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JUNE 26, 2025 • VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 21

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Budget process changed by provincial legislation

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tillsonburg's annual budget process will be changed by recent provincial legislation.

In a report to council on June 16, Director of Finance/Treasurer Renato Pullia explained that provincial changes to the Municipal Act this April enacting Strong Mayor Powers for many municipalities, including Tillsonburg, meant the mayor is delegated more control over the budget. The first step of this, which already occurred, was the mayor was to direct staff to prepare a budget.

The budget will then be presented to the mayor for consideration. The legislation states the budget must be presented to council by Feb. 1. For Tillsonburg next year, the budget will be tabled on Jan. 2, 2026.

"Once it is presented, council has a 30-day period to provide amendments to the budget," Pullia said.

The mayor can veto those amendments, but then council can override the mayor's decision with a two-thirds majority vote. Council still has a say in releasing funds from the tax rate stabilization reserve, which is a normal part of the process.

Previously, the budget process involved all of council in sessions typically starting in November.

Coun. Bob Parsons noted council usually sees the draft budget earlier, and asked how it will be different this year and if council will have a chance to review it prior to January.

Pullia said it's feasible to provide a draft to council in December to allow time for review, although the budget won't be publicly available at this time.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(STUART BLOWER PHOTO)

FEELING HOT, HOT, HOT

With warm temperatures on the weekend, the Lake Lisgar Water Park was a cool place to be. Posing for the camera are swimmers, Eliani, Adline and, Amelia. The water park opened on Father's Day weekend and is open daily starting on June 27.

Activities abound locally on Canada Day

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Canada Day promises to be a busy one for those looking for a way to celebrate our country's heritage.

As always, the day will begin with the pancake breakfast at the Station Arts Centre, running from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. A tradition

for more than two decades, Bridge Street is closed in front of the Station Arts Centre, where picnic tables and a cooking area are set up, likely for what is the largest breakfast in town of the year.

"The whole point of our Canada Day breakfast is to offer this wonderful experience and event at a low cost for the community," said Tabitha Verbuyst, executive director with the Station Arts Centre.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

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Canada Day offers a variety of activities

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Breakfast ranges from \$4 to \$9 for pancakes, sausage, coffee and tea. Proceeds from the event go back to the Station Arts Centre to purchase supplies for its summer camp.

Verbuyst gave credit to the community for supporting the event, mentioning TA Thompson hooking up temporary electrical for the grills to Christina and Mike Gazley of Tim Hortons for donating coffee and tea and Nectar's owners donating time to assist with pre-cooking. The BIA is also providing a free bouncy castle at the event.

Although Nectar's professional chefs are providing assistance doesn't mean that the amateur 'celebrity chefs' won't be on hand. Mayor Deb Gilvesy and council will be joined by Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman and Oxford MP Arpan Khanna to flip pancakes for the morning.

The Legion will host a ceremony at the cenotaph at noon, with cake to follow. And speaking of birthday cake, there will also be a cake cutting at 10 a.m. at the Station Arts Centre.

After things wind down at the Station Arts Centre, activities will switch to Annandale House from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. A carnival will provide an opportunity for a variety of games, including the popular giant games, a creative corner for youth, and complimentary treats such as cake, cotton candy, snow cones, and popcorn. Inside Annandale House, there will be a "Guess the Jelly Beans" challenge and "Find the Otters" scavenger hunt throughout the house.

The Lake Lisgar Water Park will offer free swimming from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., sponsored by Schep's Bakery.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy, speaking on behalf of council, encouraged people to attend local events.

"This is a time to celebrate the values that unite us—diversity, freedom, and a deep love for our country," she said. "I encourage you to come out to our local festivities, connect with neighbours, and let your red and white shine proudly. Let's make this Canada Day one to remember with great community spirit, fun, and togetherness. I look forward to seeing you there!"

The day will end with a big bang and fireworks at dusk in Memorial Park.

Canada Day parade in Otterville

Looking for a parade on Canada Day, but don't want to travel to see the big one in Port Dover? Otterville has the solution.

Town crier and local resident Brenda Bozso will gather the crowd on Main Street for the 1 p.m. float/bike parade with a special guest appearance by the Shriner's Mocha Love Bugs as well as the Norwich Society Musical Band

The celebration continues at the Otterville Park with children's activities sponsored by the Otterville Optimist Club that include bouncy castles, face painting and cub car races. Other activities are a free swim in the pool, a pie-baking contest/auction, Norwich Merchants beer garden with local musicians playing and a classic car show, baseball game and fireworks.

Local vendors will ensure that no one goes hungry and include JPs BBQ, the South Norwich Historical Society's Chicken BBQ (advanced tickets required: 519-879-6622), as well as a snack booth and popcorn.

"A group of dedicated community volunteers have been busy planning a fun-filled day and free events with a focus on family, youth and senior engagement," said Loralee Heemskerck, Canada Day Committee Chair.

Mayor to have increased role in budget process

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I will be reaching out to council to see if you have a priority you would like to see in the budget and/or what type of tax rate increase you would be looking for," Mayor Deb Gilvesy said, adding she would do that within the week.

The mayor noted the changes have required a lot of work by the CAO, Director

of Finance, Clerk and herself.

"It's been a lot to absorb and the report is comprehensive," she said.

Council accepted the report for information but also cancelled the previously-scheduled budget sessions for Nov. 18 and Dec. 2, and added a new budget session on Jan. 7 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Budget survey allows residents input to taxes

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Unhappy with your municipal tax bill?

The Oxford County budget survey gives residents a chance to have their say on both the Oxford County and Town of Tillsonburg budgets.

The survey is laid out in an informative manner, clearly explaining which services are county and which are municipal. Residents have the choice of choosing the importance of individual items, and to provide a rating of reducing the service, maintaining the service or increasing the service.

"It's well laid out this year," said Tillsonburg Mayor Deb Gilvesy. "It really defines the roles of the municipality versus the roles of the county."

Unhappy with your municipal tax bill?

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"It's well laid out this year," said Tillsonburg Mayor Deb Gilvesy. "It really defines the roles of the municipality versus the roles of the county."

There is also a comment section in the survey. "Obviously, there are a lot of comments about taxes in there, and the cost of taxes," Gilvesy said.

Tillsonburg residents will receive their final tax bills in July. The bill received earlier this year, for taxes due in February and May, was based on last year's budget. The July bill, for taxes due in August and October, will show the 2025 increases.

"That's usually when people pay attention because it's identified on the tax bill how much it changed from last year," Gilvesy said.

Last year there were around 1,000 surveys submitted, which was an increase.

Asked if the surveys make a difference, Gilvesy answered, "I can't speak for other councillors but it does make a difference for me because I'm sitting in a position where I should listen to ratepayers."

She said 2026 will see some things out of municipal control. A retroactive wage settlement with police across the province would have resulted in a three per cent increase in 2025 until the province provided assistance.

"We're facing the same this year as well," she said of the 2026 budget. "It's a significant tax increase to cover it. At this point it's unknown if there will be provincial help."

The simplest way to find the survey is to Google Speak Up Oxford and then click on the budget survey.



EMERGENCY HIGHWAY CLOSURE

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Highway 3 in Courtland was closed by emergency police order at 8 p.m. Saturday for several hours due to a person barricaded in a residence. A 65-year-old Courtland residence is facing several charges, including uttering threats for bodily harm or death, pointing a firearm, and careless use of a firearm, weapon or prohibited device.



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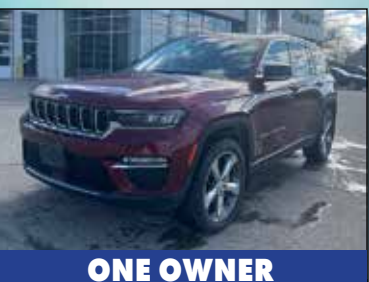
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Tillsonburg council briefs

Chance to win an I-Pad

Tillsonburg residents will have an opportunity to win an I-Pad if they make a switch to paperless billing. A report to council showed less than three per cent of residents currently use paperless billing. In comparison, the City of Ottawa has more than 50 per cent of residents on paperless

billing. The report said as long as the target of five per cent is hit, the savings from not mailing bills will negate the cost of the I-Pad.

Deputy Mayor Dave Beres said he is one of the three per cent, and pointed out if 45 per cent of residents moved to paperless billing, it would save \$10,000.

“The problem is people don’t know about it,” he said, suggesting an advertising campaign.

Coun. Pete Luciani said he is also on paperless billing. “When you look at the return on the dollar, I think it makes sense,” he said.

Coun. Kelly Spencer asked if the program could be extended if it didn’t meet targets, and was told another contest may run. The contest will commence on July 2 and run until Aug. 29. It will be promoted in the final tax bills, which are out Aug. 1.

BIA funding approved

Tillsonburg council approved spending \$5,978 for current legal fees for the Downtown Tillsonburg BIA.

Discussion of the matter took place in closed session, due to it being a legal matter, but the vote to provide the funding took place in open session. Council approved the funding from the tax rate stabilization reserve with Councillors Chris Rosehart and Chris Parker voting against it.

Subdivision phase approved

Council approved removing a holding provision on a development application from Performance Communities Realty Inc. to allow the development of 219 new units in Rolling Meadows, on the north side of town. The development will be a combination of single homes and townhomes.

Running with the Bulls

In a delegation to council, Tamara Bull, organizer of Running with the Bulls, asked town council to promote her event through municipal social media channels.

Bull was inspired to start the event after her son was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer that would require treatment in the United States. After learning the price tag of the treatment was \$900,000, a Go Fund Me account was created.

“When I saw the outpouring of love and support from our community, and not just from the Go Fund Me, I knew I had to go back some way or somehow. I am a runner so I decided to have a run,” she told council during a presentation at the June meeting.

Known for not doing things in a small way, Bull organized a fully carded run with five and 10-kilometer options and a kiddie run.

“To have a run of this caliber you normally have to go to London or Hamilton,” she said.

Funds from the run last year went to assist families dealing with a loved one with cancer. Since then, the Kindred Foundation has hooked up with Bull, and she is aiming to top the \$22,000 raised last year. With the new affiliation, tax receipts can be issued for donations.

Donations, or more information, is at tillsonburgrunning-withthebulls.com, or through Facebook.

A benefitting partnership?

A possible partnership between the town and Tillsonburg Minor Ball may end up with the benefit of a new pavilion between the town’s two hardball diamonds.

Julie Dawley, recreation and programs services manager, told council members at the July 16 meeting about \$30,000 in the budget for two storage sheds to be built for the baseball league.

“When they heard this, they thought this would be a good opportunity for them to fund raise and have a full pavilion,” she said.

The concept was to build a pavilion connected to the shed where spectators could watch games at either of the diamonds.

Coun. Chris Rosehart asked if it had been considered using the existing storage barn adjacent to the diamonds.

Dawley said the barn is used for existing storage.

Council passed a resolution to direct staff to collaborate with Tillsonburg Minor Baseball to develop a proposal, detailed budget and formal agreement for the construction of a pavilion and the construction of the sheds be put on hold in the meantime.

New asset management plan

An updated asset management plan for the town has been posted to its web site.

The need for a management plan is required by provincial legislation to “help municipalities more clearly identify their asset management needs, thus, helping municipalities work toward a more sustainable position regarding the funding of their assets.”

In his report, Director of Finance/Treasurer Renato Pullia identified there is a shortfall of \$4.2 million in the plan over the next 10 years. The plan covers the operation, maintenance, renewal, acquisition, and disposal of assets totalling \$261 million. There is a shortfall of \$4.2 million per year.

“The bulk of that is in the facilities class,” Pullia said.

At present, a survey of citizens found 85 per cent of residents are satisfied with the level of service for the town’s assets.

With a shortfall, Pullia said council will need to look at a levy increase or expect a decline in service levels. Another option is looking at ways to extend the service life of assets.

Deputy Mayor Dave Beres said he put last year’s budget into Chat GPT and was congratulated on having a good asset management plan. He questioned if council and staff are prepared for a higher levy increase if needed.

“The bottom line is the days of two to three per cent budget increases are no longer here when it comes to municipal government passing budgets, not just for us but everybody, because these new programs are here, the asset management programs are mandatory, and those days are no longer here for communities our size if we want to continue to grow and be healthy,” he said.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 11

Congratulations to
Our Prize Draw
Winner!

A big thank you to everyone
who stopped by our booth at
Tillsonburg Turtle Fest —
it was great to connect with so
many of you!

We’re excited to announce the
winner of our random prize
draw:

Irene B.

Enjoy your prize, and thanks
again to all who entered.

We loved being part of such a fun
community event!

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Have your say on the budget

Later this summer, municipal tax bills will go in the mail containing the increases approved by the town and county over the last several months.

It's inevitable that when residents realize how much their taxes are going up, there will be frustration, anger and complaining. Whining will start showing up across local Facebook sites as people question the value for their dollar. Sometimes this is warranted.

The municipal and county process to set taxes is long, drawn out and can be confusing. This is not a criticism, but it is the nature of the beast, so to speak. Using this year as an example, the process started well back in 2024 and draft budgets were presented late last year. Debate took place – all in the open – and then a tax rate was set. Impacts of the increase vary dependent on the assessment of a property.

However, to follow this process is understandably not what most people do for entertainment.

All seems good when residents receive a tax bill for the interim rate, to be paid in February and May, in Tillsonburg's case, at the same rate as the previous year. Then the shock hits when the final bill arrives for the August and October payments.

Last year was worse than most when county taxes were hiked 16 per cent.

So, what can you do about it? Talk to your town councillor, or county councillor and share your concerns is one option.

County council is comprised of the heads of council of the lower tier municipalities in the county, plus two extra county councillors from Woodstock. In the case of last year's budget, Tillsonburg Mayor Deb Gilvesy and others were against it – agreeing 16 per cent is outrageous – but they were outvoted. Residents likely didn't know what was coming until they saw their bills about six months later.

The county's budget survey gives residents the opportunity to provide input into their taxes. The survey goes beyond that, allowing residents to input the municipality they live in, which goes to local councillors. Along the way, the survey does a great job of explaining which services are municipal and which are county – this is often a source of confusion.

Last year, about 1,000 people completed the survey, which went to county councillors only. Perhaps it made a difference in the county tax rate was lower, but still higher than inflation. Now, imagine the weight it would have if all residents in the county filled it out, or even half.

This is an opportunity to have input into municipal decision making, and it shouldn't be missed.



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(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

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A legacy of philanthropy prompts a desire to inspire others



**EVERYONE
HAS A
STORY
TO TELL**

ROBIN KRAFFT

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Joan Weston described growing up here in the 50s and 60s as the golden age. Their family home was perched on the banks of Lake Lisgar, and many of her childhood memories revolve around the Pond.

"It was originally called Hardy's Mill Pond," she explained, "which is probably why we grew up calling it the Pond. Before the bridge was installed, we had to walk all the way around to get to the pool. After swimming for three hours and walking back home my legs would be rubber."

The family would canoe on the Pond in the summer, and it was great for skating and playing hockey in the winter. On windy days, Joan and her sister would lace up and hold a bed sheet between them and blast from one end to the other.

Weston adds: "My father put lights on the roof so that we could skate at night and Mom would flick the veranda light to tell us that it was time to come home."

"It was a great place to grow up and a great place to come back to," she said.

She attended the University of Guelph, earning an honours specialization degree in English. She played varsity tennis all four years, and when she came home in the summer, she gave tennis lessons at the new courts that had been installed behind the community centre.

She went on to teach English and drama for 32 years at KW Collegiate and Vocational School. Under her direction, the department took on heavy topics and social issues, frequently performing at events and receiving many requests from community organizations. They put on traditional Broadway style musicals in the school's theatre, built in 1922, which included a balcony and wings. Weston also coached swimming and tennis and was part of the music department and the outdoor hiking and camping club.

She retired in 2009 and came back to Tillsonburg to help her sister take care of their mom. She started tutoring and then got involved with the Lake Lisgar Revitalization Project, but that was just the beginning. Joan was awarded Tillsonburg Citizen of the Year in 2021 and she now volunteers on 13 organizations and committees.

Joan said that most of the volunteer work she does is not a big commitment, often just a few hours a month. The Historical Society, Adult Basic Literacy Program, and the Tillsonburg Tri-County Agricultural Society are all in need of volunteers. Weston wants to encourage residents to consider joining Tillsonburg's organizations: "Everybody is suffering from a lack of volunteers, yet many people benefit from what we do. There have to be people out there who can give some time to the town."

Lake Lisgar was a focal point of her childhood and she's been witness to many changes over the years. As guardians of the lake, the Revitalization Committee's continuing diligence has been instrumental in many improvements.

"The water quality last year was the best it's been in decades, but it's a living thing," Weston said, "and it has to be maintained."

The lake attracts residents throughout the year for walking, paddling, fishing, rowing, family gatherings and quiet reflection.

While Lake Lisgar is a hidden jewel, Weston said that "the museum is the best kept secret in town." Aside from tours and fundraising, she prepares talks for the Lunch and Learn program and the Historical Society. She recently gave a speech on George Tillson and local roads. Ever a teacher, Weston expounded: "Originally composed of plank and gravel, he built Highway 19. It stretched 31.5 miles from Port Burwell to Ingersoll, and Tillsonburg was dead centre. In the early 1850s, the stagecoach would change horses at the Queens Hotel and then continue on."

A fifth generation Tillsonburg Weston, her predecessors would have travelled those early roads, and they were stalwart members of the community, making their own valued contributions. The Weston Family Park was named to honour their collective achievements and philanthropy. Joan is an inspiration, but she's modest about it, enjoying everything she does.

"This is all playing for me," she says, "I'm not going to sit home and twiddle my thumbs, not as long as I can walk and talk!"

A look at literature to honour Indigenous Day



**THE
STAGE
IS THE
WORLD**

LAUREL A. BEECHEY

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

I was privileged to inherit my grandmother's books of Canada's past with old or reprinted editions, some 200-plus years old. Amongst them are several on our country's Indigenous people.

I wrote this column on June 19th; Indigenous Day, to share the words/poems of two people from our past.

Tecumseh was a Shawnee, statesman, warrior and patriot, who by 1810 had built a multi tribal confederacy of Indigenous nations in North America. He challenged the treaties with British [Canada] and French to try and save the lands they held from colonial expansion.

In the book, "Memoirs of a Captivity Among the Indians of North America, by John Dunn Hunter, the author has a section on Tecumseh, and captured some of his words. "Teachings of

Tecumseh:: Tecumseh, who lived from 1768 to 1813, wrote, "So live your life that the fear of death can never enter your heart. Trouble no one about their religion; respect others in their view, and demand that they respect yours. Love your life, perfect your life, beautify all things in your life. Seek to make your life long and its purpose in the service of your people. Prepare a noble death song for the day when you go over the great divide. Always give a word or a sign of salute when meeting or passing a friend, even a stranger, when in a lonely place. Show respect to all people and grovel to none. When you arise in the morning give thanks for the food and for the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, the fault lies only in yourself. Abuse no one and no thing, for abuse turns the wise ones to fools and robs the spirit of its vision. When it comes your time to die, be not like those whose hearts are filled with the fear of death, so that when their time comes they weep and pray for a little more time to live their lives over again in ~ Chief Tecumseh"

Emily Pauline Johnson was born at Chiefswood, on the Six Nations Reserve to George H.M. Johnson, who was of Mohawk and European descent, and Emily Susanna Howells, who was born in England. He was an interpreter and cultural negotiator between the Mohawk, the British and the Government of Canada. Pauline's Mohawk name, Tekahionwake ("double wampum"), speaks to her

heritage, being Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) and British.

Johnson was also a noted poet. The words of "A Cry from an Indian Wife were: "My Forest Brave, my Red-skin love, farewell; We may not meet to-morrow; who can tell. What mighty ills befall our little band, Or what you'll suffer from the white man's hand? Here is your knife! I thought 'twas sheathed for aye. No roaming bison calls for it to-day; No hide of prairie cattle will it maim; The plains are bare, it seeks a nobler game: 'Twill drink the life-blood of a soldier host. Go; rise and strike, no matter what the cost. Yet stay. Revolt not at the Union Jack, Nor raise Thy hand against this stripling pack, Of white-faced warriors, marching West to quell Our fallen tribe that rises to rebel. They all are young and beautiful and good; Curse to the war that drinks their harmless blood. Curse to the fate that brought them from the East, To be our chiefs—to make our nation least That breathes the air of this vast continent. Still their new rule and council is well meant. They but forget we Indians owned the land, From ocean unto ocean; that they stand, Upon a soil that centuries ago, Was our sole kingdom and our right alone. They never think how they would feel to-day, If some great nation came from far away, Wrestling their country from their hapless braves, Giving what they gave us—but wars and graves. Then go and strike for liberty and life And bring back honour to your

Indian wife. Your wife? Ah, what of that, who cares for me? Who pities my poor love and agony? What white-robed priest prays for your safety here, As prayer is said for every volunteer, That swells the ranks that Canada sends out? Who prays for vict'ry for the Indian scout? Who prays for our poor nation lying low? None, therefore take your tomahawk and go. My heart may break and burn into its core, But I am strong to bid you go to war. Yet stay, my heart is not the only one, That grieves the loss of husband and of son; Think of the mothers o'er the inland seas; Think of the pale-faced maiden on her knees; One pleads her God to guard some sweet-faced child, That marches on toward the North-West wild. The other prays to shield her love from harm, To strengthen his young, proud uplifted arm. Ah, how her white face quivers thus to think, Your tomahawk his life's best blood will drink. She never thinks of my wild aching breast, Nor prays for your dark face and eagle crest, Endangered by a thousand rifle balls, My heart the target if my warrior falls. O! coward self I hesitate no more; Go forth, and win the glories of the war. Go forth, nor bend to greed of white men's hands, By right, by birth we Indians own these lands, Though starved, crushed, plundered, lies our nation low, Perhaps the white man's God has willed it so." [2]

Editor's note: The quotes from Laurel's books were printed as originally written.

House fire on Keswick Road

Donations are being accepted at The Mill to assist a family who lost everything in a house fire.

At 11:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 18, Brownsville and Mount Elgin stations responded to a structure fire in the second story of a residential home on Keswick Road.

Fire crews observed heavy smoke and fire conditions on the second floor on arrival and quickly attacked the fire from the outside before entering the home for search, rescue and fire attack on the second floor.

Fire crews controlled the fire on the second floor and conducted a search of the building. The building sustained significant smoke, fire and water damage from the fire. Firefighters remain on scene checking for fire

extensions and ensuring extinguishment of the fire.

The occupants evacuated the building and no injuries were reported. The residents were displaced from the home due to the damage caused by the fire.

Police, EMS, gas and hydro assisted mitigating the emergency. The cause of the fire is under investigation.


The fire victims, who worked at The Mill, lost everything. The Mill is accepting donations to help the family. Clothing, food and gift cards are being accepted at The Mill's front desk. Clothing is women's size medium and large and men's large and extra-large. Shoes needed are men's size 10 and women's sizes six, seven and nine.



WARRANTY WORK

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Construction crews were busy fixing the retaining wall and guard rails on Concession Street West in recent weeks due to deterioration of the retaining wall. The work was done at no cost to the town as defects were found.



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Area MPs call minister's knowledge of firearms law 'embarrassing'

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Two area MPs are critical of the approach the Liberal government is taking on the issue of gun buybacks.

Following the Nova Scotia massacre in 2020, the Liberal government of the day announced the buyback of 1,500 models of what it called "assault-style" centrefire semi-automatic rifles with "high-capacity magazines" through an Order in Council. Announced under the pretense of increasing public safety, the government failed to mention that centrefire semi-automatic rifles have been limited to five-shot magazines for more than two decades.

Five years later, more firearm models have been added, including some .22 rimfire guns, but no guns have been purchased back from individual citizens. As of last fall, \$67 million had been spent on the program, with no firearms purchased back. Buybacks from dealers began in November 2024, and the program concluded on April 30, with 12,195 firearms being turned in.

Elgin-St. Thomas-London South MP Andrew Lawton recently questioned Public Safety Minister Gary Anandasangaree on the topic, asking questions to determine if the minister was aware of the requirements for firearm ownership. He found the minister didn't know what the Canadian Firearms Safety Course or a Restrict Possession and Acquisition License was. All firearms owners must take the former, and those who own handguns must have the latter.

"I was shocked to learn the minister overseeing firearms in Canada doesn't even know the basics of Canada's gun laws," Lawton said. "As a law-abiding firearms owner myself, I know that Canadian hunters, sport shooters, and

collectors take public safety very seriously, which is why it's so frustrating to see Liberal laws that target law-abiding gun owners while letting criminals walk free."

Lawton's solution: "I've invited the public safety minister to come out to my gun club, the East Elgin Sportsmen's Association (in Aylmer), to learn the facts. I hope he'll take me up on the offer."

Oxford MP Arpan Khanna noted that many members of the new Cabinet are the same people who have been going after lawful gun owners instead of criminals with the last government. He believes the minister should have been up to speed.

"Yes, I understand, it's only been a few weeks for some of them since taking the file on, but not having answers to basic, basic questions, basic numbers, basic understanding of the system, shows you how we got the problems where we are today, because if you don't understand your file, how are you supposed to make those changes in the policy," he said.

Khanna said the Conservatives have taken a different approach and believe in going after the criminals.

"This government has been so focussed on lawful gun owners and just trying to put the optics on that, while we're going after repeat violent offenders who don't use lawful legal guns," Khanna said, adding criminals use guns smuggled in from the States.

In related news, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation's recent Leger poll found the majority of Canadians surveyed would rather the government spend money to focus on criminals instead of buying guns back from law-abiding citizens. The government's financial documents include a line titled "Assault-Style Firearms Compensation Program" with a \$342 million price tag.

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Call from concerned citizen results in arrests

Members of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), Oxford Detachment responded to a call from a concerned citizen about a suspected break and enter in the Town of Tillsonburg.

On June 15, at approximately 9 a.m., members of Oxford OPP were dispatched to a suspected break and enter on North Street in Tillsonburg. Upon further investigation it was learned that two locations had been entered.

As a result of the investigation two individuals, Derek D'arcy a 37- year-old resident of Tillsonburg and Amanda Starling a 39 -year-old resident of Norfolk County,

were arrested and charged with the following offences:

- Break and Enter - Dwelling House, with Intent to Commit an Indictable Offence
- Break and Enter - Place, with Intent to Commit an Indictable Offence
- Theft Under \$5000 (two counts)
- Possession of Property Obtained by Crime Under \$5000 (two counts)

Starling was also charged with Fail to Comply with Probation Order.

A key and approximately \$2,000 in Canadian currency were the items stolen and have since been recovered.

Fatal collision in Tillsonburg

A portion of Vienna Road was closed on June 18, following a fatal accident.

On June 18, at approximately 8:30 a.m., members of the Oxford OPP were dispatched to a collision involving a passenger vehicle, on Vienna Road, in The Town of Tillsonburg.

The driver, a 59-year-old male from Norfolk County was pronounced deceased at the scene.

Vienna Road was closed between Simcoe Street and Old Vienna Road to facilitate the investigation.

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United Church of Canada celebrates 100 years

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg's two United Churches celebrated the centennial of their faith recently.

The United Church of Canada came into being on June 10, 1925 when the Methodist Church, Canada, Congregational Union of Canada and 70 per cent of the Presbyterian Church entered into a union. Locally, with Avondale being a Presbyterian Church and St. Paul's a Methodist, it translated into two United Churches in Tillsonburg.

Today, the churches had differing celebrations of

the centennial, their history and congregations.

Avondale United Church

Nicknamed 'Old Pres', Avondale is the oldest church in Tillsonburg. The frame church, known as 'Old Pres' was built in 1855. The cornerstone of the present church was laid in June 1886 – making it the oldest church in Tillsonburg today. The name of the church was changed to Avondale to recognize donor John Scott, who left a sizeable legacy to the church, and was from Avondale parish in Scotland.

Avondale members celebrated the 100th anniversary with a special service where those attending dressed as they imagine people would have 100 years ago. This meant hats and gloves for the ladies, and suits for men. There has been a display of items from the archives at the back of the sanctuary to celebrate the centennial. This included interesting historical artifacts, such as annual reports dating back to 1896 and a Bible presented to the church by the Presbyterian Ladies' Society in 1872.

In the past 40 years, changes have been abundant at Avondale as the smaller United Churches in the country closed. The name of the church was changed to Avondale Zion in 1996 when Ostrander Zion church closed, and the two merged. Then, the name was changed again to Trinity when Brownsville and Delmer United Churches closed. A name change back to Avondale followed since.

Although Avondale has the members from three of the smaller churches, it is still struggling. The church doesn't currently have a minister, but is using lay ministers.

Lisa Chevers, who was

baptized in Avondale and is a member of the church council, said there are advantages to lay ministers, saying, "I enjoy it because we have a different one every week."

Worship Committee chair Ilene Chesterman said prior to Covid there were 60 to 80 people per week and that is now only 30 to 40.

"We have reached out to try to get families to come back," she said.

"We're no different than a lot of churches and not attracting younger families," agreed Church Council chair Oliver Gauld.

Avondale is the host of the Out of the Cold program, which offers homeless people a place to sleep from November to April.

St. Paul's United Church

Although Avondale is the oldest church in town, St. Paul's congregation is older since the Wesleyan Methodist Church was meeting since 1835. The Tillsonburg Methodist Church was built on the present site of St. Paul's in 1867. That building was consumed by fire in 1912 and was replaced with the current domed structure in 1914.

The church marked the



(ALIYAH HELSDON PHOTO)

A new flag pole was installed in front of St. Paul's United Church to commemorate the anniversary, and a Canadian flag was raised after the service on June 8.

100th anniversary during a ceremony on June 8.

Rev. Karlene Palmer said the church is also seeing a significant decline in membership with members aging and able to participate.

"Our desire is to have more people join our church to ensure that we will still be here for another 158 years, which is how long our church has been in this community," she said.

St. Paul's members are working on their faith statement to "to serve God by serving others" through the Community Kitchen and Messy Church. The Community Kitchen was started by church members Jed and Laurie Drew

20 years ago. After Laurie passed away, Julie and Keith Avery started to run the program, which provide hot meals to people of the community in need. St. John's Anglican and Crosspoint also help. Recently, the Community Closet was open to provide new or gently used clothing, toiletries, books, and toys all free of cost.

Messy Church is an initiative, led by Dave and Norma Collis, with craft tables, music and sing-along ending with lunch. There are many families with young children who regularly attend and new people are always welcomed.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Volunteers with Avondale United Church, from the left, Ilene Chesterman, Lisa Chevers and Oliver Gauld, stand behind the display of memorabilia from the church's archives. The display was to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada.

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Have your say on the best in turtle exhibit



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Turtles and turtle habitat are the focus of "Slow and Steady", the current exhibit at the Station Arts Centre. This people's choice exhibit runs until July 11.

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Slow and Steady may be the name of the new exhibit at the Station Arts Centre, but it is proving to be anything but.

The exhibit, which opened in tandem with TurtleFest on June 13, was a first. However, it saw higher attendance than is typically seen for the TurtleFest opening or an exhibit launch.

"It was a great opening," said Station Arts executive director Tabitha Verbuyst. "We had 75 people show up with (MPP) Ernie Hardeman cutting the ribbon."

Typically, 60 people is considered good attendance for an opening. It also more people than usually shows up for TurtleFest's launch.

"It was much more vibrant," Verbuyst said. "They had a way bigger turnout."

The concept for the exhibit came from

a TurtleFest committee meeting. Verbuyst is on the TurtleFest committee, which she said was discussing ways to bring out more people to the opening.

"I pitched the idea of doing a TurtleFest-themed exhibit," she said.

What resulted was Slow and Steady, an exhibit that must feature either turtles or turtle habitat. Nearly 30 artists submitted 36 works for display in the exhibit. These include paintings, drawings, clay sculptures, mixed medium, papier mache and photography.

This is a people's choice exhibit where gallery visitors vote on their favourite turtle pieces by submitting a ballot. The exhibit runs until July 11, and the Station Arts Centre is open Monday to Saturday 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

All of the pieces in the exhibit are for sale. The top choice in the exhibit will receive \$250.



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Tillsonburg council briefs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Mayor Deb Gilvesy added the changes don't allow collection of development fees for multi-residential until the building is occupied, which will create a new challenge for municipalities.

The report was received for information and the plan was posted to the town's web site.

Electric charger to be removed

The EV charger at the Tillsonburg community centre will be removed.

Town council heard that staff were looking at options to end the free charging and have users pay for charging their vehicles, when the unit ceased to operate. With a circuit board it needs no longer being made, the suggestion was to remove the

unit and replace it with a new one in the future if directed by council.

Council approved the suggestion.

Town staff to look at bird feeder regulations

Council endorsed a notice of motion in regard to looking at regulating bird feeders.

Presented by Coun. Chris Rosehart, the resolution read: "That council directs staff to report back with a recommendation regarding regulating the number and placement of bird feeders on private property, including any associated enforcement considerations."

Explaining her motion, Rosehart said there are areas in town

where people have a higher number of birds feeders, which are attracting rodents. She suggested looking at control of numbers and placement of feeders so people could enjoy their property.

Coun. Chris Parker, who seconded the motion, said there is no harm in getting a staff report, but said he is only aware of one person complaining.

Coun. Bob Parsons said he hopes the report will look at the cost of having staff "going around to count bird feeders on people's property."

Coun. Kelly Spencer said she believes there is an existing bylaw regarding rodent infestation.

Council passed the resolution.

Hospital planning for upcoming golf tournament

HOSPITAL HAPPENINGS

LISA DAHM

Integrated Executive Assistant, AHI/TDMH

It's been a whirlwind at AHI and TDMH the past couple of months, but let's start off with a huge thank you to everyone who has taken part in the 100th celebrations for TDMH and the TDMH Volunteer Association, including everyone who contributed to the Tillsonburg Post Special Edition. We couldn't ask for a more supportive community!

There was a great turnout for the Century of Caring Gala on May 10th and the event was practically flawless. It was

great to see everyone who came out to share memories with us. Thank you to our spectacular emcee Kelly Spencer, and to those involved in planning and organizing – without you the event would not have been what it was.

Each of our hospital foundations held fabulous events during May. AH Foundation's "An Evening in the Secret Garden" dinner gala, and TDMH Foundation's Taste of Summer both showed great support from our communities (despite some not-exactly-'summer' weather for the Tillsonburg event). Both foundations have golf tournaments upcoming – April 14 (AH Foundation) and September 12 (TDMH Foundation). Please contact the foundation offices to register your team and/or to get involved!

Early in June, we shared a time-limited preview of the new branding/logo design for Rural Roads Health Services (RRHS) that AHI and TDMH will be adopting as we integrate. We're very excited! Stay

tuned for a more official launch of the new branding over the summer!

During the week of June 2 – 5, 2025, AHI and TDMH were happy to welcome first year medical students from Schulich School of Medicine for the annual immersive experience known as Discovery Week. If you visited the hospitals that week, you may have seen the excited new faces in the halls. Discovery Week gives the students a chance to see how they might fit into our rural community hospitals and gives the hospitals a chance to showcase experiences the students might not receive in other settings.

Our AHI/TDMH Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee ensures our team knows about, and takes part in, important days to promote inclusivity, recognition and awareness. Throughout June, AHI and TDMH are proud to participate in Pride Month, flying the progressive pride flag at both sites, show-

ing that we are dedicated to promoting a culture of inclusivity and respect for all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or background. In June, we recognize National Indigenous History Month - a time to recognize the rich history, heritage, resilience, and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Metis.

The end of June marks the end of the year for our AHI and TDMH Joint Board of Directors – kind of like the end of the school year for students. On June 25th, our current board members gather for the annual meetings where they receive annual reports and financial statements, and elect the new board members and officers. This year is a little bit different, and exciting, as the new board will become a common board of directors, taking another step closer to the integration of AHI and TDMH.

Wishing everyone a safe and healthy start to the summer season!

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To go or not to go, that was the question



**OH,
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PLACES
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GO!**

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

I got the question a lot, in the weeks leading up to my trip. “You’re going where? In June? What about the fires?”

Yes, I was bound for Saskatoon and points north in Saskatchewan, to attend the annual conference of the Travel Media Association of Canada, and to spend a few days on golf courses, part of a “pre-tour” before the conference. I would be in Saskatchewan from May 31 to June 8. And during that time, parts of the province were being devastated by wildfires. Since I write this a few days ahead of publication, I can only assume that the crisis continues.

So, I was faced with four key questions.

First, would it be safe to go to Saskatoon?

Second, would I be occupying accommodations needed for evacuees from the fire zones?

Third, what about the smoke in the air?

Fourth, should I even write about visiting

Saskatchewan in such a time?

The answers I found to those questions tells us a lot about what tourism means, today. Especially, what it means to the destinations involved.

Since you are wondering about the answers to those four questions (and yes, I did go, by the way):

I was entirely safe in Saskatchewan. And any potential visitor who consults with either “Discover Saskatoon” or “Tourism Saskatchewan” will be, too. Our hosts made our safety Job One; my pre-tour was monitored, hour by hour, to be sure we were in no way threatened. I got to golf three terrific golf destinations, and you will hear more of that in coming weeks.

It's not that the crisis was not in evidence. When they weren't assigned as our hosts, the two Tourism Saskatchewan staffers who accompanied our golf trip were normally responsible for relations with outfitters who serve fishers and hunters in northern parts of the province. They were on their phones fairly often, trying to reassure or comfort worried or devastated clients. We saw the occasional chopper flying overhead, and at one point, a herd of ambulances, transferring patients from the La Ronge south to Prince Albert, assembled in the parking lot of the Elk Ridge resort where we were staying and playing. But all of this was being carefully monitored, and we were safe and welcome.

When it came to accommodations, it was



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

On the author's first day in Saskatchewan, the atmosphere was slightly smoky, as seen in this photo at Dakota Dunes golf course.

intriguing how some bits of information get misunderstood almost immediately. There were, indeed, news reports asking people to stay away from a fire-ridden province because accommodations would be needed for evacuees. But those requests did not come from Saskatchewan – they were from Manitoba, an entirely different province!

Those Manitoba requests were sincere. By coincidence, we flew to Winnipeg to visit and stay with family after my return from Saskatoon, and before publication of this article, and there, the tourism office made sure we were not taking up hotel space needed for evacuees. But that wasn't the case in Saskatchewan, even though a few conference registrants decided not to come for that misunderstood reason.

And what about dealing with smoke in the air? This may be the oddest part. Our most northern destination was the village of Waskesiu, which is less than an hour's drive from the closest wildfire. Yet in my nine days in Saskatchewan, I smelled or spotted smoke only once – on the day of my arrival in Saskatoon.

As our small group travelled north, playing golf all the way up to Elk Ridge, the skies were clear and blue. Meanwhile, I kept hearing about smoky air in southern Ontario, Québec, the U.S. and even Europe. It all depended on wind direction – and there definitely were powerful winds.

At one of the wonderful dinners we enjoyed as guests of Tourism Saskatchewan, I wondered aloud if I should write about all of this

any time soon. Our hosts, Daryl Demoskoff and Travis Pool, were surprised that I would even think about delaying publication of the several good stories I came home with.

“Tourism is an essential part of Saskatchewan's economy,” they said. “And as you have seen, there is lots of Saskatchewan that is open and ready to receive guests. Don't tell your readers not to come – tell them they are welcome!”

Let's be clear. That's the message from Saskatchewan, where most of the communities and areas hit by wildfires do not have large populations. It's not the case in Manitoba, where there are well over 20,000 evacuees, and where tourists have been asked to stay away.

But as far as Saskatchewan goes, you are welcome.

And leaving the topic of wildfires aside for a moment, I have to say that Saskatchewan was a wonderful revelation. I had never visited the province, except as a drive-through. Turns out, I could not be more wrong. Saskatchewan is an amazing destination in its own right. And you will be reading more about Saskatchewan in the coming weeks, right here. Including a feature on making some pretty spectacular Saskatchewan-created cocktails!

Stay tuned.

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



Clear skies over Saskatoon: while the Tourism Saskatchewan and Discover Saskatoon conference hosts monitored the fire situation constantly, the visit to Saskatchewan proceeded essentially as planned, and local tourism authorities encouraged writers to continue to produce Saskatchewan travel stories.

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INDIGENOUS CULTURAL CELEBRATION

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)

The Tillsonburg and District Historical Society presented its annual Indigenous Cultural Celebration on June 19 in Memorial Park. (Top right photo) Robyn Michaud, an Anishinaabe Kwe, Bear Clan from the Sagamok Anishinabek First Nation who is a professor of Indigenous Studies, grew up in Tillsonburg and was the emcee for the evening. The evening included Indigenous food, craft vendors, drummers and dancers.



Lake Lisgar fishing derby coming up

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

It's time for young anglers to practice their casting skills in preparation for the annual Lake Lisgar Fishing Derby.

Scheduled for July 5 from 7 a.m. to noon, the annual event coincides with Ontario's Free Family Fishing Week so parents can join their youngsters on the water. And just like fishing licenses for the week, there is no cost.

This is the 11th year for the Dean family running the derby.

"We used to do it with my kids when they were young, and it was run by the Optimist Club then," Mike Dean said.

The Optimist Club closed down in Tillsonburg for a while (the club is operating again now), and Dean was president of the Kiwanis at the time. The Kiwanis Club took it over, until it too closed down. Then Dean took it upon himself to enlist family, friends and volunteers to ensure it continue.

"I wanted to make sure it keeps going to make sure it keeps going because it was something for our kids and grandkids," Dean said. "We do it all with volunteers and donations."

Last year's derby had more than 400 participants.

"There's nothing better than sitting there

on a Saturday morning and listening to a kid's squeal of delight as they catch a fish. For us, it's what makes it worthwhile," he explained.

One of the few requirements is a parent, grandparent or guardian needs to accompany the young angler.

"Our main goal is to get people out there interacting with their kids and not on their tablets or phones," Dean said.

There are prizes for the largest fish, largest of each species and most accumulated fish.

"They may not have caught the biggest fish but if they caught 200 sunfish (for example), they could win most accumulated fish," Dean said.

Each participant will walk away with a grab bag and lunch. Lunch is being supplied by the Rapid Relief Team of Tillsonburg and Area. All funding is through donations from businesses, organizations and individuals. A program through Canadian Tire and the Ontario Police Association is a big supporter. Beyond grab bags, prizes include fishing rods and reels, tackle and a draw for a major prize.

Other rules are the entire tournament is catch and release and water access is restricted to canoes and kayaks only.

If participants want to fish with live bait, there is a small charge for worms.

Summer camps abound for youth in Tillsonburg

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

School's out for summer!

While that classic line from Alice Cooper brings jubilation and joy to youngsters across the community, it is not greeted with the same enthusiasm from parents looking to keep their children busy. Don't despair as there are a wide variety of activities in Tillsonburg, from day camps to week-long camps, covering arts, history, sports and many combinations in between.

Theatre Tillsonburg's Summer Camp starts July 7 and runs until Aug. 22. Aspiring young actors work on the production of a play each week, plus they work on their dance, have outdoor games focused on acting skills, and indoor games as well. The camp is for ages four to 12 in the main camp. There is also a writer's camp for 13 and 14 year-olds, where they get to write and direct a play.

"The whole camp is focused on the drama part," said Charlotte Van Roesstel, camp director.

At the end of the week, attendees present a play for their families.

The Station Arts Centre's summer camps start the first week of summer and run for eight weeks. These include craft camp for those aged four to six, and art camp for those seven to 11.

"We do a different theme each week and do different arts and crafts based on that," said Tabitha Verbuyst, executive director of the Station Arts Centre.

Planned themes include animal planet, comics and performing arts amongst others.

Verbuyst explained camp attendees not only create arts and crafts around the themes but also complete experiments, group projects, play outdoors and have adventures. Verbuyst said she has two experienced camp counsellors returning to lead the camp.

Parents can drop youth off at 8:45 to 9 a.m. and pick up at 4 to 4:15 p.m.

"It's a fun week with a lot of different experiences," Verbuyst said.

The Tillsonburg Community Centre also has a variety of programs for youth from four to 12, plus separate arts and sports camps. There are limited spaces left.

Annandale House has a diversity of programs, offering both day programs with a variety of different themes, and four week-long camps.

The day camps offer activities, crafts and adventures along a theme. Themes this summer are Swashbuckling Pirates on July 8, 9 and 10, Mythical Creatures on July 15, 16 and 17 and Colour Me Happy on Aug. 26, 27 and 28. The morning program, running from 10:30 to 11:30 is for ages three to eight, and parents must stay. An afternoon session is held for youth ages eight to 12.

The weekly camps allow participants to explore a different theme through games, activities and more. These camps are for youths aged seven to 12 and run Monday to Friday. Appropriate for Tillsonburg 200th anniversary, the first theme "Camp Homestead" looks at life in Tillsonburg 200 years ago. Week two, "Camp Nile Explorers" has a focus on ancient Egypt. The theme switches to the modern day for week three with Camp Curiosity and STEM. "Camp Hop the Decades" allows participants to look at the music and culture through the decades.

"It's an opportunity for kids to do an educational learning at a summer camp, all themed around an idea," said Kathleen Watkin, culture and heritage programmer at Annandale House. "It's learning without realizing your learning."

Tillsonburg Minor Soccer has two one-week camps, presented in conjunction with Challenger Sports. These are open to youths from ages six to 14.

Check web sites or contact the appropriate facility for availability and costs of programs.

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Canada Day celebrations in and around

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Pancake breakfast at the Station Arts Centre, running from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. A tradition for more than two decades, Bridge Street is shut off in front of the Station Arts Centre, picnic tables are set up as well as a cooking area for what is likely the largest breakfast in town of the year. Breakfast ranges from \$4 to \$9 for pancakes, sausage, coffee and tea. Cake cutting at 10 a.m. Proceeds from the event go back to the Station Arts Centres to purchase supplies for its summer camp.

The Legion will host a ceremony at the cenotaph at noon, with cake to follow.

Carnival at Annandale House from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. A carnival will provide the opportunity for a variety of games, including the popular giant games, creative corner for youth and complimentary cake, cotton candy, snow cones and popcorn. Inside Annandale House, there will be a “Guess the Jelly Beans” challenge and “Find the Otters” scavenger hunt throughout the house.

The Lake Lisgar Water Park will offer free swimming from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Sponsored by Schep's Bakery.

Fireworks at dusk in Memorial Park.



COMMUNITY EVENTS



ound Tillsonburg

OTTERVILLE

Canada Day Parade, 1:00 p.m.

Town crier and local resident Brenda Bozso will gather the crowd on Main Street for the 1 p.m. float/bike parade with a special guest appearance by the Shriner's Mocha Love Bugs as well as the Norwich Society Musical Band

Activities at Otterville Park, starting at 2:00 p.m. Bouncy castles, face painting and cub car races sponsored by the Otterville Optimist Club. Other activities include a free swim in the pool, a pie-baking contest/auction (6:30 p.m.), Norwich Merchants beer garden, local musicians, a classic car show (1-5 p.m.), baseball game (7:00 p.m.) and fireworks (9:30 p.m.).

South Norwich Historical Society Chicken BBQ, 5-7 p.m., Otterville Park. Local vendors will make sure no one goes hungry with JPs BBQ, as well as snack booth and popcorn. (Advanced tickets required - 519-879-6622)

Fireworks at 9:30 p.m. in Otterville Park.

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Tillsonburg 14-year-old played soccer in Italy

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

A Tillsonburg teen was part of a Canadian club that played in Italy.

Ethan Gazley, 14, a Grade 8 Westfield Public School student, plays soccer for London FC. To understand how he ended up on an Italian soccer pitch, it's necessary to step back in time.

Ethan started playing when he was four, and living in Ohio. He continued to play after moving to Tillsonburg when he was nine. While playing for Tillsonburg FC, he came to know John Twinem. When Twinem was asked by coaching staff with the Cherry Beach Soccer Club in Toronto if he knew of any top-rate goaltenders who might be interested in the Italy experience, he recommended Ethan.

One of the coaches of Ethan's team was his brother Austin while he played in Tillsonburg.

"It originally started because there was no goalie and Austin made his brother go in net," mother Christina recounted. "He was natural and kept at it."

Being in net was Ethan's ticket to make it to London. This takes a big commitment on his, and his parents' part, as he has to be in London four times per week. His team finished six of 10 teams in the league last year, but Ethan was tied to lead the league with the most shutouts.

From Twinem's recommendation, it was all on Ethan's shoulders. He tried out for Cherry Beach in November after training with private goaltender coach Rob Stillo of Toronto in Sicily.

"We weren't even out of Toronto and Vladimir (the Cherry Beach coach) was messaging he wanted Ethan to come with them," said Ethan's mother Christina.

There wasn't a quick "yes", but after thinking about it, Ethan joined the team.

The Cherry Beach team and parent escorts were in Italy from May 21 to 31. They stayed in San Donato, about two hours outside Rome where the games were held. The competition was top-notch, as many of the big clubs in Italy have academy teams for younger players. Those were some of the players that Ethan faced.

Cherry Beach came away with a two-win, two-loss and one-tie record. Along the way, Ethan got two shut-outs. One of the games was against Lazio Serie A, an academy team.

His parents said the level of play in Italy is superior to Canada.

"Soccer in Italy is a way of life," said father Mike. "You live, eat and breath soccer. It's like hockey in Canada."

Asked about the reason behind his love of the game, Ethan answered, "It's probably Austin. We would to the fields when I was young and kick a ball around all the time. It just grew on me."

He talked about the secret to playing at such a high level.

"It's mostly reaction time," Ethan said. "You have to have good reaction time to be at a higher level."

His dream is to play soccer in Europe in the future, perhaps as part of a scholarship at an Italian university. There were scouts at one of the games, so that isn't entirely an unattainable dream.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Ethan Gazley of Tillsonburg played with the Toronto Cherry Beach Soccer Club at a recent tournament in Italy. He normally plays with the London FC.

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EYE ON SLO-PITCH

Slo-Pitch half-way through the season

DAVE WEAVER
Post Columnist

Summer is finally upon us with warmer temperatures finally on the way, and we have hit the halfway point on most of the Men's schedules.

Ladies A Division

The Jays won their second consecutive match up with second place Simmonds Mortgages dropping them into a tie for second with Foldens Machine Works who won their third in a row.

Jays-12 Simmonds Mortgages-6
Jays-Mayra Baelde 4-4; Brandi Cook 3-4.
Simmonds-Janet Nagy 3-3; Jackie Wood-Van Santen 2-3.
Game Synopsis-Jays limited Simmonds to runs in just one inning, Maddi Obar's double was the only extra base hit for the Jays.

Foldens Machine Works-15 Trillium Court-8
Foldens-Ashley Aker 4-5; Jen Francis 3-4.
Trillium-Carissa Maguire 3-4; Vicki McFarlane 3-4.
Game Synopsis-Foldens broke open a close game in the sixth scoring six. Mackenzie Brackenbury scored three runs on the night.

Ladies’ B Division

Kyle Nesbitt Trucking continue to roll in the division as they mercied Wildcats, opening up a two-game lead over Wildcats. Resting Pitch Face won their second straight edging out George’s Auto by two.

Resting Pitch Face-10, George’s Auto-8
Resting-Amber Smith 3-3; Brittany Wolf 3-3.
George’s-Erin Jefferies 4-4; Brittany Sandham 4-4.
Game Synopsis-Resting 's first six batters accounted for all of their runs.
Kyle Nesbitt Trucking-21, Wildcats-4
Nesbitt-Melissa Falkins 3-3; Kim Hurd 3-3; Nicole Morgan HR.
Wildcats-Krystal Sivyver 3-3; Shirley Simmons 2-2.
Game Synopsis-Chani Homewood, Kim Hurd and Melissa Falkins all crossed three times for Nesbitt.

Men's A Division

1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks won a pair to keep ahead of the fast-charging Leeswood Construction Dirty Mitts unit who also

recorded a pair of wins to sit just sixth points back with a game in hand. Courtland Landscape and Grounds upset Hit N Run to win their third straight. Cobra Chickens and The Mill both beat O&L Duct Design Ducks. Hit N Run moved into a tie for third after mercying Smitty's Electrical.

1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks-23, Bill Klyn Carpentry-19
Hawks-Jesse Hiebert 4-4, 2HR; Peter Epp 3-3; Ben Bueckert HR; Johnny Klassen 2HR; Daniel Klassen 2HR.
Bill Klyn-Rob Stortz 4-4, 2HR; Randy Miller 4-5, HR; Nathan Boldt HR; Kyle McDougall HR.
Game Synopsis-The Hawks homered twice in a five-run sixth that won it for them, Jesse Hiebert and Daniel Klassen each hit their second homer in the rally.

The Mill-25, O&L Duct Design Ducks-13
The Mill-Ethan Morgan 4-4; Darren Pace 4-4; Bryan Deblaire HR; Matt Evans HR; Tim Morgan HR; Josh Stubbs HR.
O&L-Spence Meron 4-4, 2HR; Kelso Tveit 3-4; Phil Durham HR; Connor Smith HR.

Game Synopsis-O&L playing with nine hung in there until the fourth when The Mill put seven across, Josh Stubbs had a three-run homer in the rally.
Leeswood Construction Dirty Mitts-28, Bill Klyn Carpentry-14
Leeswood-Travis Nikin 4-4; Kent Collings 4-4, HR; Tim Townsend 2HR; Trevor Stuyt HR; Cory Smith HR.
Bill Klyn-Nathan Boldt 5-5 HR; Randy Miller 4-5, HR; Ryan Carroll HR; Jake Millar HR; Rob Stortz HR.

Game Synopsis-Leeswood doubled up the eight-man Bill Klyn squad, 11 of Leeswood's 12 batters scored at least one run.
1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks-32, Hit N Run-27
Hawks-Martin Klassen 5-5, 2HR; Jake Klassen 4-5; Ben Bueckert HR; Johnny Klassen 2HR; Daniel Klassen HR; Evan Bueckert HR.
Hit N Run-Jacob Klassen 5-5; Franky Klassen 5-6, HR; Peter Klassen HR; Diedrich Klassen HR; Johnny Unger HR; Martin Klassen HR; Peter Dyck HR; John Wiebe HR.
Game Synopsis-Each team hit seven-round trippers. Martin Klassen and Evan Bueckert each drove in six for the Hawks.

Cobra Chickens-27, O&L Duct Design Ducks-8
Cobra-Brian Dyck 5-5; Dawson Dyck 4-4; Caleb Reimer HR; Wyatt Blatz HR; Marcus Enns HR.

O&L-Kyle Smith 3-3; Josh Dewatcher 3-3; Spence Meron HR.
Game Synopsis-Leadoff batter Brian Dyck hit three doubles and scored four runs for the winner’s.
Hit N Run-20, Smitty's Electrical-4
Hit N Run-Pete Wall 5-5; Jacob Klassen 4-4, 2HR; Martin Klassen 2HR; Diedrich Klassen GrSlam.
Smitty's-Justin Wood 2-2.
Game Synopsis-Smitty's didn't put up much of a fight in this one. Hit N Run belted out five homers in the mercy.

Courtland Landscape and Grounds-9, Hit N Run-8
Courtland-Zach Smith 3-4; Dan MacRae 2-2.
Hit N Run-John Wiebe 4-4; Jacob Klassen 3-4.

Game Synopsis-Courtland held off a late charge from Hit N Run to hold on to the win. Tyler Lamb's two-run scoring double in the sixth won it.
Leeswood Construction Dirty Mitts-13 Courtland Landscape and Grounds-3
Leeswood-Cheyne Sarafinchin 3-3, HR; Thom Puhr 3-4; Alex Penders HR; Kent Collings HR; Trevor Stuyt HR; Travis Nikin HR;
Courtland-Adam Thomson 3-3; Scott Mudford 2-3.

Game Synopsis-Travis Nikin and Kent Collings led the winners with a homer and a double.

Men’s B Division

There are no undefeated teams left in Tillsonburg Slo-Pitch after Pelicans doubled up on previously unbeaten At My Playground/IQT Logistics on Friday night. The night prior Pelicans mercied Designated Drinkers moving them into a tie for second with At My Playground. At My Playground had earlier in the week had picked up a point in a tie with Copper Mug-Lubricare Wannabee's. John Beere picked up their first win of the season, upsetting Underhill Farm Supply. Bayham Construction Lumberjacks remain atop the loop as they beat Underhill by three. Sandy Shore Brew Jays split a pair beating Designated Drinkers after dropping a close one run decision to Side 2 Side Exteriors Strike Force.

John Beere-19 Underhill Farm Supply-15
John Beere-Kalvin Smith 5-5, Gr Slam; Jim Long 4-5.
Underhill-Jay Lampert 4-5; Cole Williamson 4-5.
Game Synopsis-According to the score-sheet, Calvin Smith hit a walk-off grand

slam to win it for John Beere.
Sandy Shore Brew Jays-24 Designated Drinkers-16
Sandy Shore-Dylan Cremery 4-4; Tyler Smith 3-4; J.D. Collier HR .
Drinkers-Matt Barker 3-4; Warren McCallister 3-4; Kyle Postma HR.
Game Synopsis-A seven -un sixth keyed Sandy Shore 's victory. Tyler Smith scored runs in consecutive at-bats.

Pelicans-8, At My Playground/IQT Logistics-4
Pelicans-Derek Buchner 2-2, 2HR; Shaine Hall 2-3.
A.M.P.-Logan Partlo 2-2; Duncan McLean 2-2, HR.
Game Synopsis-A seven -un fifth won it for Pelicans. Derek Buchner 's grand slam was the big blow.

Bayham Construction Lumberjacks-23, Underhill Farm Supply-20
Bayham-Nathan Peters 5-5; Nicholas Klassen 4-5; Jake Sawatsky 2HR.
Underhill-Curtis Chambers 4-5, HR; Chase Corbeil 4-4; Clay Thompson 2HR.
Game Synopsis-Nicholas Klassen had two doubles and drove in five runs for the winners.

Side 2 Side Exteriors Strike Force-19, Sandy Shore Brew Jays-18
Side 2 Side-Abe Hamn 4-4; Herman Enns 4-5; Frank Klassen 2HR.
Sandy Shore-J.D. Collier 4-4; Ryan Hutchinson 5-5; Devon Schultz HR.
Game Synopsis-Sandy Shore scored nine seventh-inning runs. The winners won it on John Klassen's single that cashed Herman Enns leadoff triple.

Pelicans-25 Designated Drinkers-4
Pelicans-Chris Parker 5-5; Ryan Verbuyst 5-5.
Drinkers-Will Marten 2-2; Michael White 2-2.
Game Synopsis-Ryan Verbuyst had a big night for Pelicans hitting three doubles and a triple.

Men’s C Division

Smokin Aces-18, C.R.Custom Engraving Smokin Bases-17
Smokin Aces-Daniel Unger 4-4, 2HR; Peter Klassen 4-4; Jakie Froese HR.
C.R.-Colton Trudel 4-4; Caleb Waycott 3-4; Ryan Scott HR; Jake Rempel HR.
Game Synopsis-Corny Reimer had the game winning RBI for Smokin Aces.
Bird's Golf-8 C.R. Custom Engraving Smokin Bases-4
Bird's-Nate Schram 3-3; Mike Wong 3-3.
C.R.-Cory Hopper 2-2; Colton Trudel HR.
Game Synopsis-Jason Lichti scored two runs for Bird's.

LADIES A	W	L	T	PTS
1-JAYS	8	1	0	17
2-FOLDENS MACHINE WORKS	6	3	0	12
2-SIMMONDS MORTGAGES	6	3	0	12
3-TRILLIUM COURT	3	6	0	6

LADIES B	W	L	T	PTS
1-KYLE NESBITT TRUCKING	6	3	0	12
2-WILDCATS	4	5	0	76
3-RESTING PITCH FACE	1	7	0	2
4-GEORGE’S AUTO	1	7	0	2

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

R.L.P. Melanie Luksys-15; Diamond Kings-9

R.L.P.-Caden Craggs 5-5; Ryan Gradish 4-5.

Game Synopsis-Trent Lamb and Caden Craggs each had a single, double and a triple to lead the winners.

Tailgators-22, Cain's Brickhouse Boys-14

Tailgators-Matt Pitt 4-4; Andrew Hooper 3-3.

Cain's-Ryan Davidson 3-3; Jason Cronheimer 3-3.

Game Synopsis-Matt Pitt had three doubles for Tailgators.

MEN'S A	W	L	T	PTS
1-1,2 SEAL INSULATION HAWKS	12	1	0	24
2-LEESWOOD CONSTRUCTION DIRTY MITTS	9	3	0	18
3-COBRA CHICKENS	8	5	0	16
3-JOHN KLASSEN REALTY HIT N RUN	8	6	0	16
4-BILL KLYN CARPENTRY	5	6	0	10
5-THE MILL	4	7	0	8
5-SMITTY'S ELECTRICAL	4	8	0	8
6-COURTLAND LANDSCAPE AND GROUNDS	3	9	0	6
7-O&L DUCT DESIGN DUCKS	2	10	0	4

MEN'S B	W	L	T	PTS
1-BAYHAM CONSTRUCTION LUMBERJACKS	7	1	1	15
2-PELICANS	7	2	0	14
2-AT MY PLAYGROUND/IQT LOGISTICS	6	1	2	14
3-UNDERHILL FARM SUPPLY	6	6	0	12
4-SIDE 2 SIDE EXTERIORS STRIKE FORCE	5	1	1	11
5-DESIGNATED DRINKERS	3	6	1	7
7-COPPER MUG-LUBRICARE WANNABEE'S	2	5	1	5
8-JOHN BEERE	1	9	0	2

MEN'S C	W	L	T	PTS
1-SHAW'S ICE CREAM SLUGGERS	8	1	0	16
2-SMOKIN ACES	7	1	0	14
2-N.I.M.	7	3	0	14
3-TAILGATORS	5	1	1	11
4-STICKY BANDITS	5	2	0	10
5-BIRD'S GOLF	4	4	1	9
6-TEAM SWINGERS	4	2	0	8
7-R.L.P. MELANIE LUKSYS	2	5	0	4
7-J/E BEARING	2	7	0	4
7-DIAMOND KINGS	2	8	0	4
7-C.R.CUSTOM ENGRAVING SMOKIN BASES	2	10	0	4
11-CAIN'S BRICKHOUSE BOYS	1	5	0	2

Weekend Quiz

by Jake Grant

1. What is the strongest hand in Texas hold em' poker?

2. Which 1989 Billy Joel song mentions a moon shot, Woodstock, Watergate, and punk rock?

3. How many countries does the Equator pass through?

4. Who won the 2025 Stanley Cup?

5. Scoring two under par on a par five hole is called what in golf?
6. What is James Bond's code name?

7. M&M'S Fruit Chews would become what popular candy?

8. The Saturday Night Massacre refers to the name of what scandal?

9. When a fruit is at its ideal condition, it is said to be _____?

10. Bronze is an alloy consisting of what two elements?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31



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Red Sox fall to Simcoe Seniors in recent game

GRAHAM NICKERSON

Post Contributor

Despite terrific pitching and lock-down defence, the Tillsonburg Red Sox failed to muster much in terms of baserunners in their June 20th game at the local diamond. Their Friday night foes were the Simcoe Seniors, recent winners of the Tillsonburg baseball tournament. The Seniors knocked out a few more hits when it counted to take the game 2-0 under threatening skies.

An old-fashioned pitcher's duel pitted Skip King for the Red Sox against Johnson for the Seniors. The only real damage against King came in the first when a lead-off double to deep right followed up by a walk put two on with no outs. King then coolly sat down the next two batters with his devastating curve ball. Dunn wrapped a double to right that brought around one Simcoe run, but that would be the only tally they would score in the frame.

For Johnson's part, he faced the minimum through three innings and was steady all the way going the distance allowing three hits, one walk, with four punch outs and no runs.

Tillsonburg looked to threaten in the home half of the first when Iron Ring Rachar led off with a single to extend his on-base streak to eight games. The momentum was short lived however as King hit a screeching one hopper right at the shortstop who turned a smooth double play.

Simcoe's second run came in the third when lead-off hitter Knelsen got a base hit then stole second. Two quick outs followed. A ball hit to left field by Boyd sent Knelsen to third with thoughts of home making a wide turn around the bag. Seeing the runner far off base, first-sacker Fish Verschueren fired a throw across the diamond trying for the pick off. The throw was a little low and off line with Rob Verhoeve unable to pick the ball. The overthrow rolled to the fence to send the scampering runner in to score.

King's pitching seemed to get stronger as the game wore on, sitting down the final 10 batters he faced at the end of six innings. Kid Appleford took over hurling duties in the seventh and did a fine job holding the Se-

niors at bay in one inning's work.

With two outs in the top of the seventh, a high-twisting ball was drifting foul off the first base side. Verschueren raced over in hopes of getting out of the inning. At the last second, the ball careened out of play and Fish ran smack into the waist high fence rolling his ankle in the effort. There was a several minute delay as training staff addressed the severity of the injury. Fish was helped off the field by his teammates nursing the sprained ankle.

The bottom of the seventh was Tillsonburg's last chance at-bat. After two quick outs, Verschueren's spot was due up in the order. He waved off the manager's suggestion of a pinch hitter wanting to help the team himself. Fish worked the count full then stroked the ball

to the deepest part of center field. A sure triple but Fish eased up into second to protect his ankle and was lifted in place of Red Nickerson pinch running. Verhoeve lined his pitch to the right side of the infield but Simcoe's second baseman made a headlong dive to knock the ball down and fire onto first to end the ballgame.

The 'Burg Boys played a well fought game and were in it til the very last play. This exciting brand of ball is worth coming out to see. The Red Sox are back at home June 27th against the Simcoe Juniors, first pitch is 7:30 at Sam Lamb Field.

Simcoe..... 101 000 0 - 2 6 0
Tillsonburg.....000 000 0 - 0 3 1

CONTINUED TO PAGE 23

TILLSONBURG	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
RACHAR, SS	3	0	2	1	2	0
KING, P, RF	3	0	0	1	1	0
B. VERSCHUEREN, 1B	3	0	1	8	0	1
VERHOEVE, 3B	3	0	0	2	0	0
LISTAR, 2B	2	0	0	0	5	0
PROUSE, CF	2	0	0	1	0	0
MCPHERSON, EH, 1B	2	0	0	1	0	0
J. VERSCHUEREN, RF	1	0	0	0	0	0
VITIAS, C	2	0	0	7	0	0
MCMULLEN, RF	1	0	0	0	0	0
APPLEFORD*, RF	0	0	0	0	0	0
KRELLER, LF	2	0	0	1	0	0
TOTALS	23	3	6	18	5	1

Summary: **ER**, Simcoe 1, Tillsonburg 0; **LOB**, Simcoe 5, Tillsonburg 8; **2B** Knelsen, Dunn, Hare, B. Verschueren; **RBI**, Dunn; **SB** Knelsen; **W**, Johnson; **L**, King; **BB**, Johnson (4), King (1); **K**, Johnson (4), King (6), Appleford (1); **Time**, 1:29

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Clippers after Port Dover in the headline

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22

The Tillsonburg Red Sox improved their league record to 2-2 with a win over Port Dover Friday night at Sam Lamb Field.

The ‘Burg Boys showed a fine display of hitting, rattling off 13 hits highlighted by Iron Ring Rachar going 3-4, being only a home run shy of the cycle.

There were whispers around the Tillsonburg club house earlier in the week that their star backstop, Vitias, had once been an elite level pitcher on the plains of North Dakota. Hearing wind of this, The Little General thought to put Vitias’ arm to the test here in Ontario. Swapping out his catcher’s mitt and mask for a pitcher’s glove and rosin bag, Vitias took to the hill and pitched four innings of excellent ball, punching out six while only allowing three hits and one earned run.

Port Dover countered with junk ball pitcher Wilson, who throws among other things a knuckle ball. At times, the floating trick pitch had the Tillsonburg batters fooled, but more often than not their patience at the plate helped them to get on when it counted.

In the first, Rachar got things going with a ground rule double that skipped over the right field fence. Fish Verschueren reached with a single and moved into scoring position on a wild pitch. Verhoeve smashed one to deep center that landed on the warning track bringing Rachar around to score. Fish trotted home when Listar hit a sacrifice fly to center.

The Red Sox pushed one more across in the third. Rachar tripled to lead off the inning and came home when Verschueren singled to right.

Port Dover strung together a rally to tie the game in the fourth. Breese singled, then Benko hit a dribbler in front of home plate. Vitias rushed off the mound to try for the runner at first but bobbled the ball and did not get a throw off to put two on with no outs. The next Dover bat struck out, then G. Barnard doubled to cash two runs. A curve ball in the dirt got through Kid Appleford’s crouch and rolled to the backstop to send Barnard home. Unperturbed, Vitias struck out the next two batters to

get out of the inning.

Tillsonburg answered in the home half of the fourth with four runs of their own. Back-to-back batters set the stage for a Miners double to center that brought in one run. Rachar batted in the other welted runner with a single. Young Hepditch reached on a fielder’s choice then stole second with a head first slide. The Red Sox rookie flew around the base paths to score on a Verschueren single to right.

Verhoeve came in from third base to pitch the fifth giving up two runs on two hits, walking one and striking out one.

Miners got the ball in the sixth. The tall lefty

struck out the side with his signature cut fastball and sweeping curve combination.

Clinging to a narrow two-run lead, Fishback called on his righty ace Verschueren to close out the game. Fish’s whizzing fastball sat down Port Dover one-two-three to clinch the game for the home team. The last three outs all coming by way of the strikeout.


Tillsonburg’s next home game is Friday June 20th at 7:30 at Sam Lamb Field when they take on the Simcoe Seniors.

Port Dover.....000 320 0 - 5 5 0
Tillsonburg.....201 400 x - 7 13 1

TILLSONBURG	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
RACHAR, SS	4	2	3	2	1	0
HEPDITCH, 2B	3	1	0	1	0	0
B. VERSCHUEREN, 1B, P	4	1	3	3	0	0
VERHOEVE, 3B, P, LF	2	0	1	0	1	0
LISTAR, EH, C	2	0	2	7	0	0
PROUSE, CF	2	0	0	0	0	0
VITIAS, P, EH, 1B	2	0	0	1	0	1
J. VERSCHUEREN, C	2	1	2	0	0	0
MINERS, LF, P	2	1	1	1	0	0
APPLEFORD, CF	2	0	1	6	1	0
TOTALS	23	7	13	21	3	1

Summary: **ER**, Port Dover 3, Tillsonburg 7; **LOB**, Port Dover 6, Tillsonburg 6; **RBI**, C. Barnard (2), G. Barnard (2), Rachar, B. Verschieren (2), Verhoeve, Listar, Miners, Appleford; **SB**, Mitchell, G. Barnard (2), Stelling, Andreello, Hepditch, Appleford; **W**, Vitias; **L**, Wilson; **BB**, Vitias (4), Verhoeve (1), Miners (1); **K**, Wilson (5), Breese (1), Vitias (6), Verhoeve (1), Miners (3), B. Verschueren (3); **Time**, 2:07

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SWOX NEWS



SWOX Council declares 'unwilling host' to future wind turbine projects

DEBBIE KASMAN

Post Contributor

With people lined up to the road waiting to get in and over 300 in attendance, South West Oxford (SWOX) Council declared the township an "unwilling host" to future wind turbine projects in a 5 to 1 vote at its June 17 meeting.

Councillors Pickard, Buchner, Durston, Gillis and Way voted to support the "unwilling host" motion and Mayor David Mayberry voted against. Councillor Pete Ypma was not at the meeting.

Mayberry expressed concerns about not following municipal guidelines, saying that's why he was voting in opposition to the motion.

An group called 'South West Oxford Residents United in Opposition to Wind Turbines' delegated at the meeting and asked for the "unwilling host" designation. The group, working alongside 'South West Oxford and Malahide say NO to Wind Turbines' gathered 1,245 signatures on a petition and expressed concerns about loss of property values, damage to well water, inadequate setbacks, noise and other community impacts.

Township of Malahide council declared Malahide an "unwilling host" in a unanimous vote on June 5. In October, Zorra Township also unanimously said no to any new wind turbine projects until the province revises its policy and gives municipalities more information about their impacts.

According to Wind Concerns Ontario, 159 municipalities have passed formal resolutions declaring themselves to be "unwilling hosts" to new industrial wind power sites.

Prowind Canada and wpd Canada are hoping to build wind energy projects in the area. Prowind Canada is proposing the

Bower Hill Wind Farm would consist of six wind turbines located near Highway 401. Wpd Canada is proposing the Cedar Flats Wind Project that could see up to 34 turbines, stretching from Verschoyle south to almost Corinth and then west past Highway 73. Turbines used could reach 200 metres or 656 feet tall.

SWOX staff reminded council at its June 3 meeting that passing a resolution declaring a township an "unwilling host" does not legally prevent a wind energy proponent from approaching council with a formal request for municipal support. An "unwilling host" resolution is not binding and does not preclude the township from receiving or considering future proposals. Under the Independent Electricity System Operator's (IESO's) current procurement processes, what matters is whether a Municipal Support Resolution (MSR) is passed.

Township staff "strongly" recommended council refuse the request to be an "unwilling host" for any proposed wind energy projects expressing concern that adopting a blanket "unwilling host" position at this stage could limit council's ability to evaluate each proposal independently and on its own merits.

April Nix, Oxford County Manager of Policy Planning, responded to a question asked by Mayberry at the June 3 council meeting saying "the province has made a bit of a mess with all of this...we have had AIA [Agricultural Impact Assessment] requirements in the Official Plan now for a couple of years...the province has then moved that in, that AIA requirement now, into the Provincial Policy Statement. That change became final last fall. And then somewhere in the midst of all of that, they started, they pulled it into energy and said we want parts of this done earlier, this energy process, as well. They've not done a



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The South-West Oxford council chambers were packed when council discussed two proposed wind turbines within its boundaries. Council decided to say it was an 'unwilling host' for wind turbine development.



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MUSIC CORNER

The Wright Stuff ready to light up the Legion



BEN ADDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Bringing together seasoned musicians and a passion for songs that span generations is one reason The Wright Stuff have earned a loyal following across Southern Ontario. The band is also known for packed dance-floors, powerful vocals and a set list that never gets old. This group always promises an evening of feel-good hits, nostalgia and non-stop energy.

At the heart of The Wright Stuff is charismatic frontwoman Jas Wright whose rich vocals and magnetic stage presence

breathe new life into beloved classics every night. For Jas music runs in the family.

"As a child my father's profession as a sax player was not the norm. I would watch him on stage and see the light he brought to people's faces. That became a part of me." Wright smiled as she explains how growing up with a professional musician for a father shapes her love for music. "Every time we perform, I can confidently say the band's sole purpose is to bring that same light. My dad raised me to see music as a healing tool that brings inner light to life and that is something I will always carry with me on stage and in my heart."

Her love of singing and dancing fuels every performance and it shows.

"The funny thing is if I'm singing it is rare that I'm not moving. Our appreciation for all decades of music runs deep."

Wright sheds light on some of her favourite songs from the band's vast setlist. "Derek Brooks, who plays bass, is a great

dancer and our drummer John Clarke has the beat down. Some of my dancing favorites would be One Way or Another by Blondie, Soulman by The Blues Brothers and who doesn't love dancing to Footloose by Kenny Loggins?"

Even with a busy life offstage as a mother and wife, music remains Wright's source of energy and joy.

"The truth is, no matter how tired I am from day-to-day life, when I go to sing, whether it is at a practice, a gig or even in my car, I am always ready to perform. I feel grateful for the opportunity to entertain and when you live your passion, your energy is boundless."

The Wright Stuff's lineup is rounded out by a talented crew whose chemistry and musicianship make each performance special. Kent Hartley is a wizard on the keys and harmony vocals known for the authentic touches he brings to every cover song. Originally from outside Woodstock and now based in Tillson-

burg, Hartley's attention to detail makes the band's renditions sound just like the originals but with the warmth and spontaneity only a live band can deliver.

On bass, Brooks lays down a solid foundation keeping the groove alive from the first note to the last encore. Brook's adaptability makes the band's wide-ranging set list feel seamless. When he's not playing bass, Brooks can be found playing piano, writing or enjoying a good laugh.

Behind the drum kit is John Clarke who is a steadfast presence with solid beats that keep the whole show rock steady. Clarke's musical journey started back in grade school playing rock and roll at high school dances and sneaking into bars to gig under borrowed IDs. Over the years, he's opened for national touring acts like Barstool Prophets, Sloan, Treble Charger and Lee Aaron. Clarke has also played in bands like FOG, The Royals and The Carltons. Last year John and a few

long-time bandmates joined forces with Jas to form The Wright Stuff and the rest, as they say, is history.

On electric guitar, Dale Ranick brings the fireworks from subtle strums to searing solos that get every hand in the air. Whether it's a wedding, a festival, a legion dance or a local club Dale's playing style adds the final spark to The Wright Stuff's high-energy performances.

For those who have yet to catch the band live, Wright says this Saturday will be a chance to see what they're all about.

"The vibe is all about delivering great tunes that get people dancing and singing. The Wright Stuff is always looking for music that will make any event a success and we tailor our performances to our audiences. On June 28th, you can expect to dance all night or just sit back, relax and enjoy great live renditions of timeless music."

Looking ahead fans can expect even more surprises in the months to come.

"We're already playing many of our dream songs, but we love to add new ones every month. I love singing Piece of My Heart by Janis and Sweet Caroline always gets the crowd going. Travelin' Band by CCR is a punchy favorite. We're thinking about adding Jeff Healey and Led Zeppelin, which Dale on guitar could make truly electrifying. Blues has always been a dream for me to perform. For the coming year, we hope to connect more locally and beyond. Our goal moving forward is to bring music that sparks memories and leaves everyone with a night to remember."

The Wright Stuff performs live at Tillsonburg Legion Branch #153. Doors open at 6 p.m. with live music from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and are available at the Legion and night of the concert at the door. (limited to availability) Bring your dancing shoes and get ready to sing along to the soundtrack of your life. For more information you can follow the band at www.thewrightstuff.ca

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JUNE 27 - CONNOR PETKAU, BFMTRL & LAUREN RITCHIE
Paddy's Underground

\$20 - 8 p.m. - all ages/licensed

JUNE 28 - THE WRIGHT STUFF
Tillsonburg Legion #153
\$15 - 6 p.m.

JUNE 29 - NORTH OF 60
Annandale NHS (Music

On The Lawn Series)
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Exhibit looks at the earliest years of Tillsonburg



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)
This Franklin stove from the 1800s was made in Normandale from bog iron.

JEFF HELSDON
Editor

What was life like in southern Ontario in the 1820s?

Annandale National Historic Site’s new exhibit “Tillsonburg 1825” looks at the earliest days of the town, including what life was like for founder George Tillson when he settled here two centuries ago.

Known as Dereham Forge originally, the exhibit looks at the daily life of a settler in 1825, the founding of Tillsonburg and what the original cabin Tillson built would have looked like. Tillson came to the area from Normandale, on the shores of Lake Erie near Turkey Point, after he heard of the abundance of bog iron. Skilled in using a forge, he wanted to continue to use those skills. Two of the earliest things he built were a foundry and saw mill.

“We have a lot of the older industrial artifacts from that early time period out that we don’t get out very often,” said Jen Gibson, collections and exhibitions specialist. “So, we have things related to the blast furnace that they would’ve had, the forge and we also have a lot of things related to the lumber and sawmill industry. Then we have some maps of the early days and information about surveying as well.”

When Tillson settled, his log cabin was the first building in town. There weren’t many settlers in the earliest days, but eventually several mills were built in the Otter Creek valley, attracted by the potential of the water power from the Otter and the two creeks flowing into it.

Early settlers spent most of their time on survival, providing for their families, finding food, cutting and preparing wood for warmth, and in Tillson’s case, working at his businesses. The exhibit provides a picture of this.

“So basically, growing your own food, plucking your own ducks and geese and chickens - that kind of thing - the real settler lifestyle,” Gibson said, adding settlers would have to make their own tools as well.

Exhibit viewers will have a chance to see if they have what it takes to survive. A section of the exhibit has 26 items, of which 10 are needed for a settler coming to the area.

There is also a display with poems and reminiscences from the town’s early residents, describing what life was like. The exhibit also has a replica log cabin.

“It’s like a snapshot of life at that time,” Gibson said.

The exhibit opened at TurtleFest and runs until Sept. 28.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)
Sarah Lise helped put some finishing touches on the Tillsonburg 1825 display at Annandale National Historic Site. The display provides insight into life in town two centuries ago.

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Strawberries ripe for pickin' at Potters Road Berries

CHRIS ABBOTT

Post Contributor

The pick-your-own strawberries season at Potters Road Berries is winding down this week.

"It started on time – June 8th was our first day opening," said Nellie Verbruggen, who operates Potters Road Berries with her husband Rick Verbruggen and family east of Tillsonburg. "Quantity-wise, it's been very good."

Usually they have a three-week season, which means it should be wrap-

ping up by June 28-29. You can stop in at 145476 Potters Road to buy fresh-picked strawberries by the 'quart' or 'flat.' Or save some money and pick your own.

"It's a little bit cheaper to pick-your-own versus buying. It's been very steady this year – there's a good amount of cars coming in... picking or buying."

Nellie noted they have good support from local grocery stores selling their products, including Metro and Sobeys in Tillsonburg.

"Very good response this

year."

If you miss the pick-your-own, you can purchase ever-bearing strawberries, available until October. They also sell frozen berries.

With a warmer spring last year, the 2024 strawberry crop was early, opening June 3rd and wrapping up June 22-23. This spring, however, they had to irrigate 4-5 times to prevent blossoms from freezing on colder mornings.

"It just depends on the weather," Nellie said. "It was a cold, cold spring."

Raspberry season at Potters Road Berries usually arrives around the end of June to the first week of July.

"They (raspberries) may be a few days later, but there's a good amount of berries on there. The bees have done a very good job. We should have pick-your-own raspberries the second week that we're harvesting."

Fresh blueberries can usually be purchased beginning mid-July.

Jam, maple syrup, honey, frozen strawberries and blueberries, as well as baked goods from The Hot Oven in Verschoyle, can also be purchased at Potters Road Berries.



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Nellie Verbruggen holds a 'flat' of strawberries at Potters Road Berries east of Tillsonburg

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DANCE**
on Saturday July 19
featuring live band "North of Sixty" from
5pm-8pm. Tickets \$10 in advance or \$15
at the gate. Vendors craft tables open. Cash
bar. Food available. All Welcome. For
more info call 519-842-5281.

**OXFORD COUNTY ANNUAL COIN
SHOW**
**Woodstock Coin Club Along with
Ingersoll Coin Club**
Sunday, June 29th, 2025
**Woodstock Agricultural Society
Fairgrounds**
875 Nellis St., Woodstock, On N4S 4C6
9:00am to 3:00pm
Admission: \$4.00. Buy, Sell, Trade &
Evaluate. Kid's Table | Free Parking | Food
Booth is open
Contact: John Tryhub, (519) 608-8446 /
john@woodstockgoldnsilver.ca

**TOWNSHIP OF NORWICH
CANADA DAY CELEBRATION**
July 1, Otterville, 1:00 pm
Parade, children's activities in park, beer
garden, music, pie & home decorating
contest, baseball game, JPs BBQ, fireworks.
Visit [https://www.norwich.ca/media/
fcvn1sbl/canada-day-2025-poster-final.pdf](https://www.norwich.ca/media/fcvn1sbl/canada-day-2025-poster-final.pdf)

MOTORCYCLE RALLY
RIDE 4 SUICIDE AWARENESS
July 5 2025
Registration: 9:00-10:45 am
Kickstands Up: 11:00 am
**Start & Finish: 645 Finkle Street,
Woodstock, ON**
\$20/bike registration.
Ride rally to raise awareness for suicide and
its prevention. Victim Services of Oxford
available for support and information. Door
prizes after ride for registrants.

**DELHI & DISTRICT
HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
ANNUAL POT LUCK**
at the Quance Dam Gazebo
Monday July 14th/25. Set up at 5:30 pm
Bring your favourite dish to share, plate
and utensils. Also, a special thank you
to the community & surrounding areas
for supporting our Plant Sale. Much
appreciated.

**KIDS' ACTIVITIES
CRAFTS, GAMES, AND STORIES**
**Every Saturday in July and August, 1-3
p.m.**
The Edison, Vienna, & Area Museum
6209 Plank Road, Vienna, ON
FREE admission, no pre-
registration necessary. Contact
bayhamhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com for
more details.

**THE EDISON, VIENNA, &
AREA MUSEUM SUMMER
PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE**
The Edison, Vienna, & Area Museum
6209 Plank Road, Vienna, ON
July 5: Pioneering
July 12: The Edison Phonograph
July 19: Cars (Coinciding with the Car
Show)
July 26: The Edison Lightbulb
August 2: European Vienna
August 9: Party Time! (Coinciding with the
Ontario Trillium Foundation Recognition
Gala)
August 16: Movies
August 23: Brownie Cameras
August 30: Back to School
FREE admission, no pre-
registration necessary. Contact
bayhamhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com for
more details.

OXFORD GRIEF CARE:
FREE Monthly Grief Support Group
Register at: 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: 6:30PM-8:00PM

INGERSOLL
WHEN: 4th Tuesday of every month
WHERE: Ingersoll Public Library 130

Oxford St., Ingersoll
TIME: 10:30AM –12:00Noon

WOODSTOCK
WHEN: 3rd Saturday of every month
WHERE: Sakura House Hospice 715180
Oxford Rd.4, Woodstock
TIME: 10:30AM-12:00Noon

INTERESTED IN BRIDGE?
**Join us every Friday at the Tillsonburg
Duplicate Bridge Club at 1 p.m. at The
Senior Centre.** Don't have a partner?
Come anyway and we will match you up
with someone. For more information, visit
their Facebook page: TburgBridge.

TILLSONBURG LIONS
The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and
3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their din-
ner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Com-
munity Centre. If you are interested in giv-
ing back to your Community contact Jim at
519 409 0876 for more information.....all
are welcome.

MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING
1st Wednesday of every month
Starting at 7:00 pm
Not a member contact us to join
The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion
Branch 526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeter-
ville, Ontario. For More Information Call,
the Legion 519-443-5588
<https://www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca>

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUN-
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**The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Le-
gion Branch 526**
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tario**
You do not need to be a member to Volun-
teer, 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

WEEKLY CRUISE NIGHTS
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I'm red and white and fly up high,
With a leaf in the middle beneath the sky.
What am I?
Canadian flag

I say "eh" and I'm known to be nice,
I brave the cold and skate on ice. Who am I?
A Canadian

I live in trees and build my home,
With teeth so strong, through wood I roam.
What am I?
Beaver

You'll find me sweet and sticky, too,
From maple trees, I drip for you. What am I?
Maple syrup

I'm a dish of fries, cheese, and gravy,
From Quebec, I'm rich and savoury.
What am I?
Poutine

You'll need me if you want to say,
That you're proud to be Canadian, eh?
What am I?
Maple leaf

WORD SCRAMBLE

Rearrange the letters to spell something pertaining to fireworks.

RALEAI

Answer: Aerial

FYAFT

Answer: Taffy

PET OF THE WEEK 🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾 🐾

EACH PET OF THE WEEK WILL RECEIVE A FREE GOODIE BAG FROM RUFFIN'S TILLSONBURG!



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WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY: 9AM-8PM

SATURDAY: 9AM-5PM

SUNDAY: 10AM-5PM

NOMINATE YOUR PET TO BE PET OF THE WEEK BY EMAILING [INFO@TILLSONBURGPOST.COM](mailto:info@tillsonburgpost.com)

WORD SEARCH
CANADA DAY

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

- CANADA
- OTTAWA
- MAPLE LEAF
- FIREWORKS
- PARADE
- RED AND WHITE
- HOCKEY
- MOUNTIE
- TOQUE
- POUTINE
- MOOSE
- LOONIE
- FLAG
- JULY FIRST
- GREAT NORTH

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Martin's Nursery, 42661 Orangehill Rd Wroxeter, ON N0G 2X0 (1 Conc. North of Wroxeter on Belmore Line)

THANK YOU

What a perfectly, wonderful day on my 80th birthday celebrations! My sincere appreciation and thanks to all who took time to attend from near and far to celebrate with me as you all have influenced me in various ways during my life: my co-workers and friends during my career at TDMH; classmates & forever nurse friends from Brantford General; the close relations with the YA-YA Sisterhood; the fit chicks & rowdy roosters; chicks with sticks golfing buddies; the bridge lunch ladies; my faith community and UCW for preparing & serving food and my ever cherished life-long friends; and my extended family, whom I always enjoy. Most importantly, very special appreciation and love to my children, Kevin, Teresa, Carol, Jake and my sister, Joan. Your love and support are truly gifts to me. Love to all. God Bless.

Jean Currier

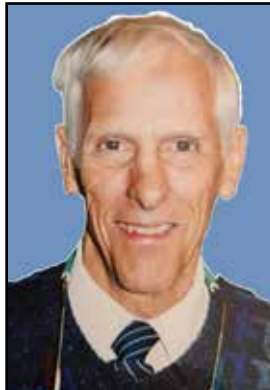
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QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Royal Flush
2. We Didn't Start the Fire
3. Thirteen
4. Florida Panthers
5. An eagle
6. 007
7. Starbursts
8. Watergate Scandal
9. Ripe
10. Copper and Tin

OBITUARY

COGGINS GORDON HOWARD (1929 - 2025)



Gordon Howard Coggins, 96, of Tillsonburg Ontario, died peacefully on Saturday June 21st, 2025.

Gordon was born in Toronto on May 1st 1929, and received his degree in English and History at the University of Toronto Victoria College in 1952. After years of teaching Secondary School around the Burlington area, Gordon joined the newly minted

Brock University in St. Catharines as an associate professor; he went on to complete a PhD, and to head the Liberal Studies program till his retirement in 1994. Gordon was just as busy in retirement; being involved in local politics, church activities, sailing, ballroom dancing, running, curling, building model boats, writing, and spending time with friends and family at his Kawagama Lake cottage.

Gordon was preceded in death by former spouse, Joyce Coggins, his spouse Sandra Coggins, and his third spouse Eveline Coggins. He was also preceded in death by his brother Howard "Kip" Coggins. He is remembered fondly by his brother's children and grandchildren, his sister Arlene Simpson and her family, and by his children David Coggins, Elizabeth Coggins, Lorinda Gorny (Peter), Kenneth Coggins (Stephanie), and grandchildren Danae, Hillary, Laura (Starbuck), Breanna (Hal), Anwyn, Gabriel, Gwendolyn, Jacob, and Benjamin.

A celebration of Gordon's incredible life will be held in August. If you would like more information on the event or would like to share with us your Gordon stories, please email gordoncogginsmemorial@gmail.com. Wareing Cremation Services, 161 Broadway St., Tillsonburg, Ontario has been entrusted with Final Arrangements. Your messages of remembrance and condolence may be shared at wareingcremation.ca

tillsonburgpost.com

OBITUARY

IN LOVING MEMORY



Sean Patrick Perry
October 12, 1965 - June 18, 2025

With heavy hearts we are saddened by Sean's Loss. He will be greatly missed by his wife Maria, his stepsons: Matthew and Michael, his friends and co-workers.

"On behalf of my family and myself, I would like to extend our deepest gratitude to **Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Homes** for their professionalism and exceptional care during our time of loss.

We would also like to sincerely thank the **Police, Fire Department, E.M.S., and Dr. Robert Hiemstra** for their respectful support.

A heartfelt thank you to **Reid & Deleye** for their kind words and compassion.

To my two wonderful sons, **Matthew and Michael**, thank you for your unwavering love and support.

I am also grateful to my Superintendent, **Alex**, and my co-worker, **Fay**, for their kindness and understanding.

Lastly, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to **CUPW, Julie Taylor**, and everyone who has stood by us and offered support during this most difficult time".

Seans Loving Wife,
Maria

Memorial donations to the "Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital Foundation" would be appreciated by the family and can be made by contacting the Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Homes- Burial and Cremation Services Inc., Tillsonburg (519)842-4238, which has been entrusted with arrangements.

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