

# Tillsonburg POST

FREE

MARCH 19, 2026

VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 24



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## Donations sought for Rotary Community Pantry

JEFF HELSDON  
*Editor*

As the Rotary Club's Community Pantry gets closer to launch, organizers are seeking volunteers as well as donations of time and goods.

Tillsonburg Community Pantry will be a small, standalone building behind the Station Arts Centre. It is not intended to compete with the Tillsonburg Helping Hand Food Bank, but will operate in tandem with it. According to the project website, "the project aims to strengthen food security, reduce food waste, and offer flexible access to nutritious food for

anyone who needs it."

Similar concepts have been used successfully in other communities, including Norfolk and London.

The facility will include a refrigerator to keep food fresh and shelving for canned goods.

Rotary member Jason Weiler said construction will start this spring, and the club is looking for donations of services and/or materials.

"Anything that is donated knocks down the cost, and we can use that money for the operation once it's started," he said, adding used materials may be accepted, but that will be subject to review.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(ROBIN KRAFFT PHOTO)

### PUB SHAMMY

A good time was had by all in downtown Tillsonburg on March 14, celebrating St Patrick's Day during the third annual Pub Shammy, organized by the Downtown Tillsonburg BIA. Hundreds of parties hit the streets for the event and the Shamrock Shuttle provided a great way to get around to all of the participating businesses.

## Province finalizes changes to reduce the number of conservation authorities

JEFF HELSDON  
*Editor*

Ontario's 36 conservation authorities will be reduced to nine under sweeping changes finalized by the province on March 10.

The initial proposal was to reduce the number of conservation authorities to seven. Locally, the Long Point Region Conservation Authority (LPRCA) would have been lumped in with other authorities in a new entity that would have stretched from Windsor to Niag-

ara.

The final decision was altered slightly to create an Eastern Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority and Western Lake Erie Regional Conservation Authority, while lumping the eastern end of Lake Erie in with the Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority. There will be nine conservation authorities in total and a new Ontario Provincial Conservation Authority. More specifically, this will translate into the amalgamation of LPRCA

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# Rotary Club's Tillsonburg Community Pantry to launch in spring

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

The Community Pantry isn't the first time the Tillsonburg Rotary Club has been involved in assisting with feeding the community. Club members assisted Cycles of Life during the pandemic.

"From there, we were looking for other ways to assist in that area," he said.

Then, a perspective club member came up with the concept of community pantries and researched how it worked in other centres. A presentation was made to council last February to get the ball rolling.

"There's a broader need associated with food insecurity in our community and others," Weiler said.

Club members plan to obtain their food-handling certificates to go above and beyond what is required. Initially, they plan to be open Tuesdays and Thursdays, but the hope is to make the pantry's food accessible several days per week eventually.

Weiler said the pantry is intended to fill gaps for those who need food.

"We would never be able to handle the volume of existing services," he said. "It's just intended to be one more option on the list of things available for people with food insecur-

ity," he said.

Although the pantry will be on the Station Arts Centre property, it will not be operated by the centre's staff. Rotary members and community volunteers will run the pantry.

Partnerships already extend beyond the Station Arts Centre, with the Tillsonburg Helping Hand Food Bank being a key player. The food bank will assist with managing the food inventory and provide a central location for volunteers to drop off donations and gather items for restocking. On each operating day, a volunteer will clean the pantry, collect items left by the community, review all remaining goods while following public health guidelines, deliver donations to the food bank for sorting, and pick up replenishment items—including perishables that cannot be held until the next food bank distribution.

Volunteers will also be needed for the ongoing operation of the facility, and the club is hoping for partnering businesses and farms that will donate food.

For more information, contact the Rotary Club at [pantryproject@rotarytillsonburg.ca](mailto:pantryproject@rotarytillsonburg.ca) or through the club web site at [rotarytillsonburg.ca](http://rotarytillsonburg.ca)

# Oxford municipalities hosting candidate information meeting

Oxford County's eight area municipalities are partnering to host a candidate information session in preparation for the 2026 municipal and school board election.

The session will take on Thursday, March 26, at 6 p.m., virtually and in person in the council chambers at the Oxford County Administration Building, 21 Reeve St., Woodstock.

New, returning or interested candidates and members of the public are invited to learn more about the roles and responsibilities of council, who is eligible to run, the nomination process, and campaign finance and advertising rules.

The session will include presentations from the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and municipal solicitor Nigel Bellchamber. Attendees are encour-

aged to send questions in advance to their municipal clerk. Those wishing to participate in the session virtually can register by emailing [election@cityofwoodstock.ca](mailto:election@cityofwoodstock.ca).

Oxford County's municipalities include the Township of Norwich, Township of Zorra, Township of South-West Oxford, Township of East Zorra-Tavistock, Township of Blandford-Blenheim, Town of Ingersoll, Town of Tillsonburg and the City of Woodstock.

The nomination period for candidates will be open from May 1 to Aug. 21, 2026. Election Day will take place on Monday, Oct. 26, 2026. Advance polling will also be available in each municipality.

For more information about the election in your community, please visit your local municipality's website.

*Have something to say? Submit your Letter to the Editor here:*  
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# Historic trailblazers remembered at Annandale NHS event

ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Contributor

Annandale NHS celebrated International Women's Day early, on March 5, with a Trailblazers Tea, recognizing the contributions of Canadian women. Thanks to their courage, persistence and perseverance, doors are open for Canadian women to walk through in all sectors.

"The theme for the event was selected by Kathleen Watkin, Culture and Heritage Programs Coordinator at ANHS, who also planned the program," Kate Bakos, Cultural Heritage Manager/Curator said. "Kathleen chose the Trailblazer theme to mark International Women's Day and to highlight the many Canadian women, past and present, whose contributions have helped shape and strengthen our country."

The lively event included a social time to enjoy conversation over coffee and a variety of teas, served by Kate Bakos, Kathleen Watkin, and Quinlan Fletcher. Guests sampled fresh fruit, croissants with butter and jam, and an array of decadent desserts. Gluten and dairy free options were also provided.

Each table of guests formed teams to compete in a round of trivia questions, prepared by Watkin, to name iconic Canadian women in categories such as politics,

sports, arts, entertainment, heroic figures and local legends.

There have been many interesting and infamous Oxford County women who paved the way for others to follow. While some of the names and accomplishments were familiar, others were surprising.

The first female physician to practice medicine in Ontario, Emily Stowe, (1831-1903) was born into a farming family in Norwich Township. She founded the Canadian Women's Suffrage Association and was also the first female principal of a public school in Upper Canada. After her application to the Toronto School of Medicine was denied, Stowe trained in New York and returned to Ontario before going into practice. In 1883, Dr. Stowe founded the Women's Medical College.

Evangelist Aimee McPherson (1890-1944) was born in Salford. She pioneered the use of the radio for religious services, starting the first Christian radio station and becoming a media celebrity and founder of the Foursquare Church. Her sermons and the donations that poured in enabled the construction of a megachurch in Los Angeles in 1923.

Guests also celebrated Nancy Barker Tillson, the founding matriarch of Tillsonburg. When she arrived in Canada in 1822 with her husband, George Tillson, pioneer



(ROBIN KRAFFT PHOTO)

The winning Trailblazers trivia team: (from left) Barb MacKinnon, Shelley McKechnie, Marilyn Avent, Carolyn Bilbie, and Holly Hanson. With the group of four teachers and a member of the Historical Society, the odds were in their favour. The deserving winners took home the cyclamen centerpieces from each table.

life wasn't easy. The mother of nine "played a significant role in transforming Dereham Forge (now Tillsonburg) from a remote forest settlement into a thriving mill and factory town." (ANHS)

Many more local trailblazing women were acknowledged, from Tillsonburg's first female mayor, Jean Ferrie, to Hulda Randall Hoover, whose son Herbert became the 31st president of the United States.

"The feedback we received was very positive," Bakos said. "Guests shared that they enjoyed the atmosphere, the food and company. They also appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the accomplishments of women in Canadian history while celebrating International Women's Day together. One guest even asked for a copy of Kathleen's pub quiz to test her husband on!"

## EDITORIAL

# Be cautious of conservation authority changes

The provincial government finalized changes it proposed to the operation of Ontario's conservation authorities last week.

To their credit, legislators partially heeded the outcry from 14,000 individuals, municipalities, and organizations that submitted to the input process, changing the number of conservation authorities from 36 to nine, instead of the seven it originally proposed. The announcement will also see the formation of watershed councils, which may take local considerations into account, and a committee comprised of the conservation authority CAOs formed to oversee it.

All of this will occur by early 2027, which is a lot of change in a short time.

Still, many details aren't finalized, which may or may not be a concern. One difference already noted is language changed from no job losses with the changes to no front-line job losses.

The driver of the change is speedier approval of applications for building permits to allow development to proceed more quickly.

It's no secret that conservation authorities, and municipalities can sometimes drag their heels on zoning and building applications. This is not to point fingers locally, but a general statement. Sometimes, this is with good reason; other times not.

The irony, though, is that conservation authorities were enforcing provincial

legislation on planning applications. So, if there were issues, perhaps the change could have been as simple as changing the regulations instead of blowing up the whole system.

It's not surprising that the Ford government opted for a wholesale change of conservation authorities, as there has been tinkering since the premier took power. At first, it was moving the ministry overseeing conservation authorities from the Ministry of Natural Resources, where it belonged, to the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks. Then, it was changes to the mandate of conservation authorities.

To oversimplify the changes, it could be said that compressing 36 conservation authorities into nine follows the 'bigger is better' theory, which holds that bigger will bring greater efficiencies. Yet, a study by right-wing think tank the Fraser Institute on municipal amalgamation didn't have to go too far to find this wasn't the case. Amongst the findings of a look at the amalgamation of Haldimand and Norfolk, was taxes rose, and Norfolk's long-term debt (as of 2015) rose by more than 100 per cent.

Only time will tell if the fears of critics of the latest wholesale change were founded, but Ontario residents need to be vigilant. This vigilance needs to include rumblings about changes to municipalities as well. There are whispers that municipal restructuring may again be in the offing.

tillsonburgpost.com



Waiting for spring.

(LINDA SYS PHOTO)

## PHOTOGRAPHERS WANTED

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

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

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

# A medieval feast and being married to a jester



**WRITER'S  
CORNER**

**NORMA COLLIS**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

It was September and I had just moved to a senior public school as their teacher librarian. I was told that the staff had a tradition of holding a staff pig roast at the country home of one of the staff members, on the Friday evening of the first week of school. Everyone on staff was invited as well as their significant other.

On the Tuesday before the party, it was announced that the party was themed. The theme was a Medieval Feast, and we

were all to come wearing an appropriate costume. I am not great at costume design and quickly cobbled together a Friar Tuck sort of thing, using a long cowl-necked bath robe.

My husband David had an extremely busy week at work. On his way home on the day of the party, he stopped at a costume store located in a city south of where we lived.

"I'm running late," he told the saleswoman. "Quick, what do you have that I could wear to a Medieval Feast?"

"Well sir, we don't have much stock available from that period in history, but we do have a lovely jester's outfit."

And indeed, it was "lovely?" The costume was pink and yellow and included a traditional three cornered jester's hat complete with bells on the end of each point. An impressive wand was included and the ensemble was completed with bright pink running shoes. I was quite envious when he appeared in all his finery. I regretted not working harder on my own costume.

We arrived at the party a little late. The pig was completely roasted and was now being carved, in the garage This culinary feat was being supervised by a good many of the male teachers on staff.

Not one of them was in costume.

There was a lengthy pause as David gave me "a look" and asked, "Didn't you tell me that we were supposed to be in costume?"

We did not immediately get out of our car as there was a somewhat lengthy conversation about lords, ladies, knights and jesters. As we surveyed the rest of the outdoor venue, only one Friar Tuck and one jester were in attendance. Every other party goer wore casual clothing that came from the present century.

I had been well and truly "initiated" into the new school and poor David had to wear his costume for the entire evening because he hadn't thought to bring a change of clothing.

He handled the situation with grace and good humour and even took it all in stride

when someone accidentally sat on his wand. The "accessory" now sported a right-angle bend at the end of it.

For the rest of the school year, during staff meetings, someone might make a statement about a topic under discussion. There would be a pause, everyone would look at me and say, "Jester Kidding Norma."

Their other favorite comment was, "Well, I'm no fool."

At the staff Christmas party, my "secret Santa" gifted me with a large wall calendar sporting an even larger photo of David dressed as the jester.

As the end of the school year neared, I was informed that the staff always had a staff party following the last day of school. "Please invite your husband," they told me.

"Oh, and be sure to tell him.....it's a tattoo party."

*Norma Collis is a Tillsonburg author of several books, including "Tales from Holy Cottage".*

# Learning about the life and families of coyotes



**THE  
STAGE  
IS THE  
WORLD**

LAUREL A. BEECHEY

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

The World Wildlife Federation's Living Planet Index, which surveys animal populations around the world, shows catastrophic decline of 50 per cent since 1970. This is a generalization of everything from fish to rhinoceroses to turtles, frogs, snakes, snails, birds, and cute furry animals.

The WWF's Canadian Living Planet Index shows fluctuations: some species are doing better, others worse, depending on their habitat conditions. On average, monitored populations of grassland species declined by 62 per cent, while forest mammals have declined by 42 per cent over the last five decades.

You can help protect wildlife. As we take the land from them for crops or buildings, they have no recourse but to move into our neighbourhoods to find food and shelter. If you don't want them in your yard, in or under your shed,

porch, or attic, you must make sure they can't get in there. Keep up the maintenance of your home and property.

Feeding dogs and cats outside is like a neon sign flashing 'free food, come and get it'. You will get raccoons, skunks, opossums, coyotes, mice, and rats. Wildlife food includes accessible garbage, windfall fruit rotting under the tree, and wild bird seed that attracts those, plus rabbits, squirrels etc.

Spring has started its return. Female wildlife are looking for places to set up their nurseries. Please, before cutting down trees, fixing the hole in the soffit or under the porch...check that it is not yet a nursery. Mom raises her babies better than any human can. Fix it after the family leaves. Trapping and moving her and the babies to a bush can cause the death of all of them. She cannot find or build a den, hunt for food for herself and the babies all at once.

I get calls from people who think they have seen coyotes in their neighbourhood, and it could be if someone is putting food outside for their dog or cat, or lives at the edge of town. If you hear them talking [howling] and are concerned, bring pets inside for a while.

Too many people know too little about and fear coyotes, yet they are a species that we should have great admiration for, as they seem to be a better example of a cohesive family unit that many humans are today. Coyotes, mate for life, co-parent and share in the duties of rearing their pups with older siblings from previous litters. They have learned survival skills and teach the young to become "coyote intelligent". Coyotes do not tolerate threats to their young, so do not take your dog off-leash.

I love hearing them talk to each other. Yes, they talk.

Pups and their parents and relatives join in chorus to vocalize, teaching the young effective communication techniques while building family bonds.

As pups become more independent, both parents may venture out to hunt, leaving the pups behind at the den or at safe, secure rendezvous sites. Parents will bring food items and toys back for the pups.

Myth: Coyotes stalk people. No! They are very aware of everything in their territory and may shadow or escort someone in their territory. They are very curious and will stop to watch people, perhaps assessing the threat you are to their family.

Myth: Coyotes lure domestic dogs. No! But when a dog chases and harasses a coyote, they will flee to the safety of their family members, who will defend them. Remember the leash!

Myth: Coyotes abandon their pups. No! Unless the pups look sickly/starved, mom is probably out hunting.

If faced with a coyote, never run from or turn your back on a coyote/fox/wolf/bear or domestic dog. That means you are prey, and they could give chase. Never scream, and instead, stand as tall as possible, wave your arms above your head, stomp your feet, and clap hands. Pop an umbrella or plastic bag, shake your car keys, or blow a whistle. Surprise gestures work best. Be assertive! Be big and loud! Yell "Go away!" A strong voice and assertive gestures send a clear message. If you do this and run towards it, it will leave.

If you are concerned pick up small children or pets and then make all the noise possible. Learn more at Coyote Watch Canada.. <https://www.coyotewatchcanada.com/site/coexisting-with-coyotes>

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## Kinsmen bridge replacement delayed until May

The replacement of the Kinsmen Bridge is being delayed until May due to manufacturing issues.

The contractor confirmed their structural component supplier has experienced longer than anticipated manufacturing and production timelines at their facility. Following a recent plant review meeting, the supplier committed to delivering the structural components in phases, allowing installation work to proceed as materials begin arriving on site.

The updated delivery timing has been incorporated into the contractor's revised project schedule. Under the schedule issued in December, bridge installation, trail restoration, and site demobilization were anticipated to be completed by mid-March 2026, with final sod and seed-

ing to follow as weather permitted. Based on the updated schedule submitted last week, these construction activities are now expected to be completed the first week of May 2026.

Final restoration activities such as sod and seeding will remain weather dependent and will be completed as soon as conditions allow.

The contractor confirmed that any additional costs associated with the schedule change, such as crane rental or remobilization, will be borne by the contractor and their supplier and will not be the responsibility of the town.

As a reminder, complimentary T-GO bus service (to and from Stops 27 and 32R) will continue until the bridge is reopened.

**Tillsonburg POST**

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# Nominations open for chamber awards

Nominations are now open for the Tillsonburg and District Chamber of Commerce's annual Awards of Excellence.

The following categories are available for nominations:

- Business Improvement Award
- Community Service Award
- Employer of the Year Award
- Entrepreneur of the Year Award

- Environmental Sustainability Award
- Positive Change Award (A Made In Tillsonburg Story)

More information is available on the chamber website at [tillsonburgchamber.ca](http://tillsonburgchamber.ca)

Nominations are open until Friday, April 10 at 5 p.m. The awards will be presented at the awards ceremony on Thursday, September 24.

# Final comments due for site plan control bylaw

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The end is almost in sight for Tillsonburg's new site plan control bylaw.

Site plan control is a planning tool used to manage development with the community. It allows for a detailed review of parking, lighting, landscaping, drainage and other details on a particular site.

The town's site plan control bylaw was last updated in 2017. The new draft bylaw, for which an open house was held to share the updates with the public on March 10, contains changes to reflect provincial legislation impacts and general updates.

"It's more of an administrative task," said Oxford County development planner Amy Hartley. "We're not look to make waves with the chang-

es."

Amongst the changes are: site plan control does not apply to residential developments of 10 units or less, third party appeal rates were removed, and the ability to request aesthetic changes has been removed. Hartley said the updates will also cut red tape, and reduce redundant wording that could confuse applicants.

The open house held on March 10 drew about 10 people to the Lion's Den, including engineers, planners, land surveyors and residents. Hartley was glad to see the number who came out to better understand the site plan control process.

Previously, she made presentation at the economic development committee and the builder's forum.

Final comments on the proposed bylaw are due March 20, and a final report will be presented to Tillsonburg council on April 13.

# Town to examine allowing more event signage

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Signs, signs, everywhere there's not a sign...

That play on the main chorus from the 1970s hit from Canadian rockers The Five Man Electrical Band sums up the thrust of what a motion passed by Tillsonburg council is looking into changing. More specifically, the motion put forward by Coun. Kelly Spencer read: "that staff be directed to report back on options for enhanced physical and/or digital municipal signage to improve communication of community announcements and events, including cost estimates, location analysis, and implementation considerations."

Speaking to her motion, Spencer started by praising town staff for their social media, further explaining, "People keep asking for banners or signs, I'm not sure if people don't see the social media. This request has come through several times by several different people."

Spencer said she likes banners across the road, although she realizes many don't. She pointed out the BIA has digital signage, but it is outdated and maybe it could be collabora-

tively updated.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy said she won't be supporting the motion, noting it would require a policy and there were some issues in the past about what types of banners can be displayed.

The mayor noted oil prices are increasing, which will impact paving and the budget.

"This is the last year of council, we shouldn't be spending time on non-budgeted items," she said. "Staff time is limited and very valuable, and staff have budgeted items to work on."

Gilvesy pointed out digital signs can be distracting to drivers.

Coun. Chris Rosehart presented another option.

"They can always rent portable signs for the time being," she suggested. "There are people in town who have portable signs, and if you approach them, they don't mind changing their signs to an event for the community. There are some signs out there that could be used."

Spencer said this was a possibility as well, adding a report on signage possibilities could work with the township sponsorship policy that is being examined.

Council passed the resolution with a split vote.

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# Ontario to see nine conservation authorities

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

with Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority, and Grand River Conservation Authority.

Details from the province provide a broad outline of the process, including the formation of a transition committee, and that the new conservation authorities would be established in 2027.

The provincial push for the change was to speed permit approval, but the information accompanying the decision states that the changes will also bring improved flood control, electronic permitting, and erosion prevention while maintaining strong environmental protections. A great deal of feedback was received during the consultation process, with 14,000 comments from municipalities, individuals, and organizations. It was taken into consid-

eration when creating watershed councils that will align more closely with the former conservation authorities' boundaries.

The changes will also see responsibility for paying levies and appointing board members move from lower-tier municipalities (Tillsonburg) to upper-tier (Oxford County). There will also be a cap on the number of board members and a possible limit to the number of representatives from each municipality.

Locally, Tillsonburg Deputy Mayor Dave Beres is the former chair of LPRCA during the consultation. He said having nine conservation authorities is better than having seven.

"Nobody likes change, however, this is much better than it looked before," he said, adding LPRCA is more at home with areas west of London, which are flatter, have many municipal drains, and less forest.

Norfolk Councillor Doug Brunton is the current chair of LPRCA. He pointed out LPRCA had little in common with areas west of London, which are flatter, have many municipal drains, and less forest.

"It's better than what it was," he said of the final arrangement. "It's a little more applicable to where we are. We were originally going all the way down to Windsor."

Beres said there are still many unanswered questions with the new structure.

"There may or may not be elected officials on the boards, that's still to be determined," he said.

"They're going to form these boards, but we don't understand entirely how we fit in," Brunton said.

Beres also had questions about the boundaries and how it will work when a municipality is in multiple jurisdictions. For instance, Oxford County is in both the former LPRCA and Upper Thames Conservation Authority boundaries.

"So how are they going to their municipal partners for funding for a levy if they haven't established this yet," he asked.

In his role as Tillsonburg deputy mayor, Beres had

budgetary concerns as well. LPRCA is more economically efficient than many conservation authorities, with two-thirds of its budget generated through user fees and logging operations in its woodlots. Beres believes many conservation authorities rely on municipal levies for up to half their budgets, and questioned if there would be an increased cost locally.

Brunton echoed that concern.

"I haven't seen the books of the other conservation authorities we will amalgamate with," he said. "We're very not reliant on the municipalities as other conservation authorities are. My fear is that reserves will be blended together, and it will be detrimental to the area."

Brunton spoke highly of the tourism potential of the LPRCA-owned campgrounds in Norfolk, and one in Haldimand County, and hopes that is taken into consideration. Pointing to Backus, he mentioned the education centre teaches about conservation and the school programs hosted in the centre.

"To me, if this amalgamation doesn't allow us to continue with the programs at Backus and the campgrounds, it will be detrimental," he said.

Beres pointed to the future of Backus mill itself, the only mill still standing on the north shore of Lake Erie that survived burning by American forces during the War of 1812.

"That's yet to be determined. Are we going to turn that over to the municipalities?" Beres pondered.

One of the questions Beres saw previously was in connection to financial donations to LPRCA and if this could go to another area. Initially, that concern seemed to be addressed, but he wants to see more details on how this and woodlot management will play out.

"This is all about building more homes faster," he said.

Brunton said meetings are scheduled in the near future with Conservation Ontario, the current entity for all the conservation authorities, and he is hopeful that more details will emerge.

## WEEKEND QUIZ

by Jake Grant

1. What plant is traditionally worn on St. Patrick's Day to represent Irish heritage?
2. What animal is known to eat magic mushrooms?
3. According to legend, what did St. Patrick drive out of Ireland?
4. Claude AI was created by what company?
5. What city dyes its river green every year for St. Patrick's Day?
6. What historic protest in Boston Harbor became a key symbol of colonial resistance to British taxation?
7. What Irish rock band released the famous album The Joshua Tree?
8. Who won best actor at the 2026 Oscars?
9. What Irish musical instrument is considered a national symbol?
10. What might you find at the end of a rainbow?

This week's answers are found on pg. 22

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# Olympic medalist speaks at chamber women's event

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

A packed facility greeted Olympic bronze medalist Erika Polidori when she was the guest speaker at The Tillsonburg and District Chamber of Commerce's International Women's Day event.

Called Empower Up, the event was held at the Tillsonburg Soccer Club. It featured displays from female-owned businesses that attendees could browse in the morning prior to lunch and Polidori's presentation, which was meant to inspire those present.

Born in London and raised in Brantford, Polidori credited her parents for their support and her grandmother for her inspiration. Her grandmother played slo-pitch on a senior women's team into her 60s and had definite goals with her game.

"Thinking back now, I see how important it was to see the goals she had

with slo-pitch," Polidori said. "Having that unofficial mentorship was important to see how my grandmother went after her goal."

Growing up, Polidori was the only girl on her T-ball team, but that didn't hold her back.

"It bothered me because they didn't know how to play," she joked. "I was always pretty competitive."

It was important for her to go places others haven't been – which she did. She made the Senior Women's Softball team in 2013, was successful at the Olympic qualifier in 2019, and was part of the Canadian Olympic team in 2021. She is now also an RBC Olympian.

Her path to the Olympics was a little unusual, as the 2020 Seoul Games were delayed by a year due to Covid. However, that wasn't known immediately, and the team trained inside from January to March 2020 in Halifax.

"It was a real challenge

to be honest," she said. "We were away from home. We talked to each other. When we didn't have much else, we had each other."

This turned into a competitive advantage down the road because they relied so much on each other. The three months of training included bringing in experts from various areas, including former Olympians, strength and conditioning training, and even Navy Seals to talk about training.

Then Covid hit in mid-March, and the team was sent home, not knowing whether they would compete in the Olympics. Team members kept in touch via Zoom. The team members worked on the concept of being one rather than 15 individuals.

"How can we beat the team in a moment when we can feel as one," she said.

The players were also taught to know their role and what their individual role is.

"Once you know what your expectations are, you go about achieving those," she said.

With the calendar turning to 2021, it looked like the Olympics would go ahead. Although the Canadians had qualified as a team, individuals had not qualified. Polidori qualified in May 2021.

She said players learned their individual strengths and weaknesses, and a culture was created where they could fail at practices.

"We were in a training environment where we would grow and fail," she said. "This way failure would happen in a training environment."

Team members also learned about delayed gratification, where they would not see the fruits of their labour immediately.

Despite pouring her heart and soul into planning, Polidori was struck with plantar fasciitis about a month before the Olympics. This set back her training, but she kept at it.

At the Olympics, six teams played round-robin games, and the two with the best records played for gold. The third- and fourth-ranked teams



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

The Tillsonburg District Chamber of Commerce's Empower Up was the only event for International Women's Day in Tillsonburg. A healthy crowd, pictured here, turned out for the event led by Olympian Erika Polidori.

played for bronze. Going into the games, Canada was ranked third and had never won a medal before in silver. The team won all its games except for 1-0 losses to Japan and the U.S., which won gold and silver, respectively.

The entire 2021 Olympics was held in an empty

stadium due to Covid restrictions. Women's softball wasn't played in 2024, but Polidori is gearing up for the 2028 games in Los Angeles.

In the meantime, she has a regular job as a nurse, as Canada doesn't offer much financial support for its Olympians.

Polidori's parting advice to the crowd was that if people have ambitious goals, they should approach them head-on and go for it.

"You'll be surprised what you can accomplish," she said. "Even if you don't succeed, you can still get so much out of it."



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

RBC Olympian Erika Polidori displays the bronze medal she won in women's softball at the Seoul Olympics. She is training for the next games in 2028.

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## TILLSONBURG COUNCIL BRIEFS

### Town assumes roads and services in Annandale Phase 7

Tillsonburg assumed the roads and services in Annandale Heights Phase 7.

Covering parts of Pearl and Pine Streets and Maple Lane, the subdivision plan was approved in 2016, and recently completed. Assuming the roads and infrastructure is part of the normal course of business between developers and the municipality. Assuming these assets means the town will now be responsible for maintenance.

Council approved the change at its March 9 meeting.

### Lease signed for hangar

Council approved a new lease for Blue-Star Hangar Inc.

The company originally had a memorandum of understanding, instead of a lease, as the company was considering operating a charter business from the hangar it constructed. With the MOU expired, staff suggested moving to a traditional lease

with the company.

During discussion of the proposal, Mayor Deb Gilvesy questioned why it took so long to bring the lease to council when the MOU expired more than a year ago.

Carlos Reyes, Director of Development and Operations, said negotiations started as soon as he realized the MOU had expired.

### Town committee changes

Tillsonburg council passed a bylaw at its March 9 meeting to change the membership of some of its committees.

Brittany Vaughan and Michael Brown were removed from the Accessibility Advisory Committee, Courtney Booth from the Museum, Culture, Heritage and Special Awards Advisory Committee and Dane Willson from the Affordable and Attainable Housing Advisory Committee. Council also appointed Evan Prouse, Bryan Wiltshire and Frank Van Heck to the Affordable and Attainable Housing Advisory Committee.

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# Jeff Tribe receives LPRCA stewardship recognition

CHRIS ABBOTT

Grant Haven Media

It's safe to say Jeff Tribe is not a fan of Ontario consolidating its conservation authorities, first announced in the fall of 2025, and recently amended on March 10.

Tribe is the 2025 recipient of Long Point Region Conservation Authority's Stewardship Award, awarded annually to an individual or group for their contribution to the natural heritage within the Long Point Region watershed.

A journalist, photographer, videographer, content creator and farmer, Tribe is passionate about the environment, said Doug Brunton, chair of the LPRCA board of directors, presenting the award at the LPRCA Annual General Meeting March 6 in Tillsonburg.

With the help of Ducks Unlimited Canada, Tribe facilitated a wetland restoration project on his family farm resulting in 1.4 acres of newly created wetland, including two wetland cells, several smaller water features, and 8.9 acres of surrounding upland habitat.

Around the wetland, 450 trees and shrubs were planted. Most recently, another 550 trees were planted through Forests Canada's 50 Million Tree Planting Program.

"Supporting the conserva-

tion of natural resources in the Long Point Region watershed is critical, optimizing and maintaining the health of the watershed," said Brunton. "Thank you for your valuable contributions, Jeff."

"My dad (Harry Tribe) was a tree planter who saw himself as a steward rather than owner of the land," said Tribe, noting the family's 'duck ponds' have been formally named 'The Harry & Jessie Wetland' in honour of his parents.

"Dad spent his lifetime bringing surviving maple saplings along. It's a 'thing' to me that I tapped those trees for the third year on Wednesday, and with help from Harry's great-grandchildren, continue to produce maple syrup from their sap."

Tribe said the family's association with LPRCA is also multi-generational.

"Dad sourced trees to plant a wood break, I can remember hoeing as a small child, somewhere around 60 years ago. The LPRCA planted 500 walnuts and 270 red oak, infilled with white pine... around 40 years ago. More recently, there were the 450 mixed trees and shrubs."

He noted the help of several organizations, including Stewardship Oxford and LPRCA,



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Doug Brunton, chair of the LPRCA, on the left, presents the 2025 Stewardship Award to Jeff Tribe on March 6.

was important in creating the wetland/tree area.

"The wetland has attracted a variety of ducks and geese... and we have received much enjoyment from the thought a wide range of other wildlife enjoys the habitat – frogs, turtles, fireflies, birds, and even snakes..."

Collaborative partnerships

with organizations like the LPRCA help make it happen, he said, "providing consultation, expertise, guidance, and 'boots on the ground.'"

"I would also like to emphasize the importance of long-term relationships with LOCAL representatives like Paul Gagnon. Paul is helpful, knowledgeable and informa-

tive. His years of lived conservation experience in this area are a huge benefit to both the CA and the land owners he interacts with.

"It concerns me when I hear there is a plan to consolidate the CAs across Ontario. As a land owner, I don't want to dial 1-800-Rent-a-Parachute-Consultant when we're

considering a project for the Tribe Ranch. We want Paul – or other local (staff) we've had the pleasure of dealing with over many generations."

People who live here, Tribe concluded, and people who have a passion for conservation in this area, "create a level of comfort, trust and confidence to move forward."

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# Jayden King thoroughly enjoyed, performed well at Montana's Brier

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

Jayden King did not end up kissing a cod and getting screeched in while at the Montana's Brier in St. John's Newfoundland.

But the Tillsonburg curler did embrace wide-ranging opportunity to learn from the personal and competitive experience it offered.

"We can build and hopefully go back to next year's Brier and do one better."

The Team Ontario rink, King, vice Dylan Niepage, second Owen Henry, lead Victor Pietrangelo, alternate Spencer Dunlop and coach Morgan Lavell collectively wanted to make a good run at the Brier.

"Not just be there for the experience," said King.

They accomplished that goal by qualifying for the playoffs with a 5-3 round-robin record. Ultimately, King and company would exit via a 12-6 loss to Newfoundland's own Brad Gushue Friday, March 6. Trailing 5-4 in the seventh end, the Tillsonburg rink elected to take some higher risk moves in order to try and win, not merely prolong the game, seeing the final score extend as a result.

"Those are the chances you have to take in order to try and get ahead of the good teams."

King had opened the draw Friday, Feb. 27 with an 11-4 win over Nova Scotia.

Stepping onto the ice for their first Brier on a Friday night with Newfoundland fans passionately supporting Gushue, Young and others as they did throughout pool play and beyond, would remain King's 'aha moment' they had arrived.

"The arena was packed to the brim."

King backed up a strong opening with an 8-3 victory over PEI the following day.

"We were kind of rolling right along," said King, pleased to have avoided a

slow start and having to play catch-up for the duration, essentially falling out of playoff contention early.

Team Ontario dropped an 8-4 decision to Gushue in pool play, and then an 8-2 final to Olympic gold medalist Brad Jacobs, representing Canada.

Falling to 2-2 against that level of teams was not entirely unexpected.

"We wanted to make sure we capitalized on the others," said King.

Team Ontario got back in the winning column with an 8-3 success against Nunavut before dropping a 10-8 decision to Newfoundland and Labrador's second team, Nathan Young.

That loss made their final two pool play games effectively must wins against tough Quebec and Saskatchewan foursomes, Wednesday, March 4 and Thursday, March 5 by respective scores of 8-7 and 9-4.

"We won the games we had to," said King, having projected the Quebec game a playoff qualification key prior to opening competition. "We were able to do that and make it to the playoffs on Friday."

There is no shortage of high-calibre competition in Ontario, however facing each province's best rinks, including some who are household names, provided both an opportunity and challenge to improve.

"We just had to execute more shots in a row and put more pressure on opponents."

As mentioned, King did not find time to do the screeching in ceremony, caught up in the curling.

"That was the one thing we missed. Our families did it which was cool."

They did manage to balance a good performance on the ice with taking in the experience however, doing some sightseeing and embracing the crowds, interacting with fans and media. Their team earned considerable media and fan attention, young, personable, com-



(CURLING CANADA/ANDREW KLAVER PHOTO)

Although Tillsonburg curler Jayden King didn't make it to the finals at the Montana's Brier, two of his three losses in pool play were to the two teams that played in the final. The youngest team at the event, the team representing Ontario and bearing the Tillsonburg Curling Club name, hopes to be there again next year.

petitive, Niepage, born deaf, the first to compete at the Brier with cochlear implants, and King accepting his pioneering role as the its first Black skip, proud to represent that community along with Tillsonburg.

He extended thanks to his and the other curlers' home communities, thoroughly appreciating the send-off and ongoing encouragement from his home town and curling club.

"We felt the overwhelming support even though we were so far away."

King rated their overall experience a nine out of ten, both in terms of their curling performance and enjoying the atmosphere at Canadian men's curling championships.

"We can't wait to see what this experience means for us on the next steps in our curling journey and are excited to see what it brings when we go back."

Edward Jones

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# Gemini boys' hockey team happy to bring home WOSSAA A/AA bronze

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

A young Tillsonburg Gemini boys hockey team took a serious run at the Western Ontario Secondary Schools Athletic Association (WOSSAA) A/AA gold medal game.

And then they regrouped and brought home hardware in their final outing of the 2025/26 season.

"I was pleased with the way they rebounded in the bronze medal game and took it pretty handily," said coach Derek Partlo of a 6-2 victory.

Tillsonburg opened its Tuesday, March 10 draw in Strathroy's Gemini arena with a 3-0 semi-final loss against eventual champion Stratford St. Mikes. The game played out closer than the final score, the Gemini trailing 1-0 with 1:45 remaining, when a blocked shot at the point led to a St. Mike's breakaway, and insurance goal. Partlo pulled goalie Will Court in favour of an extra attacker and Stratford added an empty-netter to round the three-goal final.

"We were pretty well there the whole game," said Gemini Hunter Whittington. "Just couldn't get the job done."

Tillsonburg had its chances said Partlo, including a two-on-zero rush with a deke that went just wide, and a similar shot on a second breakaway. The team's power play was also unable to connect on several man-advantage opportunities.

"That would be the only little disappoint-

ment," said Partlo. "We weren't better on special teams."

His message prior to the bronze medal game was to take something away from WOSSAA, a tangible result to cap a quality season.

"The boys responded," said the coach, citing a strong-skating effort against host Strathroy Holy Cross and passes that were 'right on.' The Gemini took the early lead, were up 4-1 and 5-1, closing out a four-goal 6-2 win after Holy Cross cut the gap to 5-2. Whittington and Keegan Diering each had two goals for Tillsonburg with Clarke Lessif and Lucas Thompson adding singles.

"It was not in doubt, we played very well."

Tillsonburg had started the season with a younger team than usual said Partlo, pleased to see his Grade 9 skaters not only stay safe, but learn to play hockey well against older, larger opponents. The team finished 7-1 in regular play, advancing to the league final against St. Thomas Parkside, which St. Mike's beat 4-2 in the WOSSAA A/AA gold medal final game.

"We were happy with our play," said Partlo.

"We played hard against the gold medal team and to take away the bronze in convincing style was a great day for us.

"A real enjoyable season - it exceeded our expectations."

"Better than getting fourth," said Whittington, pleased to bring something home from the event.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The Tillsonburg Gemini boys hockey team brought home bronze medals from the Western Ontario Secondary Schools Athletic Association tournament Tuesday, March 10 at Strathroy.

"We just all played well, hard and got along well," the Grade 11 skater summed up of the season. "It was a lot of fun - excited to play next year too."

"It was a good year," agreed Court. "Did a lot better than we expected, a lot of people expected."

"Felt good to get that bronze, not come home empty-handed."

He cited team 'resilience' as a reason for its success, adding younger players will have a season of high school experience under their belt for 2026/27.

"Hopefully come with something a little more next year."

"I think it's something to build on for sure," said Partlo, also wishing his three graduating

Grade 12s the best in their future endeavours.

"It's a good way to end it," said Grade 12 captain Liam Nunn, who hopes to continue playing at the junior level next year. "I'm glad we showed we could play hockey and get a medal out of it."

"There's not much else we could ask for."

The Gemini roster was made up of players from a number of different teams, said Nunn.

"We just gelled in the room and ended up playing well together."

In closing, he expressed thanks on behalf of the team for the time the coaching staff has contributed, including through his four years with the program.

"We definitely appreciate it," Nunn concluded.

# Carquest, B-Line vie for Club Oxford consolation championship

JEFF GWYN

Post Contributor

Action is heating up as the Club Oxford playoffs continue.

**March 8****A Division****Apple Shack 4, Fody's 0**

Apple Shack came out strong and pressured all night. They took advantage of their chances and broke up a lot of Fody's passes and chances. Fody's seemed a step behind to start and couldn't get any momentum. They played a lot in their own end and were frustrated with Apple Shack's tight checking.

Andrew Tapsell had four points for Apple Shack. Tyler Bouck had the shutout.

**Health Hut 2, ReMax 2**

Health Hut found their legs and were able to use the neutral zone to get some plays started. ReMax had to rely on rush chances in this one, but deep pressure at the end was able to tie it up. A tight checking overtime solved nothing.

Kyle Smith had two points for Health Hut. Parker Terryberry had a goal for ReMax.

**Carquest 4, Airmount 2**

Carquest found their secondary scoring in this one and they were forcing things all night. Airmount stayed in the game but just couldn't get the bounces to go their way. A closer series than the wins say.

Cory Smith had three assists for Carquest. Zach Alton had two points for Airmount.

Prouse Mortgages 3, Royal LePage 1

Prouse Mortgages worked hard to keep the pressure on all game. They kept digging down low to create chances all night. Royal LePage

had trouble scoring in this series. They did have some chances but couldn't get the follow up they needed. Both goalies played well.

Jeff Prouse had three points for Prouse Mortgages. Mitch Ryksen had the goal for Royal LePage.

**B-Line 2, RND 0**

B-Line pulled this one out at the end. They had a lot of powerplay chances but couldn't capitalize until late in the second. RND played a solid game defensively as they spent half the second period on the penalty kill. It made it hard to get the offense going, but they kept it close despite the score.

Wade Kirby had a goal for B-Line. Adam Gignac had the shutout.

**Glass 3, Source 2**

Glass found their chances tonight and had some good shots on net. They did well to kill off a late four-minute penalty to tie this series up. Source had some good chances, but didn't get the rebound in close. Late pressure just came up short in this one.

Devon McDonald had two points for Glass. Brandan Sullivan had two points for Source.

**March 11****B Division****Source 4, Glass 2**

Source did well to get their breakouts and chances down low. They gained some momentum after some early penalty kills, keeping their defence stable against a persistent Glass team. Glass came out strong early. They play a very simple game that they stick to, leading to rushes and passes down low. They couldn't get the bounces after their chances tonight.

Nate Bisschop had two goals for Source. Stephen Schafer had two points for Glass.

**B-Line 5, Carquest 2****A DIVISION PLAYOFFS**

FODY'S AUTOMOTIVE (1) VS APPLE SHACK (4)  
**SERIES TIED 2-2**

REMAX REALTY (2) VS THE HEALTH HUT (3)  
**REMAX LEADS 5 PTS TO 3 PTS**

**B DIVISION CHAMPIONSHIP**

SOURCE FOR SPORTS (1) VS TILLSONBURG GLASS (4)  
**SOURCE LEADS SERIES 2-1**

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

**B CHAMPIONSHIP FINAL**

**JEFF PROUSE MORTGAGES (2)**

**B DIVISION CONSOLATION**

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

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

**B CONSOLATION FINAL**

CARQUEST AUTO PARTS(5) VS B-LINE TRUCKING (6)  
**B-LINE LEADS SERIES 1-0**

B-Line found some new scoring in this one, getting shots and pressure in different ways. They were able to shutdown the neutral zone, keeping Carquest from using their speed all night. Carquest spent a bunch of time in their own zone and it led to some frustration. While they did get some chances, they couldn't keep up with the B-Line pressure in this one.

Ryan Davidson had two points for B-Line. Cory Smith had a goal for Carquest.

# Curling club hosts Scotch Doubles Bonspiel



**ON  
THE  
BROOM**

**NORA PETER**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

Well, the curling club is riding high on the notoriety it received during the Brier as the home club of Team King/Team Ontario.

Finishing 3rd in their pool after Team Canada/Jacobs and Team Gushue, and getting into the playoff round in their first Brier appearance, was exciting for both the team and the many curlers and supporters cheering for them. They put us on the map and I'm hoping locally it might create interest in the game and bring new members to the club, especially in the Youth and Junior curler category where there are many opportunities to compete in the sport. For Team King the future is bright.

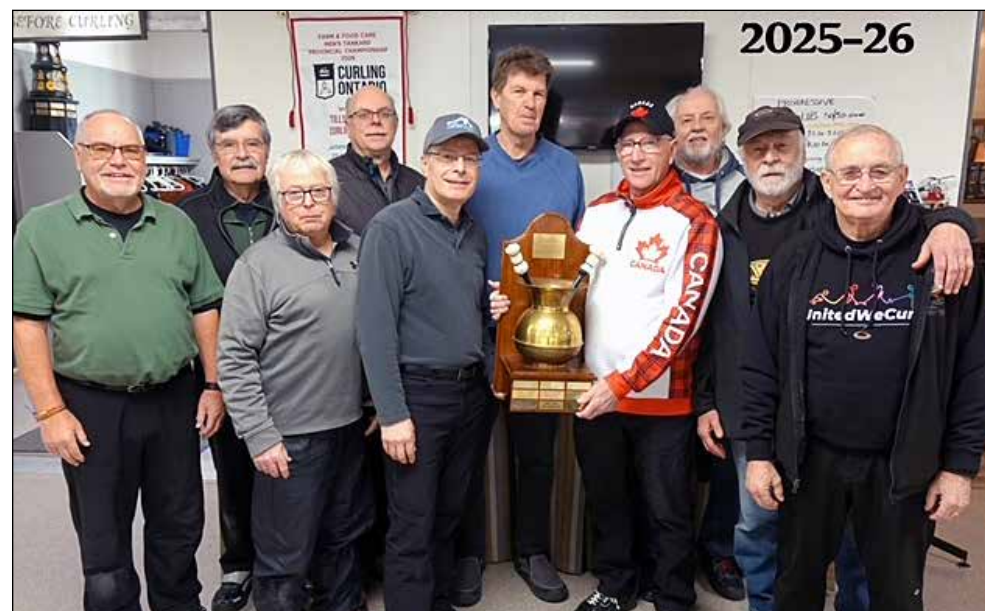
The club will close for the season on Sunday, March 29th. Leagues are into their final draws and are planning specials closing events for their sections of the club – like the Men's steak dinner

and the Ladies potluck lunch. The Senior Men culminated their season of play in the Tri County Interclub League with teams from Simcoe, Aylmer and Ingersoll with a win that made them this season's champions. Our Men were this year's overall winners and will add the trophy to our trophy case with pride.

The Board of Directors are looking forward to next year and have already begun their planning for the 26-27 season. They are seeking "passionate" individuals to join the Board especially curlers who will bring fresh ideas and diverse perspectives to help run and grow the club. Our club runs on volunteers and without Board members the doors don't open. It is not an onerous position – you make a commitment to a monthly meeting and perhaps a limited oversight duty in the club. Contact president Diane Kleer or another board member if you are interested.

The club progressive 50/50 fundraiser continues until March 23, tickets are available at the bar for \$5 each or five for \$20. The current pot is \$615. Also, there are rock handles still available for sale. Leave your mark on the ice by engraving your name, your business, your organization or the name of a loved one on a handle and help the club pay for the new handles!

Last weekend, 52 two-person teams competed in the third annual Scotch Doubles Bonspiel. This fun spiel sponsored by four local businesses - Grassmere Construction Ltd., Queen's Café,



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

**Tillsonburg Curling Club's Senior Men won the Tri County Interclub League championship. From left are 2025-26 participants, from left, Bernie Joostens, Dave Ireland, Steve Hartford, Wade Jones, Al Robinson, Marty Petryshen, Dwayne Daniel, Kari Silventoinen, Ches Sulkowski, and Sonny Pennington. Absent from photo: Ken Patterson, Peter Burns, John Lohuis and Ron Gaspardo.**

Gazely's Tim Horton's Simcoe and Oxford Streets and Domino's Pizza - attracted participants from 17 different clubs all over Southern Ontario (even one from Detroit). The event opened Friday night

with the traditional piped parade of curlers onto the ice, a welcome to the curlers from convener Jayden King, a Scotch toast to friendship and good curling by the piper and Walt Kleer, greetings from the Town by Chris Parker and the Aylmer Curling Club from Terry Dawson. Teams competed at three levels. Eight teams in the competitive division, 16 in the intermediate division and 28 teams in the recreational division. Teams were guaranteed three games with the Top 2 teams in each pool continuing to playoffs.

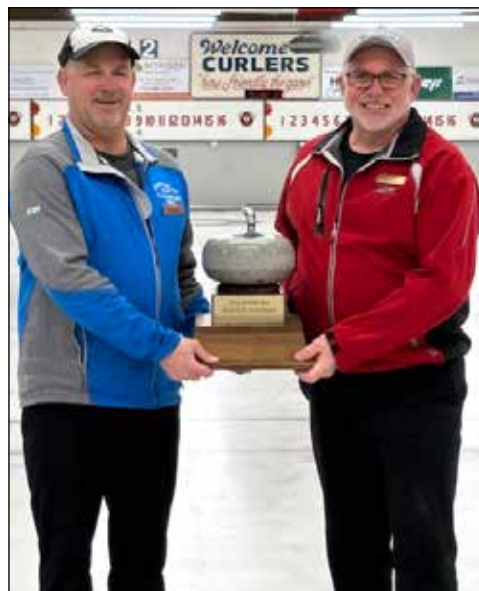
The three-day spiel culminated Sunday with the finals in each division. The Recreational Division saw Team Hamm/Durston of TCC playoff against Team Fanset/Listar of Delhi, with the win going to team to the Delhi pair. In the Intermediate Division, Team Vandenpool/Cassidy of Aylmer CC faced Team Patterson/Wyville of Tillsonburg with the team from Aylmer CC coming out on top. In the tightly contested Competitive Division, Team Bryant/Tester of the Brant Curling Club took bragging rights over Team Middaugh/Dunlop from the Coldwater CC in an extra end win. They happily accepted the trophy.

Bonspiel convener Jayden King sent out thanks to all the local sponsors and club volunteers who made the weekend spiel a wonderful success! You rock!!



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

**Team Bryant/Tester of the Brant Curling Club won the Tillsonburg Curling Club's third annual Scotch Doubles Bonspiel competitive division.**



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

**Scotch Doubles Intermediate Division winners Team Vandenpool/Cassidy from the Aylmer Curling Club.**



(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

**Recreational Division winners at the Scotch Doubles Bonspiel were Team Fanset/Listar of Delhi.**

## Thunder win Game 7 in Erin, Saugeen Shores next

**MIKE HOLLY**

*Post Contributor*

What a change a week can make!!

Coming off a terrible weekend that the Thunder dropped both games, the Thunder boys decided that they were not ready to change their hockey sticks for golf clubs yet. Their backs were clearly against the wall. Down three games to one, there was no room to take a game off.

Game 5 was even on the unfriendly ice in Erin on Saturday night. It certainly had all the tidings of a team that would roll over, but that was not to be.

Symon Reddin, from Mike Stolar and Sebastian Guastadisegni, opened the scoring at

the 1:44 point of the first with a wrist shot that sneaked under the tender's arm. However, Erin added two of their own to take a 2-1 lead into the second. Andrew Oosterveld, from Hunter Monkhouse, evened it up at 1:17 in the second. However, Erin added a power-play goal two minutes later to regain the lead. Never to quit, Luke Sinclair, from Hunter Monkhouse and Justin Abraham, tied it again at 3-3.

The third period settled nothing and we were heading to overtime. Overtime is always a nervous affair but fortunately Luke Sinclair, from Mike Findlay, settled the nerves at 4:59 of overtime.

Game 6 brought us back to a more friendly crowd in Tillsonburg but another must win

for the Thunder. Justin Abraham, from Nigel Abbott, opened the scoring with a perfect wrist shot top shelf on the power play at 10:50.

Erin answered quickly to even it up but Andrew Oosterveld, from Sebastian Guastadisegni, answered just as fast to put the Thunder up 2-1 after one. Andrew Oosterveld added his second but this time unassisted. Erin snuck one past Thunder tender Ben Blacker who played another solid game making the score 3-2 Thunder. Kane Johnson, from Sebastian Guastadisegni, made it 4-2 after two periods.

The third period opened with a goal from Erin, but Andrew Oosterveld finished his hat trick from his brother Matthew Oosterveld

and Justin Abraham to seal the deal at 5-3.

The five-goal win opened up the Domino's 5. This is a promotion that when the Thunder score five goals, everyone in the arena gets a coupon for a free lunch. The hat trick also opened up The Mug 3. When a Thunder player scores three goals, or the Thunder record a shutout, everyone gets a coupon for a free appetizer at The Copper Mug. The Thunder and their fans thank both Domino's and The Copper Mug for their support.

Tillsonburg won Game 7 in Erin 5-2 Monday night, completing the series comeback. Matthew Oosterveld was the Thunder player of the game. The OEHF A Championship against the Saugeen Shores Winterhawks will begin soon. Details to follow.

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(STUART BLOWER PHOTOS)



U11A Verne's Carpet One's Oliver Lyonnais (#71) leads the charge along with team mates Finn Goertz (#98), Blake Smith (#15) and Dexton Wright (#8) towards the New Hamburg net.



A New Hamburg skater moves the puck in the offensive end with Hudson Wilson, centre, and Tarek Hajjou, right, trailing him.



U12A Wards Automotive's Carter Smith, right, and Clark Whatley, second from left, work to get the puck out from behind the New Hamburg net in a recent game.



Tillsonburg U12 Wards goalie Ryan Peters works to stop the puck while Colton Bell, left, and Carter Smith, right, try to stop a New Hamburg forward.



U15 Roulston's Pharmacy Calum Mansley, left, Kaelan Howard, centre rear, and Emerson Hodges, closer to the goaltender watch as a shot goes in the New Hamburg Huskies' net.



Lucas Thompson of U14 Roulston's Pharmacy Storm attempts to a shot before being stopped by a Huskies defender while Sam Hunter, left, prepares to help.

# SWOX NEWS



## SWOX negotiating terms for new municipal building construction

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

At its Mar. 3 council meeting, SWOX Council authorized staff to enter into negotiations with Sierra General Contracting for the commencement of phase 1 pre-construction and detailed design services for the township's new municipal office, library, and child care facility located in Mount Elgin.

The procurement process began with a Request for Pre-Qualification (RFPQ) and seven qualified firms were shortlisted. Following issuance of the Stage 2 RFP to the shortlisted firms, two firms formally withdrew due to existing project commit-

ments and scheduling constraints. Staff received and evaluation a total of five compliant fee proposals.

Sierra General Contracting was the highest ranked proponent best suited to build the project, beating out AEC Developments, Ball Construction, Melloul-Blarney Construction, and Reid & Deleye Contractors Ltd.

Sierra General Contracting was founded in 1994 and is headquartered in Woodstock. The firm is a locally-based, privately-owned construction management and general contracting company with over 30 years experience delivering municipal, institutional, and community-focused projects across Southwestern Ontario.

According to staff, Sierra demonstrated a strong understanding of the township's project objectives, including quality, sustainability, cost transparency, and phased governance. The firm has also expressed alignment with the township's goals for delivering a high-quality, community-focused facility and recognizes the significance of this project within the local community.

Sierra's proposed approach supports continuity of the work completed to date, including the concept design prepared by R. Ritz Architect Inc., preliminary engineering by SPH Engineering Inc., and the carbon analysis and feasibility work undertaken by WalterFedy.

The latest concept drawings show a two-story

model with a 2,350 square foot library located on the north end of the lower level, a daycare on the south end of the lower level, and the municipal office with council chambers on the second floor.

A finalized construction management agreement will be brought back to council for review and final authorization prior to execution by the mayor and CAO.

The phase 1 pre-construction and detailed design services will cost \$369,315 plus HST and will be funded from the township's working capital reserve, which was included in the approved 2026 budget.

The rough estimate for the total project, from design through to construction, is estimated to reach \$13,966,212 plus HST.

## SWOX and Zorra Councils considering shared fire chief and deputy fire chief model

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

South-West Oxford Township (SWOX)

Council approved, in principle, a shared fire service leadership model with Zorra Township. Council first considered a shared model at its Feb. 17 meeting. Subsequently, Zorra

Council considered a similar request at its Feb. 18 meeting.

If given final approval, both the fire chief and deputy fire chief would be shared positions be-

tween the two municipalities. The combined salary and associated employment costs for the two positions would be cost-shared equally between the two municipalities as well.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 15

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# SWOX and Zorra Councils considering shared fire chief and deputy fire chief model

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

SWOX council also authorized staff to begin the recruitment process for a shared deputy fire chief position, subject to finalization of the shared services agreement between both municipalities.

The intention of this model is not to amalgamate services, but rather to strengthen leadership

capacity, improve continuity of operations, and provide a more sustainable structure for both municipalities while maintaining independent fire services, governance, and community identity.

Staff from both townships worked collaboratively to prepare a draft shared fire chief and

shared deputy fire chief shared services agreement, along with role descriptions for both positions. The draft shared services agreement outlines proposed job descriptions and key responsibilities for each position.

The agreement also outlines the proposed governance framework, hosting arrangements,

cost-sharing structure, reporting relationships, and service expectations for both municipalities.

The agreement is currently in draft form and will require further refinement through continued discussions between staff prior to being brought back to both councils for final approval and execution.

# SWOX council moving forward with a Mt. Elgin settlement area boundary review and secondary plan study

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

SWOX council is moving forward with a Village of Mount Elgin settlement area boundary review and secondary plan study. Oxford County planning staff are currently working with the SWOX CAO to finalize draft terms of reference and begin the steps necessary to formally initiate the process, including issuing the Request for Proposals (RFP) and retaining necessary consultants.

Mt. Elgin is experiencing, and expected to continue experiencing, higher levels of growth and development, resulting in significant change. SWOX currently has less than a 15-year supply of designated residential land (i.e. excluding existing Future Urban Growth

lands).

Mt. Elgin is designated as a 'Serviced Village' in the county official plan and is the only settlement in the township serviced by both municipal water and wastewater infrastructure. Therefore, Mt. Elgin is intended to be the township's primary growth centre and will need to accommodate the majority of the residential and employment growth forecast for the township over the next two to three decades.

The purpose of the terms of reference is to identify and define the various expectations, requirements and deliverables of the project to ensure the project is accurately and clearly defined and scoped, and that bids received from consultants are based on a clear understanding of the project and are comprehensive and comparable.

The overall intent of the study is to develop a well-considered, forward-thinking, and comprehensive vision and community specific land use policy direction for the Village of Mount Elgin to help guide and inform public and private investment and further development in the village over the next 20-30 years.

Key components of the draft terms of reference include the need to evaluate existing land uses and development within and adjacent to the village, revisit existing land use designations, identify and explain the rationale for recommended settlement area boundaries, create policies to guide future public investment and development in a coordinated way, engage community members, property owners, developers, and other interested parties, and prepare a secondary plan that is easy to interpret and

implement.

Opportunities and issues identified by the township include access and transportation, affordable housing, business retention, expansion and attraction, a desire to create a unique sense of place and identity, industrial lands, new investment, new development, and population growth.

The following studies will be needed to support the project: planning justification, cultural heritage and archaeological resources, natural heritage and natural hazards, agricultural impact assessment, assessment of infrastructure and public service facilities, servicing strategy, and a financial impact assessment.

Planning staff anticipate that the final RFP for the project will be issued in the coming months.

## YES SAVINGS

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<p><b>1 LB CLAMHELL</b></p> <p><b>ONLY</b></p> <p><b>1<sup>99</sup></b></p> <p><b>STRAWBERRIES</b></p>	<p><b>PREPARED IN CANADA</b></p> <p><b>10 LB BAG</b></p> <p><b>SAVE 50%</b></p> <p><b>1<sup>97</sup> LB</b></p> <p><b>YELLOW OR RUSSET POTATOES</b></p>	<p><b>6 OZ CLAMHELL</b></p> <p><b>PKG OF 5</b></p> <p><b>2<sup>99</sup></b></p> <p><b>BLACKBERRIES OR AVOCADOS</b></p>	<p><b>3<sup>99</sup> LB</b></p> <p><b>GREEN OR RED SEEDLESS GRAPES</b></p>	<p><b>2<sup>49</sup> LB</b></p> <p><b>TOMATOES ON THE VINE</b></p>

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# Daniel Romano's Outfit comes to Tillsonburg with new album Preservers of the Pearl



## MUSIC CORNER

**BEN ADDRESS**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

For more than a decade-and-a-half, Daniel Romano has built a reputation as one of Canada's most prolific and unpredictable songwriters. From country to glam rock to experimental pop, Romano has continually reinvented himself while cultivating a fiercely independent creative world around his band The Outfit.

The group returned this past Friday with what may be their most ambitious statement yet with the new album *Preservers of the Pearl*, which was released March 13, on You've Changed Records.

The record positions The Outfit firmly within a growing movement of modern underground rock bands where artists are working hard, pushing raw, guitar-driven music forward with renewed urgency. Groups like Mystery Lights, Sheer Mag, Shadow

Show and Uni Boys have helped lead that charge in recent years and with the release of *Preservers of the Pearl*, Welland's Daniel Romano and company step confidently into that conversation.

However, the biggest evolution happens inside the band itself. While Romano has often served as the central creative force behind his projects, this new album sees the Outfit functioning as a true collective. Long-time members Ian Romano and Carson McHone take on expanded creative roles while legendary Canadian rocker Tommy Major joins the group as a full collaborator.

For Romano, that dynamic represents the realization of a long-held vision.

"It has been a lifelong dream to have a group situation built on such trust and mutual respect," Romano says. "This group, outfit, is that dream made manifest. The synergy that is formed in this group is so cosmic that its connection to the absolute source is always palpable."

That collective energy carries directly into the way the album was recorded. The band tracked the songs live to tape at their own Camera Varda studio, capturing the musicians playing together in real time rather than assembling the record piece by piece.

"We record in this organic way because it is the most reliable way to harness the uncompromising humour and beauty of the present moment without having to reallocate it into the false narratives and of

past and future," Romano explains.

The result is a record that feels alive, full of spontaneity, texture, and the subtle imperfections that come with musicians interacting in the same room.

The band sees this approach as a direct response to what they describe as the mono-agriculture of the mind, which is a flattening cultural landscape where algorithms and trends often reward sameness over curiosity. Instead of polish and predictability, The Outfit embraces experimentation and individuality.

At the center of the album lies a philosophy the band calls Rock & Roll Magick, which is a belief that music can function as something deeper than entertainment.

"Rock and Roll Magick is the creative spirit of the alchemical process in which, as receivers, we mould the infinite potentially into a rough type of non-physical perfection called music," Romano elaborates.

That spiritual vibe runs throughout *Preservers of the Pearl*, transforming the album into something closer to an invocation, than a traditional rock release. The music feels purposeful, urgent, and deeply collaborative with shared moments between artists captured in real time.

Alongside the core members of Daniel Romano on vocals, guitars, bass, and piano, Tommy Major on guitars and bass, Carson McHone on vocals and percussion, and Ian Romano on drums, the record also features contributions from several additional

musicians. Mark Lalama adds organ, Raha Javanfar contributes violin and Aaron Hutchinson provides trumpet.

The album was recorded and engineered by Kenneth Roy Meehan at Camera Varda, was mixed by the band themselves, and then mastered by Alan Douches at West West Side. The cover photograph was taken by Sebastian Buzzalino with artwork and layout designed by bandleader Daniel Romano.

Ultimately, Romano hopes audiences experience the music like an open discussion rather than passive.

"The audience can expect to experience a co-creative participatory knowing in which, through music, our inherent sameness is simultaneously revealed," Romano says.

In a musical era often driven by speed and digital convenience, *Preservers of the Pearl* stands as a reminder that rock and roll can still be a communal act built on trust, spontaneity, and the mysterious chemistry that happens when musicians create together in the same room.

Daniel Romano's The Outfit with Carson McHone makes a tour stop at Paddy's Underground located at 20 John Pound Road in Tillsonburg on Friday, March 20th. Advanced tickets are \$25 and are available online at [www.eventbrite.ca](http://www.eventbrite.ca) and The Mill. Doors open at 8 p.m. for this all ages/licensed event. You can find out more about the band on their official website at [www.danielromanomusic.com](http://www.danielromanomusic.com)

## UPCOMING SHOWS

**MARCH 20 - DANIEL ROMANO'S OUTFIT AND CARSON MCHONE**  
Paddy's Underground  
\$25 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

**MARCH 20 - A STURDY VESSEL**  
Birds Golf Sports Lounge  
\$5 - 9 p.m. -19-plus

**MARCH 21 - TEXAS KING W/ TEAN DREAM**  
Paddy's Underground  
\$50 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

**MARCH 22 - NANCY PUHR SLINGERLAND**  
The Copper Mug  
No Cover - 5 p.m.

**MARCH 26 - JUDE COYLE**  
The Copper Mug  
No Cover - 8 p.m.

**MARCH 27 - BATES AND STUDDY'S SYSTEM OF A DOWN TRIBUTE**  
The Copper Mug  
8 p.m.

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## MARCH

**WEDNESDAYS | NOON - 12:30 PM**

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**MARCH 22 | NOON  
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16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON  
Free event sponsored by the Tillsonburg Legion. Doors open at noon and games start at 1:00 pm. Bingo prizes and door prizes. Ages 5-14 and must be accompanied by an adult. For more information call 519-842-5281.

**MARCH 24 | 7 PM  
LIFE WORTH LIVING**

Woodstock Polish Hall, 878 Dufferin Street, Woodstock

The one-hour film was produced by Woodstock native, Alex Schadenberg, Executive Director of Euthanasia Prevention Coalition and will be followed by a Q & A session with Alex. Admission is free. For more information, please email [info@oxfordcountyrighttolife.com](mailto:info@oxfordcountyrighttolife.com)

**MARCH 27 | 1-4 PM  
TILLSONBURG LEGION DANCE  
FEATURING KEN LIGHTHEART AND  
THE NORTSHORE RAMBLERS BAND**  
16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

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

**MARCH 27 | 5-7 PM  
TILLSONBURG LEGION CHICKEN  
DINNER**

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

**MARCH 28 | 2 PM  
THE EDISON, VIENNA & AREA  
MUSEUM IS PROUD TO INTRODUCE  
JENNIFER GRAINGER**  
6209 Plank Rd., Vienna ON

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

## APRIL

**APRIL 4 | 1 - 4:30 PM  
TILLSONBURG LEGION DANCE  
FEATURING KICKN KOUNTRY BAND**  
16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON

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

**APRIL 4 | 10 AM - NOON  
IT'S RAINING CATS AND DOGS @  
MESSY CHURCH**  
St. Paul's United Church, 88 Bidwell  
St. Tillsonburg

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

**APRIL 11 | WORKSHOP 1 - 4:30 PM,  
PERFORMANCE 7 PM  
CELEBRATE 65 YEARS WITH THE  
BRANT MEN OF SONG: A DAY OF  
CHORAL SINGING**

Hope Christian Reformed Church, 64 Buchanan Crescent, Brantford  
The Brant Men of Song are inviting all individuals and groups interested in singing to an afternoon workshop. There is no charge for this workshop. Participants may also sing with the Brant Men of Song in an evening performance starting at 7 pm. Financial contributions will be collected for the Brantford Food Bank. Come sing with us and enjoy the sound of many voices.

**APRIL 17 | 8 PM  
MUDMEN AT THE TILLSONBURG  
LEGION**

16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON  
Advance tickets \$30 at the Legion or <http://www.ticketscene.ca>. This is an 19 plus event. For more information call 519-842-5281.

**APRIL 25 | 9 AM - 1 PM  
TILLSONBURG CATHOLIC WOMEN'S  
LEAGUE SPRING RUMMAGE SALE**  
St. Mary's Church, Tillsonburg, ON

Please come join us at our spring rummage sale. Clothing and footwear for the family. Housewares, glassware, bedding, home decor, toys and trinkets, jewelry, books and much more. Everyone is welcome. Fully Accessible. Admission is free.

Please bring a bag (or two) to carry home your treasures.

## JULY

**JULY 17 & 18  
BRANTFORD UKULELE FESTIVAL**

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

## ONGOING CLASSES, CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

**OXFORD COUNTY DIABETES  
EDUCATION PROGRAM**

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

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

**MONDAYS | 9 - 11:30 AM  
OTTER VALLEY TAI CHI**  
St. John's Anglican Church, 46 Ridout St. W., Tillsonburg

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

**MONDAYS | 7 - 9 PM  
MODERN SQUARE DANCING IS FOR  
YOU!**

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

**2<sup>ND</sup> TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 2 - 4 PM**

**4<sup>TH</sup> TUES. OF MONTH (SEPT. TO MAY) | 7 - 9 PM  
OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY**  
Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas Street,

**Woodstock Ontario N4S 1C7**

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

**3<sup>RD</sup> WED. OF MONTH | 10 AM - NOON  
LYNN RIVER PROBUS CLUB**

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

Our retired and semi-retired members enjoy diverse interest groups, friendship and fellowship. We have interesting speakers at our monthly meetings as well as time to socialise.

Current and prospective members are welcome to join us at the Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, which is on the corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St. For more information, please visit our website at: [lynnriverprobus239.com](http://lynnriverprobus239.com) or email [lynnriverprobus239@gmail.com](mailto:lynnriverprobus239@gmail.com)

**TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 7 - 9 PM  
SATURDAYS | 10 AM - 12 PM  
LEARN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU (BJJ)**  
North Broadway Baptist Church

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

**EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM  
IN 2026 IT'S YOUR FIX! INGERSOLL  
COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE**

Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S., Ingersoll  
Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! March 20, April 10 & 17, May 1, 15 & 29, June 5 & 19.

**FRIDAYS | 1 PM  
INTERESTED IN BRIDGE?  
JOIN US AT THE TILLSONBURG  
DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB**

Tillsonburg Senior Centre - 45 Hardy Ave,  
Tillsonburg

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

**1<sup>ST</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> TUES. OF MONTH  
TILLSONBURG LIONS**

The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd

# COMING EVENTS

Tuesdays. You are invited to their dinner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Community Centre. If you are interested in giving back to your Community contact Jim at 519 409 0876 for more information.....all are welcome.

**1<sup>ST</sup> WED. OF MONTH | 7 PM**  
**WAGNER MEMORIAL TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526 - MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING**  
 The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON

Not a member? Contact us to join. For More Information Call, the Legion 519-443-5588. [www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca](http://www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca)

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

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

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

**VON OXFORD GRIEF CARE: FREE MONTHLY GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP**

Register at: [oxford.griefsupport@von.ca](mailto:oxford.griefsupport@von.ca) or 519-539-1231 Ext 6299 or 6296

**TILLSONBURG**

WHEN: 2nd Tuesday of every month  
 WHERE: VON Oxford Office 24 Brock St. W., Tillsonburg  
 TIME: 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

**INGERSOLL**

WHEN: 4th Tuesday of every month  
 WHERE: Ingersoll Public Library 130 Oxford St., Ingersoll  
 TIME: 10:30 a.m. -12 Noon

**WOODSTOCK**

WHEN: 3rd Saturday of every month  
 WHERE: Sakura House Hospice 715180 Oxford Rd.4, Woodstock  
 TIME: 10:30 a.m. -12 Noon

**TILLSONBURG SENIOR CENTRE WEEKLY PROGRAMS FOR 50+**

Games such as euchre, cribbage, whomp'em, bingo, and more played weekly. Fitness classes include drum fit and line dancing weekly. We run over 35 programs weekly! Call 688-2520 for details

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# A bridge to nowhere and a palace bereft of Popes



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

**PAUL KNOWLES**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

Any of us who got anywhere near a French class in school remembers the song, “Sur le pont d’Avignon l’on y danse, l’on y danse.” (“On the bridge of Avignon, they are dancing”). We probably learned it right after “Frère Jacques”.

Turns out, we were badly misled. As we learned during a fascinating tour of the southern French city of Avignon.

Oh, there is a bridge, all right. Or part of one. While it once spanned the Rhône River, most of it is gone. It was built in the 1100’s, with 22 spans connecting the west and east banks. But most of it was destroyed by floods in the 17th century, and today, only four spans remain.

But that’s not the problem with the song. The problem is, they didn’t dance on (“sur”) the bridge – they danced “sous” (under), and the prepositions got switched in the centuries since the song was first sung. So if you go to Avignon, and want to be historically accurate, dance under the remaining bits of the bridge, not on top.

Although, frankly, the broken bridge is not close to being the most interesting thing about Avignon. This ancient city can date its founding to the Neolithic period (the “New Stone Age”, from 10,000 to 2,000 BC). Artifacts from those dates have been found in Avignon, and there are a lot of archaeological ruins from the Greek and Roman period of the city.

But two features stand out above all oth-

ers: the 14th century city walls, which still completely enclose the old city; and the Pope’s Palace.

These two outstanding examples of architectural heritage are related, since the walls were built by order of Pope Innocent VI.

The walls run for 4.3 kilometers. They enclose 151 hectares – the entire old city, including the Pope’s Palace. And therein lies a story.

For although we think of Rome – or more properly, the independent city-state of the Vatican – as the historic seat of the Papacy, this was not always the case. In 1309, Rome was a hotbed of political intrigue, and Pope Clement V moved the Papal Court to Avignon, in France, where it remained until 1376. By then, the Avignon Papal Palace had housed seven Popes. The last of those, Gregory XI, returned to Rome in 1376.

But it didn’t end there. Even while Popes reigned in Rome, several other papal wannabes were elected Pope in France; they’re now referred to as “antipopes”. Two of them also were based in Avignon. The second of these, Benedict XII, was eventually kicked out of Avignon.

And by the way, in 1409, in an effort was made to solve the dispute, a third Pope was elected at a council in Pisa, intended to replace the two other claimants. This didn’t work, so now there were three “Popes”.

It wasn’t until 1417 that the “schism” ended and only one Pope was again recognized by the entire Roman church. And you thought church history was boring.

All of this comes to life when you visit the sprawling, soaring Pope’s Palace in the heights of historic Avignon. We toured the site as part of our terrific Viking River Cruise on the Rhône River.

The Palais des Papes is one of the largest and most important medieval gothic buildings in Europe. Much of it is open for tours – including the rooftop, which provides amazing views of the city of Avignon.

Construction of the Palace began in 1252, half a century before it became the sole res-



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

**Only a small section of the Avignon bridge remains, but it's enough to dance on... or more properly, under.**

idence of a Pope. But when the Papal Court was moved to Avignon, successive Popes devised increasingly grand additions and alterations, including several extra towers, a grand chapel, and adjoining buildings. Eventually, the size grew to encompass 16,500 square meters. The medieval Popes were determined to build monuments, perhaps to God, but more likely to their own memories.

After the Pope moved back to Rome, and the messy business of competing Popes was resolved, the Palace remained as property of the church, but was largely ignored for about 350 years. Things got worse during the French Revolution, when it was seized by revolutionary forces. In 1790, it was the site of a massacre of counter-revolutionaries, and then became a prison.

Finally, in 1906, it was named a national museum. Our tour guide pointed out that “there is no link with the church anymore.” Restoration work started on building, and that has continued ever since. Tour leaders

guide you carefully around scaffolding and across temporary bridges.

Most of the rooms continue to be unfurnished, so the architecture is the star of the show. Although during our visit, several of the rooms were adorned with incongruously modern art installations by sculptor Jean-Michel Othoniel.

We did see a few rooms where the walls still carry original murals from the 13th and 14th centuries, an intriguing juxtaposition the with ultra-modern art in neighbouring halls.

Perhaps the most impressive sight on the tour comes as you stand on the rooftop and peer through the castellations; at that moment, you are looking at 12,000 or so years of human history. And later, if you wish, you can dance under (or on) a bridge.

*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](mailto:pknowles@golden.net).*



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

**The walls of the ancient French city of Avignon still surround the entire old city.**



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

**The Pope's Palace.**

# RIDDLES

**Does February like March?**  
*No, but April May.*

**Why was the broom late for the spring cleaning?**  
*It over swept.*

**How do you tell someone winter is over?**  
*You spring it on them.*

**How do you create a pool that bounces?**  
*By adding spring water!*

**What did the drizzle say when it didn't hit the plants?**  
*I just mist.*

**How does spring end?**  
*With a G.*

**What do you call a group of rain drops hanging out?**  
*A puddle.*

**Why was the lamb sad during spring break?**  
*He wanted to go to the Baaa-hamas.*

**What's the difference between spring rolls and summer rolls?**  
*The season-ings!*

**What do clouds wear when they're trying to look nice?**  
*A rain-bow.*

**How does the sun listen to its favorite music?**  
*On the ray-dio.*

**Why do umbrellas make good friends?**  
*They've always got you covered.*

# SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

Solutions on Page 22

# PET OF THE WEEK



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

Nominate your pet to be Pet of the Week by emailing [info@tillsonburgpost.com](mailto:info@tillsonburgpost.com)

# WORD SEARCH

## SPRINGTIME

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

SPRING

FLOWERS

BLOSSOM

RAIN

SUNSHINE

GARDEN

BUTTERFLY

BIRDS

GREEN

BREEZE

SEEDS

DAFFODIL

TULIPS

WARMTH

MEADOW

# BUSINESS DIRECTORY

# CLASSIFIEDS

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## TREES

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## CELEBRATION

# HAPPY 80<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY!



**JIM DONALDSON**  
AKA James, Jimbo, Dad, Papa  
Turning 80 on March 22, 2026.  
You have made lots of memories.  
**CONGRATULATIONS!**

## CLEANING

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## QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Shamrock
2. Reindeer
3. All of the snakes
4. Anthropic
5. Chicago, Illinois
6. The Boston Tea Party
7. U2
8. Michael B Jordan
9. The harp
10. A pot of gold

## SUDOKU

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

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community!*

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**Service: 519-842-9026**



# BATHROOM VANITY BLOWOUT DEALS

MON-FRI: 8 AM - 9 PM, SAT: 8 AM - 6 PM, SUN: 9 AM - 6 PM

**CANVAS WELLINGTON DOUBLE DOOR SINGLE SINK STONE TOP, WEATHERED OAK 30 INCH**

**SALE**  
**\$199.93**

**SAVE**  
**\$300**

SKU 63-6346 (1 LEFT)



**CANVAS MILFORD DOUBLE DOOR SINGLE SINK WHITE 24 INCH VANITY**

**SALE**  
**\$199.93**

**SAVE**  
**\$200**

SKU 63-6411 (1 LEFT)



**CANVAS MAHONE SINGLE DOOR, BLACK 24 INCH VANITY**

**SALE**  
**\$179.93**

**SAVE**  
**\$220**

SKU 63-6378 (1 LEFT)



**CANVAS WELLINGTON SINGLE DOOR WEATHERED OAK 24 INCH VANITY**

**SALE**  
**\$199.93**

**SAVE**  
**\$270**

SKU 63-6340 (1 LEFT)



**CANVAS CRESTON SINGLE DOOR BLACK 20 INCH VANITY**

**SALE**  
**\$149.93**

**SAVE**  
**\$150**

SKU 63-6374 (1 LEFT)



**CANVAS CAPLIN ALL-IN-ONE LAUNDRY CABINET**

**SALE**  
**\$314.93**

**SAVE**  
**\$135**

SKU 63-3787 (2 LEFT)



**LIMITED QUANTITIES - WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!**

**WHILE SUPPLIES LAST**

VISIT OUR STORE OR GO ONLINE FOR OUR FULL FLYER AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER ITEMS ON SALE. ONLINE ORDERS USUALLY READY FOR PICK UP IN 30 MINUTES!

**248 BROADWAY, TILLSONBURG**

**(519) 842-5926**

**canadiantire.ca**

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