

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

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Area school boards cut funding for school bus monitors

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

The 2026-27 school year is fast approaching, and many elementary and secondary students across the region will be back on their buses to get to and from their learning institutions. However, some of the most vulnerable kids will be without school bus monitors, a move not sitting well with those formerly in the role.

Heather Sheridan was a bus driver for three years before transitioning to a monitor role, where she spent eight years sitting with special-needs children to ensure they remained safe and properly buckled in. She and her fellow Teamsters members were informed about a month ago that the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) and the London District Catholic School Board (LDCSB) would no longer be hiring them. She is now concerned about the safety of the kids she and her coworkers served.

"It is absolutely beyond dangerous. Part of our job is to ensure the kids stay belted in, and we work very hard to do so. Last year we had a child undo her seatbelt and within 10 seconds was at the emergency door with her hand on the handle."

Several monitors and supporters held a rally and march in Woodstock last Thursday to bring awareness to their cause. The monitors are members of Teamsters Local Union 879 who said approximately 67 school bus monitors in the area are expected to lose their jobs this summer.

"School bus monitors help ensure the safe transportation of our most precious cargo: our children. Most are assigned to buses serving special education students, while others work on regular routes where special education students ride alongside other children," said a union statement.

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(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

MOVIE NIGHT & CELEBRATION

Fernanda encouraged her kids to participate in the crafts on offer at Woodstock's Museum Square during the city's final movie night and 125th anniversary celebration. More on page 23.

CAMI employees sign new agreement as speculation swirls around plant's future

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

There is a glimmer of hope for employees of the former CAMI plant in Ingersoll.

General Motors ended production of the Bright-Drop electric delivery van at the facility on October 21, 2025. It had already suspended production in May 2025. Recently, speculation has surfaced that GM is being considered for a Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) contract to build light-armoured vehicles, a contract that could see CAMI workers back on the job if it

comes to fruition.

The reason was weak, slower-than-expected demand for electric delivery vans and excess inventory. GM also cited a tougher regulatory environment and the loss of U.S. EV tax credits.

Unifor Local 88 President Mark Gee said it was a good deal for his members.

"They have given us their intent not to neither sell nor close the plant throughout the length of the collective agreement. They have extended income security benefits for our members until May 1, 2028, or your recall date, whichever comes sooner."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



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Trade war with the United States affecting any potential new product

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Gee added employees have also been given letters of commitment for first consideration if GM is awarded a CAF contract.

The ratification number was exceptionally high, at 96.5 per cent for production workers, while those in the skilled trades approved it with a whopping 98.5 per cent.

"Pretty overwhelming support. It is a bit of a sigh of relief right now for our members, with the income security and the stuff that comes with it, but everybody is hopeful and wants to get back to work," he explained.

One issue not in the corner of GM or Unifor is the ongoing trade dispute with our neighbours to the south. Gee said the company made it very clear throughout bargaining that they were unwilling to announce any major product or major investment into the plant.

"A large part of that is because of everything happening with the US and the trade dispute going on right now. It makes it very challenging to invest money when things change day to day. We need to keep pushing and having those conversations with elected officials and GM so we can get our people back to work."

Gee said he will soon meet with Oxford MP Arpan Khanna and added any other politician he has talked to has been supportive of getting his members back

to work as soon as possible. He added everyone will win should production resume at CAMI.

"This plant is huge for the economy, huge for the town of Ingersoll and huge for Oxford in general. There are so many spinoff jobs that come with it, and we'd like to see them get back to work as well."

General Motors released a statement following the contract's ratification.

"With the ratification of new three-year collective agreements with Unifor, we have reached an outcome that supports our employees, strengthens our manufacturing operations and provides a solid foundation for GM's future in Canada."

It added reaching an agreement required collaboration and a shared focus on the future.

"The new agreements include meaningful improvements to wages, benefits and job security, and recognize the valuable contributions of our represented employees while helping sustain good-paying jobs that have long been a cornerstone of Canada's automotive industry."

GM also said its unionized employees play a critical role in GM Canada's success.

"Their skill, dedication and commitment to quality help ensure the vehicles we build continue to earn the trust of customers across North America."

Echo

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Parents and former employees say decision puts special-needs students at risk

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

It added monitors are trained to professionally de-escalate crises on buses, including situations where students in distress are screaming or banging their heads against windows, allowing drivers to keep their eyes on the road. Without monitors, drivers are left to handle these situations alone.

"School bus drivers and monitors have been beaten, bitten, pushed, scratched and injured on the job. In one case, a student opened the emergency exit while the bus was hauling kids. In another case, a student in crisis tore flesh from a monitor. Imagine a driver going 80 km/h having to deal with an emergency like that alone," said John McCann, President of Teamsters Local Union 879.

The monitors earn \$18.60 an hour on split shifts and have no paid days off. They are employed by Voyago, a transportation provider serving both school boards.

"These school boards mismanaged their budgets for years, and now low-wage workers and vulnerable kids are being made to pay the price. The boards of education are jeopardizing the safety of our children, and that is unacceptable," added McCann.

Sheridan explained she and her fellow monitors don't do their job for the money.

"We do this because we love the kids. We build a bond with them and their families. If we see these kids out and about, they come running and give us a big hug. We are a lifesaver for some of these parents."

She added some parents have told her they will no longer send their children on a bus without a monitor.

"These parents need this break. They are on 24/7."

Sheridan also said parents have not been directly informed about the cuts, but she wants to get the word out to as many of them as possible. The Echo reached out to the TVDSB last week but still had

not received a response as of press time. We tried the LDCSB on Tuesday morning, but it also hasn't replied.

Danielle Blake lives with her family, including two children with special needs, just outside Woodstock and heard the news second-hand. Her children attend TVDSB schools.

"I found out through our bus monitor. We have a very good relationship with him and he reached out to me over text messages. I contacted the school, and they said it was the bus company who said it was all the school board."

Blake then called her school superintendent and was able to get an answer.

"She told me she would be very honest with me and told me there are major (spending) cuts, there's no funding for bus monitors and it probably isn't going to be happening."

She explained one of her children is severely autistic while another is mildly autistic.

"Our more severe son, historically, was not allowed to ride the bus unless a monitor was there, so there have been times he can't ride the bus with his siblings, and we would need to pick him up. He goes to another school now that has transit, but I worry about those kids who aren't allowed to use the bus without a monitor. What's happening with them?"

Blake said the cost of employing monitors amounts to "peanuts" for the board, making the decision to cut the positions even harder to understand.

"I would pay (my monitor) out of my pocket. He is that valuable to the wellbeing of the kids on the bus in the kindest way. We have such a positive reaction to him on there. The bus is going to show up on Sept. 8, and these parents have no idea there are no monitors."

A rally in support of reinstating the monitors is being held on Saturday, Aug. 29 at Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman's office at 1 p.m.



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

Bus monitors, parents and other supporters turned out last Thursday in Woodstock for a rally and march in support of reinstating the monitors.

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A critique of the race for deputy mayor of Woodstock

As we all know, Monday, 26 October 2026 is municipal Election Day, just under seven weeks away, and we all have a civic duty to vote.

If you do not vote, you should not complain.

As I have written before, this election is a crucial watershed election. Woodstock taxpayers are dealing with a huge tax bill which has increased substantially over the past six to eight years.

And this council, as well as previous councils, have failed to address Woodstock's burgeoning social problems, choosing instead making specious grants and a downtown "revitalization" that really was not needed.

This column I am dedicating to the race for Deputy Mayor/County Councillor.

While I have stated previously that Woodstock Council needs fresh blood throughout, this particular race may be the exception to that.

There are three candidates: incumbent City/Councillor Deb Tait; incumbent City/Councillor Bernia Martin; and challenger Jacob Erb.

Mr. Erb is an unknown quantity, a successful local business owner. However, experience in being successful in

business does not necessarily equate with being efficacious in government at any level.

A candidate for a position that may well require them to step into the Mayor's Chair at a moment's notice requires that person to not only know how a parliamentary system operates, knowledge of proper Council policies, processes, a comprehension of the Municipal Act and a very good knowledge of Roberts' Rule of Parliamentary Procedure.

I can tell you from personal and professional experience that getting an understanding and knowledge of Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure is not something you can learn just by reading a book over a few nights. It takes years.

If a person is thrust into a situation without even rudimentary comprehension of the above, it would quickly degenerate into a disaster.

While I laud Mr. Erb's desire to serve and work to get Woodstock out of its "self-inflicted" mess, being Deputy Mayor/County Councillor is not an "earn while you learn" program.

Ms. Martin is a one-term County Councillor who founded a successful grocery store. Again, proficiency in being prosperous in business does not automatically parallel with being effective in government at any point.

Ms. Martin strikes me as one who is using her experience at the municipal level as a "springboard" for another level of government. We know that Ms. Martin was the Liberal candidate in the last provincial election.

Now, whether Ms. Martin was just the Liberal's "sacrificial lamb" or is serious about advancing herself politically, I do not know. But in life as well as politics, perception can be taken for reality.

Woodstock needs a strong "leader in waiting" as Deputy Mayor/County Councillor, someone who is ready to step in and fill a void when called upon, not someone who is eyeing a larger prize.

Woodstock needs a Deputy Mayor who is committed to the cause and ready to act when the need arises.

Ms. Tait is a long-serving County Councillor who knows the City well, possesses the requisite expertise in how a parliamentary system operates, the know-how of proper policies, processes, and a very good knowledge of Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

Ms. Tait, if need be, would be the right choice to assume, if necessary, the Mayor's Chair.

Allison Gowling

A concerned Woodstock resident

Lots of enthusiasm for Oxford Reads Gala about Claire Cameron's 'How to Survive a Bear Attack'

EMILY STEWART

Echo Correspondent

The Oxford Reads Gala is more than a month away and there's already plenty of enthusiasm.

The Oxford County Library and the Woodstock Public Library will hold the annual event at Woodstock Collegiate Institute on Oct. 30 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The Oxford Reads Gala will feature a conversation between outgoing Oxford County Warden Marcus Ryan and Claire Cameron, the author of the featured Oxford Reads Book *How to Survive a Bear Attack*, audience Q and A, and a book signing.

"Our community is so excited about this book and we're really, really excited to hear her story," said Sarah Adam, systems librarian.

She is also looking forward to Ryan hosting the discussion.

"He's going to bring some incredible energy to the gala. He's read the book. He absolutely loved it. He anecdotally told me this has reinvigorated his love of reading," she said.

The Oxford Reads program is in its ninth year, with the featured title first selected by a staff committee made up of members from both libraries. The committee reviews book nominations submitted by library staff before short-listing five titles. Library patrons and Oxford County residents then vote to select the winning book.

"It's kind of a collaborative community process," Adam said.

How to Survive a Bear Attack explores Cameron's obsession with bear attacks that happened in Northern Ontario as well as her own cancer journey and the parallels between the two.

"There's something about her voice in the book that I

think really connects with readers. It's a very accessible book. From the start, you are pulled right into her story, and her voice is so clear," Adam said.

Leading up to the gala, Oxford Reads will host an array of events related to the book throughout the fall, including nature hikes in Pittock Park, Hodges Pond Trail, and Trillium Woods, book club meetings at the Woodstock Public Library and Ingersoll's Commonplace Books, and presentations from wildlife photographer Terry Parker. There will also be a chance to hear from bear attack survivor Laura Darby, who is mentioned in *How to Survive A Bear Attack*, in a virtual meeting.

The Oxford Reads programming was just announced a week ago, and already some events are filling up with a waitlist.

"Every year we have such great programming that ties the book into the themes that we hope resonate with our community, so things that they're already dealing with daily or thinking about daily," Adam said. "We're really hoping to weave the threads of the book into their life and through this programming. This year, I really think we hit the nail on the head."

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Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

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Lots of enthusiasm for Oxford Reads Gala about Claire Cameron's 'How to Survive a Bear Attack'

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The Oxford Reads Gala is free to attend, but reservations can be made online via Eventbrite to secure a spot. Visit <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/oxford-reads-gala-featuring-author-claire-cameron-tickets>

to reserve a ticket.

To place a hold on a copy of How to Survive a Bear Attack before the Oxford Reads Gala and to learn more information online, visit <https://www.oxfordreads.ca>.



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Oxford Road 2 (Dundas Street) improvements in Thamesford

Oxford County will begin work on improvements along Oxford Road 2 (Dundas Street) in Thamesford to accommodate increasing traffic volumes, support continued growth in Thamesford, and improve safety for all road users.

Pre-construction meeting

**SEPT
24**

Thursday, September 24, 2026
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Construction is expected to begin the week of September 28, 2026, and is expected to continue through to November 2026. Please note that construction schedules are weather dependent and subject to change based on site conditions, contractor availability and other operational demands.

Pre-construction meeting

Residents, businesses and community members are invited to attend a drop-in pre-construction meeting to learn the construction timeline, plans for managing traffic and property access in the construction area, and project contacts. Final drawings will be on display and the project team will be available to answer questions.

 **Thursday, September 24, 2026 | Drop-in 5:00 – 7:00 p.m.**

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Health unit asking the public to know their drinking risk

Online tools help residents understand the benefits of cutting back

LEE GRIFFI
Editor

Southwestern Public Health is encouraging residents to reflect on their drinking habits and explore new, easy-to-use online tools that can show the real impact alcohol can have on their health.

Local survey data shows weekly alcohol use can range widely, from none to seven or more drinks, and people generally do not always recognize how their habits add up over time.

In 2023, nearly 21.7 per cent of residents in Oxford and Elgin-St. Thomas who drink reported consuming an average of seven or more drinks per week - well above the recommended upper threshold of high-risk to health outlined in Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health.

"Alcohol is generally normalized in our society, and the health effects of alcohol are often time-delayed over many years," says Dr. Ninh Tran, Medical Officer of Health at Southwestern Public Health. "What's empowering is that even small behaviour changes - such as cutting back by one drink

per week or understanding how much alcohol is in a single drink - can make a meaningful difference to your health."

He added the goal of the campaign is to promote a pair of evidence-based online resources that have recently become available.

Developed by the University of Victoria, KnowAlcohol.ca is an online resource that focuses on alcohol risks through personalized insights, such as how drinking may affect their risk of chronic disease, sleep, mental well-being, and overall quality of life. It also features an alcohol calculator that simplifies what qualifies as a standard drink, as serving sizes vary widely between beer, wine, and spirits.

RethinkYourDrinking.ca is another online resource for individuals seeking practical strategies to cut back on alcohol.

While many recent surveys and studies show drinking is on the decline in Canada, Dr. Tran said alcohol abuse remains a significant problem.

"Any amount of reduction in consumption will have benefits, whether they are health benefits or reducing the risk of

chronic diseases such as cancer. There are also financial benefits as well as social and emotional advantages."

New national guidelines suggest people quit drinking altogether to reduce health risks to zero, while one to two drinks per week represents a low risk, three to six is moderate while seven-plus drinks each week raises the risk of developing health issues.

Dr. Tran added the health unit wants to be practical and realistic when it comes to area residents cutting back on booze.

"We aren't people to make dramatic changes in their habits which is why we pointed out these two evidence-based tools. For example, if you go to KnowAlcohol.ca, type in your age, sex and the amount of alcohol you are currently drinking. If you were to slightly reduce your intake to whatever goal you have, you would be able to see the health and financial benefits you might get."

He added RethinkYourDrinking.ca has practical tips such as drinking more fluid while consuming alcohol, spacing your drinks out, or dedicating some alcohol-free

days.

"The small steps people are willing to do can have significant benefits. Any time you can cut back together with your family or friends, that can help with direct support and encouraging others to make small but meaningful changes."

Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health highlights that less is better when it comes to alcohol. Cutting back, even slightly, can lead to measurable benefits, including better sleep and improved mood, increased focus and energy, lower risk of cancers and other chronic diseases, financial benefits, and a stronger sense of control over your health.

"Interactive tools allow individuals to have clear, honest information in accessible formats so they can make informed choices that feel right for them," said Dr. Tran." Whether it's reducing your intake each week, choosing alcohol alternatives, or simply becoming more aware of your habits, every step matters."

To learn more about these online resources, visit www.KnowAlcohol.ca and www.Rethinkyourdrinking.ca.

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SEPTEMBER IS WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH

Changing the Narrative on Suicide

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CANADIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

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Sept. 10 is World Suicide Prevention Day.

To help raise awareness, the Tillsonburg Post is sharing information from a Canadian Mental Health Association 'Preventing Suicide' brochure.

Suicide is a difficult topic to bring up. However, when someone talks about suicide or brings up concern for a loved one, it's important to take action and seek help quickly.

WHAT IS SUICIDE?

Suicide means that someone ends their life on purpose. However, people who die by suicide or attempt suicide may not really want to end their life. Suicide may seem like the only way to deal with difficult feelings or situations.

WHO DOES IT AFFECT?

About 4,000 Canadians die by suicide every year. Suicide is the second-most common cause of death among young people, but men in their 40s and 50s have the highest rate of suicide. While women are three to four times more likely to attempt suicide than men, men are three times more likely to die by suicide than women.

Suicide is a complicated issue. People who die by suicide or attempt suicide usually feel overwhelmed, hopeless, helpless, desperate, and alone. In some rare cases, people who experience psychosis (losing touch with reality) may hear voices that tell them to end their life.

Many different situations and experiences can lead someone to consider suicide. Known risk factors for suicide include:

- A previous suicide attempt.
- Family history of suicidal behaviour.
- A serious physical or mental illness.
- Problems with drugs or alcohol.
- A major loss, such as the death of a loved one, unemployment, or divorce.
- Major life changes or transitions, like those experienced by teenagers and seniors.
- Social isolation or lack of a support network.
- Family violence.
- Access to the means of suicide.

While we often think of suicide in relation to depression, anxiety, and substance use problems, any mental illness may increase the risk of suicide. It is also important to remember that suicide may not be related to any mental illness.

WARNING SIGNS?

Major warning signs include:

Ideation: thinking about suicide.

Substance use: problems with drugs or alcohol.

Purposelessness: feeling like there is no purpose in life or reason for living.

Anxiety: feeling intense anxiety or feeling overwhelmed and unable to cope.

Trapped: feeling trapped or feeling like there is no way out of a situation.

Hopelessness or Helplessness: feeling no hope for the future, feeling like things will never get better.

Withdrawal: avoiding family, friends, or activities.

Anger: feeling unreasonable anger.

Recklessness: engaging in risky or harmful activities normally avoided.

Mood change: a significant change in mood.

HOW CAN I REDUCE RISK?

Though not all suicides can be prevented, some strategies can help reduce the risk. All of these factors are linked to well-being. These strategies include:

- Seeking treatment, care and support for mental health concerns - and building a good relationship with a doctor or other health professionals.
- Building social support networks, such as family, friends, a peer support or support group, or connections with a cultural or faith community.
- Learning good coping skills to deal with problems, and trusting in coping abilities.

When a person receives treatment for a mental illness, it can still take time for thoughts of suicide to become manageable and stop. Good treatment is very important, but it may not immediately eliminate the risk of suicide. It is important to stay connected with a care team, monitor for thoughts of suicide, and seek extra help if needed. Community-based programs that help people manage stress or other daily challenges can also be very helpful.

THOUGHTS OF SUICIDE?

Thoughts of suicide are distressing. It's important to talk about your experiences with your doctor, mental health care team, or any other person you trust. They can help you learn skills to cope and connect you to useful groups or resources. Some people find it helpful to schedule frequent appointments with care providers or request phone support.

Other things that you can do include:

- Calling a crisis telephone support line.
- Connecting with family, friends, or a support group. It can be helpful to talk with others who have experienced thoughts of suicide to learn about their coping strategies.

If you are in crisis and are not sure

what to do, you can always call 9-1-1 or go to your local emergency room.

Some people find a safety plan useful. A safety plan is a list of personal strategies to use if you think you are at risk of hurting or ending your life. You can create a plan on your own, with a loved one, or with your mental health care team.

Your plan may include:

- Activities that calm you or take your mind off your thoughts.
- Your own reasons for living.
- Key people to call if you're worried about your safety.
- Phone numbers for local crisis or suicide prevention help-lines.
- A list of safe places to go if you don't feel safe at home.

HOW CAN I HELP?

If you are concerned about someone else, talk with them. Ask them directly if they are thinking about suicide. Talking about suicide won't give them the idea. If someone is seriously considering suicide, they may be relieved that they can talk about it.

If someone you love says that they're

thinking about ending their life, it's important to ask them if they have a plan. If they have a plan and intend to end their life soon, connect with crisis services or supports right away. Many areas have a crisis, distress, or suicide helpline, but you can always call 9-1-1 if you don't know who to call. Stay with your loved one while you make the call, and don't leave until the crisis line or emergency responders say you can leave.

The two most important things you can do are listen and help them connect with mental health services.

LISTENING

Here are tips for talking with a loved one:

- Find a private place and let your loved one take as much time as they need.
- Take your loved one seriously and listen without judgement - their feelings are very real.
- Keep your word - don't make promises you can't keep or don't intend to keep.
- Tell your loved one that they are important and that you care about them.

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POLICE BRIEFS

Oxford OPP briefs

LEE GRIFFI
Editor

Missing toddler located during major storms

A small child from the Township of Blandford-Blenheim was located safely after being reported missing during a major storm last week in Oxford County. No exact age was provided by police.

On Wednesday, Sept. 2, 2026, at approximately 1 p.m., the toddler was outside playing with family when they went missing.

“Thanks to the prompt call to the Oxford detachment of the OPP, resources were quickly deployed. OPP West Region Emergency Response Unit, including Canine, assisted in the search along with London Search and Rescue

and members of Oxford OPP,” said a police press release.

“At approximately 9 p.m., after hours of searching in adverse weather conditions, the toddler was located.”

No injuries were reported. No further details will be released.

Ingersoll resident faces long list of charges

An individual is facing multiple charges stemming from an intimate partner violence investigation.

OPP officers executed a search warrant at a home and on a vehicle in the town on Aug. 26 after a complaint from a resident.

Police say a 38-year-old has been charged with the following Criminal Code offences:

- Criminal harassment

- Breach of Firearms Regulation-Store firearm or restricted weapon - two Counts
 - Careless storage of firearm, weapon, prohibited device or ammunition
 - Knowledge of unauthorized possession of firearm
 - Possession of a prohibited device or ammunition
 - Possession of prohibited or restricted firearm with ammo
- The accused was held in custody for a bail hearing and subsequently released with conditions.
- “Victims of intimate partner violence are not alone. If you or someone you know needs support, help is available. Please contact the Assaulted Women’s Helpline at 1-866-863-0511 or your nearest police service. If you are in danger, dial 9-1-1,” said police in a statement.



(OPP PHOTO)

Major thunderstorms ripped across Oxford County last Wednesday as a Blandford-Blenheim toddler went missing for nearly eight hours.

Woodstock Police Service briefs

LEE GRIFFI
Editor

Woodstock police make arrests in three vehicle-theft investigations

The Woodstock Police Service has made several arrests and recovered stolen vehicles and property in three separate investigations, including two cases in which officers used drones and the service’s K9 Unit to track suspects.

The investigations come as police continue their work under Project IONIQ, an ongoing initiative targeting vehicle theft and related offences.

Stolen motorcycles recovered

On Aug. 28, members of the WPS Street Crime Unit executed a search warrant at a London address as part of

an investigation into stolen motorcycles.

A 35-year-old man was arrested and charged with theft of a motor vehicle, possession of property obtained by crime, operation while prohibited and failure to comply with a release order. He was held in custody pending a bail hearing.

Police recovered two stolen motorcycles — one reported stolen in Woodstock and the other in London — along with motorcycle parts.

The investigation was led by the service’s auto theft investigator, a specialized position created in response to the growing complexity of vehicle theft and fraud investigations.

Police said the position allows the service to better identify crime trends, develop intelligence, coordinate investigations across jurisdictions and target

those involved in vehicle-related crime.

Drone, K9 used to track suspects

Two other investigations earlier in the month highlighted the role of the service’s drone and K9 capabilities in locating suspects.

On Aug. 21, police were called to a hotel on Norwich Avenue after a man was reportedly seen stealing a generator from the back of a truck.

Surveillance footage showed a man arriving on a motorcycle and taking the generator.

Officers later spotted a motorcycle travelling on Parkinson Road and attempted to stop the driver, who fled.

A police drone was used to track the suspect as he climbed a fence and crossed both the westbound and eastbound lanes of Highway 401 before continuing toward Highway 403 and into nearby fields.

With assistance from the K9 Unit, officers located and arrested the suspect in an agricultural field. Police also recovered a stolen motorcycle.

A 19-year-old Woodstock man was charged with two counts of theft under \$5,000, flight from a peace officer, dangerous operation, failure to comply with a probation order and disobeying a court order. He was held in custody pending a bail hearing.

Three men were arrested three days later following another stolen-vehicle investigation.

In the early morning hours of Aug. 24, an officer spotted a vehicle in a Mill Street parking lot. When officers approached, the driver fled at a high rate of speed.

Police discontinued the pursuit be-

cause of concerns for public safety but continued monitoring the vehicle.

The vehicle was later seen entering the Highway 401 off-ramp and travelling westbound in the eastbound lanes before turning around and heading east. It continued onto highways 403, 53 and 2 before entering a business property and crashing into a ditch.

A police drone spotted three people leaving the vehicle and travelling through a wooded area near the 401. A K9 Unit was deployed to track them.

One man was arrested at about 5:30 a.m., followed by two others at about 6 a.m., with assistance from the drone and K9 Unit.

A 34-year-old Hamilton man and 45-year-old and 39-year-old Brampton men were each charged with possession of property obtained by crime over \$5,000. Police said all three were already subject to release orders or undertakings for various property offences.

All three were held in custody pending bail hearings.

WPS media relations and community service officer Pritpal Thind said the two investigations demonstrate how drones and police dogs can work together to locate suspects in difficult terrain.

“The police drone provides officers with an aerial view of large or difficult-to-access areas and can help locate and monitor individuals from a distance,” Thind said.

“The K9 Unit provides an additional tracking capability once officers have established a last known location.”

Police said Project IONIQ remains ongoing as the service continues to investigate vehicle theft and related offences.

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

My memories from September 11, 2001



STEWART GRANT

Publisher

Long before I was in the newspaper business, I still wrote a lot of things down and kept a journal. Social media was not around yet, but lengthy emails to friends and family were a thing, especially for me living on an island away from home. On Sept. 11, 2001, I was a 27-year-old living in Bermuda and working as a Chartered Accountant for Marsh, an insurance company. My wife Laurie and I were hosting her parents Gary and Marg who were visiting us at our island home, and we were relieved that Hurricane Erin, the first Atlantic hurricane of 2001, had passed by Bermuda on Sept. 9 without incident.

On Sept. 11, 2001, my parents, Murray and June, were back home in St. Marys while my sister Lori was living in Norway where she was working in finance with General Electric.

I wrote them the following email on the

evening of Sept. 11 as I reflected on the horrific events. I just wanted to share this email to take you back 25 years to the thoughts of a regular guy in his 20s living through this when it happened. It's amazing how when I re-type this email all these years later how the feelings come flooding back.

September 11, 2001, 8:45 am Eastern time, 9:45 am Atlantic Time – I was sitting at my desk when Tom White walked by and told me the news – the World Trade Center had been hit by two airplanes. That's where I was when the news came. As my internet was down, I called Laurie at work so I could hear the broadcast from her TV over the phone lines to get more details on this shocking news. Following our talk, the next amazing wave of news came around – the Pentagon had also been hit. We at Marsh gathered in the meeting room where we watched the unbelievable news come in on ABC and CBS. For the balance of the morning, we silently stood and sat in shock as the pictures came across the screen. Then at about 12:00, there was a gathering in the training room where we prayed for world peace and had a moment of silence for the dead – about six or seven people got up and prayed aloud.

This is when I felt saddest, thinking not only of those who died today but also about what this attack may mean on a grander scale.

Like the Challenger explosion in 1986, like the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995, and like the Kennedy assassination in 1963, this unfortunately will forever be a moment captured in time; a moment where everyone knows where they were when it happened.

Somehow though this is scarier than all the other examples above. This was something out of a movie, something surreal – the first half of Independence Day comes to mind. Hopefully this is not a sign of things to come. Hopefully the terrorist actions which are now common in places like Jerusalem have not permanently found their way into our lives. Hopefully we do not travel in fear of being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Hopefully this doesn't start a chain of events which leads us into World War III.

The amazing thing is, although we are living in Bermuda, Canada, and Norway, we will find that none of us are unaffected by this tragedy.

I probably know people that died today. The Marsh headquarters were in the World Trade Center, floors 95 to 100. Last month I met in person a couple people from

the Marsh NY office, including one woman who I've spoken with on 10-15 occasions and gotten to know. I hope she was out of the office today.

The largest companies in the world have offices in the World Trade Center. Marsh, Deloitte & Touche, and Arthur Anderson are just the ones I know for sure. Some 50,000 or so work in the World Trade Center I've been told, so I'm sure we all know someone who knows someone who was

there today.

Once we get over the terrible loss of the people that died, we will be left to deal with the consequences – the emotional impact on the survivors, the impact on the national psyche, and the changes in our lives as a result of this. Travel will definitely be impacted, as we will see increased lines at borders, customs, etc. due to increased searches, questioning, etc. People of certain races are going to be the subject

of constant scrutiny just because of their skin colour – for them it might be very difficult.

Well, I don't know what else to say... I'm probably not thinking clearly anyway. I just wanted to get in touch with my family today and reflect a bit on what has happened. This is not just another news story that captures our interest for awhile, this is very sadly a day in which we have perhaps seen a significant turning point in world history.

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Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

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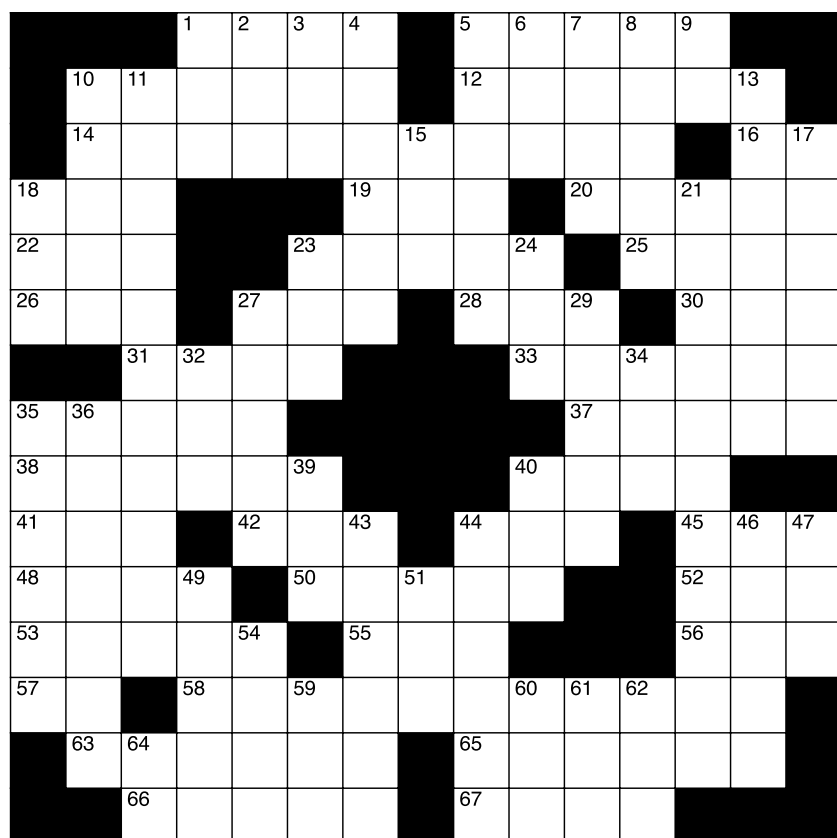
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CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Longtime <i>Vogue</i> editor Wintour | 38. Provided with a quality |
| 5. A Spanish title of respect | 40. Samoan monetary unit |
| 10. A way of looking | 41. Swiss river |
| 12. Properly | 42. Hill (Celtic) |
| 14. Rolled steel | 44. Have already done |
| 16. Not down | 45. ATM company |
| 18. Law degree | 48. Syngman __, Korean president |
| 19. Consume food | 50. Very willing |
| 20. Intermediate ecological stage | 52. Arctic explorers (abbr.) |
| 22. Old world, new | 53. Food listings |
| 23. Dispense justice | 55. Bachelor's place to crash |
| 25. Stiff hair-like structure | 56. Big Blue |
| 26. Ethiopia | 57. Sports magazine |
| 27. Cool! | 58. Relating to a place north of south of the equator |
| 28. Father | 63. Female follower of Bacchus |
| 30. An enthusiastic devotee of sports | 65. A type of laugh |
| 31. Holm oak | 66. Slovenly women |
| 33. Be united | 67. Large jug |
| 35. Rattling breaths | |
| 37. Supermarket chain | |

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Boxing's GOAT | 27. Start over |
| 2. Zero | 29. Administered |
| 3. Midway between north and northeast | 32. Romanian monetary unit |
| 4. Concurred | 34. Unit of liquid capacity |
| 5. Added flavor | 35. Equips with weapons again |
| 6. Amount of time | 36. Disney town |
| 7. Eggs of parasitic insects | 39. Female deer |
| 8. S-shaped moldings | 40. Title of respect |
| 9. Atomic #45 | 43. A place to go rafting |
| 10. __ d'art: small artistic item | 44. A way to conclude |
| 11. A godparent's "kids" | 46. Type of television |
| 13. Nocturnal burrowing lizard | 47. Georgia rockers |
| 15. Hit lightly | 49. Leonhard __, Swiss mathematician |
| 17. Aircrafts | 51. Slang for gun |
| 18. Witness | 54. River in Bosnia and Herzegovina |
| 21. Alluding to something | 59. Bar bill |
| 23. Take to the limit | 60. Small, gray-headed crow |
| 24. Baglike structure in a plant or animal | 61. Frozen water |
| | 62. Norwegian krone |
| | 64. Commercial |

Solution found on page 35



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WESTJET VACATIONS

Woodstock holds flag-raising for Terry Fox

The City of Woodstock proudly honoured the legacy of Terry Fox on Tuesday, Sept. 1, with the annual raising of the Terry Fox flag at Museum Square. The ceremony marked Sept. 1, 1980, the day Fox was forced to suspend his Marathon of Hope just outside Thun-

der Bay. Mayor Jerry Acchione joined Steve Iorio, Woodstock Terry Fox Run Community Organizer, in leading the ceremony before a gathered crowd of residents, supporters, families, and community groups. Before the flag raising, Acchione read an official proclamation

recognizing Terry Fox's extraordinary contributions to Canada and his lasting impact on cancer research. The ceremony served as a heartfelt tribute to a young man who united Canadians in 1980 and helped establish a fundraising legacy that has now generated over \$1

billion for cancer research. Woodstock's connection to Terry Fox remains deeply rooted in local history — Terry spoke at Museum Square on July 16, 1980, during a brief stop in the Friendly City as part of his Marathon of Hope.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Residents, families, and community groups filled Museum Square as Mayor Jerry Acchione and Steve Iorio guided the ceremony.



A united crowd of residents and community groups gathered as Mayor Jerry Acchione and Steve Iorio spoke to those assembled.



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MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE PROFILES

SWOX staffer hoping for a Woodstock council seat

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

Daniel Leduc was born and raised in Woodstock and parents were raised in the area.

"I have a strong agricultural background with my grandparents farming in the Embro area and my other grandfather was a milk tester with the province of Ontario. I attended St. Marys High School and then Fanshawe College for the Civil Engineering Technology Program."

Leduc was also enrolled in many sports growing up in the Friendly City, playing basketball with the Oxford Attack and rep soccer.

"I was also involved with sports in high

school at St. Marys playing basketball, football and track and field. I have been working with SWOX township for a little over five years now, I am currently working as the Chief Building Official and Drainage Superintendent for the township."

He said he is seeking a seat on Woodstock council in order for there to be an educated younger voice at the table who has a strong background in the city and practical experience.

"I am involved with council meetings at South-West Oxford providing recommendations to council for drainage, building and planning issues."

He added his priorities are to have a new multi sport recreation centre, afford-

able housing for young families that are desirable to live in, as well as smart and responsible growth.

"A sports complex is important for our youth because it is vital they stay active, engaged and busy and have the ability to socialize with other kids in day and age where there is too much screen time for children. It hurts me to see people who are born and raised in Woodstock struggle to purchase a first-time home. We need to do whatever we can to allow housing prices to go down and have houses that are affordable and desirable to live in."

While this is Leduc's first time running for an elected position, he has sat in on many South-West Oxford Township council meetings because of his role there.



Daniel Leduc.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Leatherbarrow seeking second term on Woodstock City Council

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

Kate Leatherbarrow was born in Woodstock but grew up picking eggs on a chicken farm in Haldimand County.

"One of the best parts about Woodstock (aside from the people) is living in a smaller urban centre with amenities and having gorgeous agricultural lands surrounding us. Living in Woodstock for the last 13 years, we've grown our family and opened a coffee roasting business. I've been involved with hospitality for over a decade."

Aside from being a busy mom of four, Leatherbarrow said being a councillor is her other full-time job.

"Within my role as a councillor, I also serve on six committees. My hobbies include family time, eating at local establishments, and I am a big music lover."

She explained she is seeking a second term on Woodstock City Council to build

on progress and invest in our future.

"Two particular topics that I consistently hear about are the need for more child care spaces and recreational pressures impacting our community. There are other topics, of course, but these two I mention. Progress has been made, and I'd like to be at the table to continue to advocate for these needs."

She added she has been committed to community engagement over the last four years and has provided Councillor Corner Recap videos that residents follow.

"These can be found on social media, but I am hoping to start uploading them on YouTube as well for extra accessibility. These videos highlight outcomes from council meetings, policies, processes and planning applications, as well as how to connect with city hall."

Leatherbarrow said one of the biggest issues facing the city is aligning the needs for service improvements with the

population increase.

"While the current council (and councils before me) have the great responsibility of balancing projects and service levels through the budget process, Woodstock has several large capital projects on the horizon. Not just next year, but throughout the next term of council, some of which have been identified prior to my term on council."

She added the fate of those projects requires experience, engaging with residents, following the strategic plan, and heavy advocacy to different levels of government for continued partnership.

"Woodstock has felt these growing pains, and the pressure to deliver more ice, more gym space, more transit, and more amenities is abundantly clear. Residents and families are living in a time where everything costs more. The longer we wait, the higher these price tags will go."

Leatherbarrow explained it is important to continue to advance the needs of residents to build a community where everyone feels they belong and has equal opportunity to thrive.

"The city's two largest budget lines are police and fire, critical services, but there are other departments that also need attention to keep up with the demand for service. To name one or two specific projects: North Woodstock Recreational Facility, a third fire hall, and the StreetScape project that started in 2024."

She added identifying projects and budgets as an issue facing the City of Woodstock is important because the community has so much potential ahead.

"Commitment and advancing these projects are a priority of mine. We are the largest urban centre in the region and positioned next to two major commuter corridors. We want the residents of Woodstock to work, play, dine, and stay in the city for their needs."

Leatherbarrow said she is respectful-



Kate Leatherbarrow.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

ly asking residents for their support to serve for a second term because she cares deeply for the community.

"I have consistently come to meetings prepared and been held accountable for all of my votes. I believe in community engagement, and my decision-making process is based on the voices of residents. I work hard and put many hours into this role. I am a team player and have had the good fortune of building relationships with other municipal councillors to "share notes" and see what works best across the province."

She added there are 444 municipalities in Ontario and most, if not all, are facing similar challenges.

"Higher taxes, vulnerable populations, aging facilities, etc. Connecting with municipal staff and elected officials across the region and province has only added knowledge and understanding to my role. It's been an honour of a lifetime to serve the citizens of Woodstock."

Leatherbarrow added anyone can follow her campaign on social media and her website.

"Campaigning in your community is not only a privilege, but it is an excellent way to meet new people and listen to what residents desire. See you on the trail!"

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MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE PROFILES

Lobzun seeking mayoral seat in Ingersoll

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

Tom Lobzun said he has been blessed to call Ingersoll home for more than 40 years.

"For nearly half of that time, I have watched our community work to find its groove again. I believe Ingersoll is ready for its next chapter, and I want to help make it a successful one."

He said throughout his career he has spent decades helping organizations adapt, become self-sustaining, and stay competitive in challenging times.

"I have learned that successful communities need practical leadership, good information, careful planning, and people who are willing to roll up their sleeves and get involved."

Lobzun added his three adult daughters know how much he values community involvement.

"They keep me connected to the priorities and challenges of their generation. I believe that perspective is valuable as we plan Ingersoll's future."

He explained the town has an exciting opportunity in front of it with the \$38 million MURC scheduled for completion in fall 2028.

"Along with that project comes more than \$15 million in anticipated road and utility work. We need to make sure residents understand how we will pay for them and how they fit into our long-term financial plan. We also need to determine the best future for our current arena. We should not still be waiting for this information."

Lobzun said the town can make investments while protecting its financial health and the impact to taxpayers, but it will require open budgeting, good information, and some difficult choices and a different approach to getting upper tier funding.

He also touched on policing and the need for more OPP resources.

"Ingersoll has changed since we had three additional police officers more than a decade ago, including a community sergeant who helped direct OPP resources where they were most needed. I believe we should explore adding at least one officer with responsibility for coordinating resources in our community and, potentially, serving as a youth advocate."

Lobzun said investing in community safety is more than responding to problems. It is about building relationships, supporting young people, and making sure our community has the resources it needs to remain a safe and welcoming place.

He also said planning needs to come back to the coun-

cil table, and elected representatives should be able to have meaningful conversations about planning projects and variances while respecting the professional advice of County planners.

"We have seen long-awaited apartment buildings approved in areas that were not previously zoned for them, while approved sites elsewhere have been unused for years. At the same time, important policies around parking, trails, active transportation, and our secondary plan are viewed as barriers rather than tools for creating the community we want."

Lobzun added the town needs to plan with purpose and welcome good development while making sure it fits Ingersoll and contributes to the community we are building.

"Our neighbours are seeing record housing growth and a wider range of housing choices. Ingersoll can do the same. The MURC lands (Community Campus) have an opportunity to provide the missing housing types and revenue to fund the MURC."

He added the next few budgets will be important ones; with the MURC and other infrastructure already in the capital plan, council will need to carefully examine every department, project, and priority.

"Staff understand what our community needs and where projects can be adjusted or deferred. Council's job is to work with staff, ask the right questions, and make sure residents understand the choices being made. My first budget will be the most open budget in over a decade."

Lobzun said the town also needs to make better use of the talent it already has, develop succession plans, and encourage local hiring and local companies while reducing our reliance on consultants.

"Our volunteers are another tremendous community asset. We should make sure they are properly trained and equipped to contribute. We should make it easier, not harder for those people to get involved."

He added that, in his years leading organizational change and project management, he has learned hands-on leadership and sharing information.



Tom Lobzun.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

"As Mayor, I will work to ensure council has the information it needs to do its job. We can't wait any longer to set Ingersoll on a path to a positive future shared by all. I would appreciate your support at the polls."

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MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

CANDIDATE PROFILES

Gillis acclaimed as mayor of SWOX

DEBBIE KASMAN

Echo Correspondent

With the nomination period for this October's municipal election now closed, Ward 4 Councillor Craig Gillis has been acclaimed as mayor of South-West Oxford (SWOX) Township.

Gillis began working as a herdsman for Wilmarlea Farms Ltd. in Embro after graduating from the University of Guelph in 2002. He moved to Beachville shortly after and married his wife, Tanya, in 2006. In 2009, he joined the SWOX Fire Department at the Beachville Station. He was elected Beachville Fire Association President in 2011 and Ward 6 councillor in 2018.

When asked why he decided to run for mayor, Gillis said, "Why not?"

"I feel I've learned a lot about the municipal process over the past two terms and I'm capable of taking on a larger role," he added. "I've always enjoyed working with others as a team and hearing about their perspective on things."

There are several projects Gillis wants to see to completion.

"Finishing our broadband-Internet project" so that it's available "to every premise in SWOX will be satisfying when completed," he said. "Not just business needs quality Internet service anymore. People working from home, school and education programs, agriculture, and many more need a steady Internet connection in today's world."

Gillis is most proud of his work on the Beachville Museum Board. "Getting our museum more noticed and used for community events and engagement within the area has been great to see. A small museum doing big things is a great mantra they have."

When asked about the biggest challenges facing SWOX

over the next term, he pointed to the rising cost of infrastructure, equipment and projects, saying council will need to take a closer look at spending to ensure taxpayer dollars are being used efficiently.

"Also, the ever-changing provincial goals and policies, i.e. building and the conservation authorities, will have to be navigated over the next few years," he added.

When asked if there are any decisions he has made on council that he regrets, he said there are none. "I feel I've been confident in the choices that I've made in the past."

As of Aug. 21, council is in a restricted or lame duck position. It is a temporary status when an outgoing municipal council loses the power to make major financial, property or staffing decisions.

A lame duck position can occur at two points during a municipal election process: after nomination day on Aug. 21 and before Election Day on Oct. 26 if fewer than 75 per cent of the members of the outgoing council are candidates for the new council and/or if fewer than 75 per cent of the members of the outgoing council are elected to the new council.

Council is no longer allowed to appoint or remove any officer of the municipality, hire or dismiss any employee of the municipality, dispose of any real or personal property of the municipality which has a value exceeding \$50,000 at the time of disposal, or make any expenditures or incur any other liability which exceeds \$50,000 until after the election.

Exceptions are allowed if the disposition or liability was included in the most recent budget adopted by council before Aug. 21. SWOX council adopted its Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy in May 2026, giving the CAO authority to make decisions under the policy when necessary.

Paul Buchner has been acclaimed as Councillor of Ward 1. Buchner grew up in the Brownsville area and farmed



Craig Gillis.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

alongside his brother. He also served on the SWOX Fire Service for 20 years and currently serves on the Gay Lea Co-Operative Ltd. Delegate Advisory Board.

All other wards have more than one candidate running.

The township approved new ward boundaries last July, which will impact the upcoming election. These boundary changes will take effect on the day the new council is organized after voting day on Oct. 26.

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LOOK FOR THE YELLOW SIGNS!

Oxford's Supplies4Students Program supports 1,355 local students

United Way Oxford's Supplies4Students program has concluded for 2026, supporting 1,355 students from 652 families across 39 schools.

Through the generosity of community donors, companies, churches, labour and employee groups, local students received \$50 gift cards for Giant Tiger, Dollarama, or Staples to buy the back-to-school supplies they need, helping reduce financial pressure on families while ensuring support meets each family's unique needs.

"Oxford's Supplies4Students program provides more than school supplies; it provides a sense of belonging and the support

of a community that cares," said Kelly Gilson, Executive Director of United Way Oxford. "Thanks to our generous donors and partners, 1,355 students are starting the school year with the tools they need to succeed."

In addition to the gift cards, donated backpacks and school supplies distributed through local agencies helped support more than 200 additional students across Oxford County.

United Way Oxford and Oxford's Supplies4Students partners thank the Thames Valley District School Board, the London District Catholic School Board, and Con-

seil scolaire catholique Providence for helping distribute gift cards and wish all students and staff a successful 2026-27 school year.

Oxford's Supplies4Students launched in 2016 after a two-year planning table explored ways to improve traditional back-to-school supply drives and support programs. The program was created to work across Oxford County and provide personalized financial assistance to stu-

dents and their families in need through gift cards.

Supplies4Students is a partnership between Operation Sharing, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Oxford, Salvation Army, 211, Oxford County Community Health Centre, Children's Aid Society of Oxford, Oxford Community Foundation, Kiwanis Club of Ingersoll, and the Ingersoll Community Foundation, with United Way Oxford acting as the coordinating lead.

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Woodstock Ingersoll Echo **SPORTS**

Navy Vets earn gold in Ayr tournament remembering fallen captain

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

It isn't the regular season yet but the Woodstock Navy Vets inaugural campaign in the Greater Ontario Hockey League (GOHL) is off to a solid start after winning the Eli Palfreyman Memorial Tournament in Ayr over the Labour Day weekend.

They started strong by beating host Ayr on Thursday night in the tournament opener 6-1 and followed that up with a 5-1 win over Ridley College on Friday afternoon. They met Pittsburgh on Saturday afternoon in their final preliminary round game and suffered their only loss 6-2.

That set up the rematch in Sunday's final between the top two teams in the tournament and the Vets played a terrific game to get their revenge and claim the trophy. The Vets beat Pittsburgh 4-1 in the final on Sunday night.

Cole Shoup, Joshua Jodoin, Jordan Vanderlip, Xander Zanier scored in the final while Ian Kubelka earned the win between the pipes. Earlier in the tournament, the 17-year-old Woodstock native stopped 49 of 50 shots in the win over Ridley.

The Ayr Centennials hosted the tournament, with this year's event marking the fifth annual tournament honouring their former captain. Six teams participated at the North Dumfries Community Complex.

This journalist was the then Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League's Director of Communications. The league released the following statement on Sept. 1, 2022.

The Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League is devastated to hear of the passing of 20-year-old Eli Palfreyman, Captain of the Ayr Centennials. He was participating in the inaugural Ayr Farmers Mutual Global Invitation tournament.

"The GOJHL and all member teams would like to extend our deepest condolences to Eli's family, friends, his teammates, and the entire Centennials organization. This is an unexplainable tragedy, and no words can ease the pain everyone involved is feeling," says commissioner Brent Garbutt. "As Eli's relationships and friendships run deep throughout the GOJHL, the league is assisting with providing grief and mental health professionals to support the Centennials organi-



(JIM BALKWILL PHOTO)

The Woodstock Navy Vets won gold at the Eli Palfreyman Memorial Tournament in Ayr over the long weekend, defeating a junior team from Pittsburgh in the championship game.

zation as well as other teams and their players."

Out of respect for Eli and his family, the league made the decision to postpone all exhibition games scheduled for Wednesday, August 31st and Thursday, September 1st.

Palfreyman's death was a sudden and tragic event that shocked the hockey community. He man was 20 years old, a Cambridge native and captain of the Ayr Centennials. He had been named captain only five days before his death.

On Aug. 30, 2022, the Centennials were playing the Boston Jr. Bruins at the North Dumfries Community Complex in Ayr as part of the Ayr Farmers Mutual

Global Invitational Tournament. During an intermission, Palfreyman went into the team's dressing room and collapsed.

His mother, Tammy, was in the stands and, according to reports, rushed to the dressing room. The team's trainer began chest compressions as emergency responders arrived. Palfreyman was taken by ambulance to Cambridge Memorial Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Woodstock is now preparing for its GOHL debut on Friday night in Listowel at 7:30 p.m. and then their home opener Saturday at Southwood against Stratford. Game time is 7:35 p.m.

Thamesford hosts beach volley tourney

The Sand Slam beach volleyball tournament brought lively competition and community spirit to Thamesford on Friday, Aug. 28. Hosted by the Oxford Hype Volleyball Club, the event drew adult co-ed teams for an evening of friendly rivalry and fundraising under the late summer sun. The sandy courts buzzed with energy as players dove, spiked, and rallied through multiple rounds, cheered on by spectators who embraced the warm weather with sunglasses and socks — a practical tip shared in advance. Each player contributed a \$30 registration

fee, with all proceeds supporting Oxford Hype Volleyball Club's ongoing programs and equipment needs. Coach Janelle coordinated registration and ensured smooth play, while volunteers helped maintain the courts and timing. The event concluded with smiles, sandy high fives, and a shared sense of accomplishment for both athletes and organizers. The Sand Slam not only showcased Thamesford's love for volleyball but also strengthened local support for Oxford Hype's mission to grow the sport across Oxford County. (RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Janelle welcomed competitors and outlined the evenings schedule.

THE LOST TRIBE

A wickedly good Nova Scotia bluefin tuna adventure



JEFF TRIBE

Echo Columnist

Big-game rod bending in a tight arc, I braced my feet on the chair rail and hung on for dear life, thankful it was attached to me and I to the boat. Unseen, the bluefin tuna headed straight down into 20 fathoms of Atlantic Ocean, 300-pound test monofilament line screaming off the massive, big-game reel.

You can read all the articles you want. And watch every video you can find.

But nothing, absolutely nothing, will prepare you for the adrenaline rush of a 500-pound fish making a run.

"The power, the sheer fight in the fish is unbelievable," said Tuna Fever Fishing Charter First Mate Ken Snow in the aftermath, pointing out reels are set for between 35 and 40 pounds of drag. "And they're just screaming the reel."

"And then when you're trying to get it back... man against beast, this is literally man against beast."

For associated video, search Tuna Billy Jeff Tribe The Lost Tribe on YouTube or copy and past the following URL:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=js-v9I8zV2Z4>

I was in better hands than the tuna, aboard captain Billy Bond's custom-built 38-foot Cape Islander Melissa and Papa III, christened after his daughter and her nickname for his father. A lifelong resident of Canso, Bond got his first fishing licence at the age of 13. His 50-year career on the water spanned smelt, mackerel, cod, snow crab and shrimp, before a current focus on lobster and tuna.

Years ago, tuna were considered a nuisance, unintentional bi-catch in nets. But in the 1970s, a small market developed says Bond, Asian and other buyers eventually lining up on the wharf to bid on freshly caught and cleaned fish, prices running from \$20 to as high as \$55 a pound.

He purchased his tuna licence later, which today, means one to two tags per year. Fish are now sold through buyers, Bond describing a 'prime' specimen dressing out at 330 pounds going for \$12.50 a pound earlier this season. That multiplies to a good number, until you factor in overhead, \$2 per litre diesel fuel and crew wages, or the fact additional tags purchased from other fishermen come at a cost of \$2,000 per.

"Guess what, we're doing it for fun," laughed Bond. "That's what we're doing, because we like tuna fishing."

The practical season for bluefin off Canso is spring, summer and fall, around winter migration for spawning. Ninety per cent of fishermen are cooperative, helping each other locate fish which can be found a mile offshore or 20 miles out.

"It's a big ocean," said Bond. "It's hit and miss, but normally we do all right."

In his mind, bluefin tuna are the most beautiful fish in the ocean, large, powerful, graceful and aerodynamic, like bullets going through the air, except through the water.

"They're a big fish, it's a big game. You're not playing with a little trout in a lake."

A 500-pound tuna will give a good fight, five or six good runs, some of them outlasting heavier fish in terms of time taken to get them to the boat. But there was the estimated 1,100 pounder which Bond and Snow fought for six-and-a-half hours, only to have it snap a brand-new line, right alongside.

"Got him up, had a look at him, that was about it," smiled Bond, adding with a laugh, "and then I cried for two hours."

'Fifteen or 20' years ago, he entered the charter business. Bond has appeared on The Discovery Channel (Catching Monsters), Fishing Canada and also visits the Toronto Sportsman's Show annually. He has two booking agents and clients can also schedule trips directly through his website: <https://www.tunafeverfishingcharters.com/> or connect via his email bill.bond62@outlook.com or phone number 902-366-2934.

Tuna tactics include trolling sets of rub-



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Long Point native Will Bouck has traded battling Inner Bay smallmouth bass for Nova Scotia bluefin tuna Tuna Fever Fishing Charter captain Billy Bond.

ber squid on a steel bar, one 'stinger' with a hook trailing the rest.

"That's pretty much it, the weakest guy gets it," explained Bond, who trolls mostly in the fall.

This day, we began a drift over the point of an underwater shoal 'eight or nine miles' offshore with presentations of live mackerel. Two lines held circle-hooked swimmers on the end of six-foot fluorocarbon leaders. A third illustrated Bond's preferred method, a skilful and well-practised kite/second line combination taking the bait ten metres off the starboard side and holding it on the surface.

Obviously, one is there for tuna but the overall experience of embarking from a maritime wharf, passing lighthouses, other vessels, finding a whale or two if you're lucky, is not to be understated. A hook-up with a six-foot blue shark proved an added bonus, if unwelcome for the crew. They have a habit of rolling when hooked, tangling themselves in leader, line and hook.

"He wraps it up, bites it off and everything's gone," explained Bond.

This time, the trio managed to cautiously and safely extricate the hook, photo ops included.

There's also the chance to hang out in the open Atlantic with experienced fishermen who happen to be Maritimers. This is Nova Scotia after all, where when my wife got hung up on the side of the road, six vehicles stopped to help, converted a tie-down strap into a makeshift tow rope and had her back on the road before you could say 'ceilidh.'

Great place, great people.

Snow, who returned to his father's native Nova Scotia from the Barrie area at 11, operates his own lobster boat. He joined Bond tuna fishing and acts as auxiliary captain when he's unavailable.

"I don't know if we've caught a thousand," said Snow. "But it's been hundreds."

The third crew member, Will Bouck, is

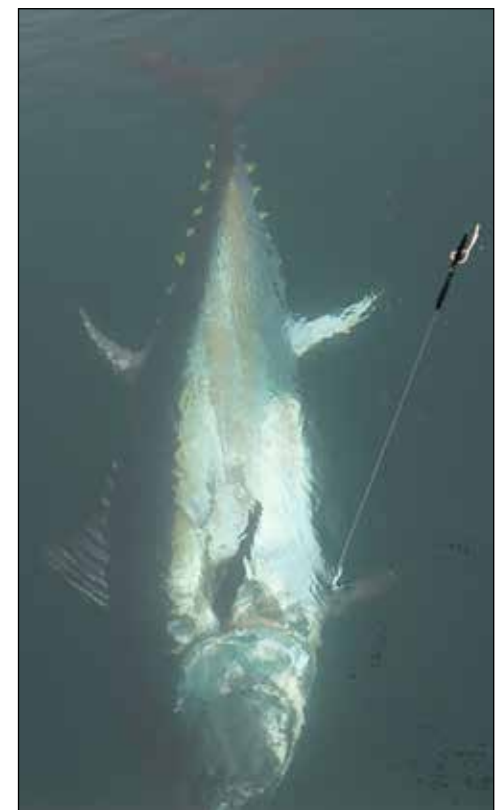
a Long Point, Ontario native who grew up fishing for trout and salmon on Lake Ontario and perch, pike and bass on the inner bay, trolling little perch Rapalas with his dad Larry on sand flats out of Old Cut.

"Deadly, deadly," said Bouck. "There wasn't a bass opener we didn't come home without our limit."

He has been in Nova Scotia for five years, fishing for four, with Bond for three, for both lobster and tuna.

"Straight adrenaline from the second you get hooked up," said Bouck of the latter. "The adrenaline rush and just the size, the size of them when they come to the boat."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 20



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

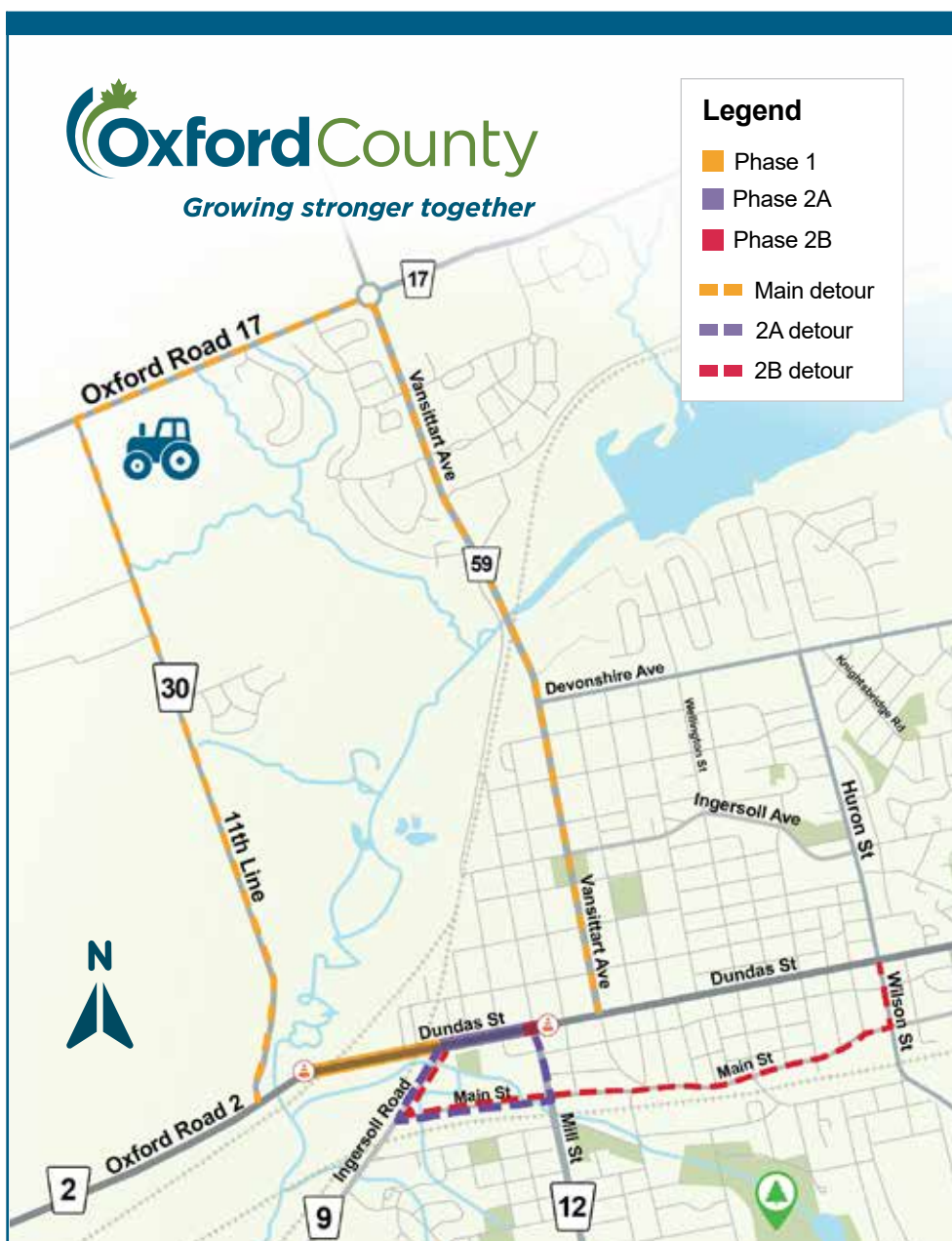
An estimated 500-pound bluefin tuna passes close by Tuna Fever Charter Boat Melissa and Papa III.

Weekend Quiz

By Jake Grant

- Which animal has fingerprints that are so similar to humans they can confuse forensic investigators?
- Which country consumes the most chocolate per person each year?
- What is the largest moon in the Solar System?
- What is the only continent with no active volcanoes?
- What is the only metal that is liquid at room temperature?
- Which famous scientist developed the three laws of motion?
- What does UN stand for?
- What was Dolly Parton's middle name?
- Which animal's egg case is often called a "mermaid's purse"?
- A tax or duty to be paid on a particular class of imports or exports is known as a ____?

This week's answers are found on pg. 34



Construction

Oxford Road 2 (Dundas Street) reconstruction, Woodstock

Intersection of Oxford Road 2 and Oxford Road 12 (Mill Street/Oxford Street) will be closed for four weeks for Phase 2B of construction

Oxford County is continuing road reconstruction work on Oxford Road 2 in Woodstock. While Phase 2A is in progress, Phase 2B is tentatively scheduled to begin the week of September 14, 2026, and will close the intersection for approximately four weeks. Please note, this date is subject to change; for the most up-to-date information, visit www.oxfordcounty.ca/construction

The entire project is expected to be completed by November 2026, and is being carried out in three (3) phases:

Phase 1: Oxford Road 2 from Oxford Road 30 (11th Line) and Oxford Road 9. Phase 1 began in April and was completed on July 28, 2026.

Phase 2A: Oxford Road 2 from Oxford Road 9 to west of Oxford Road 12. Phase 2A is in progress and is expected to be completed in November 2026.

Phase 2B: Intersection of Oxford Road 2 and Oxford Road 12. The intersection will be subject to a temporary four (4) week closure and is expected to begin the week of September 14, 2026.

Please help keep our community and workers safe: respect work zones, obey traffic signs, and maintain a safe distance from equipment and vehicles entering and leaving the site.

For information and updates follow Oxford County on social media or visit www.oxfordcounty.ca/construction

A wickedly good Nova Scotia bluefin tuna adventure

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

We were comparing notes on sea duck hunting on small, rocky Nova Scotia islands to Long Point, and checking out a massive non-typical buck on Bouck's phone, when as it does, calm turned into chaos.

"Oh, oh, oh!" Snow exclaimed, indicating a pole on the port side, which had abruptly done a 180-degree turn. "Hooked up!"

It was an organized chaos, other poles quickly reeled in to avoid tangling, the 'fish on' model tied off with a rope (one does not wish to lose a \$3,000 reel, \$1,000 pole and \$500 worth of line), before being carefully moved and anchored in the port position on the stern where Bond could see runs unfold and drive in response. Snow placed himself in between, anticipating and communicating with the captain as Bouck took point on the pole, an efficient partnership reacting in a hurry.

"You go from zero to 60 faster than a Ferrari," Snow laughed.

In general, when the tuna ran, Bouck watched the reel peel. When it paused, he would recover line with his gloved, left hand and reel with his right. And when it ran toward the boat, he reeled like a madman. Guided by he and Snow, as well as his own experience, Bond expertly steered the boat to keep the line clear, while also strategically, encouraging the tuna's natural tendency to go deep, a vertical hook-up having better odds of staying put than a shallower angle.

Battling a tuna is a mental as well as physical game.

"Find your Zen, your calm spot," Snow explained.

Bouck spoke to getting past that first adrenaline rush, controlling one's breathing and 'getting back on.'

"You get fighting a fish, it doesn't take long to wear yourself out. We always tell

you just take your time, deep breaths and reel the fish in when he lets you. Because when he first hooks up, he's just going peel line and run, run, run, run."

After several powerful runs, the fish entered the finishing phase, a 'death circle' near the surface, showing 'colour' while lying on its side. It's a critical period, tuna trying instinctively to chafe the line on the keel or propeller, says Bouck.

"They're really smart, they know how to get underneath the boat and break themselves off."

Twenty-five minutes after Snow's initial cry, an estimated 400-pound 'butterball' lay alongside the boat. On this catch-and-release trip the fish's health was paramount, line holding a biodegradable hook quickly snapped, tuna returning to the depths.

Having expected to be only an observer, a second hook-up provided an unexpected opportunity to be shepherd and assisted through a turn on the back end of the pole by Bouck and Snow.

No, I did not find my Zen.

And yes, I did wear the 'wussy' tag for reeling with both hands.

But I'll happily take it for an experience which can only be described as indescribable in terms sheer elemental power and adrenaline, a greater understanding of Ernest Hemingway's classic novel.

We headed back from a great eight-hour journey, photos and video captured, a bucket list item checked an opportunity I never expected, shared. It was difficult to adequately express 'thanks', save for the deep understanding in one for whom the experience never gets old.

"They're just an amazing fish to catch," Bond concluded. "It doesn't matter how many years you've been at it, it's still exciting to catch one."



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

An interloping blue shark was safely and successfully unhooked, gear intact.



Township of Norwich – 2026 Municipal Election
Notice of Election
Municipal Elections Act, 1996 (s. 40)

Municipal Election 2026

Elections will be held for the following Offices:

- Mayor – one (1) to be elected
- Councillor, Ward 1 – one (1) to be elected
- Councillor, Ward 2 – one (1) to be elected
- Councillor, Ward 3 – acclaimed
- Councillor, Ward 4 – one (1) to be elected

- Trustee, Thames Valley District School Board – acclaimed
- Trustee, London District Catholic School Board – acclaimed
- Trustee, Conseil scolaire catholique Providence – acclaimed
- Trustee, Conseil scolaire Viamonde – acclaimed

Election Day is Monday October 26, 2026. Voting will be held in-person from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the following locations:

- Ward 1 – Springford Community Hall - 429 Main Street West, Springford
- Ward 2 – Norwich Community Centre - 53 ½ Stover Street South, Norwich
- Ward 3 – Heritage Netherlands Reformed Congregation - 685 Main Street South, Burgessville
- Ward 4 – Oxford Centre Hall - 505386 Old Stage Road, Oxford Centre

Advance Voting is Available

Date: Saturday October 17, 2026
Location: Norwich Community Centre, 53 Stover Street, Norwich
Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Voter Notification Cards

Information regarding where you vote on Election Day will be available on your Voter Notification Card, to be mailed (approximately) the week of September 28, 2026. If you do not receive your card please contact the Clerks Department.

Proxy Voting

Electors that are on the Voters' List and unable to vote on Voting Day or at the Advance Voting may apply to obtain a Certificate appointing another eligible elector to vote on their behalf. Prescribed application forms to appoint such voting proxies are available at the Township of Norwich Clerks' Department. All applications must be certified by the Township Clerk (or designate) at the Clerk's Office during regular office hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) September 1, 2026 to October 26, 2026. Certificates will also be issued between the hours of 12:00 noon and 5:00 p.m. on the date of Advance Voting. Certificates to vote by Proxy will not be issued after 4:30 p.m. on October 26, 2026.

Identification Required

The Municipal Elections Act requires all voters to present identification before receiving a ballot. When going to vote, electors should bring their Voter Notification Card along with at least one other piece of prescribed identification that shows your name and qualifying address. Acceptable identification includes an Ontario Drivers Licence, Motor Vehicle Permit, Property Tax Assessment or Utility Bill. For a full list of accepted identification please visit the Township of Norwich Election website at: <https://elections.norwich.ca/>

Who can Vote?

- To vote in the municipal election, you must be a qualified elector. That means you must be:
- a resident of the Township of Norwich or a non-resident owner or tenant of lands in the Township of Norwich or the spouse of such non-resident owner or tenant;
 - a Canadian citizen;
 - at least 18 years of age; and
 - not prohibited from voting by law

If you live in the Township of Norwich and own or rent more than one property in the Township, you must vote where you live. You can only vote once in the Township of Norwich.

For election information, please visit <https://elections.norwich.ca/> or call 519-667-2000

Kimberley Armstrong
Director of Corporate Services/Clerk
Returning Officer
karmstrong@norwich.ca



**2026 Municipal Election
Employment Opportunity**

The Township of Norwich is now recruiting dedicated and enthusiastic individuals to work as election officials in the up-coming 2026 Municipal Election for the Advance Poll to be held on Saturday October 17, 2026 and Voting Day to be held on Monday October 26, 2026.

To be eligible to work, you must:

- Be a minimum of 18 years of age on or before October 26, 2026;
- Not be a candidate, or the spouse of a candidate, running for office in the Township of Norwich;
- Attend a mandatory training session (date/time to be determined)
- Be prepared to arrive at your designated voting place at a specified time and remain there until after voting closes and all duties have been completed; and
- Complete and submit an application for employment

If you are interested in working in the 2026 Municipal Election, you must complete an Election Official Application form which is available at: <https://elections.norwich.ca/> and submit it by 4:00 p.m. on Friday September 25, 2026. Township Staff will review your completed application for employment upon receipt. Notifications will be sent to successful applicants the week of September 28th.

2026 Voters List

The preliminary list of persons entitled to vote in the 2026 Municipal Election is available for inspection upon request at the Municipal Office, 285767 Airport Road, Norwich. Electors may examine the list to ensure their name has been included and that all related information is correct, either in person at the Township Office during regular office hours, by calling the Office at 519-667-2000, or by email to one of the contacts below. **Electors are encouraged to ensure that their name has been included and that all related information is correct.**

Electors may apply to have their name added to or removed from the Voters List or the information relating to themselves amended. Revisions to the Voters List may be made by filing an application at the Township Office, Clerks Department, during normal office hours 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. until Election Day, October 26, 2026.

Electors may also apply to revise the Voters List at the Voting Place either at the Advance Voting Day or on Voting Day. However, you are encouraged to apply for revision prior to voting day to avoid delays in voting.

No person shall use information obtained from the Voters' List, except for election purposes. The use or sale of these lists for commercial purposes is prohibited.

Advance Voting Available

Date: Saturday October 17, 2026
Location: Norwich Community Centre, 53 Stover Street, Norwich
Time: 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

For Election related information, please contact:

Sean McCoy Deputy Clerk Deputy Returning Officer 519-667-2000 ext. 7604 smccoy@norwich.ca	Kimberley Armstrong Clerk Returning Officer 519-667-2000 ext. 7614 karmstrong@norwich.ca	Lizz Birchall Customer Service Clerk Election Assistant 519-667-2000 ext. 7610 ebirchall@norwich.ca
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Woodstock sisters raise funds for cancer research

Two young sisters, Maelyn and Hadley, inspired their neighbourhood and helped kick off their school's Terry Fox Run by hosting a three day lemonade stand fundraiser from Aug. 31 to Sept. 2. Set up on a sunny stretch of late summer weather, the sisters spent the weekend serving cold lemonade to neighbours, families, and passersby throughout their Woodstock community. Their goal was simple and heartfelt — to raise \$100 in support of the Terry Fox Foundation and honour Terry's legacy of courage and determination. By the end of the third day, donations had surpassed their goal, reflecting the generosity of local residents and the enthusiasm the

girls brought to their project. Their parents provided supplies, supervision, and encouragement, and even purchased a family set of 2026 Terry Fox Foundation t-shirts to celebrate the effort. Every dollar collected will be donated directly to the Terry Fox Foundation to support cancer research. The sisters' lemonade stand became a cheerful gathering point for neighbours and a reminder of how Terry Fox's message continues to inspire Canadians of all ages. Their contribution adds to the momentum leading into this year's school Terry Fox Run, demonstrating how small acts of kindness can make a meaningful impact.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Mom and Dad, Rebecca and Mark, looked on while Maelyn and Hadley served ice cold lemonade to Sarah and Maggie.





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Oxford County OPP ready for Operation Safe Start to improve bus safety

LEE GRIFFI

Editor

Most Oxford County students were back in the classroom last week, and many for many of them it means getting on the bus in the morning and getting off it in the afternoon. For the Oxford OPP, safety is top of mind.

The Oxford detachment will be conducting a traffic initiative during the first two weeks of the school year, called Operation Safe Start. The initiative ran from Sept. 8-11 and will run again from Sept. 14-18, throughout Oxford County.

Starting in September Oxford County experiences increased traffic volumes around schools and along school bus routes during morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up periods. These conditions increase the risk of collisions, speeding, distracted driving, pedestrian conflicts, and violations involving stopped school buses.

OPP Media Relations Constable Randi Crawford said any time there is an increase in the

amount of people on area roadways there will be a rise in the chance of a collision occurring.

"We are trying to get people to get it in their heads right now to start preparing for those buses to make sure people are prepared by giving themselves extra time."

Police will conduct targeted enforcement throughout county municipalities of. The initiative will focus on monitoring motorist behaviour around school zone regulations and school bus safety laws, which will support safe student boarding and unloading. Officers will educate and enforce, where appropriate.

"We want our results to be zero. We don't want to give out any warnings or charges. We want motorists to get themselves into the right mindset to have a safe start to the school year. We understand people have busy schedules but that's no excuse for parking in bus zones and travelling faster than you should be through a school zone," said Crawford.

Student safety remains a priority for police,

particularly in school zones and at school bus loading and unloading locations, where children are most vulnerable.

"Motorists they must stop at least 20 metres away whenever approaching a stopped school bus with its upper alternating red lights flashing, regardless of whether they are approaching it from the front or rear," she explained. "You cannot proceed until the bus moves or the lights have stopped flashing."

Crawford added it is illegal not to stop for a stationary school bus with its red lights flashing.

"If you don't stop, you can be fined \$400 to \$2,000 and receive six demerit points for a first offence. School bus operators and other witnesses can report vehicles that have illegally passed a school bus."

Police are also asking parents to educate their children on being smart when riding a bus to reduce the chance of injury.

"This is a great time for parents to talk to

their kids about safe and smart activity on a bus. Make sure they are sitting down, paying attention, and following the bus driver's instructions. If a collision does happen, if you are doing all the right things the risk of injury is definitely lower," Crawford explained.

To learn more about the rules pertaining to "stopping for school buses" visit <https://www.ontario.ca/document/official-ministry-transportation-mto-bus-handbook/stopping-school-buses-law>.

"Student safety remains a high priority in our communities. This initiative aims to promote compliance with school zone regulations and school bus safety laws while enhancing the safety of all students travelling to and from school," said Oxford OPP Detachment Commander, Inspector Tony Hymers.

"Motorists remaining patient and alert, when driving among school buses and school zones, can help everyone have a safe start to the school year," he added.

Sea Cadets announce temporary location

RON YUZARK

Echo Correspondent

The Woodstock Sea Cadets have formally announced a temporary change to their weekly training location following the loss of access to their longtime home, "the Ship" in Southside Park.

All Sea Cadet and Navy League Cadet activities will be held at The Oxford School, 595459 Oxford 59, Woodstock, ensuring uninterrupted programming for youth across Oxford County. This relocation allowed both Corps to continue offering their full slate of leadership development, seamanship instruction, physical training, and citizenship activities in a safe, accessible, and

spacious environment.

The Oxford School's facilities provided the room and stability needed for the Cadets to maintain their traditions, training standards, and community involvement during the transition period. On Tuesday, Sept. 8, the Woodstock Sea Cadets (R.C.S.C.C. 153 Woodstock) welcomed returning and prospective youth ages 12 to 18 for their first training night at the new location.

The following evening, the younger Navy League Cadets (N.L.C.C. 154 Unicorn), ages 9 to 12, held their own first night of training from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Officers reported strong enthusiasm from families and noted that the new venue helped ease the transition for both age groups.

With older Cadets aging out and new youth preparing to join,

visibility and outreach remain essential to sustaining both programs. Despite the venue change, both Corps continued to deliver high quality, structured programming rooted in maritime skills, teamwork, and community service.

Cadets participated in a wide range of hands on training throughout the season, engaging in seamanship and navigation lessons that strengthened their maritime knowledge while also taking part in structured drill and range training that reinforced discipline and precision. During the warmer months, many enjoyed the opportunity to sail, building confidence and teamwork on the water.

Their citizenship and community service activities connected them with local events and volunteer initiatives, allowing them to contribute meaningfully to the community. In addition to core training, Cadets also took part in optional programs such as band, first aid, disaster relief exercises, cooking, and other specialized activities that broadened their skills and enriched their overall experience in the Corps.

High school aged Cadets also earned volunteer hours through approved community activities. The Woodstock Branch extended sincere thanks to The Oxford School for providing space and support during this transition. Officers and instructors—each fully screened through security and police checks—continued to volunteer their time to ensure a safe, inclusive, and enriching environment for all participants.

You can reach the Sea Cadet program by emailing 153sea@cadets.gc.ca. You can reach the Navy League Cadets at nlccunicorn@navyleagueon.ca. The Navy League of Canada supports more than 11,000 Cadets nationwide through 217 local branches.



(RON YUZARK PHOTO)

Officers and instructors for the evening were Trevor, Mary Lou, Lieutenant (N) Joshua Middleton and Lieutenant (N) Ryan Harris.

DEB TAIT

I believe in the importance of public service, community leadership, and I am driven to improve our city's future.

Elected leaders make decisions that have tangible effects on local communities: roads, recreation facilities, economic growth, neighbourhood safety and quality of life. I have been a member of City and County Council for numerous years, sticking to these principles.

I will advocate for:



Being a responsible steward of taxpayer money.



Managing growth within our community.



Providing amenities and supports for our City's diverse needs both now and for generations to come.

Everything is increasing—from food to gas. As an elected official we have a duty to the residents to keep taxes under control.

My votes reflect that I understand that.

- Voted against increase in \$3 bag tags
- Voted against the 58 million on the City Streetscape
- Voted against the county budgets that have escalated to the point becoming unsustainable

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City holds final family movie night

Museum Square came alive Thursday night, Aug. 27, as Woodstock residents gathered for the final Movie Night of the season, held in conjunction with the City's 125th anniversary celebration. The downtown landmark was filled with families, friends, and visitors eager to enjoy an evening of entertainment and community pride. Children were treated to a variety of games and activities throughout the square,

keeping the younger crowd energized and engaged as the festivities unfolded. Booths lined the walkways offering browsing opportunities, handcrafted items, and commemorative merchandise for purchase, adding a lively market atmosphere to the celebration. As dusk settled, the crowd turned its attention to The Sandlot, a beloved classic and clear favourite among those in attendance. Laughter, nostalgia, and

shared moments rippled through the audience as the film lit up the warm August night. The event not only marked the close of this year's Movie Night series but also highlighted Woodstock's enduring spirit as the community honoured 125 years of history, growth, and togetherness. The combination of activities, local vendors, and a cherished film created a memorable evening that reflected the heart of the city.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Brendan from Tempo Restaurant offered Pop and doughnuts to Stephanie, Blake and Lee.



Julie, holding Violet, Henry and Greg, settled in to watch the movie.



As darkness descended the audience turned their attention to watch the movie.

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Simple Ways to Enjoy Fall in Southwestern Ontario



REBECCA KITCHEN

Echo Contributor

Fall in Southwestern Ontario is one of the most beautiful times of year. The changing colours, crisp air, and slower pace provide the perfect opportunity to reconnect with nature, sup-

port local communities, and create meaningful memories with family and friends.

One of the easiest ways to enjoy the season is by exploring the many trails throughout our region. Whether you enjoy hiking, birdwatching, photography, or simply taking a peaceful walk, there is no shortage of beautiful places to discover. The vibrant reds, oranges, and yellows of autumn create breathtaking scenery that reminds us to slow down and appreciate the beauty around us.

Take a stroll through the main streets of our small towns and visit local shops. You never know when you'll discover a new favourite café, bookstore, artisan, or hidden gem. Supporting small businesses not only helps our local economy but often leads to unique ex-

periences you won't find anywhere else.

Don't forget about our beaches. While many people associate beaches with summer swimming and tanning, they offer something special all year long. Searching for beach glass, listening to the waves, and walking along the shoreline can be incredibly calming. Spending time near water has been shown to help regulate the nervous system, reduce stress, and improve overall well-being.

Fall is also the perfect season to take photos of the stunning landscapes around us. Challenge yourself to visit trails in neighbouring communities, explore conservation areas, or simply capture the beauty in your own backyard.

For those who enjoy history,

consider visiting local museums, heritage homes, and castles. These treasures often go unnoticed, but they provide a fascinating glimpse into how people lived in generations past. Exploring these places can spark curiosity, encourage learning, and create meaningful conversations with children.

If you have young people in your life, take them along for the adventure. Their questions, observations, and excitement can transform an ordinary outing into an unforgettable experience. Children often notice details and ask questions that adults would never think to consider, reminding us to see the world through fresh eyes.

Many of these historical sites and museums rely on visitors, donations, and mod-

est admission fees to preserve their stories and maintain their buildings. By visiting, you're helping keep local history alive for future generations.

Fall reminds us that wellness doesn't always require a treatment, a program, or a destination vacation. Sometimes it simply means taking a walk, exploring a new place, learning something new, and appreciating the beauty that exists right in our own communities.

This season, get outside, be curious, support local, and embrace the simple joys that Southwestern Ontario has to offer.

"Wellness doesn't always happen in a clinic. Sometimes it's found on a trail, along a beach, inside a heritage home, or while discovering a hidden gem in a small town."

Echo

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(out of 4)

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JEFF LILLICO, 2024. PHOTO: ANN BAGGLEY.

More Must-See Theatre

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OTHELLO | THE TAO OF THE WORLD | THE KING JAMES BIBLE PLAY

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Riddles

What loses its head in the morning but gets it back at night?

A pillow.

I have a head like a cat and feet like a cat, but I am not a cat. What am I?

A kitten.

Who makes it, has no need of it. Who buys it, has no use for it. Who uses it can neither see nor feel it. What is it?

A coffin.

Throw away the outside and cook the inside, then eat the outside and throw away the inside. What is it?

Corn on the cob.

What is at the end of a rainbow?

The letter W!

What kind of tree can you carry in your hand?

A palm!

You'll find me in Mercury, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus. But never Neptune, or Venus. What am I?

The letter "R."

Sudoku

by PeterS 2026

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

Solution found on page 34

Featured Pet



IVY

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Word Search

MELODIOUS

A	M	M	P	T	O	A	B	C	R	H	P	O	S	T
R	V	H	B	N	E	A	M	Y	A	N	T	H	E	M
I	B	C	O	B	U	B	B	E	Y	P	N	T	D	C
V	M	O	O	T	A	C	C	A	T	S	U	A	T	R
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O	S	P	P	N	D	D	E	A	D	B	T	V	U	R
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E	V	O	S	M	I	E	Y	N	T	M	D	O	U	P
T	R	H	R	Y	O	S	D	I	O	H	M	S	D	B
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I	V	O	R	P	M	I	O	R	U	E	R	A	Y	I
M	P	A	V	H	D	R	P	H	C	O	D	V	H	O
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Woodstock Pokémon and Vintage Toy Show

The Oxford Auditorium at the Fairgrounds became a vibrant hub of nostalgia, pop culture excitement, and collector community spirit as the Woodstock Pokémon and Vintage Toy Show returned on Labour Day Monday. Visitors celebrated one of its strongest showings to date, featuring expanded Pokémon focused vendors, specialty collectors, and new interactive displays. This year's show featured one of the most diverse vendor rosters yet, bringing together long time collectors, specialty dealers, and first time exhibitors from across Southwestern Ontario. The show

featured an impressive variety of collectibles that kept visitors browsing throughout the day. Vendors offered a wide selection of vintage and modern Pokémon cards, including rare singles, graded slabs, Japanese imports, sealed booster packs, binders, and custom mystery packs, with several specialists showcasing early era WOTC favorites such as Base Set, Jungle, Fossil, and Team Rocket. Display tables were filled with action figures and pop culture icons ranging from Transformers G1 and G2 to Masters of the Universe, GI Joe, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, Mar-

vel Legends, DC Multiverse, and NECA horror figures. Die cast and automotive collectibles also drew steady interest, including Hot Wheels Redlines, Matchbox Lesney pieces, Johnny Lightning models, NASCAR memorabilia, and farm related die cast items that appealed to both casual shoppers and dedicated hobbyists. Retro gaming enthusiasts found original Nintendo, Sega, and PlayStation titles, handheld systems, controllers, and boxed consoles from the 80s, 90s, and early 2000s, all of which generated strong nostalgia. Small antiques and classic memorabilia—ad-

vertising signs, tins, bottles, country store items, gas station collectibles, vintage paper, postcards, maps, and ephemera—added a timeless charm to the venue. Sports and non sport card collectors explored hockey, baseball, basketball, wrestling, and favourites like Garbage Pail Kids, movie cards, and TV series sets, while comic and music fans browsed Silver Age and Bronze Age comics, vinyl records, movie posters, music memorabilia, and collectible magazines that rounded out the show's extensive offerings.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Cody from Game Monster Canada had many enthusiasts stopping by.



There was a large interest in collectors browsing the Pokémon offerings.

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FREE THIS FALL!

High School Film: H Is For Hawk

Monday, Sept. 28 • 12 p.m.
Ages 13–18 • FREE • Registration required
Market Centre Theatre

Fall Fest

Saturday, Oct. 3 • 12–4 p.m.
All ages • FREE
Museum Square

WOODSTOCK
ART GALLERY

Embro welcomes toy show and auction

The Embro Zorra Community Centre came alive on Sunday, Aug. 30, as the 41st Annual Ontario Toy Show and Rotary Consignment Auction welcomed collectors, families, and hobbyists from across Ontario. The long standing event celebrated farm, truck, and construction toys with an enthusiastic turnout. Guests explored an impressive variety of displays, vendor tables, and collector showcases throughout the day. A highlight for many was the youth exhibitors, whose detailed diorama displays earned

praise for creativity and craftsmanship. Awards were presented at 2:30 p.m., drawing a large crowd eager to see this year's winners. Food trucks operated on site, offering visitors a range of refreshments as they browsed. The Rotary Consignment Auction, held entirely online at www.jacobauctions.com, opened for bidding on Aug. 21 and closed on Aug. 27. The digital format allowed participants from across the province to take part in the annual fundraising tradition.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Lane, Peerke and Tim from Sarnia browsed the custom replicas on display.



Aearyl and Paul of Hansy Helper proudly displayed their collection of authentic model tractors.



Murial and Denis proudly displayed their collection to attendees.

— See You @ the — MOVIES

RETURNS! SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Market Centre Theatre | 4:00 & 7:00 p.m. | \$12

September 28 H Is for Hawk

October 26 Meadowlarks

November 9 The Choral

December 7 Once Upon a Time in a Cinema

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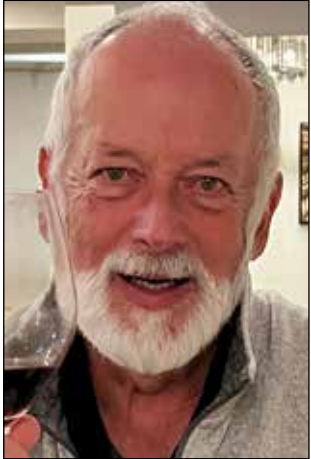
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OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO!

TRAVEL

Exploring Rhône River wine country



PAUL KNOWLES

Echo Contributor

Sometimes, it's good to be reminded how little one knows.

Among our circle of friends, I am sometimes seen as something of an expert on wine. That's because I write about wineries, from time to time, and I organize an annual, one-day wine tour in Niagara for a group of about 30 friends. Oh, yes – they know I drink wine on a very regular basis.

Turns out, I am simply a guy who likes wine. But an expert? Not so much.

I quickly realized how little I actually know when we were invited by Viking to take a Rhône River cruise, in the south of France. It was a terrific experience; we visited famous cities like Lyon, Avignon and Arles; we saw impressive examples of Roman civilization; we learned about the area's key role in the French Resistance in World War II.

And to my great delight, our cruise included visits to both the Beaujolais wine region, and to Châteauneuf-du-Pape. Places about which, it turned out, I knew nothing except the names.

There are wonderful wines being produced all over the

world, but you have to admit that the first nation that comes to mind when you talk "wine" is probably France. And wine country along the Rhône is an important contributor to that longstanding reputation. I learned that most of the major vineyards along the Rhône have been there since Roman times. So, they've had a while to get it right.

Wine production became even more important in the 1300's, after the Pope had moved from Rome to Avignon (that's a long and complicated story). What's crucial here is that the Popes liked wine, and encouraged the development of more vineyards.

Today, two of the important wine regions are the two we were able to visit – Beaujolais and Châteauneuf-du-Pape.

And here's where I confess my absolute ignorance. I had no idea that there are actually 12 appellations (sub-districts) in the Beaujolais district, which sits north of Lyon. More embarrassingly, I had always assumed that Châteauneuf-du-Pape was a single, prestigious winery. Nope. This appellation includes 320 vineyards, supplying about 180 independent wineries. It covers 3,200 hectares.

Our cruise sailed from north to south, so the first wine tour we did was in the Beaujolais district, which lies north of Lyon. Here, there are about 200 wineries. We were welcomed at the Château des Ravatys, located in the Côte de Brouilly appellation (roughly in the centre of the Beaujolais district).

We learned that Beaujolais wines are almost exclusively made from Gamay grapes; and that 94% of Beaujolais is red wine (yes, you can make either red or white from red grapes; it depends on your

method).

Probably most importantly, we learned that the Beaujolais we tasted was really, really good.

A side note: sometimes large-group wine tours result in wineries serving their bottom-line wines, for economic reasons. This was certainly not the case during our wine country visits with Viking; the wines were excellent, unfortunately so good at times they were well out of my price range!

The Beaujolais visit was an included feature of our cruise. A few days later, we opted for an optional excursion, which comes at an add-on price. The tour to Châteauneuf-du-Pape was worth it.

This district, south of Lyon, is a direct result of Papal love for wine; in fact the name translates as "The Pope's new castle", and that castle (although hardly new) still stands. Here, we had tours and tastings at two wineries – Château des Fines Roches, part of Domaines Mouset, and Maison Bouachon.

Unlike the Beaujolais wines, which are made from one grape variety, in the Châteauneuf-du-Pape district, 18 varieties of grapes are used in making the wine – not all at once, of course. Most Châteauneuf-du-Pape wines are red, although whites also bear the same appellation.

There are strict rules imposed on the vineyards, including when owners can harvest, minimum alcohol content in the wines (typically rather high, between 13% and 15%), and vineyard management.

There is some good reason behind the strict rules. In the 1870s, an insect pest known as Grape phylloxera came to Châteauneuf-du-Pape (it



A vineyard in Beaujolais country.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

ravaged vineyards all over Europe), and destroyed the vineyards. One result was wine fraud – inferior wines were sold, falsely labelled. But root stock was imported from North America, French vines were grafted onto it, and eventually, the vineyards rebounded. By the 1920's, the strict regulations had been imposed, to ensure that wine from Châteauneuf-du-Pape was indeed of the quality the brand name represented.

I was intrigued that one

of the Châteauneuf-du-Pape rules is that vineyards must not use irrigation. However, this appellation is part of the much larger Côtes du Rhône region. The good news for wineries using that label, as opposed to the admittedly more prestigious Châteauneuf-du-Pape brand, is that irrigation is allowed. The good news for wine drinkers (me, for instance), is that Côtes du Rhône wines are both excellent and far less expensive than those bearing

that iconic, Pope-inspired label.

I went to the Rhône region knowing less than I thought about wine. I return, probably still in the same boat... but having had a heck of a good time. Wine time, in fact.

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



The chateau at Château des Ravatys in the Beaujolais district.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

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COMING EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 19 | 1:30 PM
KC AND THE SUNSHINE BAND TRIBUTE WITH THE GIRLS FROM CELEBRITY PRODUCTIONS
Old St Paul's Church, 723 Dundas Street, Woodstock
Refreshments to follow. Tickets only \$20.00. Available by calling 519-537-3921, at www.oldstpauls.com or at the door. It's time to get on your Boogie Shoes!

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 12 | 3 PM
INGERSOLL DISTRICT NATURE CLUB ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND NATURE WALK WITH BBQ
Join us at the **LAWSON NATURE RESERVE on McBeath Rd south of Ingersoll N0J 1W0** for a guided walk on the trail followed by a meeting and BBQ.Both members and nonmembers are welcome.Call Sheila 519 485 2645.

SEPTEMBER 12 | 9 AM - 4 PM
(Rain Date: Sunday, September 13)
OPEN HOUSE AND FAMILY FUN DAY
Tillsonburg Regional Airport, 244411 Airport Road, Tillsonburg
Join the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association for its biggest event of the year, their Wings & Wheels Family Fun Day, September 13. (Rain date: Sept 14). World War II Harvard aircraft, along with hundreds of classic cars will be on display in one location. Bring your classic car or peruse those brought by others. Harvard flights will be available all day long. A great day’s outing.
Activities:
• Opportunities for Harvard flight experiences (While pre-booking flights is not necessary, it is recommended. Contact crewflights@harvards.com to ensure your seat)
• Hangar tours and aircraft displays
• Fundraising garage sale & book sale
• Food trucks
All types of vehicles are welcome. If you are bringing a vehicle for display, registering your vehicle upon arrival on-site is highly recommended.
In case of inclement weather, check their Facebook page for RAIN DATE updates. Cost: Cash donation, Contact: info@harvards.com / 519-842-9922, For more info: www.harvards.com

SEPTEMBER 13 | 1:30 - 5 PM
LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR COMMUNITIES PORCH MUSIC FEST
Starts at The Waterlot, downtown New Hamburg
Live music, local food and drinks, and fun for the family hosted at Puddicombe House; Imperial Market Patio; The Waterlot and the LYNC Station downtown New Hamburg. Ten local and award winning musicians will keep you singing and dancing. Come for the music stay for the food and take a picture with some classic police cars.Porch Music is in support of the Mill Block Community Development. Free limited tickets are available at [Eventbrite: eventbrite.ca/e/lync-porch-music-fest-tickets-1996113255481?aff=oddtcreator](https://eventbrite.ca/e/lync-porch-music-fest-tickets-1996113255481?aff=oddtcreator)

SEPTEMBER 13 | 2 PM
DECORATION DAY SERVICE
Burgessville Baptist Cemetery,
Speaker Pastor Nick Mitchell, soloist Lola Mather-Dyer.

SEPTEMBER 14 | 7 PM
INGERSOLL CHORAL SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!
Ingersoll Christian Reformed Church
Like to sing? We’d love to have you join us. No experience required! Rehearsals begin Sept. 14, preparing for our November show at ITOPA – ICS Lights Up Broadway. Find us on Facebook or email holly.langohr@gmail.com for more info.

SEPTEMBER 19 | 2 - 4 PM
OPEN HOUSE AND FAMILY FUN DAY
St. John’s Church, Eastwood, 685860 Oxford Rd 2 (Hwy2)
Visit our historic church and learn about our Celtic traditions. Games and refreshments.

SEPTEMBER 19 & 20 | 10 AM - 4 PM
ALPACA FARM DAYS
Carol & Jim Harrison, 335358 Line 33, R.R.4, Embro
Meet alpacas! Learn! Play! Shop! Relax! New this year: alpaca pellets & beans for your gardens. Fee: Donation to Big Brothers, Big Sisters Oxford in lieu of admission charge.
This is an outdoor event, rain or shine. Find us on Facebook: Harrison’s Alpacas. Our farm is in the heart of Oxford County’s rural community.

SEPTEMBER 20 | 2 - 4 PM
GROWING ORCHIDS IN CASES
Richards Memorial Church, 360 Edgeworth Avenue, London, ON N5W 5C4
The London Orchid Society meets the third Sunday of each month. Join us for Jay Norris' Presentation on Growing Orchids in Cases from Stratford, ON. His presentation is how he uses cases to create a tropical paradise for Orchids that grow better in warmer conditions. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting for more information at www.londonorchidsociety.com; contact Daryl at 519-666-2927.

SEPTEMBER 21 | 7 PM (ZOOM MEETING)
OXFORD COUNTY BRANCH – ONTARIO ANCESTORS – SEPTEMBER MEETING: MORROW SCREW AND NUT COMPANY
Richards Memorial Church, 360 Edgeworth Avenue, London, ON N5W 5C4
Please come join us for a presentation by Peg Perry. Step into the remarkable story of the Morrow Screw and Nut Company of Ingersoll, Ontario—a manufacturer whose influence reached far beyond its factory walls. This webinar explores the company’s long and eventful history, its surprising role in shaping Canadian industrial and social developments, and the deep community bonds forged through its employee programs, traditions, and multigenerational workforce. Join us to rediscover a local institution that helped build not only machines, but a vibrant social fabric that endured for decades. Visit our website at <https://oxford.ogs.on.ca> to register for this free zoom meeting. Everyone is welcome.

SEPTEMBER 29 | 10:30 - 11:30 AM
SEPTEMBER 30 | 7 - 8 PM
FUNG LOY KOK TAOIST TAI CHI® OPEN HOUSES
(Sept. 29) St. David’s United Church, Kirk Hall, 190 Springbank Ave, Woodstock
(Sept. 30) Church of the Epiphany, Basement Hall, 560 Dundas St, Woodstock
Discover the health benefits of a Taoist Tai Chi® arts introductory program to be held in the Woodstock area! Join us for a demonstration, ask questions, and learn more about our practice. For details, Email: Woodstock@taoist.org or visit www.taoist.org/locations/Woodstock or call 1-888-824-2441.

SEPTEMBER 30 | 7 PM
OXFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY ALTADORE
Chartwell Oxford Gardens, 423 Devonshire Ave, Woodstock (Main Entrance)
The only home fine enough to entertain the Prince of Wales in 1860. Come join Thomas Ryerson as he takes us through the rich history of the house on the “Round Hill” and its former occupants. Free Event, No Registration, Parking, Donations Welcome! www.oxfordhistoricalsociety.ca or email us at info@oxhs.ca

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 24 | 10 AM - 3 PM
OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY CIRCUIT BOOK (STAMP) FAIR
Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7
Free Admission & Parking. Stop in and buy some stamps and meet fellow stamp collectors. About 8 participating stamp clubs. Contact: dheaton3e3@gmail.com. Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

ONGOING CLASSES, CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

WOODSTOCK SEA CADETS AND NAVY LEAGUE CADETS ARE FREE PROGRAMS
New Address: The Oxford School, 595459 Hwy. 59, Woodstock, ON N4S 7W1. 519-539-2111

SEA CADETS:
12 – 18 years Tuesdays 6:30 – 9:00 pm
Contact: 153sea@cadets.gc.ca

NAVY LEAGUE CADETS:
9 – 12 years Wednesdays 6:30 – 9:00 pm
Contact: nlccunicorn@navyleagueon.ca

EVERY 3RD THURSDAY | 5 - 7 PM
ARTISTS OPEN MIC | POETRY, PROSE, MUSIC & MORE
Blueink Bookstore & Cafe, 491 Dundas Street, Woodstock, ON
www.blueinkbookstore.com. Go to “Events” Tab for information

and to register

FOOD TRUCKS AT GRACE UNITED CHURCH TAVISTOCK
116 Woodstock St. S. Tavistock

AUGUST 31 | 4:30 - 7:30 PM
Born2Eat, Los Rolling Tacos, Fo'Cheezy
Donations to Tavistock Agricultural Society

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM
BE FALL-ISH AND COME TO THE INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE
Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S. Ingersoll
Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! September 4 & 18, October 2, 16 & 30, November 6 & 20, and December 4.

3RD TUE. OF MONTH | 6:30 - 8:30 PM
CAREGIVER CONNECTION
Revel Realty Woodstock, 111 Huron Street (Virutal/hybrid options available)
Are you worried about your child or youth? Parents and Caregivers for Mental Health (PCMH) is here to listen, support, and walk alongside you on this journey. Our free Caregiver Connection peer support groups offer parents and caregivers a community of support. Can’t make it in person? Join one of our virtual or hybrid groups! Visit family.cmho.org or email oxfordcounty@pcmh.ca for more information.

EVERY FRIDAY | 1 PM
TILLSONBURG DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB
Tillsonbur Senior Centre, 45 Hardy Ave, Tillsonburg
Don’t have a partner? Come anyway and we will match you up with someone. For more information, visit their Facebook page: TburgBridge.

2ND TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 2 - 4 PM
4TH TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 7 - 9 PM
OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY
Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7
If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection. Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com. Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>

LAST TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH | 10 AM - 12 PM
MONTHLY VON BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC
Ingersoll Pharmsave, 19 King St. E., Ingersoll
Last Tuesday of every Month.

3RD WED. OF MONTH | 6:30 - 8:30 PM
PEER SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS
21 Wellington St., Woodstock (Virtual options available)
PCMH is a peer support program providing support to parents and caregivers across Ontario with lived experience raising children and youth with mental health challenges. For more information, please visit family.cmho.org or oxfordcounty@pcmh.ca. We are also on Facebook: Parents for Children's Mental Health ~ Oxford County

VON OXFORD SUPPORTIVE CARE PROGRAMS
Navigating any form of grief can feel overwhelming; however, with the right support, guidance, and education, individuals can discover a pathway to healing.
VON Oxford Supportive Care Programs offer assistance for grief stemming from various circumstances, such as the death of someone, caregiving, serious illness diagnoses, and life transitions. Through education, connection, and compassion, our programs create a safe space for individuals to explore their emotions and learn effective coping mechanisms during the grieving process
Contact us today to learn more about VON Oxford Supportive Care Programs. Email: oxford.griefsupport@von.ca, Phone: 1-888-866-7518. All Programs are Free-of-charge.

OXFORD COUNTY DIABETES EDUCATION PROGRAM
Are you looking for support with your Diabetes? Our Team of Registered Nurses, Registered Dietitians and a Social Worker is here to support YOUR goals. We can help with medication adjustments, lifestyle and diet changes, stress management, weight reduction strategies and more. Appointments are available at Alexandra Hospital Ingersoll and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital and by phone. **SELF REFERRALS ARE WELCOME.** Please call 519-485-9611 to book an appointment. Let’s work together!

COMING EVENTS

THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF OXFORD COUNTY

The Optimists bring out the best in Youth, Community, and Themselves. If anyone is interested in coming out to meet us and learn more about us please email brenda7621@outlook.com

THE LIONS CLUB OF WOODSTOCK

The Lions Club of Woodstock has been serving the community and Oxford County with kindness and generosity since 1931. The Lions always place the needs of neighbours and communities first. Through the dedication and hard work of our volunteer members, we are serving those in need together. If you are interested in becoming a member or simply wish to learn more by attending one of our monthly meetings, please email Steve Iorio at steveiorio4@gmail.com for more information.

OXFORD COUNTY BRANCH OF ONTARIO ANCESTORS

Are you looking to start a summer pastime? Are you interested in your family history? Oxford Branch has an extensive collection of family history and genealogical resources that can help you.
Come visit our Resource Centre at 82 Light Street, Courthouse Square, Woodstock. We are open Tuesdays to Thursdays 10:00 am to 4:00 pm
Volunteers are ready to help you get started or help you research for missing information. You can also connect with us on the web at <https://oxford.ogs.on.ca>. We are dedicated to supporting and promoting genealogical research in Oxford County. Hope to see you through the summer!

BEACHVILLE LEGION EVENTS: 434852 ZorraLine, Beachville

WEDNESDAYS | 7-8 PM GENTLE CHAIR YOGA

WEDNESDAYS | 7:30 PM HUMP DAY DARTS, FREE POOL

THURSDAYS | 7 PM EUCHRE

FRIDAYS | 8 PM DARTS, FREE POOL

SEPTEMBER 16, 30 | 4:30 - 6 PM OX ON THE RUN MOBILE LIBRARY

THURSDAYS | 7 PM LINE DANCING

Salsa and West Coast Swing 8:15. No partner required.

SEPTEMBER 11 | DOORS OPEN 6 PM BINGO STARTS AT 7 PM OXFORD COUNTY FELINE WELLNESS BINGO

SEPTEMBER 13 | 1 - 4 PM THAMES VALLEY BLUEGRASS AND OLD TIME COUNTRY PICKERS

Open Mic (acoustic only). Come enjoy the music!

SEPTEMBER 19 | BRANCH OPENS 2 PM, CENOTAPH SERVICE 2:30 PM, BBQ 5 PM SATURDAY SEPT 19 100TH ANNIVERSARY/OPEN HOUSE/ STEAK BBQ

Social time follows. See the display of artifacts related to Beachville soldiers and their military service. Steak BBQ 5 pm. To order call 519-423-6363 or rl495.suppers@gmail.com

SEPTEMBER 20 | 1 - 4 PM THAMES VALLEY BLUEGRASS AND OLD TIME COUNTRY PICKERS

Open Mic (acoustic only) BBQ and Open House

SEPTEMBER 26 | 7 - 11 PM KARAOKE WITH KEN PYLE. FREE POOL

ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION BRANCH 55 EVENTS: 642 Dundas St, Woodstock, ON

MONDAYS (STARTING SEPT. 14) CADETS

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS (&WEDNESDAYS STARTING SEPTEMBER 2) DART LEAGUE

THURSDAYS (STARTING SEPT. 10) | 1:30 PM SHUFFLEBOARD

FRIDAYS CANTEEN IS CLOSED

Until sometime in October.

SATURDAYS | 7 - 11 PM EVENING ENTERTAINMENT:

SEPTEMBER 12TH - DJ WOLFEMAN

SEPTEMBER 19TH - DJ KELLY (MUST HAVE A TICKET FOR THIS DANCE) 7-12AM

SEPTEMBER 26TH - NORTSHORE RAMBLERS

SEPTEMBER 19 | 12 - 4 PM OPEN HOUSE

BBQ, Music, History and much more. Bring your family and friends to learn more about this Branch. Followed that night with our Hawaii Dance 7-12am if you purchased a ticket.

SEPTEMBER 20 | 1:30 PM BATTLE OF BRITAIN IN INGERSOLL PARADE

SEPTEMBER 23 | 10 AM SERVICE OFFICER VISIT

SEPTEMBER 27 | 5 - 6 PM FAMILY DINNER FISH N CHIPS

Set price with dessert extra, per-order and pay no later September 23rd contact rlbranch55@rogers.com or 519-537-3112 to order.

OCTOBER 3 POPPY CAMPAIGN STARTS

Reminder that our Poppy campaign is coming up next month is starts October 24th and runs till November 10th, we will be needing as many volunteers as possible so please come out, have fun but most of all support your Legion and Veterans.

OCTOBER 24 BAKE SALE

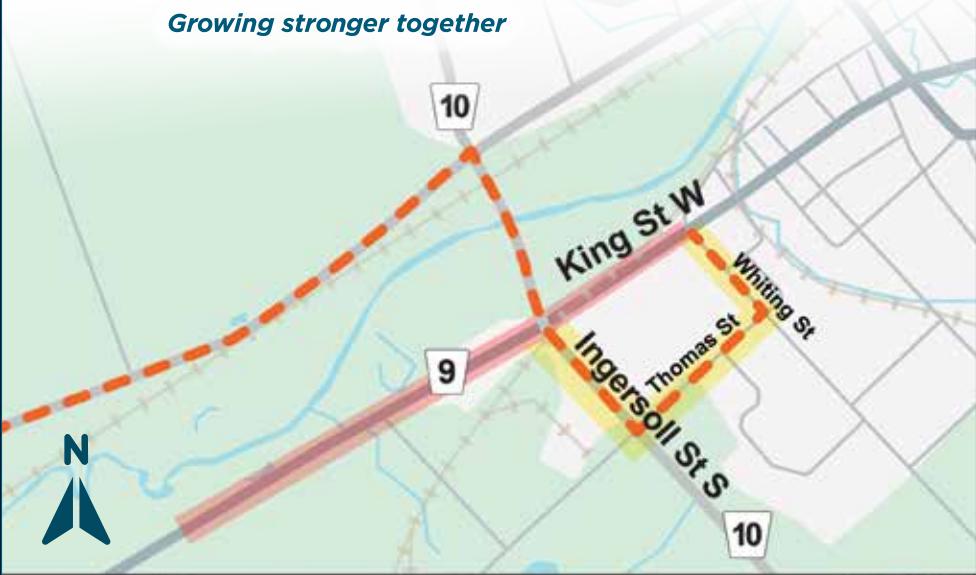
Reminder about our Bake sale October 3rd we will need donations as well as baked goods for this event.

DECEMBER 18 100TH ANNIVERSARY GALA

Did you know it is the 100th anniversary of the Royal Canadian Legion and Branch 55 Woodstock, Ontario? We provide support to cadets, Veterans and local youth among many other things. Support our 100th anniversary gala either with a prize donation or monetary donation. More details by emailing rlbranch55@rogers.com



Additional detour



Full detour



LEGEND

Project area

General detour route

Additional detour area

Construction

Oxford Roads 9 and 10 intersection, Ingersoll

Intersection of Oxford Road 9 (Hamilton Road / King Street West) and Oxford Road 10 (Ingersoll Street South) will be closed to east and westbound traffic

Construction at the intersection of Oxford Road 9 and Oxford Road 10 is expected to begin the week of September 14, 2026, and is expected to be completed in November 2026.

Access to the intersection will be maintained for north and southbound traffic, but traffic travelling east and west will need to use the additional detour.

Detour: Ingersoll Street South, Thomas Street and Whiting Street

Construction on Oxford Road 9, from CPKC Railway west to the Town of Ingersoll boundary is still ongoing and the existing detour is still in place:

Existing detour: Oxford Road 10 (Ingersoll Street North), Road 60, Elgin Road and Hamilton Road

The entire project is expected to be completed in December 2026. Please note construction schedules are weather dependent and subject to change based on contractor availability and other factors.

Please help keep our community and workers safe: respect work zones, obey traffic signs, and maintain a safe distance from equipment and vehicles entering and leaving the site.

Learn more at www.oxfordcounty.ca/IngersollOR9

For information and updates follow Oxford County on social media or visit www.oxfordcounty.ca/construction

CORRECTION:

KC AND THE SUNSHINE BAND TRIBUTE

The date for this event was incorrectly published as September 10.

The correct date is Saturday, September 19 at 1:30 p.m.

at Old St. Paul’s Church, 723 Dundas St., Woodstock.

We apologize for the error and any inconvenience caused.

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CLASSIFIEDS

TREES

For Sale: Shade Trees; Maples, Oaks, Birch, Beech, Honey Locusts, Elms, Magnolia, Hydrangea Tree, Tulip Tree, Crab apples, Ivory Silk Lilac, Chanticleer Pear, Golden Weeping Willows and more. Apples, Pears, Peaches, Plums, Apricots, Nectarine, Blueberry, Haskap etc. Lots of healthy strong Spruce, Cedars and White Pine for your privacy hedges and windbreaks. Hundred of flowering shrubs.

Reg Hours 7am- 6pm Mon-Sat at Martins Nursery c/o Emanuel Martin. 42661 Orangehill Rd., Wroxeter, ON

GARAGE SALE

RETIREMENT GARAGE SALE

TOOL! TOOL! TOOLS!
AND HOUSHOLD ITEMS

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2026
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

132 LOSSING DR., NORWICH

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Koalas
2. Switzerland
3. Ganymede (Jupiter)
4. Australia
5. Mercury
6. Sir Isaac Newton
7. United Nations
8. Rebecca
9. Shark
10. Tariff

SUDOKU SOLUTION

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

OBITUARY

ARLENE DENISE BAILEY



Arlene Denise Bailey (nee Penny) passed away peacefully on Monday, August 24, 2026, at Caressant Care Woodstock, at the age of 92.

Predeceased by her husband, Reg Bailey (2010), and her son, Shane Bailey (surviving spouse Shelley Finlay) (January 2026).

Loving Mom to Michele (Don) Fulkerson, Marla (Kevin) Boakes and Melissa (Denis) Brolese.

Loving Grandma of Jared (Cynthia) Fulkerson, Zach (Morgan) Fulkerson, Christopher (Brandie) Bailey, Kimberly Bailey, Bethany Bailey, Aaron (Alicia) Boakes, Ethan Boakes, Mitchel Brolese and Brock (fiancée Kayla Schelhaas) Brolese.

Proud Great Grandma of Hallie Fulkerson, Alli Bailey, Danika, Ainsley and Emmett Boakes.

Dear Sister of Durelle (Rene) DeCooman, Sandra (John) Rutherford and Brent (Julie) Penny. Fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews, friends and neighbours.

Daughter of the late Merton and Norma Penny and the late Sister-in-law Marjorie (late John Simser)

Arlene grew up on the Penny Family Farm in Hatchley near Norwich, Ontario, graduated as a Registered Nurse from Woodstock General Hospital in 1954, with employment at Woodstock General Hospital and Oxford Regional Centre in Woodstock. Arlene attended Oxford Baptist Church and enjoyed music, short travels, being outdoors, and having conversations with everyone she knew.

Our family would like to thank the staff at Langdon Retirement Home and Caressant Care Woodstock for their care and kindness to our Mom over the past 2 years.

Funeral took place at Brock and Viser, followed by Interment at Norwich Gore Cemetery.

Donations may be given to Oxford Baptist Church or Sakura House.

info@theecho.ca

OBITUARY

JANET ILENE LEBOLD



After a courageous battle with cancer, Janet Ilene Lebold (née Melton) passed away peacefully on September 5th, 2026 in her 84th year.

Beloved wife of Jack Lebold. Devoted mother of Jeff (Paula) and Dianne (Mike). Dear Grandma to Brandon, Amanda, Matthew, and Meghan (Jack). Loving Great Grandma to Olivia and Myles. Faithful sister to Harold Melton (pre deceased) and Jean McKay

(Bill, predeceased). Sweet sister-in-law to Lorraine and Barb (Bill, predeceased). Janet was also a cherished Aunt to many nieces and nephews.

There wasn't anyone who didn't love Janet. She dedicated her life to others whether it was as a nurse, member of Kinettes, Alzheimers Society, and Norwich Curling Club. Janet adored her church family at St. David's United Church.

The family would like to thank all the doctors and nurses at the Verspeeten Family Cancer Centre in London and the Woodstock Cancer Clinic. Special gratitude to Sakura House - Woodstock. They would also like to say how grateful they are for everyone who called, sent flowers and cards, or dropped off food for Janet. It is so much appreciated.

Visitation to be held at the Smith-LeRoy Chapel of the Glendinning Funeral Home, 69 Wellington St. North, Woodstock from 4:00 to 7:00 pm. on Friday, September 11, 2026. Funeral service to be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 12, 2026 at St. David's United Church, 190 Springbank Ave., Woodstock, Ontario. Reception to follow in the Kirk Hall.

In lieu of flowers, Janet requested donations be made to St. David's United Church or VON Sakura House - Woodstock. Personal condolences may be shared at www.smithleroy.com.

Show Your Community Spirit.
Support Local News!

CLASSIFIEDS

OBITUARY

ANNA MARIA
ADELAIDE
COCCO
(MARCH 17, 1932 – AUGUST 29, 2026)



Anna Maria Adelaide Cocco (née Dal Lago), passed away peacefully after a long and fulfilling life, surrounded by her family on August 29, 2026, at Woodstock General Hospital. She was 94.

Anna Maria was born in Valdagno, a town in northern Italy near the foothills of the Alps, to Antonio Dal Lago and Paola Visonà. She spent her childhood active in sports, from playing basketball to

skiing, even travelling into the mountains by motorcycle with her skis strapped to the side. Later she worked as a telephone operator, where she was valued for having all 100 telephone numbers in town memorized.

In the late 1950s, she followed her soon-to-be husband, Carmelo Cocco, to Canada. They spent a short time living in Toronto, where they were married, before settling in Woodstock where they raised their daughter, Giulia. As a family, they loved camping in the summer and skiing in the winter. Anna Maria worked at the Harvey Woods factory in Woodstock for 26 years before retiring.

After Carmelo's untimely death in 1983, Anna Maria met Silvano, and they remained together until his death in 2021. With Silvano, Anna Maria's love of travel took her around the world, and they enjoyed many holidays together. She especially looked forward to spending her winters in Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, and visiting all the friends she made there, although she said her favourite place of all was Costa Rica. Through her travels, she made many longtime friends with whom she kept in touch.

Anna Maria always enjoyed being social and active. She loved going dancing and playing cards with her friends and was always ready to offer guests food and her strong Moka pot coffee. She filled her life with the people and activities she loved.

In her downtime, she enjoyed reading, gardening, sewing and knitting, and watched a movie almost every night before bed. She loved opera, ballet, and theatre, fondly remembering her father knowing many opera songs and singing them to her when she was young.

She also loved being in the kitchen and cooking, always going all-out for holiday meals and making sure there was cake and a bottle of Prosecco ready for every birthday celebration. Although her specialty was traditional Italian cooking, she was always excited to try foods from different cultures.

One of Anna Maria's greatest joys was her family. She loved children and animals and always looked forward to seeing her grandchildren. She will be lovingly remembered by her daughter Giulia (Marty), granddaughter Stacie, and grandson Richard (Tabitha).

Her family would like to extend their thanks to everyone involved in Anna Maria's care, including doctors, hospital staff, and PSWs.

Some of Anna Maria's final words of advice were "do what you want as much as you can, because you never know when you won't be able to anymore."

At Anna Maria's request, there will be no funeral service. A burial will take place at a later date at St. Mary's Cemetery in Woodstock, where she will be laid to rest alongside Carmelo.

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