the Wilmot Recreation Complex pools.

Swimmers can sign up to join Saint Nick from 10:15-11:15 a.m. or 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Admission for those 17 and under is \$20. Adults can pay the regular admission price or bring a non-perishable food item for the Wilmot Family Resource Centre. Up to two adults can attend with each child.

“We’re honoured that Santa is taking time out of his busy schedule to return to Wilmot Township,” Mayor Natasha Salonen said in a press release. “We hope swimmers enjoy the event and consider

making it a new holiday tradition.”

Participating children will receive a small gift and a photo with Santa that will be sent to them by email after the event. Those interested in attending should register early to secure a space at <https://bit.ly/SwimmingSanta>.

Swims will be held in both pools at the Wilmot Recreation Complex at 1291 Nafziger Rd. There is a capacity of 100 people for the leisure pool, which is a warm pool. Please note Wilmot’s swim admission policy applies to all swimmers. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Additional event details are available at www.wilmot.ca/aquaticshighlights. For more information about swimming in Wilmot, visit www.wilmot.ca/swimming.

WARD 3 TOWNHALL

HOSTED BY COUNCILLOR HARVIR SIDHU

Let’s discuss Wilmot Township’s draft 2025 budget
& other pressing Ward 3 concerns.

No need to RSVP.

DETAILS:

Thursday, January 2, 2025

7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

Meeting Room A, Wilmot Recreation Centre,
1291 Nafziger Road Baden



QUESTIONS?

Email Harvir.Sidhu@Wilmot.ca &
Carly.Pettinger@Wilmot.ca

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Perth County council votes to discontinue PC Connect rural service after March 2025

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

As a result of the high cost per rider and the end of a funding agreement with the province, as well as to keep the 2025 proposed budget impact on county landowners down, Perth County council has voted to discontinue the PC Connect rural-route service as of March 31, 2025.

As part of 2025 budget deliberations at the end of the Dec. 5 Perth County council meeting, county economic development officer Justin Dias presented a report to council on the future of the PC Connect rural-route service after the county's \$2.47-million Community Transportation grant funding agreement with the province, which has been in place since PC Connect was launched in 2020, ends at the end of March.

In his report, Dias recommended extending the program by nine months to the end of 2025, which would cost taxpayers an additional \$225,103 on top of what is already a double-digit proposed levy increase for next year at nearly 13.2 per cent.

"I initially had supported the extension for nine months, but considering the headwinds we have with our budget, there's going to be no money coming to help fund this and the amount of people that are being pushed closer to the line (by the cost of living) and stuff like that, when it comes time to vote on this, I will be voting to terminate the program," Coun. Hugh McDermid said.

"Over \$60 per person, per ride is outrageous and we shouldn't expect all the residents to subsidize that," added Coun. Bob Wilhelm.

The funding required to continue the PC Connect rural-route transit service until the end of 2025 would represent a little more than a one per-cent increase to the proposed 2025 tax levy for the county.

While ridership is increasing, the county's cost for each ride is decreasing and most regular users of the rural-route bus service indicated the importance of the service in connecting them to medical appointments, groceries and social and community engagements while reducing personal transportation costs and increasing their independence, the fact the province has not committed to any further funding for PC Connect after March 2025 was a concern for the majority of county council.

"We had hoped the (Ontario Transit Investment Fund) would support ongoing

operations of PC Connect and support the service as it transitions to the gas tax (funding)," Dias said. "Unfortunately, as details were released (about the funding stream), it really is targeted towards new services or major changes to existing services to serve underserved areas. So, we don't see this as being that lifeline to support PC Connect in the short term."

While there is no provincial funding currently available to support PC Connect in the way council and staff had hoped, Coun. Walter McKenzie and deputy warden Dean Trentowsky argued for extending the rural-route service until the end of the year to use that time to lobby the provincial government for stable transit funding.

Coun. Todd Kasenberg also expressed concern with what he perceived as short-sightedness in discontinuing a transit service as the county continues to grow.

"We've essentially built a framework and a platform for us to deliver transportation services in our community; we do that every day in investing in roads and bridges and the matters of capital. And here we are; we're definitely enured in the transportation and transit business," he said. "For us and at this point in time, especially ... for the rapidly growing community if North Perth which will be a city in 10-12 years, for us to remove transit and cause harms to people and to our local economy is a really bad idea."

Kasenberg suggested the budget impact of extending the bus service doesn't outweigh the benefits of the rural-transit routes, whether it's supporting vulnerable people in rural communities by connecting them with family, friends and outside services, reducing Perth County's carbon footprint by offering public-transit alternatives to the use of personal vehicles, or promoting economic development by connecting local businesses to the labour and other outside resources they need to thrive in the county's rural areas.

Ultimately however, council voted to discontinue the PC Connect rural-route service after March 31, 2025. Deputy warden Trentowsky and councillors McKenzie, Kasenberg and Matt Duncan – all of whom represent either North Perth or West Perth – voted against the motion. The remainder of council, comprising representatives from Perth East and Perth South as well as Warden Doug Kellum, who serves as deputy mayor in North Perth, voted in favour.

Please note PC Connect Routes 1, 2

and 3 offering service between Stratford, St. Marys, London, Kitchener-Waterloo and North Perth are not impacted by this decision.

Draft 2025 Perth County budget remains steady with proposed 13.18 per-cent levy increase

Perth County's draft 2025 budget was released to the public in early November and county council has met three times – on Nov. 7, 21 and Dec. 5 – for budget deliberations.

The draft budget carries an overall proposed levy of \$25,123,337, up by nearly \$3 million or 13.18 per cent above the 2024 levy. The draft budget includes an overall operating levy of just over \$21 million – up by more than \$2.65 million over last year – and a capital levy of just over \$4 million, which increased slightly by \$280,000 over the previous year's capital levy.

The budget also includes the proposed transfer of \$412,300 from reserves to keep the levy increase at 13.18 per cent.

Though county treasurer and director of corporate services Corey Bridges said it could be higher, early estimates show the county saw roughly 1.5 per cent growth, adding \$333,250 to the tax base last year and effectively reducing the proposed levy

increase to nearly 11.7 per cent.

The county's operating budget includes the hiring of a number of new staff positions including a full-time prosecutor at a cost of nearly \$122,000, part-time backfill paramedics at a cost of nearly \$334,400, a full-time economic-development officer at a cost of nearly \$77,800, an administrative assistant to the CAO at just over \$52,000, a contract planner at just over \$46,000 and a summer student to work in the CAO's office at a cost of nearly \$15,600.

Meanwhile, the proposed 2025 capital budget includes 39 projects at a total cost of roughly \$11 million. If the budget is approved as is, just over \$9 million of that cost would be covered through county reserves, while nearly \$2 million would be funded through the Canada Community Building Fund, the Ontario Community Infrastructure Fund and from agreements with municipal partners.

The more-than \$4 million to be collected through next year's proposed capital levy would be transferred to reserves for future capital projects.


Perth County council will next discuss the proposed 2025 budget at its Dec. 19 meeting, after which staff are hopeful the budget will be adopted and passed early in the new year.



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Two Wilmot councillors hosting townhalls; Events come as township wrestles with huge potential tax increase

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Councillors Harvir Sidhu and Kris Wilkinson have never shied away from the big issues facing Wilmot, including the Region of Waterloo's land-acquisition plan. Now, the pair are holding separate townhalls in their individual ridings to hear what taxpayers are most concerned about.

The councillors broke rank from the rest of Wilmot's elected officials in June and held a news conference where they demanded greater transparency from the Region of Waterloo regarding the proposed acquisition of 770 acres of farmland.

"I have been trying to plan a townhall since this summer, but unfortunately the timing just never worked out," said Sidhu. "I was encouraged by council passing my motion for the open-mic delegations for our council meetings. Ultimately, I just want to hear from our residents. I work for them and more transparency is never a bad thing."

Despite representing Ward 3, Sidhu said he isn't restricting attendance to just his constituents.

"I would like to hear from my residents if they have specific concerns. Having said that, all residents from Wilmot are welcome. Almost all the decisions we make affect everyone in our township."

Wilkinson, a Ward 2 councillor, said he too was hoping to have a meeting with taxpayers sooner, but the timing of his get-together makes sense.

"I had initially planned to host a townhall event to meet with the residents of Petersburg to discuss the proposed upgrades to their water-distribution system. However, when I was looking at the calendar and upcoming meeting agendas, it made sense to host an event after the budget was released so that I could meet with



Councillors Harvir Sidhu (left) and Kris Wilkinson are holding townhall events to hear from their constituents on issues like the 2025 budget and road safety. Contributed photos

the entire ward to discuss issues."

While Wilkinson is hoping for a strong turnout by Ward 2 residents, he is also welcoming those from other areas.

"With that said, the topics for conversation will be primarily focused on my ward."

Sidhu expects much of the conversation to centre around the 2025 budget, something he doesn't support in its current form.

"It is a large document that I have been slowly chipping away at. I will not be accepting it as presented. There are many difficult decisions we will be facing. Asking for residents to foot the bill to fix all our financial issues in one year is simply a non-starter for me."

He admitted to receiving many phone calls and emails from shocked residents who are having a hard time getting their heads around such a massive potential



hike to their tax levy.

"Overwhelmingly, the sentiment has been of anger and frustration. People are in difficult financial times right now. Some people understand that we are in a non-favourable situation, however this cannot be fixed overnight."

Wilkinson expects the budget will be a hot topic at his townhall this weekend. He added it's a wakeup call for council and residents alike.

"This budget represents a turning point for Wilmot. We finally have a document that shows how bad things are, drawing the entire town's attention. With that said, I feel it is the perfect opportunity for us to look at budget cuts and refinements to get our expenditures down."

He added a small increase in taxes is needed to ensure money is being put away to rebuild reserves.

"In a perfect world, I'm looking to cut 10 per cent from our 2024 budget

expenditures and, at most, a five per-cent tax levy increase. This should allow us to put away funds for the future and allow us to reevaluate our service offerings. We need to focus on getting back to basics, which is providing the essential services for all our constituents."

Wilkinson said the primary reactions to date have been shock, anger and a call for budget cuts.

"Less than one per cent of my interactions were in favour of this document. Hearing some of the stories from residents has really driven home the cost-of-living crisis, and I fear that a substantial increase could force people out of their homes."

Sidhu said he expects speed and road safety will likely be another topic of discussion at his event.

"With many of the busiest streets running through my ward being regional, it's something I will keep advocating for."

Wilkinson explained there are several issues on top of the budget on the minds of folks he has talked to.

"Budget, budget, budget, the Prime Ministers Path, speeding, water systems, road conditions and a need for an additional ice pad at the Wilmot Recreation Centre."

Wilkinson's townhall is booked for Saturday, Dec. 14 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the St. Agatha Community Centre. Sidhu's event is set for Thursday, Jan. 2, 2025 at the Wilmot Recreation Centre from 7-8:30 p.m.

Editor's Note: The Gazette was informed just before press time that Ward 4 councillors Steven Martin and Lillianne Dunstall announced they would also host a townhall meeting. That event will occur on Saturday, Jan. 4, 2025 at the New Hamburg Community Centre from 10 a.m. to noon. Ward 1 councillor Stewart Cressman is also holding an event, but a date has not been set.

WARD 2 TOWNHALL HOSTED BY COUNCILLOR KRIS WILKINSON

Join Councillor Wilkinson to discuss the proposed 2025 Wilmot Township Budget & the Petersburg Distribution Water System. Followed by an open Q&A session.

Details:

Date: Saturday, December 14th, 2024

Time: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Location: St. Agatha Community Centre, 1791 Erbs Rd, St. Agatha, ON N0B 2L0

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Shakespeare firefighters collecting toys and food for kids at Christmas

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Many local organizations, including fire departments, have been doing a job they love this Christmas, collecting toys and games as gifts for area kids who otherwise might not have much to celebrate this Christmas.

They were also collecting food at the same time.

On Saturday, members of the Shakespeare Firefighters Association held an open house in hopes locals would stop by with a toy, food or even cash for a needy family in the area.

Many residents came with just that to make sure every family member young and old did not go without when Christmas morning rolls around.

All food, toys and cash collected is donated to the needy through Stratford House of Blessing.



Shakespeare firefighter Ben Lindner along with his wife, Amber, welcomed those who came and dropped off toys and food at the local fire station on Saturday. Their children also helped out. They include, from left, Sloane, 6, Aveleigh, 4, Austyn, 10 and Corbin, 9. Photo by Gary West

Ella Jones wins trophy for most points from 2024 Tavistock Fall Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A young teenager has become a perennial winner at the Tavistock Fall Fair after entering 75 different fall fair classes earlier this year.

Ella Jones was awarded the Laura Hansuld Trophy for earning top points in the junior division of the 2024 Tavistock Fall Fair. She is a daughter of Beth and George Jones.

The 16 year-old, who is in Grade 11 at Eastwood Collegiate Institute, has won the trophy five times in past years and loves preparing entries for the annual fair because of her many abilities and her natural competitive nature. She says she only enters exhibits from the Tavistock Agricultural Society fall fair prize book.

The beautiful, large trophy is in honour of Hansuld, a farm girl born in Waterloo region and went to school there. After graduation, she taught in that district and she then decided to go into training as a nurse. She moved to Chicago and became head nurse in one of the big hospitals there.

Later, Hansuld was a Red Cross nurse in the U.S. Army. In 1926, she married Edmond Hansel, a farmer in East Zorra Township, and her interest turned to farming, homemaking and her family.

In 1946, Laura Hansuld had the idea for organizing the women of the district to form a Women's Institute (WI) group. She



Ella Jones is pictured with the Laura Hansuld Trophy for obtaining the highest number of points in the Junior Division at the 2024 Tavistock Fall Fair.

became its first president.

It was Laura Hansuld who chose the name, Anna P. Lewis. Lewis was the superintendent of Women's Institutes for Ontario from 1945-1955 and was responsible for many innovative changes made to WI in that time period.

Lewis passed away in 1994 and Laura Hansuld passed away in March 1961. During that following September, the Tavistock Agricultural Society received a



Chris Wiffen, president of the Anna P. Lewis Women's Institute, is shown on the weekend presenting Ella Jones with the Laura Hansuld Trophy for receiving the most points in the Junior Division of this year's Tavistock Fall Fair.

donation from Laura's Hansuld's church.

That gave them the idea of starting a memorial fund in her honour. With the memorial fund, they have bought the large trophy pictured, which is awarded to the fair entrant with the highest points in the

junior age group, 10-18 years, at the local Tavistock Fall Fair. At the same time, they purchase a small gift each year to be presented to the winner.

This year, Jones was gifted a silver bracelet for winning the trophy.

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New Hamburg business taking letters for Santa

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A New Hamburg business is bringing a little extra holiday cheer this Christmas season.

Cloverleaf Farms is accepting letters to Santa and has the jolly old elf and his wife making an appearance next week.

"We decided to do letters to Santa before the postal strike. When that happened, it was a bonus for us that more kids would bring in letters. Funny story; we weren't going to invite Santa initially, but one woman said she was so excited Santa was coming to the store. I said, 'He is?'"

Scheid said the woman saw one of her videos on social media and assumed the jolly fellow was coming.

"I needed to rewatch that video; what did I say? She assumed it so I instantly started messaging my Santa Claus connections," Scheid said.

Santa and Mrs. Claus will be at the store on Friday, Dec. 20 from 2:30-4 p.m. Letters to Santa need to be dropped off

by Dec. 15 for children to receive a letter back from the holly jolly fellow on or after Dec. 20.

"We try to do something new every Christmas. Last year we had an advent calendar where we gave away something every day in conjunction with local businesses," Scheid said.

Scheid explained the idea for this year's event came to her while perusing the Mennonite Central Committee New Hamburg Thrift Centre.

"I saw this mailbox and I said, 'Hey, let's do that.'"

The mailbox is overflowing with letters from area boys and girls looking forward to hearing what Santa has to say to them. Schied said it's easy for her and her staff to be a part of the Wilmot area.

"I love this community. We did a book signing with a Petersburg author when her first book came out and she is coming back. We also have a young gentleman named Jett who is raising money for the humane society by selling colouring books he made."



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Paw Patrol fundraising breakfast held in Tavistock

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Tavistock Agricultural Society stays active for many months of the year, planning and fundraising for next year's fall fair.

The directors recently hosted a breakfast and vendor market at the Tavistock Memorial Hall, during which two characters from the kids show, Paw Patrol, participated in a meet and greet.

Paw Patrol is a very popular kids

show and organizers invited the two pups named Chase and Skye to come and do what they do best, helping the community however they could.

According to ag. society director Kaitlin Keller, the kids in attendance were invited to go up as many times as they wanted to mingle with the pair.

Those in attendance also brought non-perishable food donations for local food banks and non-profit organizations.



A group of agriculture society organizers "pawsed" at the end of a busy day at Tavistock's Memorial Hall during the Paw Patrol breakfast sponsored by the Tavistock Agricultural Society. Pictured in front from left are Dennis Holst, Barry Klein, Kim Urlando, Chad Keller and Alisha Wilson. In the back row from left are Kathy Rosenberg, Julie Kimpel, Skye, Kim Hill, Kaitlin Keller, Chase, Val Jones, Monica Shantz and Greg Pye.



An excited Tavistock area family at the Paw Patrol fundraiser breakfast were having a good time with the excitement brought to visitors by the Tavistock Agricultural Society. Contributed photos

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Shakespeare Optimist Club hosts successful Family Paint Night

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Shakespeare and area children filled the Optimist Hall last week as they spent some time together painting holiday art for the Christmas season.

Shakespeare Optimist members along with volunteer Cheryl McKenny, owner of The Imagined Canvas, kept the young, local painters excited and entertained throughout the evening. Even parents and older siblings got involved.

The painters showed their artistic skills on an 18-inch by 24-inch piece of slate with guidance from McKenny.

Optimist president Mike McNeil, who spearheaded the evening, was really pleased with the 190 area youth who registered. Even with blustery weather outside, a large crowd of kids still showed up for the evening and seemed to enjoy their time together.

Refreshments were served and supplied by club members.



Three members of a Shakespeare area family were proud to show off their masterpieces at the end of the Optimist Club's Family Paint Night.



Abbie shows off her masterpiece. She proved that she has a love of art at the end of the Optimist Club's Family Paint Night last week.



The tables at the Shakespeare Optimist Hall were mostly full as area families enjoyed the Family Paint Night sponsored by the village's Optimist Club. Contributed photos

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New Hamburg Legion celebrates recent roof repairs funded by Ontario Trillium Foundation grant

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A nearly \$48,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) has helped New Hamburg Legion members make much-needed repairs to their building's roof, helping to preserve the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 532 headquarters and make it available to members and community for decades to come.

While in New Hamburg to attend the local Remembrance Day service last month, Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris dropped in at the local Legion to celebrate the OTF capital grant and the completion of the roof repairs, which finished up in September.

"The New Hamburg Legion is a community staple, serving our veterans and their families, along with hosting and supporting important community programs and events," Harris said in a recent press release issued by the Legion. "This OTF grant has supplied the Legion with the much-needed funds to repair a damaged roof, ensuring their venue can be used in its full capacity for years to come."

Over the last few years, rainstorms and harsh weather made it apparent the roof on the 42-year-old building was in need of significant repairs.

"The roof was deteriorating badly," said New Hamburg Legion executive committee member Bill Pearson. "We were having leaks depending on the weather conditions but, if it was really raining, we would get some leaks coming in. So, we had to do something with that. We were either going to patch it or we were going to replace it, and then, lo and behold, we were led to the Trillium grant and what it was for. Consequently, we formed a committee and applied, and went from there."

Awarded in June, the grant funded the repairs, which were performed by local roofing company N W Roofing of New Hamburg. The roof was completed in time for the annual Remembrance Day ceremonies, the Veterans' Dinner and a host of other dinners and community events at the Legion in support of local veterans and their families, and the community at large.

The Royal Canadian Legion serves veterans and their families, seniors and other community agencies such as the Wilmot Family Resource Centre. The Legion hall is a venue for the Veterans' Dinner each year, the Coldest Night of the Year walk in February and, on Dec. 6, the Wilmot Family Resource Centre hosted its International



Kitchener-Conestoga MPP Mike Harris joined New Hamburg Legion Branch 532 members Nov. 11 to celebrate a nearly \$48,000 Ontario Trillium Foundation grant awarded earlier this year that supported recently completed and much-needed repairs to the Legion roof. Photo courtesy of New Hamburg Legion Branch 532

Day of Elimination of Violence Against Women Walk. The Legion is also hosting a visit with Santa on Dec. 15 and a Family Day event Feb. 16.

"We are a community organization but we also serve the veterans," Pearson said. "We have many events down there for the community as a whole, and we have to maintain the Legion that is there. We'd be foolish to let it go down. The hall is a nice size. If you're only having a dinner for 100, it's perfect."

Pearson said the Legion membership wasn't previously aware of the opportunities for building upgrades and repairs through OTF. Now that they have gone through the grant-application process, he

says members have begun discussions around applying for future funding to help with accessibility upgrades at the Legion.

"Whether it's helping people learn new things, connect with their community, or simply have fun, organizations like the Royal Canadian Legion deliver experiences that make a difference," said Ontario Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming Stan Cho in the Legion press release. "That's why grant support through the Ontario Trillium Foundation is so important. This funding will help ensure they remain at the heart of the community for decades to come."

The Royal Canadian Legion was founded in 1925 and is Canada's largest veteran-support organization. The New

Hamburg Legion was founded in 1953 and currently has 288 members, many of whom volunteer an extraordinary amount of time to their branch and community.

The OTF is an agency of the Ontario government with a mission to build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Last year, OTF invested more than \$110 million into 1,044 community projects and multi-sector partnerships. Projects aim to enhance economic wellbeing, foster more active lifestyles, support child and youth development, provide spaces for people to come together and connect, and create a more sustainable environment. Visit otf.ca to learn more.

Apologies from the Gazette. This is the full list of victims.

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Tavistock's Grace United church collects hundreds of gifts for the needy at Christmas

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

With Christmas just around the corner, the congregation at Grace United Church in Tavistock, led by youth leader Carol Young and Rev. Marilyn Arthur, have encouraged kids and members of the congregation to come forward with gifts for those who might not otherwise have a gift to open at Christmas.

With boxes and bags filled with hundreds of gifts, Young said Project Good Tidings is a yearly event at Christmas when the youth from the church invite groups, committees and organizations of the Grace church family to join in the effort.

Each group, committee, or organization is invited to fill

at least one basket for a local aid agency.

The Christmas Place in Woodstock, the Tavistock Assistance Program (TAP) and Optimism Place and Shelterlink Youth Services in Stratford were the agencies selected as this year's beneficiaries.

These agencies and organizations work with children, youth and families all year round. Since 2004, over 600 bushel baskets have been filled and given out through Project Good Tidings. This year, 38 bushel baskets along with over \$100 in gift cards and cash donations was collected to distribute.



Grace United Church youth co-ordinator Carol Young is shown in front of the church on Sunday with kids from Sunday School who helped to carry in many dozens of bushel baskets of toys. Once they were blessed by Rev. Marilyn Arthur, they were carried out and distributed to four local aid agencies in Oxford and Perth counties. Contributed photo

IN MEMORIAM

IN LOVING MEMORY



RON BRENNEMAN,
DEC. 18, 2023

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THE WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

thewtgazette@gmail.com

The holiday season is full of faith and celebration. Even though people may believe this important time begins at the start of Dec., for millions of the Christians, the Twelve Days of Christmas begin with the birth of Baby Jesus on Dec. 25 and continue through the Epiphany on Jan. 6.

The Epiphany, also known as Three Kings Day, is a Christian feast day that “celebrates the revelation of God in His Son as human in Jesus Christ,” says The National Shrine of Saint Jude. The Epiphany is celebrated on Jan. 6 each year and gets its name from the Greek word meaning “to reveal, or manifestation,” a nod to the idea that this was the day Jesus was revealed to the world.

On the Epiphany, three Magi visited the Christ child to pay homage. These wise men were the first to greet Jesus after his parents. The Magi followed a star to Bethlehem, having faith that the Child’s location would be accurate. The unlikely royal visitors bestowed gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These herbs are typically used in burial ceremonies, and their offering may have potentially foreshadowed Jesus’ destiny.

According to Father Hezekias Carnazzo, a Melkite Catholic priest and founding executive director of the Virginia-based Institute of Catholic Culture, the Feast of the Epiphany is one of the earliest feasts and actually predates the celebration of Christmas.

Although the Epiphany is an important date for Christians and many celebrate it, celebrants in Spain and Latin America consider it as important as Christmas Day. Within these nations Día de los Reyes (Three Kings Day) is a time for serving Rosca de Reyes, an oval-shaped treat that has a small doll inside



A nativity scene symbolizes the faith and celebration of the holiday season, culminating in the Epiphany on January 6, when Christians commemorate the visit of the Magi and the revelation of Jesus to the world.

to represent Baby Jesus. The figurine symbolizes the hiding of the infant Jesus from King Herod’s troops. Children also receive the majority of their gifts on Three Kings Day. It is customary for kids to place their old shoes with a wish list on them for the Three Kings. On the morning of Jan. 6, the shoes are filled with toys and gifts.

The Epiphany is celebrated in various ways around the world. In the Czech Republic,

people swim in the freezing cold Vltava River and men dress up as the Magi before riding camels through Prague’s city center. Three Kings Bread, similar to the Rosca de Reyes and called Dreikönigskuchen, is prepared and consumed in Germany and Switzerland.

Christmas fanfare does not cease when the calendar turns from Dec. 25 to 26. The Epiphany on Jan. 6 also is an important day of celebration.

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Interim Pastor Harold Schlegel.
131 Wettlaufer St., Tavistock 655-2581
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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

1. What is gifted on the twelfth day in the song “12 Days of Christmas”?
2. St. Nicholas is the patron saint of ____.
3. What is Boxing Day known as in Ireland?
4. What country has won the most medals in the Winter Olympics?
5. What year was Mitch Marner born?
6. What is the term for the condition where plants enter a state of suspended growth during winter?
7. What bear has the strongest bite force?
8. How many National Parks are in Alaska?
9. What do you call a house made from blocks of snow?
10. What Chinese plant blooms in winter?

Answers found on page 26

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Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette



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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

U13 LL Huskies One capture gold at Elmvale tournament

SPENCER SEYMOUR

Sports Director

The U13 LL Boys One New Hamburg Huskies won the top prize at the Orr Lake Hat-Trick Tournament Nov. 29 to Dec. 1 in Elmvale.

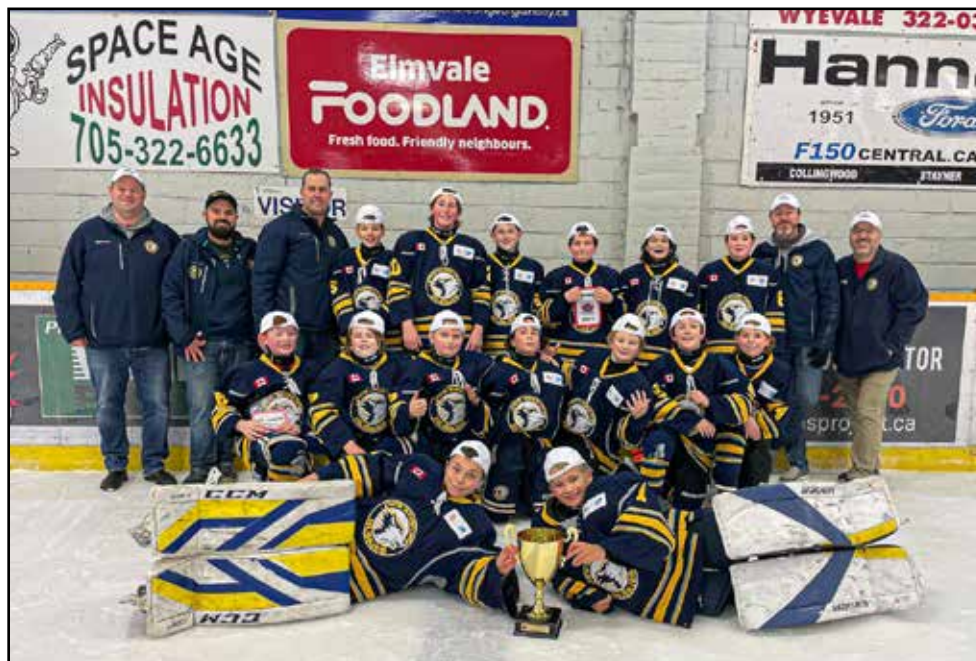
According to head coach Matt Vusich, early on in the tournament, the team began to implement the offensive attack they had been practicing.

"The big focus for our coaching staff the last few weeks has been working on our forecheck," Vusich told the Gazette. "During our second game in the tournament, you could see the forecheck kick in. The forwards were pressuring the puck and causing turnovers that, with the help of our defence at the point, we were able to turn into goals."

After going undefeated in their round-robin games, the Huskies defeated the Honeywood Hurricanes 2-0 in the semi-final to secure their spot in the gold-medal matchup against the home team, Elmvale Coyotes.

"The semi-final was a late start time for us," Vusich said of the 9 p.m. puck drop. "But yet, the boys looked fresh and full of energy. They controlled the game and there was little doubt about the outcome once we had a goal on the board."

In the final against the Coyotes, the Huskies fell behind 1-0 due to a goal early in the second, but they battled back to



The U13 LL Boys One New Hamburg Huskies claimed the gold medal at the Orr Lake Hat-Trick Tournament Nov. 29 to Dec. 1 in Elmvale. Pictured laying on the ice in front, from left to right, are Keaton Herlick and Oliver Vusich. Pictured in the middle row, from left, are Jace Nelson, Tucker Moreau, Benn Owens, Drew Brown, Noah Murphy, Nathan Smith and Simon Carter. In the back row, from left, are assistant coach Paul Arsenaault, trainer Steve Carter, head coach Matt Vusich, Caleb Rutledge, Garrett Rowley, Eric Arsenaault, Lincoln Elrick, Jacob Gurney, Max Dietrich, assistant coach Jeff Herlick and Sean Gurney. Contributed photo

tie it up early in the third on a goal by Caleb Rutledge, assisted by Drew Brown and Garrett Rowley. Brown was the top point-getter of the tournament, netting seven goals and two assists.

Vusich praised his squad for not succumbing to negativity when they went

down by a goal.

"Our strong play continued, but we were unable to beat their goalie. We had a ton of chances but just couldn't get one to go in. When the other team scored early in the second, not one player on our bench got down. I could hear our guys immediately

trying to get everyone going and pumped up to get one back. It took a lot of effort and chances, and fortunately, their hard work paid off."

Noah Murphy scored the go-ahead goal for New Hamburg with just one minute and nine seconds left in the game. Lincoln Elrick and Jace Nelson picked up the assists.

"I think the boys' positivity and confidence in one another earned them the win," Vusich said. "They never stopped moving their feet and showed little frustration despite Elmvale's goalie making save after save. The other coaches and I are glad to have had a front-row seat to their excitement, enthusiasm and determination. Each and every player on our team worked hard and cheered on the hard work of their teammates. Our group goes out of its way to include everyone and acknowledge the efforts of others."

Keaton Herlick and Oliver Vusich, the Huskies' goaltending duo, split the net and ended the tournament only allowing four goals in five games, a stretch that included two shutouts.

Players of the game were awarded by the coaches, with the winners of the prestigious green hats being Brown, Elrick, Murphy, Simon Carter and Jacob Gurney. Parents also vote during each game to select the hardest worker of the contest, with winners including Rowley, Rutledge, Eric Arsenaault, Benn Owens and Nathan Smith.

Royals drop decision to undefeated Wolves

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

Ripley may not sit atop the Ontario Elite Hockey League (OEHL) standings, but they are the only team without a loss.

They continued their dominance with a 7-4 victory over Tavistock last weekend to pick up win number 10 of the season. The Royals fell to six wins against five losses.

"Ripley has been one of the top teams over the past five seasons," said Royals coach Tyson Zehr. "It's clear they come into each game with the mindset of giving their best, and that's what separates top-tier teams from others. They bring a level of intensity that makes a regular-season game feel like a playoff game."

The best player on the Wolves and arguably in the league is Garret Meurs, a former fifth-round draft choice of the Colorado Avalanche in 2011. While he didn't see any action in the NHL, he did play five years of professional hockey, jumping back and forth from the East Coast Hockey League to the American Hockey League. Meurs leads the OEHL with 15 goals in 10 games. Zehr said Ripley is deep in terms of their top talent.

"They have really strong, top-end guys who can find open ice and make us pay if we lose track of them. We've done a good job in the playoffs over the last two years to contain them as much as possible, but Saturday night gave our guys a good reminder of how dangerous the best guys

in our league can be."

The game was tied 2-2 after 20 minutes of play and the Royals led 3-2 on a powerplay goal by Matt Zilke just over 12 minutes into the second period. The Wolves scored three times before the end of the second, two with the man advantage, and never looked back. The third goal was scored with Zilke in the penalty box serving a five-minute major for head contact.

"The penalty to Zilke was a real blow," said Zehr. "Not only did we give their power play a five-minute opportunity, but we also lost one of our best players. Whether or not we agree with the call, it definitely shifted the momentum and changed the course of the game. It was a tough situation to recover from."

Deven Kropf scored twice for Tavistock while Tyler Sutter, with his first of the season, added a single marker. Ripley outshot Tavistock 40-38.

One of the two ice compressors at the Tavistock and District Recreation Centre went down during the day Saturday but was replaced. Then, the ice-resurfacing machine had some technical difficulties during the game and a chunk of ice was taken out of the ice. Arena staff were able to fix the damage.

"A big thanks to the arena staff. Despite the mechanical issues, they stepped up to make sure everything was taken care of and that we could play and finish the game. Their support was much appreciated and we're lucky, as we always have been, to have such a great crew working

in Tavistock," said Zehr.

Kids Night

Santa Claus is coming to town on Saturday night as the Royals host the Milverton Four Wheel Drives this Saturday at 7:30 p.m. for the team's annual Kids Night. All kids in attendance will be given a ballot for a chance to win a prize including a tabletop hockey game and the popular mystery mini sticks. Santa Claus will make a special appearance and will be available for pictures in the blueline club during the second period.

TAVISTOCK ROYALS SR. "AA" HOCKEY



Tavistock
Royals

KID'S NIGHT

Santa will be there!
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AT 7:30PM

TAVISTOCK & DISTRICT
RECREATION CENTRE

U18 Huskies win Silver Stick qualifier

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

The U18 New Hamburg Huskies took home gold last weekend at a Silver Stick qualifier and did so by defeating some of the best teams in the province.

The team travelled to the Georgina Regional where they went 2-1-1 in the round-robin portion of the tournament. They downed Markham 5-0 in the semi-final game before downing Clarington, the eighth-ranked A team in Ontario, 5-0 to take the gold. The Huskies will participate in the International Silver Stick tournament in Sarnia from Jan. 17-19.

Head coach Zach Mark said the win is a huge accomplishment and a step in the right direction.

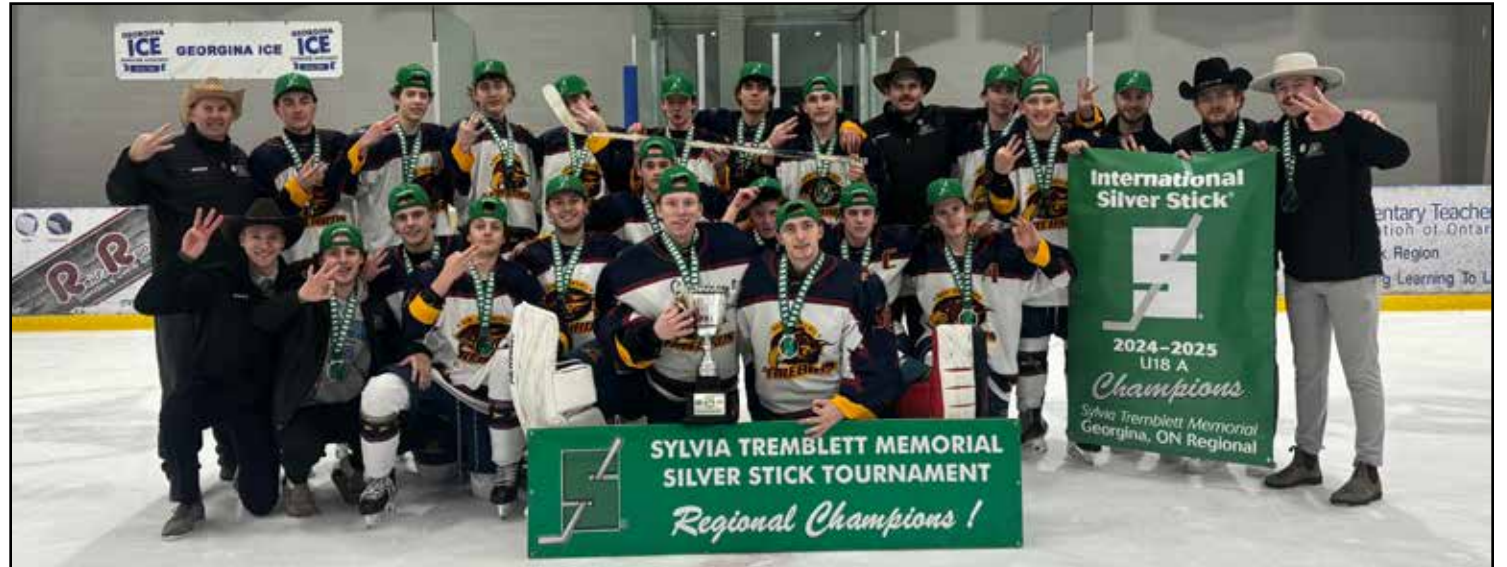
"All season, our goal has been to cash our ticket to International Silver Stick in Sarnia and to win the Georgina Regional Silverstick for a third straight season. It was a tough weekend and all of our players stepped up big time. Being able to repeat and complete the three-peat is huge for our team, our players, our coaching staff and our program."

He added the team is hungry since it hasn't been able to win the international part of the tournament.

"Although the boys are happy, we are not content by any means, and we can't wait to go chase an International Silver Stick title in January."

The Huskies haven't lost a league game this season with six wins and five ties. Mark said he's pleased with how the squad has done in a competitive Shamrock League. The Huskies are ranked third in the province.

"We have a very competitive league, which helps us when we go into tournaments. We have St. Thomas, first in Ontario, fourth-ranked St. Marys and South Oxford who are ranked 13th. Our boys know that it is crucial to show up each and every night, especially when the



The U18 A New Hamburg Huskies took gold at a Silver Stick tournament in Georgina last weekend. Contributed photo

competition is this strong."

Mark added it pushes his team to be at their best every night.

"We truly know that it is a league where anyone can win on any night. We have done well so far, with ties against St. Thomas and St. Marys, and we look forward to matching up with those teams late in the season and into playoffs."

Mark explained his team has all the tools to make a run in the playoffs, hopefully ending in an Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) title.

"This team is one of the tightest-knit groups I have had the privilege to coach. We in New Hamburg have a unique situation where 90 per cent of our players go to the same high school, they are on the same high school hockey team, they hang out in class and at lunch, and it is super cool to see them grow together as a group."

Mark added the Silver Stick weekend showed the team has what it takes to win in big games and in big moments.

"Sometimes in league, we like to take shifts off, or not be our best all the time, which is understandable, but when the

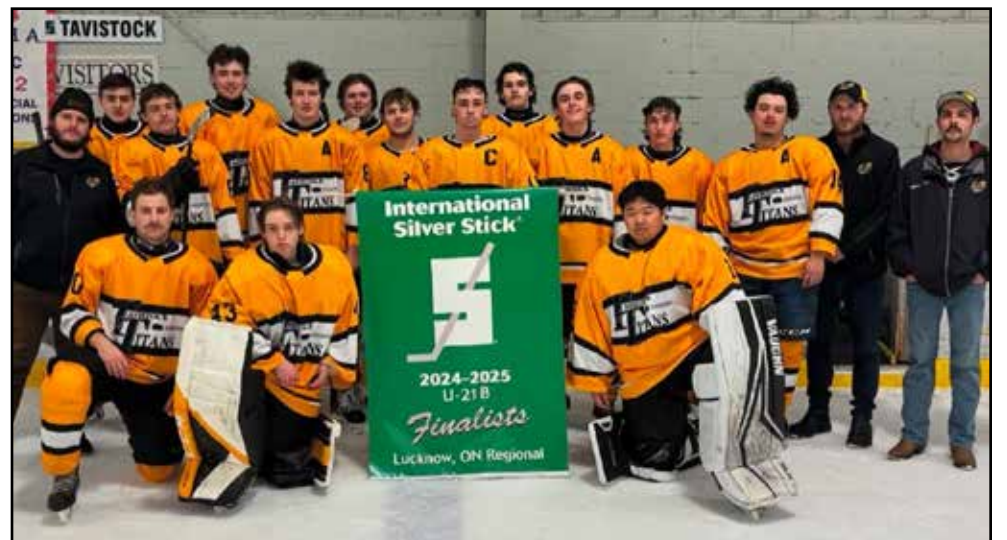
going gets tough, this group gets tougher. They buy into our gameplan and our systems, and they do everything it takes to be able to win big games. That showed this weekend."

U21 Titans bring home silver

The Tavistock Titans competed at a

Silver Stick qualifier in Lucknow last weekend.

They downed the Mid-Huron Huskies 3-1 and Walkerton 3-1. They earned a spot in the tournament final after a 4-1 win over the Huron Bruce Blizzard, but dropped a 4-2 decision to the Lucan Irish.



The U21 Tavistock team earned a silver medal in a Silver Stick tournament in Lucknow last weekend. Contributed photo

PJHL Roundup: Firebirds regain first place

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

New Hamburg's four-game win streak has them back on top of the Provincial Junior Hockey League's (PJHL) Doherty Division. That streak includes a pair of weekend victories at home, 3-1 over Tavistock on Friday and 3-0 against Dorchester on Saturday.

Keegan Metcalfe's second-period goal was the game-winner against the Braves. Josh Soulliere and Aydan Burns also scored for the Firebirds. Izac Blum picked up his seventh goal of the season for Tavistock, which outshot New Hamburg 35-29.

On Saturday, Josh Jacklin stopped all 45 shots he faced to earn his second shutout of the season. Justin McManus scored his seventh of the campaign early in the second

period after a scoreless first. Jordan Jacobs added a marker and Jack MacDonald also scored for the Firebirds.

The Firebirds recently acquired 19-year-old goaltender Deklan Jermol from the Dorchester Dolphins for a player development fee. The New Hamburg native stopped 34 of 35 shots Friday night to earn the win. Jermol started his PJHL career with the Mitchell Hawks but spent two full seasons and one partial season with Dorchester where he put up impressive numbers including a .914 save percentage and 3.01 goals against average in 2023-2024.

New Hamburg captain Owen Fischer said Jermol is a welcome addition to the dressing room.

"So far, he's been a very funny and enjoyable person to be around. His play in

a big game was awesome and something I'm looking forward to watching him doing more. He's easy to get along with and a great teammate."

Goalies are known to have unique personalities, but Fischer said as long as they're stopping the puck, it's all good.

"They're known to be a little odd but all three of our guys are a great fit like a glove. It's awesome and we are comfortable with all three of them in net saving our bacon."

Jermol was brought in to fill the void created by the five-game suspension handed out to Liam O'Leary on Dec. 1. O'Leary and Wellesley goalie Brandon Abbot fought last weekend when the pair voluntarily took their masks off at centre ice. Both netminders are eligible to return on Dec. 21. Abbot received the same penalty.

Fischer explained the Firebirds are

healthy and playing some darn good hockey right now.

"We've had so many injuries this season and we finally seem to be getting fully healthy which is exciting. I think that's a huge part of it and we are growing so close as a team. Our play is reflecting that."

Applejacks take four weekend points
Wellesley started the weekend off with a hard-fought 3-1 win in Norwich. Keenan McGrath's first goal of the season 13 minutes into the third period proved to be the game-winner. Dimitri Eleftheriadis added an empty net goal while Tyler Wagler scored in the first for the Applejacks.

The game featured four fights in the second period along with two misconducts, one for each side, for disrespectful/abusive behaviour late in the third.

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SPENCER.SEYMOUR88@GMAIL.COM**

Waterloo County 4-H members show dairy projects at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Waterloo County 4-H members came home from the Dairy Classic show at this

year's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto having enjoyed the experience at the largest 4-H junior show in Canada.

Those members who placed in the finals after all the preliminary heats had been

completed include:

- Devin Martin - fifth Intermediate Showperson
- Shae Cleaves - 20th Intermediate Showperson

- Emma Stere - fifth Fall Calf
- Kelly Stere - 1 5th Intermediate Calf
- Colton Martin - 20th Fall Calf
- Aaron Henhoeffler - 14th Guernsey Calf



The Waterloo County 4-H Royal Classic team, pictured with their barn exhibit in the background. In front from left are Julia Van Bergeijk, Aiden Van Bergeijk, Kelly Stere and Emma Stere. In back from left are Colton Martin, Shea Cleaves, Aaron Henhoeffler, Donnavan Martin and Devin Martin. Contributed photo

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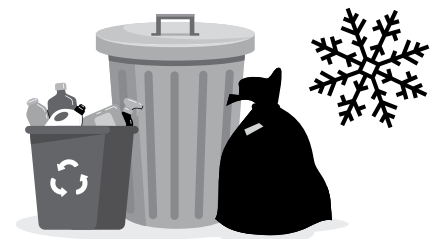
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HOLIDAY COLLECTION GARBAGE AND RECYCLING



WILL YOUR COLLECTION DAY CHANGE?

Residences and businesses in Blandford-Blenheim, East Zorra-Tavistock, Ingersoll, Norwich, South-West Oxford, Zorra and parts of Tillsonburg (North of Concession, West of Broadway) will have regularly scheduled collection during the holidays.



TOWN OF TILLSONBURG

ORIGINAL DAY	NEW DAY
Wednesday, December 25	Saturday, December 28
Wednesday, January 1	Saturday, January 4

Remember to have all garbage bags and recycling bins to the curb by 7:00 a.m. on your collection day. When severe weather hits this winter, collection may be delayed or cancelled. Monitor local news, visit www.wasteline.ca or download the wasteline app to receive service alerts.

LOCATED IN WOODSTOCK?

Please visit www.cityofwoodstock.ca for adjusted collection dates over the holidays.



DON'T LET YOUR HOLIDAYS GO TO WASTE

1. Remove all tape, plastic film, twist ties and other decorative objects before recycling cardboard.
2. Flatten and bundle cardboard boxes no larger than 75 x 75 x 20 centimetres.
3. Recycle wrapping paper, except foil-based paper.
4. Remove all ribbons and bows. Save and reuse for next year where possible.
5. Bulky Styrofoam can be dropped off at the Oxford County Waste Management Facility, Tillsonburg Transfer Station and Woodstock EnviroDepot.

HOLIDAY HOURS WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**CLOSED: Wednesday, December 25, 2024
Thursday, December 26, 2024
Wednesday, January 1, 2025**

2025 TIPPING FEES

Please refer to the Fees and Charges By-law for 2025 pricing details at oxfordcounty.ca.



Remember those extra layers of protection from respiratory illness this holiday season

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

thewtgazette@gmail.com

The wintry weather has now arrived and so, too, has influenza (the flu).

Huron Perth Public Health (HPPH) has received notice of the first lab-confirmed influenza case for the 2024-2025 season in Huron and Perth.

Additionally, COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and Mycoplasma pneumoniae continue to circulate in Huron and Perth counties. HPPH urges residents to protect themselves and others from illness, especially during the holidays when more group gatherings are held.

"Everyone has a role to play to reduce the spread of respiratory illness," said Huron-Perth medical officer of health Dr. Miriam Klassen in a press release. "Using

multiple layers of protection will reduce your risk of spreading or developing respiratory illnesses, including those caused by M. pneumoniae and other pathogens such as influenza, SARS-CoV-2 and RSV."

Respiratory illness is spread from respiratory droplets that come out of the nose and mouth when someone coughs, sneezes, breathes or talks. Close contact with someone who is sick, or touching a surface or object with a virus or bacteria on it, then touching one's mouth, nose or eyes, increases a person's risk of illness.

The following measures can help protect us and others from respiratory illness this season:

- Wash or sanitize hands often
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your arm (not your hands) or with a tissue
- Wear a mask in indoor public settings or in crowded spaces

- Practice physical distancing
- Spend time outdoors or in well-ventilated indoor spaces when possible
- Stay home when sick, and do not go out in public until symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours (48 hours for nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea). Wear a mask for 10 days following the onset of illness to prevent further spread. In addition, for 10 days following the onset of illness, avoid visiting people at higher risk of severe illness such as those in long-term care or hospital.
- Get vaccines recommended for age and health status, including seasonal influenza and COVID-19 vaccines
- Create a plan with a health-care provider to access antiviral medications for those with chronic health conditions that present a higher risk for

complications and hospitalization.

- Seek medical care if worrisome, new symptoms develop such as wheezing or difficulty breathing, or if symptoms are severe, persistent, or worsening despite treatment.

Common seasonal respiratory viruses may not require medical assessment or specific treatments like antibiotics. However, those with pre-existing chronic health conditions may be at higher risk of more severe disease. Seek medical care if an adult or child has severe, persistent, or worsening symptoms, especially if they might be at higher risk of developing severe disease.

For more information, call Huron Perth Public Health at 1-888-221-2133, visit www.hpph.ca, or follow HPPH on Facebook and X.

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HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

We have been honoured to bring you the local news that matters most to you throughout the past year!

To allow our team, including our dedicated deliverers, to spend Christmas and Boxing Day with their families, **there will be no newspaper published on December 26.**

Please look forward to our special **Year in Review** feature on **January 2**, highlighting the remarkable moments our community shared in 2024.

Regular publication will resume on January 9.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

...Tis The Season The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Christmas/Holiday Edition

DECEMBER 19TH

Support Your Local Newspaper AND Local Charities

**For Any Christmas or Holiday themed ads
booked in our December 19th issue,
the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette will donate**

10% of ad proceeds

**to the Wilmot Family Resource and
TAP (Tavistock Assistance Program)**

Deadline: Friday, December 13th at noon

**To book your Christmas message contact:
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Wendy Lamond 519-655-2341 wendylamond74@gmail.com**



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Ontario 

Stratford-Perth Archives launches new, searchable newspaper database

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Stratford-Perth Archives is making it easier for researchers to access Perth County and Stratford newspapers of the past.

Earlier this year, the archives launched a new newspaper database via the OurDigitalWorld website. The website is a discovery portal that brings together content from archives and libraries across the province providing free online public access to past issues of local newspapers. Not only are the newspapers available for viewing, but each issue is keyword searchable making it easy to locate specific content.

“I pioneered the project,” said assistant archivist Jennifer Georgiu. “I started at the archives in June 2021 and in that year, I proposed to (archives manager) Betty Jo (Belton) to create a database where we could scan newspapers just for preservation. Then I spent some time scanning newspapers from both microfilm and physical copies trying to figure out how we could manage both.”

While some papers from Perth County and Stratford’s past were preserved on microfilm, others like the long-defunct Stratford Mirror and Mitchell Times were only preserved in hard copy, making it more important to ensure their preservation and protect them from degradation through further handling.

“With all that in mind, I came up with a newspaper-scanning manual. From there, for the last three years in the summertime for two months, we’ve had two summer students every year helping us scan, and then I would also scan newspapers too and help train and assist them,” Georgiu said.

In total, Georgiu and the summer students have scanned roughly 8,600 editions and counting of 18 different local newspapers.

All pre-1950 issues scanned so far are available for free at www.vitacollections.ca/s-pacollections/search. Post-1949 issues scanned so far are available to browse and search in the same way via public computers in the archives’ reading room. Recent issues of the Listowel Banner,

Mitchell Advocate, Stratford Beacon Herald, Stratford Gazette and Stratford Times are available as well but only on public computers in the archives’ reading room.

Other newspapers that have been scanned include:

- Atwood Bee
- Canadian Colonist (for the local German community)
- County of Perth Electioneering Monitor
- County of Perth Herald
- Listowel Standard
- Milverton Sun
- Monkton Times
- Stratford Advertiser
- Stratford Examiner
- Stratford Times (late 1800’s)
- Stratford Weekly Herald

In the first six weeks since the database launched, there have been over 38,000 views of the Perth County database by users from across North America and from as far away as Norway and New Zealand.

“Everything is on Google, so people want a searchable database to look at material,” Georgiu said. “... This really opens the doors for researchers because you can search not only at the archives but from the comfort of your own home.”

“It just makes accessing those newspapers easier for everybody,” Belton added. “It genuinely makes them accessible for someone who might have an issue with reading microfilm or reading the physical copies, so it has made them much better as research sources. Also, from an archival perspective, the original newspapers that have never been microfilmed ... are quite fragile. They’re printed on wood-pulp paper, so we wanted to make sure that some of these papers from the 1920s, ‘30s ... we wanted to make sure we’re capturing those to preserve the original so we don’t have to send the originals out to be restored and to make sure we have that digital copy saved.”

Belton and Georgiu said the Stratford-Perth Archives is grateful to the Perth County branch of Ontario Ancestors, which provided \$10,000 in seed money to make this project possible.

Gazette Puzzles

WINTER FAMILY FUN

Q	X	J	G	W	S	E	V	R	A	C	S	N	R	A	C	U	O	R	Y
U	W	F	Z	C	O	D	R	W	I	D	S	N	O	W	S	H	O	E	S
T	Y	D	A	S	X	B	I	H	K	J	Z	Q	B	I	R	K	T	T	H
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Cabin
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How our cat started watching *How I Met Your Mother*

FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

By Stewart Grant



Kevin, our cat, turned six this year. I just looked it up on the internet and learned that this age means he's roughly the equivalent of a 40-year-old human. Ah, it all makes sense now!

I know what I was like when I turned 40. I thought, using probable mortality tables, it's half over. I thought about my life and all the things that I wanted to do. My version of such a mid-life crisis involved buying a fitness studio and a newspaper.

It seems that Kevin, too, has been thinking about his life. He's been figuring things out this year.

Though he hasn't gotten a job

or started driving a car, he's becoming more aware of things. He's figuring out new cause-and-effect relationships.

In October, Laurie and I, as we often do, began packing our suitcases for a vacation. This involves spreading the red-coloured cases out on the bed and meticulously rolling clothes and placing them into the enclosure. Once done, the suitcases are hauled downstairs and eventually loaded into the car.

The night before we left on this journey, Kevin did something new. He laid down on our bed instead of his usual spot on the couch in the living room. He

wanted to sleep with us, perhaps in the hopes that we wouldn't leave on our trip. He peacefully slept at my feet the whole night, something that never happens.

While we were away, our daughter, Sydney, was holding down the fort and she called us shortly after we arrived in South America. Kevin had thrown up several times, and he wasn't eating his food. He missed us so much that he had made himself sick. She took him to the vet just to be sure it wasn't something else, but yes, poor Kevin was missing us. It was bothering him more than he'd ever indicated before.

After a few days, Kevin felt better, but I'm sure he was pleased when we returned. He still doesn't like to cuddle, but he likes to sit close by.

One day last month, I was sitting in the living room wondering what to watch. Kevin was at his resting place on the top of the sofa. For some reason unbeknownst to me, I typed "cat tv" into the YouTube search, and what I found was a game-changer for Kevin. We watched a few

minutes of the first video that came up. A camera had been set up beside a tree stump with seeds laid on top, and across the screen were the sights and sounds of active nature as birds and squirrels frolicked.

Kevin, who had ignored our living room television for most of his life, was suddenly transfixed! He sat on the edge of the ottoman, his head moving left to right, up and down, following the action. He moved around the room, climbing different furniture and even looked behind the TV as he wondered, "How can I get those birds?"

We don't have our TV on that much at home, but we often call up an episode of *How I Met Your Mother* while we eat dinner. For those who haven't seen it, it's kind of like *Friends* but edgier, and in my opinion, much funnier.

Kevin missed the first couple seasons, but lately he's been sitting there, at the edge of ottoman, intently following Ted Mosby's search for love and wondering when we finally get to meet the



Kevin the television-watching cat. Photo by Stewart Grant

mother... and shouldn't it be Robin Scherbatsky?

Well, that's probably not it. Kevin has figured out that if he is patient, there's a chance we might put on some Cat TV afterwards.

It seems that whether you are a 40-year-old human or a six-year-old cat, it's important to find new and stimulating interests.

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Chemical-free candles courtesy of busy bees

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



Holiday entertaining is here and candles symbolize celebrations, providing ambience, quiet tranquil moments and even emergency lighting.

Conventional candles compromise health. Unfortunately, paraffin or a paraffin-blend of wax is the standard go-to ingredient used by the majority of brands. Paraffin is an inexpensive biproduct of the petroleum industry and often paired with scary synthetic scents and colours.

Once lit, toluene, benzene, formaldehyde and a laundry list of chemicals can cause headaches,

intensify asthma and even link to cancer. Lead wicks are standard and not healthy. The sparkly, eye-catching, bright-coloured, cutesy birthday cake candle may be a lovely hostess gift but loved ones deserve natural candles that support health, not hinder it.

Holistically support yourself, family and friends with clean air. Go green! Bring back natural artisan candles. Busy bees are more than honey makers. Visiting Andre and Kasia Bartczak's Apiary in New Hamburg was a learning extravaganza for this holistic nutritionist. Honey is simply

divine as a natural sweetener, but to my surprise, Andre also handcrafts candles.

They are simple yet stunning. Riverside Bee Yard beeswax candles are 100 per-cent natural and rustic with a cottage feeling. They have a subtle, natural scent and are hypoallergenic. They are a safer choice for people suffering from allergies, asthma and other respiratory ailments. Bees wax is a cleaner burn and biodegradable and eco-friendly, not harming the environment. The candles are stand-alone pillars, and eliminating the glass or tin vessels is another win for the already overflowing landfills worldwide.

The candle-making process is a series of slow and tedious steps, but it was quite exciting to watch live and in person. I encourage parents and teachers to arrange a visit for a private tour of the apiary. Candle making begins by collecting the beeswax from the hive frames followed by a purifying process involving melting the wax



Riverside Bee Yard beeswax candles are a safe alternative to mass-produced, chemical-laden candles. Photos by Mercedes Kay Gold

three separate times.

Next, the 250-gram mold is prepped, wick cut and then poured into desired molds. After six hours, ta-da, the wax has finally hardened. The only step remaining is cleaning and dipping the wick into the melted beeswax. From beehive beginnings, the entire process takes about 11 hours for the prettiest pillar this writer proudly burns on her coffee table.

Candles set the mood, ignite romance and help us wind down. Eliminating fluorescent lighting

is never a bad thing. Give the gift of clean candles by Riverside Bee Yard this holiday season. Shop online or in person at the apiary located at 1193 Perth St., New Hamburg.

Riverside Bee Yard can also be found at Pharmasave in New Hamburg, Wild Hog in Perth East, Euromax in Milton and Cygnet Café in Toronto. They can also be found in Kitchener at Glogowski Euro Food, Onkar and Central Fresh Market.



Blocks of beeswax waiting to be turned into candles at Riverside Bee Yard in New Hamburg.

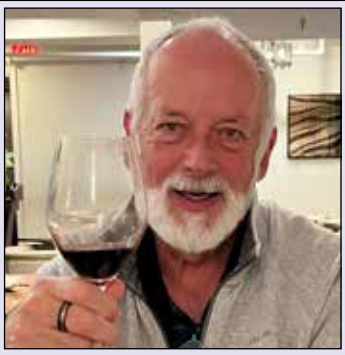


The candle-making process at Riverside Bee Yard in New Hamburg is fascinating.

Unique stories and art at Belleville's Victorian mansion

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



It was not my finest hour. When I first met Anna Fraiberg of the Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board, I waxed eloquent about how much I like Prince Edward County (PEC) and how much I would like to visit the area as a first stop on our road trip to eastern Canada.

Fraiberg listened patiently for several minutes and then said, "I think I should explain that we don't represent Prince Edward County."

Rats. I swallowed hard, thought for a moment and said, "I'm sorry. Tell me what you do represent."

Fraiberg was more than gracious. She acknowledged their neighbouring area, PEC, is a terrific destination, but then suggested her region is also pretty special, though less known. In fact, I have since learned that the Bay of Quinte website starts with the low-key admission, "You might know us as a mid-way stop on road trips between Toronto and Montreal."

Fraiberg wondered if I was still interested in spending a few days in Bay of Quinte, given the misunderstanding. I told her I would be thrilled to explore a region that was still under the radar, and our conversation led to three terrific days in Belleville, Quinte West, Trenton, Brighton and Napanee.

I wrote a number of weeks ago about the really fine National Air Force Museum of Canada in Trenton. It is a must-see destination, but there is much more in Bay of Quinte. It's a perfect, multi-day destination, easily reached from southwestern Ontario.

One of our favourite stops was at the Glanmore National Historic Site, an 1883 Victorian mansion that has been a museum since the 1970s. It was designated a National Historic Site in 1971.

I know what you're thinking; there are a lot of Victorian era homes in Ontario that have been converted into museums. But Glanmore is unique, quirky and very interesting. It's also inexpensive – adult admission is \$8,

students and seniors are \$6.50 – and open year-round except Mondays (afternoons only from September to May). This time of year, it is lavishly decorated for the season, an added perk for cold-weather visitors.

What I especially enjoyed during our tour, led by longtime staff member Melissa Wakeling, were the unique exhibitions and features of the museum, quite different from anything I have seen in other sites.

First, much of the furniture and furnishings are original to the home, which was built for \$7,000 in 1883 by wealthy banker John Philpott Curran Phillips and Harriet Dougall Phillips. Harriet Phillips was an artist of some repute, and romantic portraits she created still hang in the house.

The home remained in the family, more or less, until it became a museum 90 years later. I say, "more or less in the family" because the house passed to Jessie Patterson-Phillips, a young woman who was informally adopted by the Phillips. She was the daughter of a local labourer, but came to be part of the Phillips family, and became their heir, though no legal adoption ever took place.

The home remained in the family for four generations.

But Glanmore is home not only to authentic furnishings and art from the four families, but also to the extensive Couldery Collection. Bertram and Cecilia Couldery, who lived in England, visited Belleville in the 1880s and liked the community so much they bought a second home here. Eventually, their eclectic collection of arts and crafts was donated to Belleville, brought there from England and eventually given a home at Glanmore.

The rather unusual highlights of the collection are 42 animal paintings by Horatio H. Couldery. Horatio Couldery, who was Bertram Couldery's brother, was a well-known British artist who specialized in painting animals. His works add a unique ambience to the elaborately fur-

nished rooms at Glanmore.

Though Glanmore is a National Historic Site, the museum is also committed to local history and has an extensive collection of Bay of Quinte region artifacts, ranging from clothing to tools to toys. Wakeling – who has lost none of her passion for Glanmore in her 24 years there – led us through temporary exhibits of local history and showed us the well-stocked kids' activity area in the basement of the house.

Children are welcome and families will be given scavenger-hunt cards that encourage kids to spot specific items on display. Kids and adults will also enjoy the appearances of a small paper doll called "Flattie Hattie," a permanent resident in the house.

If you happen to be a fan of Murdoch Mysteries, you have already paid brief visits to Glanmore. The home was featured in the third and 17th seasons.

But trust me, seeing glimpses on TV will not give you the unique and highly enjoyable experience you will get as you explore Glanmore, marvelling at the Victoria opulence and discussing the plethora of animal paintings with your pet-loving friends.

For more information, visit the really excellent website at www.glanmore.ca.

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



A whimsical portrait done by original Glanmore owner Harriet Dougall Phillips.



Glanmore Museum in Belleville. All photos by Paul Knowles



The billiards room at Glanmore. One can spot Flattie Hattie poised precariously in the left-hand centre pocket of the billiards table.



The opulently furnished living room at Glanmore.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - DECEMBER 2024/ JANUARY 2025

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

21st Annual Christmas Tyme in
Wellesley
6:45 p.m.
Details on page 7

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

A Jazzy Christmas Concert with Jack
and Kyla
7 p.m.
Pay What You Can - All are welcome
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

Wilmot Council meeting
7-11 p.m.
Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road West Baden

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting
7:00 p.m.
Council Chambers
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Council chambers
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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

Community Christmas Dinner for
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12 noon
Email info@wilmotfamilyresourcecentre.ca
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DECEMBER 26, 2024



JANUARY 1, 2025

TUESDAY, JANUARY 7

Wilmot Council budget meeting
7-9 p.m.
Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road West Baden

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 15

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12:00 p.m.
Please register by Jan 10 by calling 519-
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Wellesley Recreation Complex, 1401
Queen's Bush Rd., Wellesley

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- The Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:
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 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
 - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - \$35 + hst

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PRAYER TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN (NEVER KNOWN TO FAIL)

Oh, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel fruitful vine, splendor of Heaven, Blessed mother of the Son of God, Immaculate virgin, assist me in my necessities. Oh star of the sea help and show me herein You are my mother. Oh, Holy Mary Mother of God Queen of Heaven and Earth, I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to secure me in my necessity (make requests), there are none that can withstand your power. Oh Mary conceived and without sin pray for us who have recourse to thee Holy Mary, I place card in your hands (three times). Say this prayer for three consecutive days you must publish for it to be granted
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Weekly Quiz Answers

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Twelve drummers drumming | 5. 1997 |
| 2. Children | 6. Dormancy |
| 3. St. Stephen's Day | 7. Polar Bear |
| 4. Norway | 8. Fifteen |
| | 9. Igloo |
| | 10. Plum Blossom |

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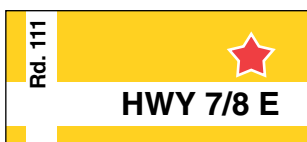
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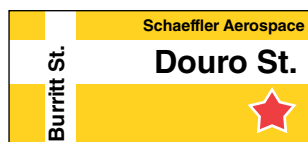
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