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(PHOTO COURTESY OF UNIFOR)

General Motors has announced an end to the production of the BrightDrop EV delivery vans in Ingersoll. The federal government said it will work closely with all parties involved to find a new vehicle to produce at the facility.

General Motors shuttering production in Ingersoll

Future of the massive CAMI plant unclear

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

General Motors is ending the BrightDrop delivery van production at its CAMI plant in Ingersoll.

Employees found out this morning via a letter signed by GM Canada's managing director, Kristian Aquilina, and plant director Bill Harkness.

"Team – today we shared some difficult

news. GM has made the decision to end production of BrightDrop due to slower-than-expected market growth. This means team members at CAMI will remain on layoff. We will be assessing the site for future opportunities," stated the letter.

GM added the vehicle's production isn't being moved elsewhere. Ingersoll Mayor Brian Petrie said today's news was tough

to take.

"They've been through hell for a long time now, and this is just one more nail, as they say. We have gone through a lot and I think we can get through this as well."

On the positive side, Petrie said the plant isn't closing, but the announcement will have wide-ranging effects on the economy.

"We know that only 10 per cent of its

Continued on page 2

Wilmot councillor talks development

Wilkinson says slow and steady is council's priority

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Wilmot Township is in the midst of public consultations on a new official plan and Wilmot Ward 2 Coun. Kris Wilkinson wants residents to be assured council will use a responsible lens for future growth.

Next up in the process is a special meeting of council on Nov. 17 where the public is invited to listen to the feedback provided on the work behind the scenes.

"Right now, the process is to gather information from individuals to look at housing, commercial and employment needs, wastewater servicing, and so forth, which is great," said Wilkinson. "Council has been involved in two direct meetings where we have been able to give feedback."

The township must follow the most recent planning guidelines from the province which means there is a real potential for growth in the near future.

"We have looked at areas we want to see potential development, and we put together a map where we would like to see growth. We planned to have roughly another 10,000 people in this area which would cap our population at 32,000. That coincides directly with what we have available in our wastewater

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Future uncertain for CAMI employees as GM pulls plug on BrightDrop

Continued from page 1

workforce lives in Ingersoll, but there is a reason why this is national news. This affects more than just the town.”

CAMI contributes 12 per cent of the town’s tax base, something not lost on the mayor.

“We have to prepare for that. It’s always been a rough go with taxes, but we are trying to work with GM on that to find a better solution. The premier and the prime minister had no problem showing up when times were good, announcing money; they need to show up when times are tough and help us out.”

In April 2022, the federal government and the province each committed \$259 million to GM’s facilities – including the CAMI plant in Ingersoll – to support a large-scale transformation into electric-vehicle production.

The funding was part of a broader \$2-billion investment by GM to convert the CAMI plant and other Ontario facilities for EV production. The facility change was meant to make CAMI the first full-scale commercial electric-vehicle production facility in Canada.

“Obviously tough news this morning for the workers in Ingersoll,” stated Innovation, Science and Industry Minister Melanie Joly.

Joly and Oxford MP Arpan Khanna sparred during Question Period on Tuesday. Khanna said the auto sector has been hit yet again as Canada continues to

be hit by U.S. tariffs.

“This adds to the 2,200 job losses in Oshawa and the 3,000 announced in Brampton. The Liberals have sold out our auto workers, so will the prime minister finally admit he has lost control of the wheel and is driving our auto sector off the cliff?”

Joly said she is looking forward to working with Khanna to find solutions and added her government will fight for the jobs of CAMI employees.

“This morning, we were already on the phone with the company to be in solution mode, with Unifor, (Premier) Doug Ford and (Ontario Minister of Economic Development) Vic Fedeli. Our goal is to bring back a new model to Ingersoll, and we’re on it.”

Khanna added he received a call from a CAMI employee Tuesday morning who said he is in dire straits financially.

“He doesn’t know how he will pay for his mortgage. He doesn’t know how he will feed his family. There is a real sense of anxiety in our community. The Liberals blew millions on EVs and now workers and their families are paying the price.”

Joly said her goal is to bring jobs back to Ingersoll and added the government will continue to work with the Americans to eliminate the unjustified tariffs against the auto sector.

Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman said the provincial government is in close contact with GM and other labour partners.

“I know this is especially tough for our workers in Oxford, and we will be doing everything we can to support them after this disappointing announcement. GM also knows that its Ontario operations are a big part of its success, and that is why they are exploring new opportunities for the CAMI plant. We have strong safeguards in place to ensure that provincial funding delivers real results, and we will review GM’s decision closely to ensure all agreements are respected and enforced.”

Despite the announcement of the end of production in Ingersoll, Petrie is optimistic the company will be able to come up with a plan for the manufacturing facility.

“This isn’t going to get better tomorrow, that’s for sure, but GM is a great partner. When we have conversations, I know they want to be here. They’ve put a lot of investment into that plant and it’s a hard market for them with all the uncertainty. How do you make an announcement on anything right now? It’s really concerning.”

Unifor, the union representing CAMI employees, is putting the blame south of the border despite the delivery van’s slow sales.

“The reality is that CAMI was hit from both directions by Trump as he aggressively acted to undo EV supports and hit Canadian auto assembly plants with a 25 per-cent tariff,” said Unifor national president Lana Payne. “Now, more than 1,000 workers and their families are paying the

price for Trump’s political interference and GM’s failure to hold the line.”

The announcement affects Unifor Local 88 members currently on layoff after the plant was idled in May. At the time, GM cited slowing commercial-EV demand, but today’s decision confirms a full end to the BrightDrop line.

“We have a lot of members with decades of dedication to GM who are now abandoned,” said Unifor Local 88 president Mike Van Boekel. “These are highly skilled workers who delivered for this company and this community. They deserve a future at CAMI – not a dead end.”

The letter given to employees said GM will work with Unifor to follow the provisions of the collective agreement, which includes full pay for the next six months and additional supports.

“Over the next days and weeks, you will have many questions. I encourage you to talk to your HR representative or Unifor representatives. . . . We will also support our salaried workforce during this transition,” it added.

“We want to emphasize that this decision has nothing to do with the performance of our CAMI team. You have an outstanding reputation and track record for building award-winning, high-quality vehicles and have been committed to the BrightDrop business.”

Three-hundred employees were set to return to one production shift this month



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Responsible growth key in Wilmot’s new official plan

Continued from page 1
treatment plant available to us.”

Growth in the township is projected to occur over the next 25 years and the approved sections (as seen on the attached map) could include residential areas along with light commercial opportunities and some industrial areas. Wilkinson explained the plan is to bridge the area between Baden and New Hamburg.

“It will allow us to grow without adding too much density. I’m not necessarily opposed to growth, but I want to make sure we do it the right way. What I am hearing from residents is they want to see single-family home opportunities that allow people to own property. That aligns with areas that are going to be high-density housing.”

Wilkinson added putting a high-rise apartment building in downtown Baden or New Hamburg wouldn’t be a good fit.

“We are trying to keep in line with what a small community is and what our rural agricultural community is but knowing that we have a lightly populated urban area. We are trying to keep in the spirit of that. Part of what we are trying to do is make sure we have employment opportunities.”

He said it is important to note residential development will occur north of the rail line, while industrial is slated for south of the rail line.

“This is pretty traditional in the way we have developed in the past. Because it’s happening south of Snyders Road and north of the highway, we already have a lot of existing infrastructure in the area. We’ve got sewers, gas lines, electrical and water hookups. There is an opportunity for us to build up these neighbourhoods and build massive infrastructure to service some of these areas.”

The councillor agreed it is hard to predict when any type of residential building could begin in the area with the current state of the homebuilding industry, and the township may not see much residential

development in the near future.

“One of the things we need to see is the financing costs for builders come down. That’s not the business I’m in, unfortunately, but as interest rates continue to drop, we might see that happen. We also have to see what the economic factors are.”

Wilkinson alluded to the current trade war and tariffs as a barrier to development that is having a direct impact on the cost of the goods needed to build.

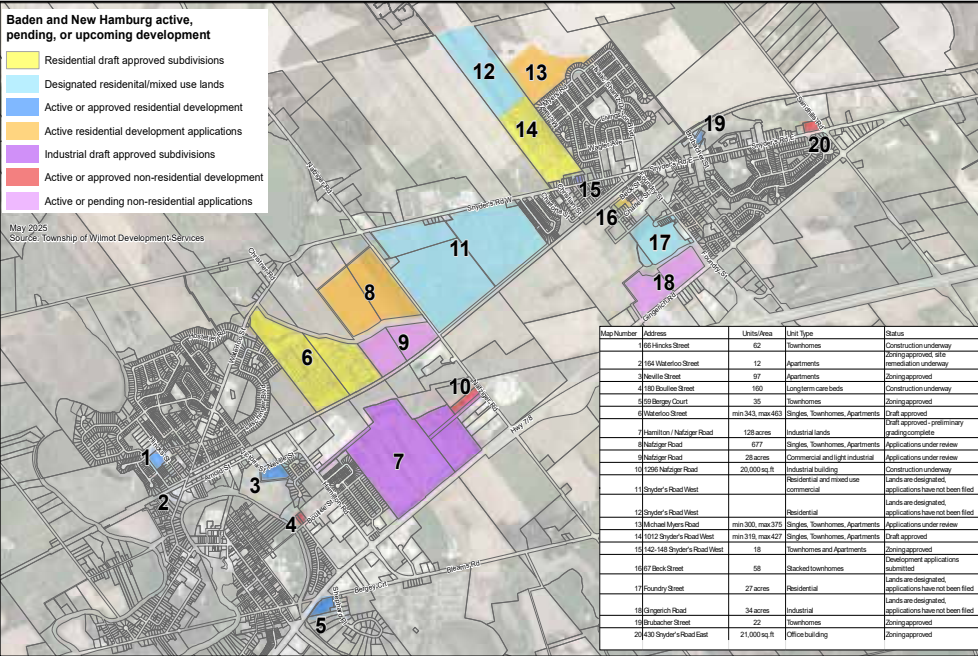
“That’s on the developers. We can approve it, but we have to give them time and the opportunity before we look into ways to incentivize them. We don’t want to heavily incentivize them to build because we might be overrun in a very short period of time. I’d rather have it slow and controlled, moving at a pace that is controllable for us.”

He added outlying areas such as Petersburg and St. Agatha aren’t currently on the development radar because they don’t have the needed infrastructure. He also said it isn’t easy to say no to a developer, but what’s best for the township comes first.

“My philosophy is let’s work with developers in a way that’s going to make our township happy and plan desirable neighbourhoods. Let’s not overwhelm anyone with buildings no one wants to see. If we were to turn down a neighbourhood, there is a good chance they are going to go to the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT), and I would hazard to guess 95 per cent of the developments that go there get approved in their original form.”

Wilkinson said he’d rather work with developers to make sure Wilmot is building things that are appropriate and within the township’s control.

“Instead of wasting tax dollars on legal fees and fighting at the OLT, we are going to make sure we do it appropriately from that side. That’s the way I am looking at it. It’s a reasonable plan that is going to be cost-effective.”



(IMAGE COURTESY OF WILMOT TOWNSHIP)
Coun. Kris Wilkinson said Wilmot Township is ready to grow responsibly as the new official plan is in the works. Areas eight and nine on the map have been approved for development.

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B.C. singer-songwriter and former New Hamburg resident to perform benefit concert for Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Though he hasn't lived in New Hamburg for 17 years, B.C. singer-songwriter Keith "Papa" Thom says when he reached out to the Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre to ask if he could perform in a benefit concert to support the organization as part of his cross-country tour, the staff remembered him immediately and agreed to take him up on the offer.

Over the past few weeks, Thom has logged more than 4,300 kilometres as he's travelled from his current home in Peachland, B.C. – where he also serves as deputy mayor – to Ontario, stopping along the way to perform in concerts that raise money for organizations, charities and non-profits that serve the unhoused and undernourished.

"My next stop is Toronto and then I have to go to Ottawa to do a benefit for Homes For Heroes subsidized housing for our veterans," Thom told the Gazette last week. "It's kind of fun; I don't make a darn cent, but man, I'm having a good time."

"... From 2009-2014, I literally traversed the country in January, February and March cooking shepherd's pie in homeless shelters, which was quite a thing. My wife, for some odd, peculiar reason, doesn't want me to do anymore winters, so I thought this would be a good alternative. I'm not cooking shepherd's pie this time, but I'm trying to raise money for lots of different charities that need the help."



(PHOTO)

As part of a cross-country tour raising money for organizations that provide support for the unhoused and undernourished, B.C. singer-songwriter and former New Hamburg resident Keith "Papa" Thom will perform at St. George Anglican Church in New Hamburg with all proceeds going to support the Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre. Photo courtesy of Keith "Papa" Thom

At 71, Thom recently released his first studio album, "Legacy," filled with his original folk songs that span more than 50 years of songwriting, dating all the way

back to 1973. Thom said he made the album as something to leave behind for his kids. Now, after taking the album overseas to Holland and Germany with great success, he has been performing from his new album, along with covers of some well-loved folk favourites, for audiences across the country as part of this tour.

Thom said the New Hamburg show came about because of his connection with the town and the Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre.

"I lived in New Hamburg 17 years ago, so it's kind of my hometown," he said. "It's going to be really nice doing that benefit concert because there will be familiar faces in the audience for once. ... I thought it would be nice because I saw what (the resource centre) did for the community, plus they have a foodbank, and it sort of fits all the criteria for what I would like to raise funds for. I know when I lived in New Hamburg, I saw the good work they did myself first hand, so that was kind of an encouragement to go back for them."

The concert, which will comprise original and cover music as well as some good old-fashioned storytelling, will take place at St. George Anglican Church in New Hamburg from 3-5 p.m. Oct. 25. Admission is by donation and all proceeds, along with five dollars from every CD Thom sells, will go the Wilmot & Wellesley Resource Centre. The church will also provide drinks and refreshments.

For more information, visit www.papa-thom.com.

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Nith Terrace: The heart of a close-knit seniors' community in New Hamburg

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Gazette Reporter

Tucked away on Waterloo Street in New Hamburg, Nith Terrace Seniors' Apartments stands as more than just a place to live – it's a thriving community built on friendship, independence and pride.

The 30-unit complex, built in 1982, offers affordable, independent living for seniors through a rent-geared-to-income model. With mostly one-bedroom apartments and a few two-bedroom units, Nith Terrace has become a sought-after housing option in Wilmot Township, with a waitlist of around 60 people.

But beyond the numbers, what makes Nith Terrace special is how it's run – and who keeps it running.

"We are not a charity, we don't accept donations and we do not provide receipts," said John Hanson, president of the Nith Terrace Seniors' Apartments board. "We are governed by a volunteer board of directors – five members who provide the governance. It's a free-standing operation that's self-sustaining in its current form."

The project was originally launched through a donation of land from the New Hamburg Board of Trade, a Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) mortgage and regional subsidies. Four decades later, it remains one of the few personally owned, non-government-affiliated senior apartment buildings in the region.

"The rent-pricing model has evolved over time, but today, our mission is to provide affordable senior housing at about 80 per cent of market rate," Hanson explained. "This is a very important component of senior housing in the Township of Wilmot."

With a community lounge, games room, laundry facilities and shared kitchen and

meeting spaces, the building's layout encourages connection and activity. Yet it's the residents themselves who make Nith Terrace feel like home.

"The people here get along really great," said property manager Nelson Dusky, who has overseen the building for 24 years. "Everybody sort of looks after each other. They're not nosy, but if something happens, the tenants help one another."

That sense of camaraderie is reflected in the many social events hosted throughout the year – from barbecues and potlucks to spaghetti and lasagna dinners. Monthly fundraisers and special gatherings, like free Christmas dinners, also bring residents together.

"A lot of our tenants go above and beyond, like looking after the flower beds and taking care of things around the building," Dusky said. "They really take pride in the place."

For resident Dorothy Harding, it's that neighbourly spirit that defines Nith Terrace.

"We really do look out for each other here," she said. "We're really like a family."

The apartments also offer practical conveniences – affordable rent with utilities and cable included, free parking and individual thermostats in each unit. Its downtown location is another major perk.

"Living here is really convenient because it's in the downtown area," said tenant Paul Ilgner. "You can get places easily, and our son lives close by, which makes it even better."

While residents enjoy the comforts of home, the board remains focused on ensuring Nith Terrace's long-term sustainability.

"We're currently having a facility condition audit and reserve study done by an engineering firm," Hanson said. "With a 43-year-old building, we're planning for the future – repairs, upgrades and keeping

everything in good shape. Today, the facility is in very good condition."

That approach has earned Nith Terrace a reputation far beyond New Hamburg.

"Nith Terrace has been referred to as a bit of a poster child for how to run a seniors' apartment," Hanson said. "It's been

used as a model for other regions as well."

For the residents who call it home, though, the success of Nith Terrace isn't measured in reports or studies – it's in the friendships formed, the gardens tended and the sense of belonging that fills its halls every day.



(AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE PHOTOS)

Property manager Nelson Dusky stands by the front sign and garden at Nith Terrace Seniors' Apartments. Dusky has managed the building for 24 years and says the residents' community spirit keeps it thriving.



Resident Ervin Wagler says he enjoys living at Nith Terrace Seniors' Apartments, where neighbours look out for one another and take pride in the building's upkeep.



Paul and Marg Ilgner, residents at Nith Terrace Seniors' Apartments in New Hamburg, say they enjoy the convenience of living close to downtown and their family.

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The Halloween architect of Goldschmidt Crescent

SCOTT DUNSTALL

Gazette Correspondent

It started as a small Halloween party decoration display. Ten years later, it's a full-scale neighbourhood phenomenon.

Gayle Asselstine has become something of a local legend – especially if you're a kid in Baden. I met Asselstine last year around this time when I was president of the New Hamburg Optimist Club. One of our initiatives was co-sponsoring a "Best Home Halloween Decoration" contest. Entries were posted to the Show Us Your Wilmot photo-sharing Facebook page, and winners were determined by community reactions. It wasn't a surprise who won.

Asselstine is a single mom of two boys, both in their late teens and early 20s. By day, she's an accountant with experience at BlackBerry, and currently works as a fractional chief financial officer for two start-ups. One is a multinational based in New York, the other a local business run by a female entrepreneur in her late 20s. She doesn't just do the financials – she genuinely invests in the success of these ventures. She's especially passionate about supporting women carving their own paths.

But that's just one side of her. What makes Asselstine's story fascinating is the contrast. We tend to assume financial professionals are all spreadsheets and caution tape – safe, practical, maybe even creatively limited. Asselstine destroys that notion completely.

What began as a low-key effort to add a little atmosphere to her Halloween street party soon turned into something more after she noticed the reactions. Her first full display had people stopping on the sidewalk and even knocking on her door to ask how she'd created such realistic effects. That reaction lit a spark.

The next year, she upped the ante. Every display built more buzz, more wonder and more foot traffic. I visited her house again this year on Goldschmidt Crescent, tucked behind the castle in Baden, and I'm still processing what I saw. I promised not to reveal the theme – no spoilers allowed – but it's wild. Think creatures emerging from her lawn, some guy walking a plank and absolutely no room for a car in her driveway or garage until after the

31st. Every inch is dedicated to the display. Can't tell you what it is and it's making me batty – get it?

And here's the kicker: she builds it all herself. No crew. No designers. Just Asselstine, a bunch of shipping pallets, pool noodles, hot wax melts and a very active imagination. She sources materials from Halloween outlets and hardware stores alike. Her workshop looks like a cross between a construction site and an art studio, and it's active year-round. Halloween isn't a seasonal hobby for her. It's creative therapy – her way to recharge and stay connected to something deeply personal.

She's self-taught. No background in set design. No online courses. Just a willingness to try something new and keep building on it. Her garage is full of partially completed projects, and she never really declares a

display "finished." There's always something more she could do. Always one more detail to tweak. She says she doesn't sleep. She sleeps even less at this time of the year just thinking through ideas and how to execute and create.

To anyone who visits her street, please be watchful of kiddos and parents and please also consider something else. She estimates that she spends at least \$3,000 per year! What would she normally be paid for a consulting hour as a skilled and seasoned accountant? For the hours she commits to this, I could buy something new and shiny for my driveway.

She does not want or ask for compensation. I've met her. She would never allow or consider it because it's always been for herself and the community, unless it was for a special group or organization important to her. She has kept a donation spot for a group or cause that has meaning. This year, she has one that is very personal to her. On the display near the sidewalk will be a donation spot for McMaster Children's Hospital (See QR code below to donate).

Enjoy the scary fruit from the work of this extraordinary woman in our community.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF SCOTT DUNSTALL)

Scott Dunstall awards Gayle Asselstine in 2023 for winning The New Hamburg Optimists/New Hamburg Board of Trade "Home Halloween Decorating Contest" open to all residents in Wilmot Township.

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Tavistock Scotiabank branch closing next spring

Company laying off staff in the name of efficiency

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Scotiabank is cutting jobs and closing physical branches, including the one at 23 Hope St. S in Tavistock.

Bank clients have been given a letter as they visit the branch.

“You may have noticed habits have changed considerably over the past few years, with many day-to-day transactions now being completed online and using mobile banking. As a result, we’ve seen a reduction in visitors at several of our branches.”

Scotiabank’s district vice president, Victor Zamin, signed the letter and goes on to say the branch is moving its operations to Woodstock at 385 Springbank Ave. N.

“The change will take effect on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 11 a.m.”

A sign on the bank’s front door states the ABMs will be removed at 8 a.m. on the same day. That sign does not mention the branch closure.

Scotiabank spokesperson Claire Dawson said in a statement that finding ways to be more efficient is a part of managing the bank effectively.

“We will continue to prioritize and invest in areas that best meet the needs of clients and deliver sustainable growth.”

No details were provided regarding the scale of the upcoming job cuts. However, in 2023, Scotiabank reduced its global workforce by about three per cent, or roughly 2,700 positions. As of the third quarter, which ended July 31, the bank employed 87,317 people.

The Tavistock branch employs six people. There has been no word yet if any of them will be offered positions elsewhere or if their jobs will be eliminated.

Tech expert Carmi Levy said the closure shouldn’t come as a surprise as banks have been consistently trimming their branch network in recent years in a quest to cut costs and drive efficiencies.

“The usual excuse is based on the shift toward online banking and digital services. If more customers are managing their relationships with their banks via apps and websites, then there’s less need over time to visit an actual brick-and-mortar branch.”

He added with younger customers increasingly likely to never set foot in a branch at all, it’s easy to understand why banks are in such a rush to divest themselves of expensive real estate and similarly expensive employees.

“The cold reality of banking is branch-based transactions are significantly more expensive than any other form of

transaction. So, if banks can motivate users to spend more time in their apps and less time in their branches, they can save the tremendous overhead associated with having to manage real estate and people in pursuit of profit,” he added.

Part of the challenge for some people, particularly seniors, is a lack of trust when it comes to performing any type of financial transactions online. Levy said people’s skepticism is understandable.

“There is no such thing as 100 per cent secure technology. Every digital service comes with its own set of risks. That said, online banking has been around long enough that financial institutions have had years to implement multiple layers of fairly comprehensive protections against fraud and other forms of financial cybercrime.”

While too many Canadians continue to fall victim to financial crimes on digital platforms, the risks aren’t enough to deter the majority of customers from using e-commerce tools. The convenience and efficiency are simply too much of a draw. With better education and awareness, Canadians can continue to close the cybersecurity gap and reduce their exposure to digital fraud.

Levy added banks may be closing their branches at a rapid clip, but they still maintain sizeable customer service

departments.

“While some customers may be more comfortable with bringing their affairs into a branch and meeting an employee in person, they will have to find new ways of engaging with helpful employees if their branch is shuttered.”

He said anyone not comfortable with online banking would do well to enlist the assistance of a trusted family member, friend, or financial advisor to help navigate the array of resources available to those who no longer have access to a local branch.

“They’re out there, even if finding them isn’t always as apparent as it could be.”

Levy explained the removal of brick-and-mortar branches impacts certain communities and customer types more than others, including rural areas, smaller towns and Indigenous communities.

“Customers who aren’t as comfortable with technology, often but not always senior citizens, are particularly vulnerable. This is a challenge that both industry and government need to figure out, otherwise too many Canadians will find themselves on the wrong side of the financial digital services divide. It isn’t acceptable for banks to pad their bottom line at the expense of a quiet minority of Canadians who still want to do their banking face-to-face.”

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Empty Bowls for Haiti returns, offering a delicious way to make a difference

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

The community came together on Saturday, Oct. 18, for Empty Bowls for Haiti at Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden.

Guests enjoyed a warm bowl of soup, live music and great company, all while helping to support important projects in Haiti. For \$35, guests chose a beautiful handcrafted pottery bowl made at Dundee Pottery Studio, then filled it with a variety of delicious soups donated by local restaurants. Each bowl was made and donated by friends and students from Dundee Pottery.

The Empty Bowls for Haiti fundraiser began in 2006 when Rosemary Arthurs teamed up with Lois and Lee Steckley to raise funds for communities in Haiti. Their connection to the country was personal. At the time, their children were living and working in Port-au-Prince, helping to strengthen local food systems and support community development. Haiti's ongoing challenges with food security are linked to many factors, including widespread deforestation.

After taking a short break last year, Empty Bowls for Haiti returned, much

to the delight of the community.

"Many people told us how happy they were to see Empty Bowls back," Arthurs said.

This year's event was well-attended with more than 190 guests at the first sitting and around 100 at the second. The event raised around \$9,000. Arthurs expressed her gratitude to everyone who attended, volunteered and donated soups.

All proceeds from Empty Bowls for Haiti go to the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to support reforestation and climate resilience projects in Haiti. To better understand the challenges faced by the people of Haiti, Rosemary recommends the book *The Uses of Haiti* by Paul Farmer.

Rosemary and her team are already looking ahead to next year's event, which is planned for Saturday, Oct. 17, 2026.

Special thanks to the Dundee Pottery friends and students who created and donated the bowls: Alley Santinos, Jeanette Headley, Laura Kelly, Lois Steckley, Melissa Miller, Peggy Schneider, Seaneen Taggart and Violet Shadd. For more information, visit www.dundeepottery.ca or stop by the studio at 181 Front St. #3, New Dundee.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Guests at Empty Bowls for Haiti enjoyed a variety of delicious soups generously donated by local restaurants including Schmidtsville in Wellesley; Kennedy's in St. Agatha; Old Country Kitchen, Scran & Dram and Adam Brenner in New Hamburg; EJ's in Baden; Pacini Restaurant in Toronto; Homestyle Diner, Tamale Girl, Village Caterer and Pasha BBQ in Kitchener; and Quehl's in Tavistock. Organizer Rosemary Arthurs expressed her gratitude for the restaurants' generosity and encouraged community members to show their support by visiting these establishments and enjoying a meal.



Guests at Empty Bowls for Haiti each chose a beautiful, handcrafted pottery bowl made at Dundee Pottery Studio to take home as a memento of the event.

CORRECTION:

An error was made in the story, "Fall Harvest at Silver Creek Nursery in Wellesley," on page 10 of the Oct. 16 edition of the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette. In the story, the author incorrectly indicated that Silver Creek Nursery is owned by the McCormick family, however the owners of Silver Creek Nursery are Steph and Zach Muma. Additionally, a photo

caption indicated there was a Wellesley Pumpkin Experience at Silver Creek Nursery. That photo was actually taken at Fall Harvest Farm, which is owned by the McCormick family. Silver Creek Nursery does not grow pumpkins and is not affiliated in any way with Fall Harvest Farm. We regret any confusion this may have caused.

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Small business spotlight: Jake Zettel keeps things clear with mobile glass service



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Jake Zettel of Glass FX Mobile Glass Service replaces a windshield on a Dodge truck at Schultz Automotive in Tavistock last week. Zettel's mobile service is available by calling 519-274-5144.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

When political leaders talk about the backbone of the Canadian economy, they often point to small businesses, and in Tavistock, one such business is a clear example.

Glass FX Mobile Glass Service, owned and operated by Amulree's Jake Zettel and his partner, Sasha, provides mobile repair and replacement for both automotive glass – primarily windshields – and household thermal windows.

Zettel has been repairing windshields for more than 30 years. He began his career with Apple Auto Glass in Kitchener before launching his own company 19 years ago. Today, Glass FX serves customers throughout Perth, Oxford and Waterloo counties.

"The people I work with – both vehicle owners and car companies – really appreciate that I can bring the service to them," Zettel said. "A customer can be at work and have a cracked or chipped windshield repaired before they even head home."

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Community Futures Oxford offering new loan stream

Partnership focuses on rural investment

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Oxford County's Community Futures branch has teamed up with the Business Development Bank of Canada (BDC) to offer \$100 million in financing.

"The Business Elevation Loan will boost entrepreneurship and small businesses. This is all about being able to lend more money to them. When an entrepreneur comes in, they could potentially get up to \$500,000. Right now, we are only able to commit to loans up to \$300,000," said Community Futures general manager Allan Simm.

"With BDC partnering, we could each offer \$250,000 on these deals. This is a great opportunity for us to diversify risk and offer more money."

Simm added the name of the loan itself is dynamic, energetic and can appeal to start-ups and small businesses.

"It suggests something powerful, sparking growth, innovation and momentum. It conveys energy, aligning well with entrepreneurial values."

BDC spokesperson Kris Smith explained the deal could provide a huge boost to the local economy, and he hopes the money will satisfy a need in Oxford.

"Entrepreneurship in rural areas is 17 per cent while it is just 12 per cent in urban centres and there are more entrepreneurs in rural areas who need help. The problem is there isn't a lot of help out there, especially as you get more remote."

Smith added BDC doesn't have the capacity to reach rural areas which is why the partnership is so crucial to the success of small businesses looking for funding to start or expand a business.

"This is the start of something new at BDC called community banking. We are using the partners in our ecosystem, in this case, Community Futures. We are leveraging their roots but more importantly, their knowledge and how they do business in helping entrepreneurs."

If the entire allocated dollar figure is utilized, the ripple effect is expected to put \$250 million into the Oxford County economy.

"Frankly, we are hoping it is the first \$100 million. I can't wait for the day we

use it all up and I have to go back to our board and ask for another. We are very prepared to do so," added Smith.

BDC has made the ambitious goal of helping 100,000 rural entrepreneurs over the next 10 years through its community banking priorities.

The announcement was made at the Community Futures office in Ingersoll last week where an Oxford County business was highlighted as a success story after receiving funding through the organization to help with its launch. Jodi Pendry owns Terra Nova Nordic Spa just south of Hickson. She explained financing a commercial business was more difficult than she thought it would be, so she turned to Community Futures.

"They were a big stepping stone for us to get started on the spa. We had to start out small, which in hindsight is the best way we could have done it, and grow as we learned. The money we received from Community Futures allowed me to do a few extra things I may not have been able to do otherwise, and our business is all about providing an experience."

Pendry added sales doubled in her second year and will likely double again in year three.

"I don't want to say too much because I don't want to jinx myself because things have been going so well. It's taken a lot of work and we did take on a lot of risk."

When she was launching her business, she attended as many networking opportunities as she could across Oxford and there was always one consistency – the presence of Community Futures.

"It was such an easy interaction when I had the opportunity to speak to any of their staff. When I first came to them, I had the big picture and I think I said I wanted \$3 million," said Pendry with a laugh. "They said no, we don't do that."

Pendry said she went to a well-known local investor before securing financing with Community Futures and pitched the idea on the spa property on a blustery winter day.

"(The investor) said to me, 'Sorry, people aren't going to come here when the weather is like this.' He said he couldn't see this being a successful business so off he went. He came in about two years ago, shook my hand and congratulated me."

Ingersoll Mayor and Oxford County deputy warden Brian Petrie said Oxford County is a microcosm of what the entrepreneurial spirit is all about.

"We have the perfect ratio of rural, agriculture and industry that the rest of Canada should be very jealous of. It's an extremely smart move by BDC to support our people who really want to get out there and do things."

He added he knows from experience how difficult it is to obtain capital to start a business but those who receive money from the new funding stream will put it to good use.

"They are going to be very thankful and they are going to make sure they pay it back and grow those businesses."



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTOS)

Kris Smith (right) from the Business Development Bank of Canada and Oxford Community Futures general manager Allan Simm announce a new \$100-million funding stream to help rural entrepreneurs and small businesses in Oxford County grow and succeed.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Township of Wellesley Official Plan and Transportation & Mobility Master Plan

Posted on October 20, 2025

The Township of Wellesley is creating a new **Official Plan (OP)** – a roadmap that will guide growth and development to the year 2051. A series of background reports are being prepared on key topics, such as housing, commercial and employment needs, agriculture, settlement area boundary expansions, stormwater management, and servicing.

The Township of Wellesley is developing a **Transportation & Mobility Master Plan (TMMP)** to guide policies and projects that will address community transportation needs over the next 25 years. Key objectives include delivering a safe, efficient, and environmentally sustainable multimodal transportation system that preserves the Township's authentic rural character and promotes equitable access to active transportation.

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When: Wednesday, November 12, 2025 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Where: Crosshill Mennonite Church - 2537 Hutchison Rd.

Your input matters. This public session is an opportunity to share feedback and help shape the future of Wellesley Township.



Learn more about these projects at:
<https://www.engagewr.ca/engage-wellesley>



Jodi Pendry, owner of the Terra Nova Nordic Spa near Hickson, was on hand for the funding announcement and was lauded as a success story after receiving funding from Oxford Community Futures to start her business nearly three years ago.

Apple Butter and Cheese Festival proceeds go to support Wellesley Fire Department fruit orchard

Orchard planted in response to Apfelbaum Challenge

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A recent challenge posed to Township of Wellesley Fire Rescue by the Perth East Fire Department's Milverton station has led the Wellesley fire department to plant a 12-tree urban fruit orchard beside its station in the Village of Wellesley, next to the Wellesley Recreation Complex.

At the Oct. 14 Wellesley committee of the whole meeting, councillors approved a request from the Apple Butter and Cheese Festival (ABC) committee to contribute \$1,500 towards the fruit orchard, which had already been planted by the fire department. The orchard includes six varieties of apple trees, two pear trees, two peach trees and two sweet cherry trees.

"On Sept. 29, the festival committee was approached by a member of the Township of Wellesley Fire Rescue to get support for the planting of an urban orchard," said ABC committee treasurer Theresa Bisch.

"This is part of the Apfelbaum Challenge."

According to Bisch, the Apfelbaum challenge is a social-media-nomination challenge mostly active in Germany. As part of the challenge, a group – often part of a fire brigade – is nominated by another group to take part. The nominated group has one week to plant an apple tree, which is recorded and shared on social media, before nominating another group to do the same.

A short video posted to the Township of Wellesley Fire Rescue Facebook page on Oct. 14 shows township firefighters planting a single apple tree. Before the tree is planted, the firefighters are seen placing some apple butter from Wellesley Brand Apple Products in the hole as a tongue-in-cheek tie-in to a major local apple business in the township.

While the video shows only one tree planted, Wellesley district fire chief Brendan Westmorland told the Gazette the fire department decided to take the

challenge one step further.

"We had a very public area of empty lawn behind our fire station that adjoins the Bill Geis Recreation Centre," Westmorland said. "We also have volunteer firefighters who are involved in horticulture and landscape architecture who came up with the idea of an urban orchard. Our firefighters also have close partnerships with the Apple Butter and Cheese Festival, and we felt that the urban orchard would make a community space that reflects the agricultural heritage of Wellesley and the spirit of the Apple Butter and Cheese Festival."

Westmorland said the project was financially supported by the ABC Festival, and the Wellesley firefighters will maintain the trees. The trees came from a local nursery, Silver Creek Nursery Ltd., which provided both support and advice for planting and caring for all 12 trees.

Township Coun. Derek Brick, who also serves as a firefighter with the local

department and as a member of the ABC committee, told the Gazette the idea to plant additional trees goes beyond taking the challenge posed by the Milverton fire station to the next level.

"As I thought more about the challenge and what tree to plant, I got thinking about pollination and what tree can accomplish this as a singular tree," Brick said. "In order to pollinate, most fruit trees need a second tree and some bees in order to create fruit. This is where the idea of the urban orchard took shape. The idea evolved quickly into something great."

"... This project is a great example of the community coming together to create something that we can watch grow and eventually enjoy. Seeing the ABC Festival funds grow into a productive orchard is going to be a great opportunity for the community to watch (the trees grow and produce fruit) right next door to our great recreation complex."

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Let's Tree Wilmot expands local tree canopy with federal and municipal support

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A local non-profit group is growing Wilmot's tree canopy with support from federal, municipal and community funding.

Let's Tree Wilmot, a project of Garden Wilmot, recently received \$67,240 from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to support ongoing tree-planting projects. Additional funding has been provided through the Township of Wilmot's Community Grants program and other donors. The combined funding will support two years of tree planting and one year of watering and monitoring in communities across the township, including New Dundee, Petersburg, Mannheim and New Hamburg.

"We continue working with the township to increase the number and variety of trees for all to enjoy," said Let's Tree Wilmot chair Marlene Knezevich. "We are especially excited about starting a large project next year in Mannheim."

The organization completed an application for the funding, with Tree Canada vetting the application.

"Looking at how we plant, species and the scientific rationale (guide) what and where we plant. As this is a matching dollar-for-dollar grant, we need to have the township involved to set money aside for public lands. We also plant on private lands and the partners must do the same."

Wilmot Township completed a tree



(PHOTO COURTESY OF WILMOT TOWNSHIP)

Township of Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen joined members of Let's Tree Wilmot for a planting event at Petersburg Community Park on Oct. 18. The group recently received federal and municipal grants to fund two years of tree planting throughout Wilmot.

canopy study in 2023 and developed a policy to help the community gain more of the benefits that come from planting and maintaining trees.

"We have a tree canopy of approximately 22 per cent, which is higher than some other townships. The goal is to have at least 30 per cent. Trees are important for providing shade, managing water, mitigating floods, enhancing beauty, serving as wildlife habitats and creating corridors, restoring the land so we feel this is part of reconciliation too," said Knezevich.

Let's Tree Wilmot has planted over 6,000 trees since 2020 and is vowing to continue as long as it has funds and land to do so.

"We have amazing, dedicated volunteers. Like any other event, there is a lot of planning that happens in the background. When planting on public lands, we work with the township to determine locations. Then we select the native trees to be planted based on the soil (and) moisture levels to plant the right tree for the right place."

Before planting, tree locations are staked and the land is prepared if needed, such as cutting tall vegetation.

"The native tree order usually comes the day before, so we receive it and lay out the trees in their new homes. For the day, we have our tree crew who guide volunteers who attend to plant," said Knezevich. "A

how-to plant demo is done; we protect the trees using tree wraps or grow tubes from rodents/deer. Trees are mulched with arborist chips if in a lawn area to retain moisture, and coco mats are used when in the rough."

The group was able to purchase "Billy," an old Dodge Ram pickup, which is outfitted with a tank and pump used to water the trees when planted. Watering is done weekly in the first year and bi-weekly in the second year, though Knezevich prefers rain.

"We are currently watering about 2,600 trees, which means 15-20 hours of volunteer time. With time and money, this is a role the township will take over. We also started using a geographic information system to inventory our trees, and we can monitor survival rates and growth rates over time. In the past, we did it manually."

Most of the land in the area is privately owned, and the group collaborates with landowners such as Tri-County Mennonite Homes in the Nithview floodplain. To reach the goal of a 30 per-cent tree canopy, new plantings will primarily need to take place on private property.

"Let's Tree Wilmot is a fantastic community partner, showing how local residents can make a lasting difference with every tree they plant," said Mayor Natasha Salonen.

For more information about Let's Tree Wilmot or to participate in future events, visit www.letstreewilmot.ca.

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New entrance signs showcase Tavistock from above



Workers from Sign Ontario install one of the new Oxford County entrance signs Monday morning depicting an aerial view of Tavistock. From left are Connor Reynolds of Stratford, Damen Roobroek of Mitchell (on the platform lift) and Devin Kaufmann of Tavistock.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Motorists entering Tavistock from any of the community's four main routes are being greeted by striking new entrance signs recently installed by Oxford County.

The new four-by-eight-foot signs feature an aerial



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Within an hour, the new sign on Highway 59 heading into Tavistock was complete, standing proudly beside the East Zorra-Tavistock welcome sign — population 14,000.

image of Tavistock and the surrounding countryside, along with the welcoming message: "Growing Stronger Together."

The signs were produced by Sign Ontario, located east of Stratford, and offer a professional, eye-catching introduction to visitors arriving in the County of Oxford.



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Tavistock Fall Expo brings community together

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

The 14th annual Tavistock Fall Expo, held at Tavistock Missionary Church on Mogk Street, brought local vendors, volunteers and visitors together for a day of fellowship, food and shopping.

Marjorie Wilson came up with the idea for the Fall Expo in 2010 and has been organizing the event ever since. Though Wilson hopes to play a smaller role in the future, she still plans to stay involved with the event she helped create.

This year's Expo welcomed 18 local vendors, offering everything from handmade crafts to home-based business goods. Vendors were not charged a fee for their tables. Instead, they're invited to make a donation to the church,

and charitable donation receipts are provided.

After browsing all the vendors' tables, shoppers had an opportunity to sit down to a delicious lunch of homemade soups and fresh sandwiches. Brenda Ehnes was in charge of organizing the food for the expo for the second year in a row.

Wilson described Brenda as "a lady with a gift for hospitality." All the food was prepared by a group of dedicated volunteers using ingredients donated by members of the congregation. Behind the scenes, volunteers helped set up tables before the event and another group helped with clean-up afterward.

All money raised from food sales and donations will go to the church's building fund, helping with major repairs and maintenance.



(DIANE DANEN PHOTOS)

From left to right are volunteers Carol Gunn, Lily McIntosh and Brenda Ehnes, who were kept busy serving delicious homemade soups, sandwiches and sweet treats to visitors at the Fall Expo.



Left, Isaac Kurevija, 10, a Grade 6 student at Tavistock Public School, shows off some of his 3D creations from his business, Fantastic Fidgets and More. Isaac's favourite item is the Infinity Cube because he says, "You can play with it for hours!"

Right, the Urich family enjoying a break after a delicious lunch at the Tavi Fall Expo. From left to right are Janina, Everly, three, Kate, six, Michael, Maxim, five, and Henry, eight.



The glory days of the Pontiac Parisienne and the Ford Galaxie 500

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

It's always a treat to see classic cars from the past brought back to life, especially for those who remember the eras when these vehicles ruled the roads.

Last week, Shakespeare's Danny Morey

was spotted in Tavistock driving his vintage Pontiac Parisienne convertible through the Tim Hortons drive-through, soaking up the sunshine with the top down on a warm fall afternoon.

During the mid-1960s and early 1970s, Pontiac led the way for General Motors in vehicle sales, with models such as the

Strato Chief and Laurentian complementing the more luxurious Parisienne and Grand Parisienne. The Executive Line Parisienne could be purchased brand new for about \$9,300, featuring a 350-cubic-inch engine with either a two- or four-barrel carburetor.

At the same time, GM's Chevrolet

lineup offered the Biscayne, Bel Air, Impala and top-of-the-line Caprice, all part of what many call the glory days of General Motors in Canada, with Oshawa standing proud as the country's leading car manufacturing hub.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Shakespeare's Danny Morey enjoys cruising in his classic Pontiac Parisienne convertible. With colder weather on the way, top-down days are limited, but Morey says he wouldn't trade the experience for anything. A repaint might come in the future – though most vintage car owners agree that keeping the car in its original condition adds to its charm.



Another well-known vintage ride in Tavistock belongs to Ron Saunders, whose 1968 Ford Galaxie 500 – with its 302-cubic-inch engine and dual exhausts – turns heads wherever it goes. East Zorra-Tavistock Mayor Phil Schaefer rode in the car during the Tavistock Fall Fair parade in September. Saunders, who inherited the car from his father, has been restoring and refinishing furniture for 35 years through his business, R.&R. Enterprises, located on Perth Line 33 near Stratford. He and his wife Rhonda have two grown sons, Jordan and Rob, and a granddaughter, Lily.

Sebben Drainage: Four generations of tiling across South Easthope and beyond

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

For more than six decades, the Sebben family has been helping Southern Ontario farmers make the most of their land through effective tile drainage.

As farmland prices continue to rise – often topping \$40,000 per acre across Perth, Oxford and Waterloo counties – many farmers are investing in tile-drainage systems to boost production rather than buying additional land.

Sebben Ag. Drainage Ltd. has been part of that story since 1961. The company began when Hamilton (Ham) Sebben purchased his first Speicher wheel machine and, together with his son, John, started installing clay tile for friends and neighbours along Pork Street. They called their small business the Pork Road Tile Drainage

Company.

In 1971, Ham's younger son, Brian, joined the operation, prompting a name change to H. Sebben and Sons. Decades later, when Brian's son, Kyle, entered the business in 2008, the company became Sebben Ag. Drainage Ltd. Today, Kyle and Brian Sebben work together as partners, with Kyle Sebben managing day-to-day operations while Brian Sebben lends his expertise and advice from a lifetime in the field.

Over the years, the Sebben family has installed millions of feet of drainage tile across southern Ontario. They've worked on countless local farms and employed many area residents. One of those long-serving team members is Kevin Bender of Tavistock, who continues to operate the company's plow after many years

on the crew.

Brian Sebben recalls one particularly memorable season when a group of Tavistock Braves hockey players joined the crew to stay in shape during the off-season. The team went on to win the Ontario championship that year, and Brian Sebben likes to think the hard labour in the fields had something to do with it.

The drainage business has evolved significantly since the Sebbens began. Clay tile has long been replaced by plastic, and today, the family uses a 550 Wolf Plow, capable of draining many acres in a single day. Computer technology and GPS mapping have further modernized the process, allowing Sebben Ag. to provide clients with accurate drainage maps once the job is complete.

Brian Sebben says they're grateful for

the ongoing support of local farmers.

"A business is nothing without its customers, and we're thankful to have worked with so many great people over the years."

Now in its 64th year, Sebben Ag. Drainage remains proudly family-owned and operated, continuing the tradition of quality workmanship and personal service. With Kyle Sebben's young children – Brooklynn, Bentley and Blake – already showing interest in the work, the fourth generation of Sebbens may soon be ready to carry the legacy forward.

In 1961, clay tile cost 4.5 cents per foot and was installed for the same price. Today, plastic tile costs about 52 cents per foot, with installation at 28 cents per foot – proof that while technology has changed, the Sebbens' commitment to hard work and service has not.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SEBBEN FAMILY)

Hamilton Sebben, left, and his son, Brian (second from right), in 1981 with one of their early drainage machines. Brian Sebben says there was always plenty of good local help to get the job done.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Third-generation tile installer Kyle Sebben says he's proud to continue the family tradition, serving area farmers with modern equipment and methods.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Longtime employees Kevin Bender and Andrew Matheson work together on a recent tiling project close to home.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Kyle Sebben pauses for a lunch break with his children – Brooklynn, Bentley and Blake – who may one day represent the fourth generation of Sebbens in the business. The family operates from their base in South Easthope Township, Perth County.

Opti-Mrs club ramping up for more fundraising efforts

JAN CHURCHWARD

Tavistock Opti-Mrs

The Tavistock Opti-Mrs are gearing up for another year of fundraising to support the Tavistock community.

The group of local ladies have been getting together since 1979 to raise money and support local activities and causes.

Since 1979, the fundraisers have supported local sports, the Queen's Park Pavilion, the Queen's Park stone gates, the Tavistock Public School playground, the Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth and Sakura House Hospice, and many more. The group will be handing out hot apple cider during the upcoming Santa Claus Parade and hosting a free skate for kids during the Christmas holidays.

First on the list of fundraisers, the group will be hosting a Ladies Harvest Festival Luncheon on Sunday, Oct. 26, at the Tavistock Legion with speaker Katherine McKay, a naturopathic doctor. Tickets are available at IDA, Shell and South Easthope Insurance.

Their next biggest fundraiser will be another dance featuring the iconic Lulu's Band on Saturday, April 11. More details to follow!

The Opti-Mrs would love to expand their fundraising goals and activity support by accepting new members. Please contact tavistockoptimrs@gmail.com for more information.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF TAVISTOCK OPTI-MRS)

The Tavistock Opti-Mrs Club is ramping up for another fundraising season. The group held a Lulu's Band event last year and also a Ladies Lunch (pictured) to raise money for local initiatives.

Fall into Pre-Owned Savings" @ Stratford Nissan

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PRICE DROP

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2020 Honda Civic EX FWD



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MILEAGE - 93,017 KM

2021 Nissan Rogue SV FWD



PRICE DROP

\$22,495 OR \$182 B/W
MILEAGE - 93,245 KM

2022 Nissan Rogue S FWD



PRICE DROP

\$22,999 OR \$165 B/W
LOW KMS - 61,758 KM

2024 Nissan Sentra SV FWD



PRICE DROP

\$23,495 OR \$169 B/W
LOW KMS - 24,548 KM

2022 Hyundai Tucson SEL AWD



PRICE DROP

\$23,999 OR \$172 B/W
MILEAGE - 109,521 KM

2022 Toyota Corolla LE FWD



\$24,999 OR \$180 B/W
LOW KMS - 63,874 KM

2022 Subaru Crosstrek PREMIUM AWD



PRICE DROP

\$28,999 OR \$208 B/W
LOW KMS - 37,645 KM

2023 Toyota Corolla Cross LE



PRICE DROP

\$28,999 OR \$208 B/W
MILEAGE - 82,646 KM

2022 Toyota Prius PRIME UPGRADE FWD



PRICE DROP

\$31,999 OR \$230 B/W
LOW KMS - 34,265 KM

2023 Nissan Rogue SL AWD



PRICE DROP

\$33,999 OR \$244 B/W
LOW KMS - 43,049 KM

2021 Honda CR-V EX-L AWD



PRICE DROP

\$35,999 OR \$291 B/W
LOW KMS - 44,497 KM

2022 Toyota RAV4 Hybrid SE AWD



PRICE DROP

\$39,999 OR \$287 B/W
LOW KMS - 36,315 KM

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STRATFORD NISSAN



Grace United Church members mark 100th anniversary with tree sales and community giving

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The front parking lot of Grace United Church in Tavistock was bustling with activity Saturday morning as members of the congregation sold trees in celebration of the United Church of Canada's 100th anniversary.

In addition to the tree sale, members of the church undertook two other projects in recognition of the milestone: collecting 100 boxes of pens and markers to send to northern communities and donating 100 personal care items to Shelterlink in Stratford.

The initiative was organized by Carol and Wayne Shewfelt, who reported that nearly all the trees were sold by Sunday, following the church's anniversary service.

The Shewfelt group expressed their gratitude to everyone who supported the project and reminded residents that the church's Middle-Aged Pews group will once again be selling Christmas trees this year.

A variety of trees will be available on the front lawn of Mike and Beth Elliott's home on William Street North in Tavistock, around the time of the annual Santa Claus Parade in late November. Shoppers can also look forward to spotting Charlie Brown, Snoopy and the Christmas crew – familiar figures that reappear each holiday season to signal the arrival of fresh, local trees.

The weather cooperated beautifully for the event, with sunny skies and mild temperatures – ideal conditions for transplanting new trees before the rain set in.



(ELIZABETH HALLIDAY PHOTO)

Young shoppers got in on the tree-buying fun as Rylee, Jenn and Liam Weldrick were helped by church members Wayne Shewfelt and Bill Brown.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

From left, Wayne and Carol Shewfelt, Bill and Wanda Brown, Marcia Bender and Elizabeth Halliday were busy sorting small potted trees for area residents to take home and plant. The trees came from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority, which encourages local tree planting to keep the environment green.

WRDSB launches strategic plan community consultation website

AMANDA MODARAGAMAGE

Gazette Reporter

The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has launched its Strategic Plan Community Consultations website, a new online hub designed to provide families with updates and information about the upcoming community consultation process.

The board said the consultations will help ensure the Multi-Year Strategic Plan, developed in 2022, continues to reflect WRDSB's beliefs and values while supporting student achievement and wellbeing. The process will also provide feedback to inform future decisions. The goal of the website is to make participation in the consultation process as accessible and inclusive as possible.

"A dedicated website provides a central

hub where students, staff, parents, families, caregivers and community partners can easily find information and access engagement opportunities," said a board spokesperson.

"It reflects our commitment to transparency, openness and ensuring that every voice in our community has a meaningful way to contribute to shaping the direction of public education in Waterloo Region."

Once feedback is collected, the board said it aims to ensure transparency in how community input is used to shape the final updates to the strategic plan.

"Transparency and accountability are central to this process," the spokesperson said. "As feedback is gathered through surveys, focus groups and town hall sessions, staff and trustees will review and analyze the input to identify key themes and priorities."

Regular updates will be provided at public board meetings, and a final report – including a summary of consultation findings and how they informed the strategic plan – will be presented in spring 2026.

"This ensures the community can clearly see how their voices have influenced the direction of the WRDSB's work," the board said in a statement.

The website also highlights the importance of student participation, emphasizing that students are at the heart of everything they do.

"The consultation process will include multiple opportunities for students to share their voices, including through surveys, facilitated focus groups and town hall meetings," the spokesperson said.

According to the board, the community consultation process will unfold in four phases:

- Phase 1 — Planning (May-June 2025)
- Phase 2 — Implementation (July-December 2025)
- Phase 3 — Consolidation (January-February 2026)
- Phase 4 — Reporting (spring 2026)

"We are currently finalizing the survey and expect to begin the community consultation in the coming weeks, which will involve focus groups, surveys and town hall meetings," the spokesperson said.

"It is anticipated that the consolidation of information will be completed by February 2026, with a final report to trustees in spring 2026."

WRDSB said the public will be kept informed through regular updates shared on the consultation website, the board's social media channels and at public meetings.

Grace United Church celebrates 56th anniversary in Tavistock

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Anniversary celebrations are always a time to reflect on both the past and the present. On Sunday, Grace United Church in Tavistock marked its 56th anniversary with a special service that welcomed back a familiar face to the pulpit.

Rev. Margaret Smith of Stratford, who

served as interim minister at Grace United for 12 months between the tenures of Rev. Soo Young and current minister Rev. Marilyn Arthur, delivered a heartfelt and thought-provoking sermon titled “The Last Time.” Her message captivated the congregation from beginning to end.

In welcoming Smith back, Arthur shared how meaningful her time with the Grace

congregation had been and expressed how pleased everyone was to have her return for this special occasion.

During her sermon, Smith reflected on the history of Grace United Church, which was formed through the union of Zion, Knox, South Easthope and Harmony congregations. In 2010, the Lingelbach congregation joined, followed more recently

by members of the Hickson United Church family.

Smith said anniversaries are about celebrating unity – the coming together of worshippers who share a common goal: to serve God and pray for peace in the world.

For those who missed the service, a recording is available on YouTube for the community to enjoy



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Rev. Marilyn Arthur, current minister of Grace United Church, welcomes Rev. Margaret Smith, who served the congregation for 12 months as interim minister and previously ministered in Stratford after teaching at Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School. Both shared meaningful messages with the children and congregation during Sunday’s 56th anniversary celebration service.



After the service, during fellowship time in the church hall, church member Marcia Bender and Rev. Margaret Smith proudly wore their Toronto Blue Jays sweaters, celebrating the team’s recent victories and their berth in the World Series against the Los Angeles Dodgers.

OBITUARY

RIDDLE: Christine Anne



With deep sorrow, the family of Christine Riddle (nee Schwantz), announce her passing on Wed Oct 15, 2025 at her home in Capreol, Ontario in her 72nd year.

She was in the presence of her beloved husband of 53 years, Bruce Riddle, son Michael (Tracy), daughter Theresa (Wayne), grandchildren Christopher, Mikayla &

Emily and nephew Adrian Schwantz. Survived by her brother Kenneth Town (Linda).

Loving daughter of the late Kenneth & Adella (Yecny) Schwantz of Tavistock ON,

A Funeral Service will take place at a later date.

Funeral arrangements have been entrusted to the Francis Chapel of the Glendinning Funeral Home, Tavistock

Personal condolences can be shared at www.francisfh.ca

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of His hand.

Sorry For Your Loss



by PeterS 2025

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

ANSWERS FOUND ON
THE CLASSIFIED PAGE

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. What does the abbreviation USB stand for?
2. Mace is the outer covering of which common spice?
3. Which writer adapted his own book for the 1989 film “Pet Sematary”?
4. The study of human behaviour and mind is called what?
5. What kind of animal is raised in a warren?
6. Who released the 1988 album “Look Sharp!”?
7. What is the most frequent number in the bible?
8. Which element has the atomic number 1?
9. What K-Pop group sings “Dynamite” & “Butter”?
10. The Gulf War involved the liberation of what country?

Answers found on the classified page

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR TO GALEN SIMMONS
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The Old Gazettes

By Sydney Grant

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

October 21-28, 2015, Edition (10 years ago)

In its ninth year of successful fund-raising, the Empty Bowls for Haiti event raised over \$8,500 this year for MCC Haitian Projects. Thanking everyone for their support was co-chair Leigh Steckley who addressed the sold-out crowds Saturday night where the event was held at Steinmann Mennonite Church in Baden. Ontario potters donated the bowls, local restaurants and organizations donated the soup and patrons kept the bowls. This event supports MCC Ontario and its commitment to sustainable change in Haiti. Tickets were \$25 each.

Fifty years ago, McConnell Nursery Company Limited of Port Rowan purchased the property at the end of Jacob Street in Tavistock to erect a shed-type building where they would package and reship nursery stock. Over the past few weeks, Roger Kropf of Ontario Refrigerated Services Inc., owner of the property, had the property cleared. The buildings were torn down and all materials are in the process of being recycled. Mr. Kropf said there are no concrete plans for the property at this time. He said all environmental steps will be completed to deem the site clean.

On Monday, Oct. 19, Justin Trudeau, 43, son of the late Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, led the Liberal Party of Canada into a majority government. The Liberals amassed 184 seats followed by the Conservatives with 99, the New Democrats with 44, the Bloc Québécois with 10 and the Green Party with one seat for a total of 338 seats in the House of Commons. Less than a week before the 78-day election campaign ended, Liberal leader Justin Trudeau made a stop in Stratford, Ont. on Tuesday, Oct. 13. He met with Perth-Wellington candidate Stephen McCotter at his campaign office on Wellington Street, then greeted Liberal supporters around the corner on George Street at Chocolate Barr's Candies shop.

October 23 - 30, 1985, Edition (40 years ago)

The Tavistock Baby Band group met at Grace United Church on Wednesday, Oct. 16, for their regular monthly meeting in the form of a Halloween Party. The children and many mothers came in costume and enjoyed the activities of the morning. Following a good show of ingenious wardrobe, the "band" relaxed for snack time. Some of the costumed youngsters are: Ashley Yantzi, hockey player; Ryan Roth, hobo; Russell Roth, clown; Adam Wettlaufer, farmer; Courtney Zehr, space creature; Janelle Witzel, witch; Jillian Yantzi, Smurf; Patrick Klann, lion; and Lisa Ditner, little Dutch girl.

The Tavistock Scout Troop held another successful Apple Day on Saturday, Oct. 26, with the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts all participating in the morning sale. Cub leaders Allan and Sylvia Sparling supervised the boys, other leaders and parents into their sales areas. Twenty-one boys travelled door to door around the village while others made their sales at strategic points around town: some at Don's, the post office, Mohr's, the Variety and the arena.

This is the time of year, when area residents find balloons floating across their yards, usually they have been sent aloft by our American friends to celebrate one event or another. A string of balloons found last week by Betty Yantzi of RR 1, Tavistock, tops them all. Eleven cards and six intact balloons were found wound together. Oddly enough, the balloons come from two separate places. Most are from Detroit, Mich., while another one is from Tasha Morgan, Western Michigan University.

October 22-29, 1975, Edition (50 years ago)

A fellow member of the Tavistock Men's Club and Board of Trade, Wayne Buck, presented slides and a talk on the metric system; which is presently being incorporated into our school system and to the general public. At the monthly meeting last Thursday, Oct. 16, Mr. Buck pointed out how much easier things will be when we think metric and do away with feet, pounds and volumes. Buck also had available tests, scales and tapes with which members could actively participate and get the feel of the metric system.

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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette SPORTS

PJHL Roundup: Applejacks bounce back, retain division lead

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

A Tavistock loss combined with a Wellesley victory means the Applejacks are one point clear of the Braves at the top of the Provincial Junior Hockey League’s (PJHL) Doherty Division.

Wellesley dropped a 6-2 decision in Woodstock on Saturday despite outshooting the Navy Vets 42-32. Ben Morton and Riley Noble scored for the Applejacks, who roared back into the win column on Sunday with an 11-4 drubbing of Paris. Leading scorer Ian Speiran scored four times and now has 19 points in 11 games. Luke Schofield added a goal and three assists, and Ryan Brenton chipped in with three points. Wellesley outshot Paris 66-37 for its eighth win in two games.

Tavistock started the week-end with a 5-4 overtime victory in Norwich. Yann Raskin scored the game-winner just 57 seconds into the extra period on a feed from Evan Palubeski and Carson Bernhardt. The Merchants had a 3-1 lead early in the second period, but goals from Raskin and Marc Dionne tied it up heading into the third.

The Braves travelled to Dorchester on Saturday and were trounced 9-4 by the Dolphins. Palubeski scored three times in a losing effort, while Carter Arseneau had a pair of assists. Tavistock native Connor Roth scored his first goal of the season for Dorchester.

New Hamburg earned its fourth win of the season with a 5-3 home-ice win over Dorchester on Friday. Captain Andrew Gear led the attack with three assists while Josh Soulliere scored twice. Aydan Burns, Ben Oliver and Jayden Fischer scored single markers while Connor Harman kicked out 25 of the 28 shots he faced.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTOS)

Players on the ice watch as New Hamburg Firebirds’ forward Josh Souliere’s second goal of the game enters the Dorchester Dolphins’ net during the Firebirds’ 5-3 win over the Dolphins on Oct. 17. The goal was the eventual game winner, and Souliere’s two-goal effort gave him four goals on the season.



Justin McManus passes the puck during the New Hamburg Firebirds’ 5-3 win on Oct. 17 over the Dorchester Dolphins. The victory put the Firebirds one point ahead of the Dolphins for fifth in the South Doherty Division.

CURRENT STANDINGS																				
PROVINCIAL JUNIOR HOCKEY LEAGUE																				
PJHL																				
South Doherty Division																				
	GP	W	L	OTL	I	SOW	SOL	PTS	OTW	GF	GA	DIFF	PCT	PCT	PIM	RW	ROW	STK	IN-DIV	GPCT
1 Wellesley Applejacks	10	8	2	0	0	0	0	16	3	45	33	12	0.800	0.000	179	5	8	1-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.577
2 Tavistock Braves	9	7	1	1	0	0	0	15	1	43	29	14	0.833	0.000	164	6	7	0-1-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.597
3 Norwich Merchants	12	6	4	1	0	0	1	14	2	40	41	-1	0.583	0.000	190	4	6	1-0-1-0	0-0-0-0	0.494
4 Woodstock Navy Vets	12	6	4	2	0	0	0	14	1	50	40	10	0.583	0.000	170	5	6	0-1-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.556
5 New Hamburg Firebirds	10	4	3	3	0	0	0	11	0	38	30	8	0.550	0.000	198	4	4	2-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.559
6 Dorchester Dolphins	11	4	5	1	0	1	1	10	0	42	42	0	0.455	0.000	163	3	3	1-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.500
7 Hespeler Shamrocks	11	4	6	1	0	1	0	9	1	18	43	-25	0.409	0.000	255	2	3	2-0-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.295
8 Paris Titans	11	4	7	0	0	0	0	8	1	39	57	-18	0.364	0.000	169	3	4	0-4-0-0	0-0-0-0	0.406

OEHL Roundup: Royals split weekend games but keep a share of top spot

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

Tavistock took two of a possible four points on the weekend but remains in a first-place tie in the Ontario Elite Hockey League's (OEHL) South Division.

The Royals travelled to Petrolia on Friday and limped home after a 6-1 defeat. Colin Martin scored the lone Tavistock marker in the third period off a pass from Matt Zilke.

On Saturday, Tavistock bounced back with a 4-2 victory in Erin. Goals by Deven

Kropf, Drew Gerth and John McDonald gave the Royals a 3-0 lead in the third period before two Outlaw goals pulled them to within one.

Gerth added an insurance marker on the powerplay with just eight seconds remaining. Grahan Noye stopped 43 of 45 shots to earn his first win of the season. Gerth leads the team in scoring with five goals and three assists in four games, good for fifth in the league scoring race.

Next action for the Royals is Saturday, Nov. 1, as they travel to Tillsonburg to face the Thunder.

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RK	TEAM	GP	W	L	T	OTW	OTL	SOW	SOL	PTS	PK	RW	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	STK	PIM	PPG	SHGA	PPK	TSH	SHG	PPGA	PK%	
1	 Seaforth Centenaires	4	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	6	.750	2	3	25	9	16	Won 3	26	14	1	1	0.071	9	0	0	1
2	 Tavistock Royals	4	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	6	.750	3	3	20	12	8	Won 1	58	12	4	0	0.333	21	1	3	0.857
3	 Dunnville Aeros	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	4	.500	2	2	19	15	4	Won 1	109	20	2	0	0.1	18	2	3	0.833
4	 Tillsonburg Thunder	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	.667	2	2	9	6	3	Lost 1	87	12	3	0	0.25	19	1	0	1
5	 Milverton Four Wheel Drives	4	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	3	.375	1	1	14	20	-6	Lost 2	83	21	6	2	0.286	17	0	3	0.824
6	 Petrolia Squires	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1.00	1	1	6	1	5	Won 1	16	5	2	0	0.4	1	0	0	1
7	 Elora Rocks	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	.500	1	1	7	10	-3	Won 1	22	10	0	0	0	5	0	1	0.8
8	 Erin Outlaws	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	2	4	-2	Lost 1	28	5	1	0	0.2	6	0	2	0.667
9	 Delhi Flames	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	.000	0	0	3	28	-25	Lost 3	100	12	1	1	0.083	15	0	8	0.467

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MINOR SPORTS **SCRAPBOOK**



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Dominic Smith launches a quick shot on target during the U11 REP Tavistock Titans game last Tuesday.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Mark Dewys rips the puck on net during this past Sunday's U11 LL Boys Four New Hamburg Huskies game.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Bentley Snider drops to a knee and lets a shot fly during last Tuesday's U13 REP Tavistock Titans game.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Logan Craig fires the puck from along the board during last Saturday's U13 B New Hamburg Huskies game.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Lucas Shartun rockets the puck on goal during the U11 LL Boys One Tavistock Titans game this past Monday.



(ALEC RICHARD PHOTO)

Ben Jakobs snaps a scoring chance off his stick during last Saturday's U15 LL Boys Two New Hamburg Huskies game

The Grade A Brenneman Family: Generations of egg farming on the Perth-Oxford border

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

With World Egg Day recently celebrated, it seemed fitting to visit a local family whose dedication to egg farming spans decades.

The Brenneman family, west of Tavistock on the Perth-Oxford county line, has been collecting, grading, and marketing eggs for generations. The Brenneman egg business began in the 1950s with Lorne and Selma Brenneman, who raised a flock of 1,500 free-run hens on their farm along the 11th Line of East Zorra. The hens had roosting areas and nest boxes, and the family raised their own pullets every year to replenish the flock.

In 1970, the first cage-system barn was built, housing 4,000 laying hens. Around that time, the federal government introduced the Egg Marketing Agency, now known as Egg Farmers of Ontario, to stabilize production and ensure fair pricing for farmers and consumers alike.

Lorne Brenneman's son, Keith Brenneman, recalls that the new marketing system brought much-needed structure and stability to the industry.

"It really helped farmers by setting fair prices and supporting the grading stations and stores that sold our eggs," he said.

Collecting eggs in the early days was done by hand, using wire baskets. When



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

The Brenneman family, west of Tavistock, proudly represents three generations of egg farmers. From left are Keith Brenneman, Julie and Kyle Wynette, with Reid, Nash and Marilyn in front.

the first cage system arrived, eggs were gathered with metal carts pushed between rows. Keith Brenneman and his wife, Marilyn Brenneman, often had their three daughters riding in car seats on the egg cart before they were old enough to help with the chores themselves.

By the late 1970s, modernization brought automatic egg belts, which transported eggs to the front of the barn for collection and packaging on stationary tables.

In time, daughter Julie Wynette

in an enriched colony housing system. This system allows hens to perch, scratch and nest – behaviours that reflect their natural instincts.

Julie Wynette jokes that the only things missing are "morning yoga and Netflix," but she's proud of the results.

"The hens are cleaner, the eggs are cleaner and the overall quality has improved," she said. "It's been a positive change."

Julie and Kyle Wynette, and her parents agree that while technology, management and consumer expectations have evolved over the years, one thing remains constant: the pride egg farmers take in caring for their hens and producing a healthy, affordable source of food.

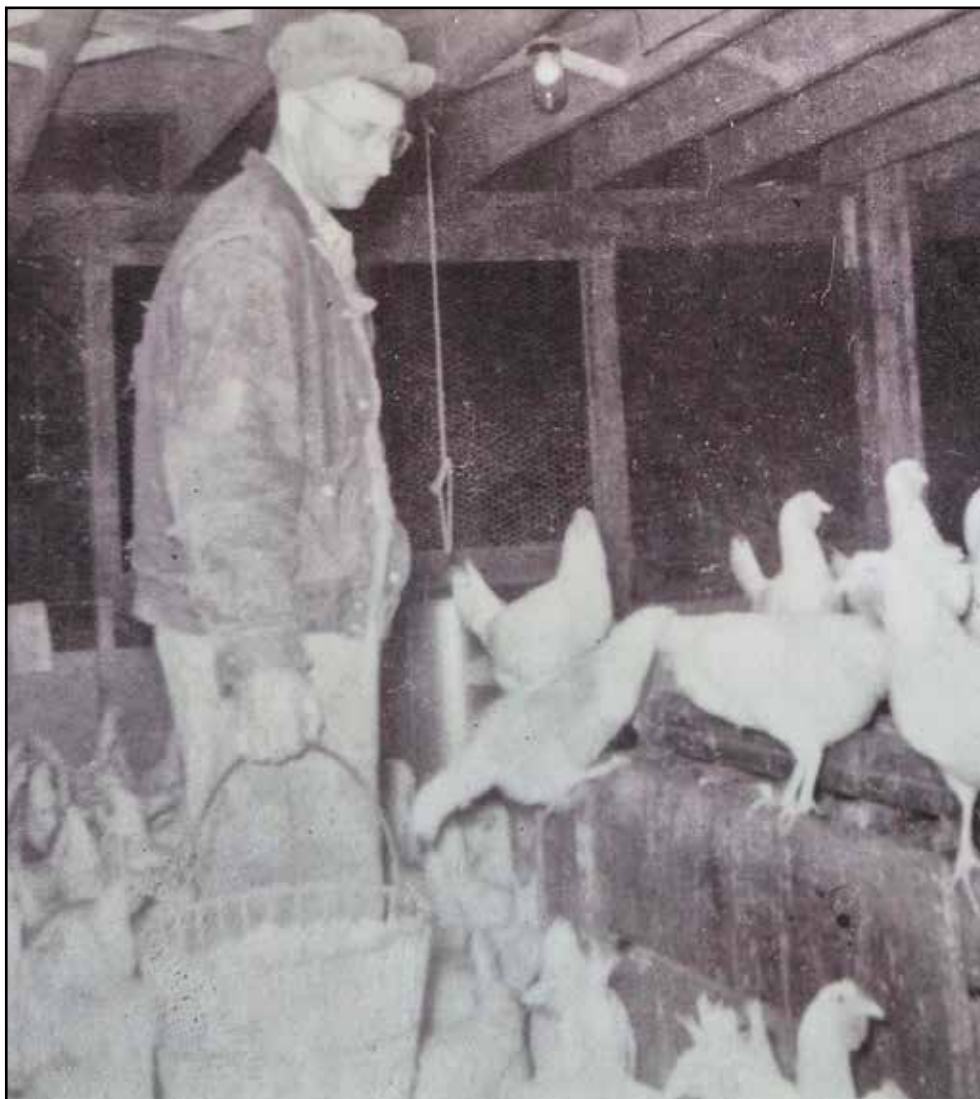
"One egg contains essential proteins, vitamins and minerals," Julie Wynette said. "It's amazing that a hen weighing less than two kilograms can produce something so nutritious every day."

She also notes the industry's environmental progress.

"In the past 50 years, Canadian egg production has increased by 50 per cent, while the industry's environmental footprint has decreased by almost 50 per cent. Egg farmers are doing their part to protect the environment."

(Brenneman) and her husband Kyle Wynette returned to the farm to begin the next generation of operations. Julie Wynette credits her parents for continually upgrading and modernizing the barns over the years to meet changing consumer and animal-welfare standards.

In 2024, the family built a brand-new facility that now houses 20,000 laying hens



Lorne Brenneman collects eggs on the family farm in the mid-1950s, when hens roamed freely inside the chicken house.



Veteran Tavistock egg farmer Keith Brenneman demonstrates Canada's National Egg Quality Assurance Program, which ensures the highest standards for consumers.



Julie Wynette (Brenneman) shows freshly packed trays of eggs from the family's automated system, ready to be shipped to grading stations. Eggs typically reach grocery stores within five to seven days. Julie serves as a national ambassador for Egg Farmers of Ontario, appearing in radio, television and "Fields to Forks" promotions.

Optimist Club of Petersburg raises funds for youth programs

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Correspondent

The Optimist Club of Petersburg hosted its Community Bottle Drive on Saturday, Oct. 18, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Bechthold Home Improvements.

Club members were on hand throughout the day, collecting bottles and cans, any items with a deposit at the time of purchase. Club president Warren Bechthold joked that they tell participants to “go home and get hydrated” so they’ll have empties to donate at their next fundraiser.

The bottle drive is held three times each year, in October, January and May. The club uses all proceeds from the event for youth programs and other community initiatives.

Fo’ Cheezy Food Truck was on hand to support the event and offer up a delicious selection of

grilled cheese sandwiches. The Optimist Club would like to thank them for their generous support.

The Optimist Club is now busy preparing for its Youth Pumpkin Giveaway, taking place on Saturday, Oct. 25. Herrle’s Country Farm Market in St. Agatha has generously donated pumpkins for the event. Local youth are invited to stop by Bechthold Home Improvements at 1239 Notre Dame Dr. in Petersburg from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. to pick up a pumpkin to take home and carve. Participants will have the opportunity to submit a photo of their carved pumpkin for a chance to win prizes. More details will be shared at the pumpkin giveaway.

Looking ahead, the Optimist Club invites families to join them for Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, Dec. 13, at Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Petersburg.



(DIANE DANEN PHOTO)

From left to right are Optimist Club member Steve Malleck, president Warren Bechthold, members Allan MacIsaac and John Gutscher at the Community Bottle Drive in Petersburg Oct. 18.

What features matter most to buyers

EXPERT REAL ESTATE ADVICE

By Isabel Livingston



When buying a home, people often look at specific features that make the house special. These are usually not just “nice to haves” but often play a strong role in whether someone chooses to buy a property.

Common property features buyers look at are location and

neighbourhood. People are looking beyond just inside the home, considering things like their commute, nearby amenities, safe communities and the resale value that comes with a thriving community.

Outdoor space is often highly important to a buyer. It provides

an additional living space for the summer months and offers space for pets and children to play. A lot of buyers like quieter neighbourhoods or privacy buffers.

Kitchen and bathroom remodels and upgrades are often quite costly. This makes them a perfect candidate for this list. An updated kitchen or bathroom can offer a lot of extra value to a home and is often a high priority for many buyers.

A finished basement is a feature that is becoming rare, especially in new construction. The value this offers a buyer is huge. Think additional living space, possible bedroom, office or bonus room and maybe even a bathroom. A separate entrance for potential

rental income, multigenerational living or a home office is a growing want for many buyers.

Garage, need I say more!

Bungalows / one-storey homes are still a very popular layout, especially for older buyers wanting less stairs and maintenance. These homes tend to offer a ton of flexibility and longevity for buyers for their convenience.

Last but not least, the demand for energy efficient properties is growing vastly; efficient appliances, higher-quality insulation and smart technology.

What this means for buyers and sellers; if you are buying, think of which features matter the most to you because a trade-off may be needed, especially if you are

working with a budget. If you are unable to get a specific feature you were wanting, find out the cost to have it done later. If you are selling, highlight these features in marketing “large backyard on quiet street” or “energy efficient upgrades.”

Take your time house hunting; it is one of the most valuable things you can do to end up with a home that fits your life and budget.

For real estate advice or article suggestions, please reach out, I would love to help. 226-232-4236 or ilivingstonsells@gmail.com.

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

SEPTEMBER REAL ESTATE STATS

ISABEL LIVINGSTON
REAL ESTATE

	AVERAGE SALE PRICE	NUMBER OF SALES	NUMBER OF NEW LISTING	AVERAGE DAYS TO SELL
WILMOT TOWNSHIP	\$1,033,750	8	15	40
EAST ZORRA TAVISTOCK	\$747,500	2	18	68
WELLESLEY/ WOOLWICH	\$910,715	11	31	52
PERTH EAST/ SHAKESPERE	\$788,000	5	22	47

(IMAGE COURTESY OF ISABEL LIVINGSTON)

This is Doug.

Doug is an active member of his community.

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Doug is smart.

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Farm train rolls through rural Perth County



(GARY WEST PHOTO)
A New Holland combine pulls a pickup truck towing a 40-foot header – a “farm train” on the move near Milverton as harvest season continues across Perth County.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

When you’re a farmer running a one-person operation, creativity is key to getting from one field to the next. In this case, a New Holland combine operator found an efficient way to move all their equipment at once – creating what could only be described as a “farm train.”

The setup included the combine pulling

a pickup truck, which in turn towed a 40-foot combine header. Maneuvering such a long convoy required careful planning, especially when turning corners or navigating around parked vehicles.

This unique sight was spotted near Milverton, heading east toward Millbank, as the farmer prepared to tackle another soybean field under a sky that threatened rain.

Sunflowers grow tall at Steeplehigh Farms



(GARY WEST PHOTO)
Some might call her the Sunflower Queen, and for Shakespeare’s Jenn Dietrich, the title fits perfectly when fall rolls around each year. Jenn, her husband, Dwayne, and their sons, Cole and Chase, plant sunflower seeds as a cover crop alongside oats and other grains to improve soil health after harvesting wheat in July. The deep roots of these plants help maintain ideal soil conditions for the following year’s corn crop. The family also uses poultry manure to boost yields and reduce fertilizer costs. Motorists often ask why the Dietrichs grow sunflowers, and the answer is simple: they brighten the countryside and add to the natural beauty of Southwestern Ontario each autumn.

Gazette Puzzles

COLD AND FLU SEASON

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

ACHES	COUGH	MUCUS
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Pet of the Week

BRIAR

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Crush healthy mornings with the almighty cranberry

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



The official cranberry season in Ontario runs from late September through October, and thankfully so because what's Thanksgiving without fresh cranberry sauce.

The small, stunning ruby red fruit, both sweet and tart, are harvested from low shrubs and vines grown in fresh water bogs or marshes. These beautiful baby balls are a bevy of body-boosting benefits, and more than a sidekick to holiday turkey or ham.

As a holistic nutritionist, fresh cranberries over dried are my top pick. Sugar of any kind and seed oils sabotage health, creating inflammation in the body. With just 46 calories in a cup, low sugar and high fibre, this ravishing, red berry adds a well-balanced taste sensation to morning oats for a super swap to your regular food fare.

I love that cranberries boast a whopping 90 per-cent water content. Cold and flu season is in the near future, and cranberries are

an immune booster, containing 25 per cent of your daily vitamin C. The superfruit contains a string of other minerals and vitamins plus several cancer-fighting and anti-inflammatory antioxidants including quercetin, myricetin, ursolic acid, anthocyanins, and proanthocyanidins.

Fall in love all year with cranberries, and yes, fresh or frozen is always first choice. Canned at the holidays? No, thanks! Homemade fresh sauce or jam is a breeze to prep. Always choose unsweetened cranberry juice to drink solo, add to club soda, vodka or, for a fruity twist, to champagne celebrations.

Back to the cute cranberry and all the holistic health help the berry supplies. Cranberries may protect against liver disease and improve eye health. Need more reasons to incorporate Ontario's famous berry to the menu? Add lowering blood pressure,

improving cholesterol, dreamy digestion, better oral health and their claim to fame, preventing a urinary tract infection (UTI).

Start every day with healthy eating. Set the tone for the rest of the day. A bowl of homemade granola is all-day, nutrient-dense goodness, and if you are a busy bee, grab a serving or two for the drive or as a desktop-snacking companion.

Old fashioned oats are the belly-filling basis, but nuts and seeds keep blood sugar stable. Oatmeal is a sensational source of both soluble and insoluble fibre for a happy gut. Look for sprouted oatmeal for an unbelievable biome. Pecans add the power of plant-based protein and good fats. A squeeze of citrus adds a touch of vitamin C and sunshine to colder days. Coconut is always an island-inspired flavour first-choice winner and there are heaps of healthy fats. Mother Nature's sweetness, honey or maple syrup, is my chosen source of sugar but please feel free to cut the amount in half. Honey and an egg white help cluster the cranberry love but maple syrup on its own is the vegan option. Feel free to swap the nuts and seeds and create your own handcrafted version.

Cranberry granola

Ingredients:

- 1-2 cups fresh cranberries
- 4 cups old fashioned oats



(VECTEEZY PHOTO)

A bright and wholesome start to the day, homemade cranberry granola combines tart Ontario cranberries, oats, nuts, and a hint of citrus for a crunchy, nutrient-packed breakfast or snack.

- 1 cup chopped pecans
 - ½ cup sulphite-free coconut flakes
 - 4 tablespoons coconut oil
 - 1 orange (¼ cup fresh squeezed orange juice and 3 tbsp grated orange zest)
 - 3 tbsp Riverside BeeYard honey
 - 3 Tbsp Wagler Maple Products Maple syrup
 - ½ teaspoon vanilla
 - ¼ teaspoon Ceylon cinnamon
 - *(optional) 1 egg white
- Directions:**
1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees Fahrenheit.
 2. Mix all the dry ingredients together in one bowl.
 3. Whisk one egg white and set aside.
 4. Melt the coconut oil.
 5. Mix all the wet ingredients together including the egg white and coconut oil in a separate bowl.
 6. Combine both bowls and stir well.
 7. Spread the granola mixture in a thin layer on cookie sheets.
 8. Place in the oven and bake until the edges are golden brown.
 9. Stir frequently maintaining a thin layer.
 10. Cool and place in glass air-tight containers.
- Granola freezes well but is a great hostess gift.
*Egg white adds clumps to the granola

Size matters in the bedroom

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

By Galen Simmons



I could always sleep in any bed; it didn't matter where, when or on what I was sleeping, catching just the right number of Z's every night was never a problem of mine.

From soft mattresses to those that feel more like a sheet of plywood, and couches that are either too narrow or too short to a sleeping bag on the floor, I've always found my way to a deep, restful sleep. Or at least that was the case until Julia and I decided it was finally time to upgrade to a king

bed.

After more than a year sleeping in a queen bed with a dog that likes to carve out a space in between us and a cat that spends the night perched up near my head, and having moved into a home that has the space upstairs for the most luxurious of sleeping accommodations, we felt we deserved a little more space to roll around.

After purchasing our home and planning out our kitchen renovations, we knew we couldn't spend

a lot on our dozy dream. So, we bought a modestly priced king bed on Amazon and one of those mattresses that's delivered to your door vacuum-sealed in plastic. To make that mattress a little more comfortable, we splurged and bought a nice, memory foam mattress topper and a couple of those osteo-cervical pillows that help with neck and shoulder pain.

And boy, did it ever make a difference. At first, being accustomed to lesser mattresses for most of my life, I thought it was too much. Why should I need all this space and comfort? But then, within maybe a week, I grew to love our new bed, so much so that sleeping anywhere else began to seem unreasonable and what once might have been an overnight trip became much-longer, late-night drives just so I could make it home to my own bed.

I can't count how many times someone has invited me to stay overnight, and I've come up with

an excuse that allowed me to come to home to my big, beautiful bed instead.

It's actually becoming a bit of a problem.

Recently, our new puppy, Piper, decided she would start going to the bathroom in our bed. The first time it happened, we hadn't yet purchased a second set of king-sized sheets, so we figured we'd just sleep in the old queen bed – which also has a mattress topper I once considered comfortable – in the spare room and clean the sheets in the morning.

Big mistake. Neither Julia or I slept more than 20 minutes at a time that night. Toss and turn for half an hour, fall asleep for 20 minutes, wake up in pain or numbness, roll over, rinse and repeat. It was so bad, Julia even opted to trade the bed for our couch, which tells you everything you need to know.

You can rest assured we ordered a second set of sheets for our king

bed the very next day.

And then, just this past weekend, Julia and I stayed at my mom's for a belated Thanksgiving celebration. While my sister slept upstairs on the pullout, we opted to take the double bed in the basement (I actually thought it would be more comfortable).

Of course, it wasn't. All night, it was the same story. We rolled into one another, accidentally kicked the dog, nearly fell off the edge of the bed and woke up with sore backs, hips and necks. Three days later, I still feel sleep-deprived from that bed.

And it's not just the size of the bed that matters to me anymore. We've slept in king-sized beds where the mattress was either too firm or too soft. I guess I'm starting to understand how Goldilocks felt; the only bed that's just right is the one we have right here at home.

An unexpected delight in downtown Toronto

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



When you put the two words, “Toronto” and “Gardiner” together in the same sentence, the reaction is probably not all that positive because it conjures up very familiar images of sitting motionless in your car on the Gardiner Expressway – an experience even more likely this year because of all the construction on the notorious lakeshore highway.

But there is another “Gardiner” in Toronto, and it offers a much more pleasant experience. The expressway was named for Fred Gardiner, a Toronto politician, but The Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art carries the same moniker because of founders George and Helen Gardiner (no close relation to Fred that I can find).

The Gardiner Museum is, frankly, an unexpected delight. I have written from time to time about attractions that seem less than inspiring in my uninformed opinion, where I anticipate a 20-minute visit, which then turns into a number of intriguing hours. That was certainly the case with the Gardiner Museum.

The institution is located at 111 Queen’s Park, directly across from the main entrance of the Royal Ontario Museum. Once managed by the ROM, the Gardiner gained operational and financial independence about 30 years ago and has thrived ever since.

But what is it?

The Gardiner was founded by George and Helen Gardiner to house their collection of ancient American artifacts and European pottery and porcelain. As a former chair of the Toronto Stock Exchange, George Gardiner was free to indulge in a whimsical hobby, and so, began collecting ceramic art. That collection formed the foundation for what is now an ever-growing inventory of important ceramic pieces.

George Gardiner passed away in 1997 and Helen Gardiner in 2008, but their vision – and their continued philanthropy – has sparked two significant expansions to the museum and its collections. One such program, in 2004, saw the museum close for two years to allow a major expansion. A second is ongoing on the ground floor this year. The cur-

rent \$15.5-million project is described as “the full-scale reimagining of our ground floor (which) will include the construction of a new, fully equipped makerspace, a Community Learning Centre and an Indigenous gallery space.”

But even with the ground floor closed for reconstruction, there is still a lot in the open exhibits to intrigue visitors to the gallery.

Now, let’s be honest here. We visited the Gardiner as complete novices, knowing virtually nothing about ceramics, and not sure we really cared. But the exhibitions, the information and the sheer quirkiness of the art and artifacts on display absolutely captured our attention.

For instance, soon after beginning our visit, we spotted some outrageously bold images on what were apparently dinner plates. The accompanying information told us these were original creations of Pablo Picasso.

Nearby was something completely different – a life-size, bright blue, ceramic chainsaw, the creation of Native Canadian artist Mary Anne Barkhouse.

You might not immediately associate ceramics and porcelain with humour, but to my surprise, we found a great deal to smile about in the pieces on display at the museum. An English piece created in Staffordshire in the 1830s is simply labelled “The Ale Bench,” but there’s a lot going on in the work – a full-on dust-up between a drunken man and a rather aggressive female opponent! It made me laugh – still does, when I look at the photo – and honestly, I think that is as positive a recommendation as I can make for any

tourist attraction.

And we also laughed at the highly detailed, admittedly weird, 19-character “Monkey Orchestra,” from the Meissen factory, around 1750.

Like many hobbies over the centuries, the creation and collecting of porcelain has inspired huge excess, and such extravagance is certainly on display here. There is, for example, a 31-piece gold tea and coffee service made in Vienna in 1788.

Many of the pieces in the Gardiner collection have historical significance, such as the group of three Sevres vases once owned by French King Louis XVIII.

But one of my biggest surprises came from much closer to home – right here in Canada. I am a bit of a collector of Inuit sculpture, but all of my pieces are soapstone or serpentine or bone. At the Gardiner, I found a wonderful ceramic piece, “Man Skinning Walrus,” by Roger Aksadjuak (1972-2014), a Nunavut artist.

Unlike many such institutions, the Gardiner is open seven days a week, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. (until 5 p.m. on weekends and holiday Mondays). The admission fee is very reasonable – what is suggested is \$15 for adults, \$11 for seniors, and free for 18 and under. However, during the current construction project, admission is actually by donation of a Loonie or more. And every Wednesday, the museum is open until 9 p.m., and admission is free after 4 p.m.

One highlight of the museum is the Clay restaurant, open every day except Saturday for lunch. The food is really good. It is also not inexpensive.

So, I highly recommend that if you know little or nothing about ceramics, you set your skepticism aside and visit the Gardiner Museum. I’m confident it will be a pleasant surprise.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

The Gardiner Museum featuring ceramics and porcelain in Toronto.



Pablo Picasso brought his unique artistic vision to dinner plates.



A ceramic chainsaw by Mary Anne Barkhouse.



An alehouse brawl captured in clay.



The admittedly creepy “Monkey Orchestra.”

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Beef mothers and calves enjoy North Easthope's rolling hills



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Beef and dairy mothers with their calves enjoy a morning meal of lush, organically grown grass on the Rachel Green homestead along Perth Road 105 in Perth East's North Easthope Township.

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

A peaceful rural scene unfolded last week on the century farm of Rachel Green, nestled in the rolling hills of North Easthope, west of New Hamburg.

The farm, which has been certified

organic for many years, is home to both dairy and beef cattle — a source of pride for Rachel, who continues her family's longstanding farming tradition.

Green is the daughter of Emily and the late Ken Green. Her brother, Harley, and his family also carry on the agricultural legacy, farming in Alberta.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2025

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25

Oxford Philatelic Society Circuit Book Fair
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Free Admission & Parking
Stop in and buy some stamps and meet fellow stamp collectors. About 8 participating stamp clubs. Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com
Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>
Church of the Epiphany,
560 Dundas Street, Woodstock

MONDAY, OCTOBER 27

Wilmot Council meeting
7 to 11 p.m.
Council chambers
60 Snyder's Road W, Baden

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28

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

Perth East council meeting
7 p.m.
Council chambers
25 Mill Street East, Milverton



SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1

Free Repair Cafe hosted by Nith Valley EcoBoosters
10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Get help with fixing items that are broken or need mending. For more details contact nvecoboosters@gmail.com
Zion United Church
215 Peel Street, New Hamburg

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Ostomy Support Group Meeting
7:00 p.m.
Speaker – Joanne Schreuders
'Securing Your Legacy' – Planning and preserving your memories
Social time and snacks. Everyone welcome.
(519)273-4327
93 Morgan St., Stratford

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5

East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting
9 a.m.
Council Chambers
89 Loveys Street East, Hickson

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

The Plattsville & District Heritage Society Annual Remembrance Service
11:30 a.m.
Chesterfield Cenotaph
816661 Oxford Road 22, Bright

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Growing Greener Communities: Perspectives from Tree Canada
9 p.m.
Speaker: Christine Earnshaw. Join us for a fun evening celebrating LTW's accomplishments and recognizing our volunteers. Christine of Tree Canada leads the Growing Canada's Community Canopies (GCCC) initiative. She will talk about our national tree program and discuss how important our work in Wilmot is.
Wilmot Recreation Complex, Rm A, Baden



WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12

Tavistock Men's Club Sauerkraut & BBQ Pork Chop Supper
4 to 7 p.m.
Pick Up Only. Call 519-655-3573 or email: info@tavistockmensclub.ca or online tavistockmensclub.ca
Tavistock Memorial Hall
1 Adam St. Tavistock ON

MUSEUM/ARCHIVES EXHIBIT

The Museum/Archives will be open for viewing of **Remembrance Displays and Memorabilia** on the following **Saturdays of November 1st, 8th, and 15th, 2025 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**
All are welcome
816661 Oxford Road 22, Bright

MORNING & EVENING BIBLE READING

Read the Bible in a Year in Community
Morning meeting 6:00am daily
Evening meeting 6:00pm daily
Contact Arthur Rosh if interested.
Phone number: 226-899-1551
Email address: arthur.rosh@gmail.com
Location to be determined in New Hamburg, Tavistock, Baden, Wellesley, New Dundee, St. Agatha, Shakespeare, Petersburg, Hickson, Punkeydoodle's Corner and area

EVERY WEDNESDAY

TOPS - Taking off Pounds Sensibly
Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
TOPS is a non-judgmental weight loss support group. Need help on your weight loss journey. For info call Cathie 519-662-9273.
St James Church, Baden

Wednesday Night Euchre at the New Hamburg Legion
Wednesdays at 7 p.m.
65 Boulee St., New Hamburg

STAMP CLUB

Oxford Philatelic Society
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2-4pm) and 4th Tuesday (7 to 9pm)
September to May
If you have never belonged to a stamp club, now's the time. Meet new friends, grow your knowledge and collection.
Contact: Don Eaton dhfe@silomail.com
Website: <http://www.rpsc.org/chapters/oxford>
Church of the Epiphany
560 Dundas Street, Woodstock Ontario N4S1C7

FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES

Tavistock Seniors Activities @ Tavistock Memorial Hall, 1 Adam St. Tavistock ON, except Shuffleboard
Pickleball Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon, 12-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052
Cards Monday, Wednesday afternoon 1-4, euchre, crib (bring board), etc. Just drop in to play, good to bring someone. Contact: Bob Routly 519-301-2118
Inside walking Monday & Wednesday morning 8.30-12. Contact: Larry Brown 519-240-6715
Crokinole Monday, Wednesday morning 8.30-12, Just drop in to play, good to bring someone. Contact: John Schultz 519-655-2346
Shuffleboard @ arena, Wednesday 12:30-4 and Thursday 10-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052.
VON Smart Seniors Exercise, Tuesday and Thursday morning 9-10; Village Manor 10:25-11:25. Contact: 519-539-1231 x 6285

The
Wilmot-Tavistock
Gazette

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

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW:

- The Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:
 - Coming Events Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst
 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
 - Display Ad - Sizes begin at a Small Classified Display ad (3.3" x 2.5") - \$35 + hst

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OR call 519-655-2341 with credit card details

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

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|-------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Universal Serial Bus | 6. Roxette |
| 2. Nutmeg | 7. Seven |
| 3. Stephen King | 8. Hydrogen |
| 4. Psychology | 9. BTS |
| 5. Rabbits | 10. Kuwait |

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