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Harvard association plans history day

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

There will be an extra dose of history at the Tillsonburg Airport this Saturday as the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association hosts the Military Heritage Open House and Fly Day.

The traditional nostalgia of a fly day with the Second World War-vintage Harvard trainers will be boosted by Second World War reenactors and live period music. The event starts at 9 a.m., and runs to 4 p.m.

Association vice-president John Britton provided a breakdown of the day, saying a Legion colour party ceremony will take place at 10 a.m. Throughout the day, there will be displays by the Tillsonburg Military History Club, the Harvard dive team, military reenactors, a military vehicle display, a singer performing war songs, food trucks, and free popcorn.

"This particular event we started after we decided to start something fresh and new to excite the public to come out," Britton said of the event.

He said the event came about for a couple of reasons. The first began with the donation of memorial benches by the Fallowfield, Hewitt, and Beckham families, who were the founding fathers of the association. That led to the ongoing planning to erect a model Spitfire around a memorial garden with the benches.

"Then we thought, why don't we dedicate one of our fly days to members of the military," Britton said, explaining preliminary plans were to break ground for the memorial garden this Saturday.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2



(ALIYAH HELSDON PHOTO)

WEEKEND CRIMES RESULT IN CHARGES

Police blockaded the area between Baldwin and Prospect Streets, to the west of Broadway on Saturday for an ongoing investigation that ended with a 41-year-old Tillsonburg resident being charged with aggravated assault and arson. Firefighters were also dispatched to Prospect Street during this time.

Man in custody, victim in hospital following assault on Saturday

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Investigation is continuing into an incident on Saturday in the area of Prospect Street that resulted in one individual sustaining life-threatening injuries and another facing aggravated assault and arson charges.

At approximately 4:45 p.m. on July 11, Oxford OPP, along with fire and emergency services, responded to an assault call in the area

of Prospect Street. In connection with the call, an individual was transported to hospital with serious injuries and remains in critical condition.

Oxford OPP issued an alert on Saturday at 5:37 p.m., and again at 8 p.m., asking the public to stay indoors, stay away from the area, and to avoid picking up hitchhikers while the investigation is ongoing. At 10:47, another release indicated "one individual is in police custody without incident." The individual charged is a 41-year-old male from Tillsonburg, who remains in custody pending a bail hearing.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

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Harvard association plans history day

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

However, there were some hold-ups, and that didn't occur.

The other reason for planning the event, which will hopefully remain an annual occurrence, was to attract more people to the monthly fly days held during the warmer months.

"We feel that we're tapping the area," Britton explained. "We've been here 40

years. We're trying to expand the interest, to bring more people out to the day."

It's not that there isn't enough interest – there were 18 flights at the last fly day – but the association wants that to continue. Britton explained that many passengers on the flights are people who come to the airport for breakfast, see the Harvest display, and end up on a plane.

Strong police presence in area of incident on Saturday

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

During the response, emergency services were called to a structure fire at 6 Prospect Street, which was a different residence.

Tillsonburg Deputy Fire Chief Fred Ten Eyck said the Ontario Fire Marshal's Office has been called in to investigate, and couldn't provide further details.

"As the investigation is ongoing, we are unable to provide any comment regarding the origin, cause, or circumstances of the fire at this time," he said.

There were unconfirmed reports on social media that the incident involved a stabbing, but police wouldn't confirm the nature of the assault, as the incident is still under investigation.

Oxford OPP Constable Randi Crawford explained that the warning to shelter in place and not to pick up hitchhikers was issued before the suspect was apprehended.

"Anytime there is an active police investigation, and the suspect has not been apprehended, we issue a public warning out of an abundance of caution," she said.

Police remained on scene Saturday night to interview witnesses and collect evidence. There was a police presence in the area Monday as Crawford said police were looking for anyone with video surveillance of the area, and further seeking witnesses.

She cautioned that people should stay away from active incidents as there were many onlookers in the area Saturday night. Crawford suggested people monitor the incident on social media from their homes.

"Residents are reminded that during active police incidents, they should remain indoors and avoid affected areas unless otherwise directed by emergency personnel," she said.

Anyone with information regarding this incident, including video surveillance of the area, is asked to contact the Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or *OPP (*677) from a mobile device and reference incident number E260984687. Anonymous information can be provided through Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).

Tillsonburg fire department had a busy four days

JEFF HELSDON
Editor

Tillsonburg residents hearing emergency vehicle sirens last week may have thought firefighters were busy, and they were right.

Firefighters had a busy 96 hours from July 5 to 8 with 16 calls. Typically, the department has 1.5 calls per day on average.

Amongst the 16 calls were an industrial fire, a commercial smoke investigation that involved a pre-fire condition, a gaseous hazardous materials call, and several additional emergency calls.

Deputy Fire Chief Fred Ten Eyck said industrial fires have occurred before in this facility. He said there was no damage of note and the building was evacuated while the fire was being contained.

"They have an internal fire brigade that began fire suppression efforts," he said. "We

worked with them to finish this."

Due to other calls at the same time, Tillsonburg requested one truck and firefighters from Courtland Fire Department for this call.

After firefighters left this call, there was a call for a commercial pre-fire situation. Ten Eyck explained there was an electrical shortage in which the breaker didn't trip, and although a fire didn't start, it could have if there hadn't been intervention.

"If it wasn't during the day, and it was at night, it would likely have been a fire," he explained.

Ten Eyck gave credit to the firefighters during this period and to Courtland for the prompt response and support.

"The safety of our community remains our top priority, and we are grateful for the strong partnerships that help us maintain effective emergency response capabilities during periods of increased demand," he said.



WOMEN ON WILSON HELP (CONTRIBUTEDPHOTO)

Earlier this year the Women on Wilson (WOW) partnered with Tillsonburg Senior Centre to provide volunteer assistance at their programs and activities in 2026, and to do some fundraising on their behalf. On June 12, the group hosted Groove to Give, a fundraiser featuring live music, a food truck, dancing, door prizes and more, raising \$1,610 for TSC's ongoing programs and activities. The same amount was also donated to the Upper Deck Youth Centre. Pictured at the cheque presentation to TSC are, from left: Ann Ormerod, Carol Iwaniuk, Ghislaine Boulianne, Corrie Parris, Shari Sonoda, Nicole Christison, Administrator Nancy Puhr-Slingerland, Kate Robson, Gail Anderson, Donna Lonsway, Janice Donoghue and Louise Harriman.

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EDITORIAL

County council pay hikes indicative of spending habits

Last week, in a divided vote, Oxford County council voted in favor of a pay raise for the new council that will be sworn in this coming November.

The bill to taxpayers is about \$40,000 for the increase.

In a report to council, the human resources department stated the increase was necessary to maintain the 60th percentile for council remuneration. In 2022, council "approved targeting the 60th percentile of comparator municipalities for council compensation." This means that the compensation for 40 per cent of municipalities will be more than Oxford County, and 60 per cent will make less. By comparison, choosing the 50th percentile would put Oxford in the middle of the pack.

Notice the word targeting from the report. This means county council has the discretion to turn down the suggestion of maintaining that level, and bringing in a pay increase, which three councillors – Deb Gilvesy, Deb Tait and Jerry Acchione – did in a recorded vote.

In the big scheme of things, \$40,000 isn't a huge amount of money in the county budget, but if county councillors were to make every cent count, they would have all turned down the potential pay increase. Put the same issue in the scope of a small business, and if the business is struggling, the owner wouldn't take a pay increase in most cases. While it's harder to judge

a municipal government's performance against a business, one tool used by the public is how much their taxes went up. With a 16 per cent increase two years ago, and a five per cent increase for 2026, most residents would say the county is not doing well.

Of course, municipal staff and politicians have many tools to assess financial health, and Oxford County is not failing on those indicators, partly due to the tax increases.

To look at it another way, how many members of the public had a 16 per cent pay increase in 2025? Some trimming could have kept this number lower. Remember Oxford County saw CAMI lay off the entire staff during this period.

More telling are the arguments from council members for and against the increase. The 'for' side argued increases are needed to attract quality candidates, while the 'against' side questioned the motivation for the public to run for council, saying it shouldn't be money.

As for the public, our only say in this fall's vote is for the local mayor. In Tillsonburg's case, Gilvesy voted against the increase. Assuming the majority of the public agrees with that stance and opposes the increase, why aren't the public in other municipalities letting their mayors know their sentiments, instead of just complaining about it on social media?



Baltimore oriole.

(ANDREW STANCEK PHOTO)

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Submit your Letter to the Editor here:
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Go with the flow, keep an active body and mind, and be kind



**EVERYONE
HAS A
STORY
TO TELL**

ROBIN KRAFFT

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Mary VanMaele was born in 1939 at the Tillsonburg Hospital, and grew up on a tobacco farm in the Scotland, Ontario area. She shared her recollections of what the work was like before machinery.

"Everything was done by horse," VanMaele said. "The tobacco boats were a structure on sliders, and the horse was led by the primer. You pulled by hand, with your nose to the ground. There was no tying machine, we tied by hand. There was no elevator, you handed it up to the kiln hanger. We'd be done by 6 p.m., if we were lucky. If you were a farmer's daughter, that's what you did. Active body, active mind."

They also kept cows, chickens, and large gardens to be self-sufficient. The value of hard work was a life lesson from her father, but she also learned kindness. Door-to-door sales were common at the time, and he would regularly invite the Watkins man, the Fuller Brush man, and

the Rawley's man for meals. He also took in men who were down on their luck.

"My mom cooked the main meal at noon," VanMaele said. "She was a saint. Dad would say: 'Okay, Mumma, put another plate on the table. We're going to get him fed up and find him a job.' He would bathe them, feed them, and within a week, they'd be out looking for a job. This is the way I was raised. Dad had a great love for people and animals."

This example prompted Mary's many volunteer roles over the years, including cooking for the homeless with her church, and becoming a Girl Guide Captain. She laughed as she told a story about a memorable camping trip.

"It was me and 25 Girl Guides and Rangers," VanMaele said. "There was no hydro. We sat beside the campfire under the stars and sang and played guitars. When we arrived, my first job was to make sure the water cistern was okay. When I lifted the lid, it was full of snakes. I had to get them out of there and decontaminate the water. I wasn't really scared of snakes, but there were so many, and I had to scoop them out with my hands. The girls were watching me in amazement, but little did they know how I was feeling inside."

Mary went on to nurture her own farming family in the Langton/Lyndoch area, and moved to Tillsonburg in 1983, and into the first phase of Hickory Hills in 1988. She is now the second-longest living resident of Hickory Hills, and the legacy of physical activity continues on in her three adult children, five grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

"One of the best highlights of my life was going to France for eight days to watch my granddaughter compete in the Life Saving World Championships (2014)," VanMaele said. "It was a huge honor for her to represent Tillsonburg there. There were the highest waves on record, 30-foot swells, and I honestly thought when she went out into that water that I'd never see her again. I was so relieved when I saw her coming back with the 'rescued' person on the board."

Mary noted that her father's love for animals has also gone down through the generations. She remembers laying beside him in the barn all night as he nursed a colicky horse. Her granddaughter, a vet tech, now operates Black Goat Farm and Sanctuary, home to over 100 animals.

"All my children and grandchildren, they're all the most wonderful human beings," VanMaele said. "I'm so blessed."

Mary has travelled across Ontario with her grandchildren for their sporting events, but it hasn't deterred her from her own physical activities. She enjoys daily aquafit, swimming, water skiing, and downhill skiing. On her 80th birthday, she went parasailing for the first time. She admits that there have been challenges along the way, but she has kept on going.

"There certainly are amazing stories amongst all the hardships," VanMaele said. "You had to go with the flow. We didn't have all these conveniences that people have now. It was all so different. We survived. But all the way through, Tillsonburg was always our town. I'm so blessed to be in this town."

Victorian women's fun in Tillsonburg

MUSEUM MUSINGS

LARISSA MCCABE

Summer student, Annandale National Historic Site

During the Victorian Period (1837 – 1901), an unwritten social code shaped everyday life: ‘The Theory of the Separate Spheres.’ It drew a clear line between men and women, placing men in the “public sphere” of politics, recreation, and economics, while women were expected to remain in the “private sphere” of the home.

Supporters believed that this was more practical, and that it helped people behave better and be good citizens. The idea of separate spheres was often stricter for professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, and wealthy merchants, as well as the upper class.

The separate spheres made it taboo for women to have public social spaces. While men had pubs, taverns, and coffeehouses to mingle in, women were only able to socialize at home events or clubs. However, even this was only an option for upper-class women, who had the space and free time to do so.

Volunteering and charity work were other ways that women maintained a social life. Though fulfilling and community-focused, these activities did not provide the same sense of relaxation and freedom found in spaces like taverns.

Shopping at department stores, such as Heath’s Department Store in Tillsonburg, became a public activity that women could enjoy for fun. When women started shopping in public, it became a heated topic. Some believed that it would corrupt women, or that they would irresponsibly spend their husband’s or father’s money. Others said shopping was safer than other activities, and that it helped women with their duties as mothers and wives. One reason women are still associated with shopping and malls today is that shopping was an early



(ANHS PHOTO)

way for women to mingle and be out in public.

While the idea of the separate spheres was believed to be a good model for a “respectable” society, life is often more complicated than simply following expectations of how to live. Women still got bored, wanted fun, played outside, played sports, and interacted with the opposite gender.

Humans are social creatures who desire connection with one another after all. Despite expectations that women stay at home, Victorian and pre-World War I-era Tillsonburg has a rich history of women’s recreation. Rebecca Beausaert is the expert in this field with her book, “Pursuing Play: Women’s Leisure in Small-Town Ontario, 1870 – 1914.”

Recreational boating emerged as a defining pastime, bringing men and women together in ways that subtly challenged social norms. Photographs kept by Mrs. Jessie Thomas (1858 – 1942) from the 1860 Canoe Club reveal mixed groups paddling and socializing along local waterways. By 1891, the Tillsonburg Boating Club counted 102 members in a town of about 2,000 people, a clear sign of the activity’s broad appeal. Images from the period show men and women

sharing boats and relaxing along the shoreline — some even reclining together in the shade, a detail that might have raised eyebrows in more conservative circles.

Beyond recreation, these outings often carried a hint of romance. Beausaert notes that romance often took place while boating. Local author and amateur historian Bert Newman captured this sentiment with stating that, “On a nice, soft, balmy evening in June under the slivery moon, you could take your sweetie out for a canoe ride. What is more romantic than that?”

With easy access to Otter Creek, Lake Lisgar, and Lake Joseph, boating offered an affordable escape—equal parts relaxing, romantic, and fun!

Today, people have more ways to have fun than they did in the past. There is something for everyone to enjoy. Tillsonburg still offers lots of activities for both residents and visitors. People can go shopping, enjoy time on the water, take part in programs at the Tillsonburg Community Centre, splash at the Lake Lisgar Water Park, or explore the town’s many historic sites. Whether on land or water, Tillsonburg continues to be a place where people can relax, play, and make memories.

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Pratt the new president of municipal administrators' group

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg CAO Kyle Pratt has taken on another leadership role in addition to serving as the town's head administrator.

A long-time member of the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario, Pratt became its president at the annual meeting in June. The association represents municipal professionals across the province, providing professional education and accreditation, leadership development, advocacy and networking opportunities.

For Pratt, the position is significant as his first municipal job in July 2007 was through an AMCTO municipal intern program in the County of Hastings.

"It's full circle as I started as an intern in Hastings, and now I'm the president," he said.

Pratt served as a board member for one term in 2010-2011, and didn't seek renewal. He returned to the board in 2021 after starting as CAO in Tillsonburg in 2020. Last year, he was elected as vice-president, and became president this year.

"Serving as AMCTO president is a great privilege, and it is an honour," he said of the new role.

Pratt has attended the annual conference most years since starting his first position.

"It's something I strive to go to every year since I'm in municipal government," he said. "I don't make it every year."

The AMCTO conference is different from other municipal leadership conventions like AMO and ROMA, where not only municipal leaders attend but also provincial cabinet ministers and often the premier. Instead, the AMCTO gathering focuses on education and networking. There are often municipal legal updates at the conference, as well as sessions on strategic planning.

As president, Pratt will:

- Chair the board and help set the association's strategic direction.
- Represent AMCTO with municipal, provincial, and sector partners.
- Serve as an ambassador for municipal excellence and professional development.
- Serve as the primary spokesperson for the association during interviews with media, ministry delegations, meetings with provincial representatives, and standing committee hearings.
- Support initiatives that strengthen governance, leadership, and service delivery across Ontario municipalities.



Kyle Pratt.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

- Help ensure the association responds to the evolving needs of local governments.

Pratt explains that the new role won't take away from his position with the town, and that AMCTO has staff to handle much of the heavy lifting.

"This will be a volunteer position, over and above my position as CAO with the town," he said.

In fact, he believes his involvement with the association will benefit the town. He learned through AMCTO about the municipality of Grey Highlands being the first to develop a municipal app.

"We talked about that with council, and we were one of the first municipalities in Ontario to have a municipal service app," he said.

Expanding on that, he said being president helps raise Tillsonburg's profile and gives him broader experience. He will be one of the first to learn about grant opportunities and legislative changes, and will have delegations with cabinet ministers at AMO (in addition to those the town arranges).

"The role helps facilitate stronger relationships with municipal leaders, provincial representatives, and sector experts, which can lead to partnerships, knowledge sharing, and access to resources that may not otherwise be available," Pratt said.

Asked about the big issues in the coming year as president, Pratt answered, "We're bringing on a new strategic plan, so we'll get to carry that forward and look forward to meetings with ministry officials on key legislation like the Municipal Act and Municipal Election Act."

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Helsdon family celebrates father/daughter POMAC outdoor writing awards 'double'

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

It's always an honour for Tillsonburg Post editor and long-time outdoor writer Jeff Helsdon to find his name among the Professional Outdoor Media Association of Canada (POMAC) award winners.

But this year's list provided elevated enjoyment. Not only did he receive third-place recognition in the Other Feature category for a piece on the Lamprey Control Program in the Great Lakes that ran in the Post, Helsdon was thrilled to see daughter Abigail's name among the Delta-Waterfowl Future of Hunting in Canada Award winners, also third for her 'Being on a Hunting TV Show is a Dream Come True.'

"It was quite surprising in a great way," he said.

Helsdon has not only shared his love of the outdoors through writing and photography, he included, encouraged and supported wife Karen and their three children in that passion.

"Abigail's the one it really stuck with," Jeff reported.

She jokes she's been fishing 'since she was six months old,' trailing her father around in the woods as soon as it was legal. She earned her apprentice licence at the age of 12, and has been hunting since, both with him and on her own.

"We do lots of things together, but that's

one of my favourites," says Abigail, who enjoys both the pursuit and ultimately, supplementing her diet with truly free-range options. "It's always nice to have meat in the freezer."

A Glendale graduate who enjoyed soccer and basketball, she is currently studying respiratory therapy at North Bay's Canadore College. Abigail began writing with her father's support and guidance, helping her in the transition from academics to articles. He also encouraged her to join POMAC, accessing its writing mentorship program. A member since 2024, Abigail considers herself fortunate to have been paired up with Ken Bailey, a notable outdoor writer and author in his own right.

"It's been quite helpful," says Abigail, who sends drafts along to Bailey for valuable feedback. "He lets me know if I'm headed in the right direction."

The mentoring program puts bright, young writers in touch with experienced members says POMAC President Timothy Fowler, an opportunity that can also provide networking and access to editors.

"It's great to write a story, but you have to sell it somewhere," said Fowler. "For a young writer trying to get started, POMAC is a tremendous opportunity."

Abigail has written 'a half-dozen' stories, and while keeping her expectations modest, submitted to the annual awards competition. 'Being on a Hunting Show'



(ALIYAH HELSDON PHOTO)

Jeff and Abby Helsdon recently both won separate awards from the Professional Outdoor Media Association of Canada.

detailed a shared youth grouse hunt near Kapuskasing that aired on Angler and Hunter TV, striking a chord with the judges.

"A little bit unexpected, I guess," she admitted of an award made extra special in conjunction with her father's.

Fowler also commented on the father-daughter award combination.

"Isn't that neat?" he exclaimed. "I'm not saying it hasn't happened before, but I'm not aware of it."

"It's a great article but that interest is multiplied because they've both won awards."

Outdoorspeople are familiar with the term 'bragging rights'. For example, should Karen Helsdon have harvested a larger black bear than her husband, it might be a thing he is occasionally reminded of.

"She did," Abigail laughed. "And when it comes up in conversation, it's not bad to humble him a little bit."

Technically, their awards are equal in position, but Abigail could be excused for giving her father a little good-natured 'chirping.'

"I may have," she laughed. "But didn't have too much to stand on because he also got third place and has got a lot more awards than I do. I've been in his office and

he has a stack - and that's just plaques, not certificates."

Awards aside, Jeff's bigger reward may be the time shared and memories made with a daughter who has chosen to follow in his footsteps, on the water, in the woods and in front of a computer. Having watched her grow up while fishing together and shared in her first Eastern Wild Turkey harvest with a 'double' in Elgin County when she was 15, Helsdon was more than pleased to mutually celebrate this year's father/daughter awards pairing, admittedly enjoying one more than the other.

"Hers, for sure," said Jeff, encouraging his daughter to 'stick with it.'

She plans on just that, around ongoing studies.

"The plan is to continue," Abigail said. "Keep going, keep writing, keep hunting and try and pass that on to future generations."

And if the time comes when, for example, Jeff receives a third-place award and she a first, Abigail is both ready to remind her dad of the fact, while confident he'll celebrate it too.

"He's supportive of everything I do," she concluded. "And when I do well, he's right there."



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ROBIN KRAFFT

Post Correspondent

National Drowning Prevention Week, from July 19 - 25, is an opportunity to share a message that can save lives.

The theme for this year is "Prepare to be Water Smart" and the goal is to reduce the number of tragic water fatalities across the country. The peak summer months are upon us, and The Lifesaving Society is indicating that education, proper use of PFDs, building swimming skills, and making responsible choices when spending time near, in, or on the water can make a difference. The Town of Tillsonburg is offering programs throughout the week to provide essential skills and education to keep your family safe this summer.

"Our Aquatics Supervisor Melanie Corbett and her team have put together a week full of interactive activities," said Julie Dawley, Recreation Programs & Services Manager. "Each day engages families while reinforcing important water safety messages. The activities will also include a themed take-home handout that participants can use to continue learning at home. It is our hope that the activities will provide opportunities for meaningful conversations with patrons and help reinforce important drowning prevention messages in an engaging way."

National Drowning Prevention Week 2026 – Prepare!

Monday, July 20 – Lifejackets

Participants will learn the importance of wearing a properly fitted lifejacket by finding one that fits them correctly, and challenging themselves to put it on in 10 seconds or less. Staff will be available to demonstrate proper fitting techniques and explain when lifejackets should be worn. A lifejacket safety handout will be available for families to take home.

Tuesday, July 21 – Sun Safety

Children will dress a manikin with all of the items needed to stay safe in the sun, including a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and a shirt. This hands-on activity will encourage conversations about protecting yourself from UV rays while spending time at the pool or beach. Families will receive a sun safety handout with additional tips.

Wednesday, July 22 – First Aid Kits

Participants will learn what essential items belong in a basic first aid kit, and why each item is important. They will then have the opportunity to pack a sample first aid kit themselves, reinforcing preparedness for water-related and everyday emergencies. A first aid kit checklist will be provided as a take-home resource.

Thursday, July 23 – Buddy the Lifeguard Dog Day

Families can stop by to meet Buddy and have their picture taken. This activity provides a fun opportunity to engage children while staff promote key water safety messages, including active supervision and backyard pool safety. Participants will receive a backyard pool safety handout.

Friday, July 24 – Colouring Contest

Participants can complete a water safety-themed colouring page throughout the day. The Water Smart Contest is a water safety colouring and creative contest for children and youth in three age groups: 5 and under, 6–10, and 11–15. A winner in the under-five category will be selected, and awarded locally. For the 6–10 and 11–15 categories, we will select a local winner, and those winning entries are submitted to the Lifesaving Society's Provincial Colouring Contest. One winner will be chosen for each category and receive a Water Smart prize pack.

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COMMUNITY UPDATE

Notices

Take the 2027 Budget Survey!

No matter where you live in Oxford County, the 2027 Budget survey is your chance to have a say on which services should be a priority next year.

Answers and comments from the survey let us know how well municipal services are understood, how they are valued, and which ones are a priority for residents. The survey takes approximately 10 minutes to complete. It closes on August 31, 2026.

Visit www.tillsonburg.ca/budgetsurvey for more information



Bid Opportunities

RFP 2026-010
Consulting Services for Stormwater Management Master Plan
Submission Deadline: July 28, 2026 at 2:00 PM

RFT 2026-004
Construction of Sidewalk Connectivity
Submission Deadline: July 27, 2026 at 2:00 PM

Visit tillsonburg.bidsandtenders.ca.



Before You Dive In...

A pool can be a great way to enjoy your backyard during the warmer months. Before you start your project, remember that pools are required to be properly enclosed with a fence to help keep your property safe and compliant with Town regulations.

For detailed information on requirements visit: www.tillsonburg.ca/planyourproject.

Potter's Gate Land Surplusing Referred back to Town Staff

At its July 13, 2026 meeting, Tillsonburg Council referred a report regarding the potential declaration of a portion of municipally owned land on West Town Line, within the Potter's Gate subdivision, back to staff for more investigations regarding the best location for the playground and the residential lot to be sold. Staff will report back to Council at a future meeting on the best way to proceed with selling a portion of the property for future residential development, while retaining a portion for a future neighbourhood playground to serve the growing community.



Sportsfield Project Public Information Centre Review Concepts and Share Your Feedback

The Town of Tillsonburg invites residents to attend the first Public Information Centre (PIC) for the Sportsfield Project. Review concept plans for the Annandale Ball Diamonds and Mall Road sites, ask questions, and share your feedback to help inform future planning. Additional PICs will be held on August 13 and September 9.

Learn more at www.tillsonburg.ca/SportsfieldProject.

Date: Thursday, July 23, 2026

Time: 4:30 PM – 6:30 PM

Location: Marwood Lounge, Tillsonburg Community Centre



Culture Corner

Join the Herd! Volunteer for Party 'Til the Cows Come Home

Help make our celebration of Oxford County's agricultural heritage a success on Saturday, August 8! Volunteers are needed to assist with games, crafts, food service, and family activities.

Flexible shifts available: 9:30 AM – 12:00 PM or 12:00 PM – 2:30 PM (or stay for both!). High school students can earn community service hours.

Sign up: <https://forms.office.com/r/qmdtAYxxLJ>

519-842-2294 | museuminfo@tillsonburg.ca

We'd love to have you on the team!



Summer Drop-In Programming: Let's Celebrate!

Discover how people around the world celebrate through stories, crafts, music, games, and hands-on activities! Each day, we'll explore different cultural traditions and special occasions while having fun and getting creative.

July 14-17 | \$10 per visit

Ages 3-7: 10:00-11:00 AM

Ages 8-12: 1:00-3:00 PM



Active Living & Learning Opportunities

Make water safety a priority this summer.

Join us at Lake Lisgar Waterpark for National Drowning Prevention Week from July 20 - 24 and take part in our Activity Passport – fun, educational, and a chance to win a prize!

Activities will run Monday to Friday from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM, depending on attendance and demand. Activity Passport pickup begins at 11:00 AM on Saturday, July 18.

Learn more at www.tillsonburg.ca.



SPORTS

Jager relieves previous ‘Pain-ful’ experience with 2026 Ontario Men’s Amateur title

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

Jager Pain had a full-circle moment at the 104th Ontario Men’s Amateur Thursday, July 9 at the Otter Creek Golf Club (OCGC).

Two years ago, at the Junior Boys event said OCGC Director of Golf Taylor declercq, Pain had seen a potential victory fade away on the 18th hole. This year, heading into the final hole with a lead, he executed a flawless tee shot, closing out a solid score of 69 for the day on the green to lock up a two-stroke victory over Gabriel Mainella.

“It was nice for our staff to see him get his redemption,” said declercq of a humble and talented 2026 champion, whose home club is listed as the Birdwood Golf Course.

One hundred and fifty-six of province’s top male golfers teed off Monday at OCGC, on the edge of Otterville. Following two 18-hole rounds, the top 60-plus ties (67) made the cut for the final two days. Pain shot rounds of 69, 68, 76 and 69 en route to the title, for a six-under-par total of 282. Mainella (Oviinbyrd Golf Club) was in second place with a four-under-par 284 on rounds of 73, 72, 68 and 71. Matteo Rocco (70, 73, 71, 71, Weston Golf & Country Club) and Jackson Murphy (70, 71, 71, 73, Cataraqui Golf & Country Club) tied for third, and Josh DiCarlo (74, 74, 71, 67, Pointe West Golf Club) and Cam Burke (73, 74, 71, 68, Golf Ontario Public Player) tied for fifth with identical two-under-par scores of 286.

Avery Mahoney (even-par 288, Hamilton Golf & Country Club) and Charles Fitzsimmons (288, Beacon Hall Golf Club) tied in seventh; and Spencer Shropshire (289, Hawk Ridge Golf Club) and Eddie Gu (289, Laurel Oak Country Club) rounded the top-10 finishers with a ninth-place tie. The OVGC was represented by

Andrew Gradish, who won a 36-hole in-house competition for the host exemption berth.

“I had to play well to earn the spot,” said Gradish, whose two-day score was not among his better totals, leaving him well above the cut line. “I was not last,” he laughed, not thrilled with his performance, but honoured and privileged to represent not only the club, but golfers in the area. “It was a great experience.”

Gradish had competed at a couple of Mid-Am (25-plus) tour events previously, but found the 156-member field at the Ontario Amateur to be at a different level.

“The competition was second-to-none,” he said, noting a field featuring some of Ontario’s best golfers, also includes many of Canada’s best amateur golfers.

“I kind of know my place,” he laughed. “It’s a different game - these young guys play with no fear.”

“It was just a really cool experience to be able to play in your backyard.”

The average age of the field was low said declercq, noting a lot of the golfers are either on, or heading to, NCAA scholarships south of the border.

“These guys are good,” he said, mentioning one Pain shot in particular, a five-wood off the number four tee on the final day, a hole playing as a 300-yard par four.

“He was over the back of the green,” declercq marvelled, adding the course surrendered three holes-in-one during the tournament, two on the fourth hole, another single on the par three seventh.

“Crazy stuff,” said declercq, who came to his present position after beginning his career at The Bridges at Tillsonburg.

Superintendent Randy Booker had the course in great shape declercq credited, playing a shade over 7,000 yards for The Amateur. Otter Creek can be described as two courses in one the Director



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Otter Creek Golf Club Director of Golf Taylor declercq enjoyed the competitive level and smooth operation of the 104th Men’s Amateur hosted Monday, July 6-Thursday, July 9.

of Golf continued, opening with four links-style holes, giving way to wooded valleys and tree-lined fairways before closing out with another introduction to fescue.

“It’s a unique course,” he said. “It challenges your whole game. You can’t relax, you have to control your ball.”

Hosting the Ontario Men’s Amateur is a significant undertaking, however there is also a measure of pride and prestige involved. declercq issued thanks for a 55-member cadre of volunteers from the area who helped the event run smoothly, as well as sponsorship from Sobey’s, Zehrs and Sysco Southwestern Ontario.

“The event couldn’t have gone any better,” he concluded. “I don’t imagine it will be too long before we have something else like this.”

Tillsonburg FC women getting stronger as LAWSL season progresses

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

The Tillsonburg FC women’s soccer team has 24 players on its roster, 11 on the field at a time and multiple generations of support behind it.

“I’m glad I can give them what I had growing up,” said coach Molson Page following a 2-1 London and Area Womens Soccer League (LAWSL) Third Division Cup victory over London Curinga Titans Monday, July 6 at the Tillsonburg Minor Soccer Park.

As the Belgian men’s national team, no doubt with the help of the soccer gods, restored some measure of sanity to the 2026 World Cup, Tillsonburg was also taking care of business at home to the visiting Titans.

Olivia Moore scored what would stand as the second-half game-winner on a through ball down the left wing from Alex

Couto, breaking into the clear with a burst of speed. Moore fired a high, hard shot that went over the Curinga goalie, under the bar and into the back of the net for her second goal of the season.

“I intended on crossing it,” admitted Moore, “but I got a good angle on it and it went in.”

“A goal’s a goal,” interjected FC midfielder and team captain Kelsey Sanderson.

Tillsonburg’s Kherington Spanjers had opened scoring in the first half, her ninth LAWSL marker of the season.

“Through ball,” she recalled, “deked around the goalie.”

“Bottom corner,” added Sanderson. “Beautiful goal.”

Tillsonburg keeper Elysse Davis, having concluded her high school career with a much-wanted goal, was happily back in her natural environment to help lock up the victory. Curinga did pull within one on a great shot, but Davis kept

it clean from there, surviving a couple of heavy collisions, one on a corner, and in addition, sliding to clear a lead pass from an onrushing attacker.

“I just got the ball,” she said. “That never happens - I’m normally run over.”

“There was a few tough ones in the box,” she added. “But I think we played really good as a team. Tied 3-3 last time, and we came back stronger.”

Tillsonburg sat fifth in the 10-team LAWSL Division 3 loop as of Friday, July 10, three wins, two ties and two losses good for 11 points. The team is trending in the right direction after a tough start says Davis.

“I’m very excited to see what the rest of the season brings.”

Page is happy to work with ‘an excellent group’, some of whom he has coached since they were ten years old.

“I still think of them as little kids running around on the field,” he admitted.

His own experience, as a person who loves the game and is willing to coach, respects the efforts others, including George Ambrus, put in on his behalf, or Page credits, as Scott Gooding did for a lot of his current players. This year’s expanded roster numbers represent ‘a good problem’ to have, needing to rotate players in and out of the game-day lineup is much better than struggling to field a team. Beyond an influx of Glendale Gemini graduates, Page looks to strong numbers in Tillsonburg Minor Soccer Club U15 program.

“We want to be sure they have a women’s program to go into.”

Sanderson experienced that progression, looking up to leaders before her including Kayla Smith, Mariah Gooding and Jen Pathy, a role she now strives to fill as a 27-year-old Tillsonburg FC veteran.

“I do feel old on this team, I



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Tillsonburg’s Gabby Ash (left) crosses the ball toward the Curinga goal.

do,” she laughed.

More seriously, she also expressed her appreciation for Page, coach Gooding and Alechia Matos, all of whom played a role in keeping an in-town

competitive women’s option available.

“The losses are tough, the wins are fun, but overall, it’s just a good time,” Sanderson concluded.

Hard luck Red Sox drop two games over the weekend

GRAHAM NICKERSON

Post Contributor

Under threatening dark grey skies, the Tillsonburg Red Sox took on the Port Dover Clippers in a rematch Friday night, looking for retribution from their blowout loss last week. What followed was the most thrilling game of ball played yet this season and proved that all may be fair in love and war, but not in baseball.

Young right-hander Paxton Bale received the starting assignment once again for Tillsonburg. With each outing this season Bale has improved on his command and velocity making him one of the team's steadiest arms. After facing the minimum in the first, Bale found himself surrounded by Clippers in a two out jam. An error by Iron Ring Rachar, a walk and a hit-by-pitch loaded the sacks, but a slow curve got the nine-hole hitter to fly out to left to end the inning.

As so often is the case this year, Tillsonburg struck early with a run in the first. Owen West knocked a two-out single then swiped second to put himself into scoring position. Bubba DeClark slapped his offering up the middle to score the hustling West. Jim Davis looked to keep the inning going with a single to center field, but lead runner DeClark was cut down at third by the relay throw. The Red Sox bench was in an uproar over the out call as Bubba's slide avoided the swipe tag to get his hand in safely, but the base umpire was out of position to make the correct judgement.

The missed call set off a series of bad luck and misfortunate events for the Red Sox. In their very next time at bat, Landon Hepditch led off with a single, then after a strike out, Jeff Prouse reached on a base hit. The momentum was cut short when Laird McPherson grounded into an inning-ending double play.

Port Dover took the lead in the third when the Lake Siders strung together a two-out rally of their own on four hits and a walk. The blow that scored the go-ahead run was a high pop up behind the pitcher's mound that ate up all five infielders and dropped in untouched.

Bale cruised through the fourth then pulled a rabbit from his hat to get out of a bases loaded jam in the fifth, striking out Adam Benko to end the frame.

The rally-killing double-play struck again in the Tillsonburg fifth after Ky Miners led off with an opposite field hit. Prouse smacked a hard hit ball but it was right back to the pitcher, who turned the trick for two outs. Red Scaman struck out on three pitches to send the Sox back to the field.

Bale's day was done after five innings of five-hit ball, three strike-outs and two runs, however the youngster issued five free passes along the way. Prouse took the mound in the sixth and held Dover hitless over the next two innings. In his younger days, Prouse was recruited to pitch in a semi-professional league in Puerto Rico. The Red Sox veteran proved that he's lost none of the zip that has sustained his illustrious baseball career.

In their last chance at bat, Davis led off with a single and after a fly

TILLSONBURG	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
RACHAR, SS	2	0	0	0	2	2
VITIAS, DH	3	0	1	0	0	0
WEST, C	3	1	1	5	2	0
DECLARK, 1B	3	0	1	6	0	0
DAVIS, 3B	3	0	2	1	1	0
HEPDITCH, 2B	3	0	1	1	0	0
MINERS, LF, CF	3	0	2	5	0	0
PROUSE, CF, P	3	0	1	1	0	0
MCPHERSON, EH	1	0	0	0	0	0
*SCAMAN, RF	1	0	0	1	0	0
THIESSEN, RF, LF	2	0	1	0	0	0
TOTALS *Pinch Hitter	27	1	10	21	5	2

Summary: **ER**, Pt. Dover 2, Tillsonburg 1; **LOB**, Tillsonburg 6, Pt. Dover 10; **RBI**, Ritchie, Andreello, DeClark; **W**, Wilson; **L**, Bale; **BB**, Wilson (1), Bale (5); **K**, Wilson (4), Bale (3), Prouse (3);**Time**, 1:45

out, Ky Miners earned his second hit of the day on an opposite field poke job. With runners at first and second and just one out, Prouse dug into the right-handed batter's box looking to tie, if not win, the contest for the home club. Jack Wilson, who had started the game for Dover, was still on the mound though showing signs of tiring. The right hander laid in a curve that Prouse rolled over to the short stop and was turned for the third Dover double killing of the game. This one being the knockout blow to end Tillsonburg's hopes for victory.

Port Dover.....002 000 0 – 2 5 0

Tillsonburg.....100 000 0 – 1 10 2

A mercy loss to Simcoe Juniors

The slumping Red Sox arrived at Simcoe's Owen Street Grounds Sunday afternoon still licking their wounds inflicted by Port Dover in their 2-1 heartbreaking loss on Friday. Standing in their way to some sort of reprieve from their losing streak was the formidable Simcoe Juniors. It should be noted that although the baby-facers wear Simcoe across their jerseys, they represent the Norfolk Seat in name only with over half their lineup residing in Tillsonburg.

Tim Thiessen got the call to start for the Red Sox. The outing being somewhat of a live tryout for the third starter's spot in the rotation. News had broke just before first pitch that long time Red Sox pitcher and all-around hitter Skip King announced he was hanging up his cleats for the season. King had not been in the lineup since the end of May.

The Juniors leaped out to a 3-0 lead by the close of the second

TILLSONBURG	AB	R	H	PO	A	E
RACHAR, SS	2	1	1	2	0	1
VERHOEVE, 3B	2	0	1	1	0	1
VITIAS, C	2	0	1	3	1	0
WEST, LF, CF	2	0	0	1	0	0
MORRIS, 1B	2	0	0	2	0	1
MINERS, CF, P	2	0	1	1	0	0
THIESSEN, P, LF	2	0	0	2	0	0
SCAMAN, RF	2	0	0	1	0	0
POLFLIET, EH, LF	2	0	1	1	0	0
KLASSEN, 2B	2	0	0	0	2	1
TOTALS	20	1	5	14	3	4

Summary: **ER**, Tillsonburg 7, Simcoe; **LOB**, Tillsonburg 5, Simcoe 7; **3B**, Shortt; **RBI**, Vitias, Van Rybroeck, Shortt, Al. Auld (2), Lamb, Powell, Murphy, Topp (2); **W**, Lamb; **L**, Thiessen; **BB**, Thiessen (2), Miners (2); **K**, Miners (2), Lamb (3), Al. Auld (2);**Time**, 1:46

inning with all their runs being unearned. The Sox infield seems to cut off their nose to spite their face whenever handed a decent pitching performance. All four infielders behind Theissen got in on the misdeeds sharing an error a piece.

Tillsonburg's lone run came in the third during a two-out rally that began with Rachar walking. Rob Verhoeve then singled, sending Rachar to third. Vitias squibbed a swinging bunt up the third base line making it safely to first with a head-long slide. The excitement of the play was settling when third baseman Jaryn Shortt inspected the ball and discovered a gash on the horse hide resulting from the swing. Forgetting to call time, Shortt rolled the tarnished ball towards the Simcoe dugout looking to make an exchange for a fresh one. The play was still live however and Rachar came scampering home while confusion reigned over the grey sweated Juniors.

Thiessen lasted into the fourth, but after walking the lead-off batter was lifted for left hander Ky Miners. The fleet-footed featherweights ran wild on catcher Jordan Vitias, swiping seven bases without being caught once en route to three runs in the fourth, and five runs in the fifth.

The Juniors' speed, combined with 10 hits and five defensive errors, slowly but surely ran the score up for the home team and before Tillsonburg could catch their collective breath the umpire cried "Mercy!" and the visitors were put out of their misery once more.

Tillsonburg has a much-needed practice Friday night then returns to ground zero (Simcoe) Sunday for a contest with the Seniors.

Tillsonburg.....001 00 – 1 5 5

Simcoe.....210 34 – 11 10 0

Hawks, Jays, only undefeated slo-pitch teams



DAVE WEAVER

Post Columnist

EYE
ON
SLO-
PITCH

The birds are ruling the roost as the 1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks in Men's Division 1 and the Ladies' Division Cooks Concrete Jays are the only defeated teams in Tillsonburg Slo-Pitch League.

Ladies' Division

Foldens Machine Works had a good week, edging out a short-handed Simmonds Mortgages squad

on the Monday, and earning a tie with Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry in their second game, moving into second place. Simmonds split their week with a mercy win over Resting Pitch Face. Sunspace mercied Queen Bees to sit solidly in fourth, but are just three points out of third. The Wildcats split games with Queen Bees and Cooks Concrete Jays. Cooks shut out Resting to round out the week's action.

Cooks Concrete Jays-12, Resting Pitch Face-0

Cooks-Denise Pelletier 3-3; Brandi Cook 3-3.

Resting-Martina McCallum 3-3; Carmen Hancock 3-3.

Game ynopsis-Mayra Baelde reached and scored in three plate appearances for the winners.

Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry-17, Queen Bees-3

Sunspace-Gemma Ladosz 3-3; Tammy Griswold 4-4.

Queen Bees-Carolyn Vanlagen 2-2; Jayden Hanniman 2-3.

Game Synopsis-Gemma Ladosz, Tammy Gris-

wold and Claire Barker all scored three runs for the winners.

Foldens Machine Works-10, Simmonds Mortgages-8

Foldens-Mackenzie Brackenbury 3-3; Andrea Deblaire 3-3.

Simmonds-Tena Bueckert 4-5; Shannon Oneill 4-5.

Game Synopsis-Mandi Vickers led Foldens with a single, triple and three runs driven in, Roxy Dekeyser made some key plays in right field.

Foldens Machine Works-10, Sunspace/Bill Klyn Carpentry-10

Sunspace- Kim Hurd 4-4; Amanda Stubbs 4-4.

Foldens-Mackenzie Brackenbury 4-4; Amber Woolgar 4-4.

Game Synopsis-Sunspace rallied with four in the seventh to earn the tie, Nicole Morgan 's run scoring a bases-loaded triple was the big blow.

Wildcats-20, Queen Bees-8

Wildcats-Ling Wong 4-4; Bridgette Homenuik 3-3.

Queen-Jayden Hanniman 3-4; Carolyn Vanlagen 2-3

Game Synopsis-Christine Phillips and Ling Wong each doubled and scored three runs for the winners.

Cooks Concrete Jays-19, Wildcats-2

Cooks-Deanna Laemers 3-4 Hilary Stoop 3-3.

Wildcats-Christine Phillips 2-2; Jordan Triska 2-2.

Game Synopsis-Denise Pelletier and Hillary Stoop each scored three runs for Cooks.

Simmonds Mortgages-20, Resting Pitch Face-7

Simmonds-Shannon Oneill 4-4; Connie White 3-3.

Resting-Sara Sohm 3-3; Carmen Hancock 2-2.

Game Synopsis-Simmonds broke open a close game, scoring 11 over their final two at-bats. Shannon Oneill, Jackie Wood-Van Santen and Brooklyn

CONTINUED TO PAGE 11

Hawks, Jays, only undefeated slo-pitch teams

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Carroll each reached and scored in both innings.

Men's Division 1

It was a sparse slate of action in the division after Thursday 's games were canceled due to torrential showers. 1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks mercied the Cobra Chickens and Hit N Run beat the Chickens by six.

Hit N Run-16, Cobra Chickens-10

Hit N Run-Peter Wolf 2-2; Martin Klassen 2-3, 2HR; Peter Klassen

MEN'S DIVISION 1	W	L	T	PTS
1,2 SEAL INSULATION HAWKS	12	0	0	24
THE MILL	6	5	0	12
HIT N RUN	6	7	0	12
LEESWOOD CONSTRUCTION DIRTY MITTS	5	6	1	11
COBRA CHICKENS	5	8	0	10
CUBS	4	6	1	9
SUNSPACE/BILL KLYN CARPENTRY	3	9	0	6

MEN'S DIVISION 2	W	L	T	PTS
PELICANS	12	1	0	24
STRIKE FORCE	8	4	0	16
AT MY PLAYGROUND/IQT LOGISTICS	7	3	1	15
ALL SEASONS ESTATE CARE BANDITS	7	4	1	15
MAVERICKS	7	5	1	14
STICKY BANDITS	6	6	0	12
UNDERHILL FARM SUPPLY	3	8	1	7
PAPA'S AUTO SPA	3	9	1	7
QUACKHEADS	3	9	0	6
DESIGNATED DRINKERS	3	10	0	6

MEN'S DIVISION 3	W	L	T	PTS
SLUGGERS	8	2	1	17
SANDY SHORE BREW JAYS	8	3	0	16
JOHN BEERE	7	5	1	15
BEER BOMBERS	5	6	1	11
NAPA/COWARD'S PHARMACY MAULERS	5	7	0	10
NAPA/COWARD'S PHARMACY MAULERS	3	10	1	7
BIRD'S GOLF	3	6	0	6

HR; Jacob Klassen HR; Johnny Unger HR; Daniel Unger HR.

Cobra-Wyatt Blatz 3-4, HR; Marcus Peters 2-3, 2HR; Nathan Peters HR; Caleb Reimer HR.

Game Synopsis-Peter Klassen homered, doubled and drove in four for Hit N Run.

1,2 Seal Insulation Hawks-23, Cobra Chickens-9

Hawks-Ben Bueckert 5-6; Peter Epp 6-6, 2HR; Evan Bueckert 3HR.

Cobra-Nathan Froese 3-3; Jesse Froese 4-4, HR; Caleb Reimer HR.

Game Synopsis-Despite fielding just nine, Hawks had no problem in this one with Evan Bueckert hit a pair of three-run shots and a solo for the winners.

Men's Division 2

All Seasons Estate Care Bandits scored late to defeat the Quackheads. The first-place Pelicans won a close one over Underhill Farm Supply to remain with just one blemish on their record. A big matchup, with a surging AMP squad, was rained out the night before. Mavericks went two games above the .500 mark with a mercy of Designated Drinkers. Strike Force collected the other victory, a mercy win over Papa's Auto Spa.

All Seasons Estate Care Bandits-20, Quackheads-14

Bandits-Benny Neufeld 5-5; Andrew Teichroeb 5-5; Jake Sawatsky HR; Nicholas Klassen HR.

Quackheads-Rob Wong 3-4; Cody Long 4-4.

Game Synopsis-The Bandits scored nine over their final two at-bats, Luke and Benny Neufeld and Caleb Dyck each doubled and scored in both innings.

Pelicans-12, Underhill Farm Supply-9

Pelicans-T.J.Neville 4-4; Brandon Travers 2-3.

Underhill-Ty Cadotte 4-4; Stephen Schafer 3-4; Troy Sebok HR; Curtis Chambers 2HR.

Game Synopsis-TJ Neville scored three runs for Pelicans, Ryan

MEN'S DIVISION 4	W	L	T	PTS
N.I.M.	17	1	0	34
BRICKHOUSE BOYS	9	4	0	18
R.L.P. MELANIE LUKSYS	7	10	2	16
DIAMOND KINGS	6	11	0	12
SMOKIN BASES	6	12	0	12
TORNADOES	4	14	1	9

LADIES	W	L	T	PTS
COOKS CONCRETE JAYS	16	0	0	32
FOLDENS MACHINE WORKS	11	4	1	23
SIMMONDS MORTGAGES	11	4	0	22
SUNSPACE/BILL KLYN CARPENTRY	9	6	1	19
RESTING PITCH FACE	5	12	0	10
WILDCATS	2	13	0	4
QUEEN BEES	0	15	0	0

Marques and Andrew Garnham each hit a triple.

Mavericks-17, Designated Drinkers-2

Mavericks-Ryan Landry 4-4; Doug Falkins 4-4.

Drinkers-Kevin Postma 2-3; Gavin Haggith 2-3.

Game Synopsis-Mavericks took advantage of a Drinkers squad that were two players short, Ryan Landry reached and scored four runs for the winners.

Strike Force-19, Papa's Auto Spa-5

Strike-Tony Klassen 4-4; Jake Enns 3-3.

Papa's-Jesee Legg 3-3; Shawn Brooks 3-4.

Game Synopsis-Johnny Klassen led Strike Force with five runs batted in and four runs.

Men's Division 3

NAPA/Coward's Pharmacy Maulers won a pair of games over Wolfpack. John Beere almost upset the first-place Sluggers squad, but instead the game ended up in a tie.

NAPA/Coward's Pharmacy Maulers 25, Wolfpack-10

NAPA-Jeff McKay 4-4; Damion Bancroft 4-4; Ryland Vandergulick HR.

Wolfpack-Ethan Diechert 3-3; Tyler Marques 2-3; Ryan Copping HR.

Game Synopsis-Matt Bowers, Damion Bancroft and Jeff McKay all scored three runs for the winners.

NAPA/Coward's Pharmacy Maulers-23, Wolfpack-18

NAPA-Darren Swick 4-4, HR; Jeff McKay 4-4, HR.

Wolfpack-Ryan Copping 4-4, HR; Kevin Hmeil 4-4.

Game Synopsis-NAPA stole this one away with a six-run sixth, Jeff McKay and Darren Swick homered and scored four runs for the winners.

Sluggers-8, John Beere-8

Sluggers-Cole Seaton 4-4, 2HR; Gary Woolner 3-4.

John Beere-Kristian Carrel 4-4; Shawn Ryerse 3-4.

Game Synopsis-John Beere tied this one up with a two-run sixth.

Men's Division 4

Smokin Bases pushed N.I.M. before surrendering nine runs late to lose by two. They followed that up with a come-from-behind victory over R.L.P. Melanie Luksys. N.I.M.completed their perfect week with a win over second-place Brickhouse Boys.

N.I.M.-20, Smokin Bases-18

N.I.M.-Jordan Friesen 4-4; Cory Chambers 4-4.

Smokin-Reg Burnett 4-4; Ric Ashley 3-3.

Game Synopsis-N.I.M. plated nine runs in a bat-around last inning to escape with the win, leadoff batter Cory Chambers reached and scored four times.

Smokin Bases-13, R.L.P. Melanie Luksys-12

Smokin-Alfred Guidolin 4-4; Tim Miners 4-4.

R.L.P.-Landon Boughner 4-4; Blake Ash 3-3; Natan Granger HR.

Game Synopsis-A two-run sixth won it for Smokin. Lead-off batter Ian Barrett scored three runs for the winners.

N.I.M.-17, Brickhouse Boys-11

N.I.M.-Jeff Wheeler 5-5; Cory Chambers 4-5.

Brickhouse-Ryan Davison 3-3; Shawn Knelsen 3-3.

Game Synopsis-Everyone in the winner's order scored at least one run.



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SCRAPBOOK

(STUART BLOWER PHOTOS)



Tillsonburg Shopper's Drug Mart players converged on their Delhi foe during recent U-15 action.



Meridian player Health Osteopathy players Myles (front) and Mason (back) work together to keep the ball away from Baldwin Street Chiropractic players in a U-8 house league game.



Tilly Trailers defender Eric Tong, right, is ready to assist with clearing any rebounds after a shot by an Optometrists on Broadway forward in a U-8 game.



Petro Canada players Owen Sawatzky, left, and Brody Froese, right, work to keep control of the ball in a U-12 game against East Elgin Concrete Forming.



A Tillsonburg player finds air to gain control of the ball in a U-15 rep game against London.



Tillsonburg Glass and Optimist International U-8 teams played a hard-fought match in last week's heat.

New long-term care facility on cusp of opening

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The new peopleCare long-term care facility on Maple Lane will accept its first residents Aug. 17.

The facility will house 160 residents. The modern design is bright and airy. Those entering the facility walk into an open lobby that doubles as the chapel with movable chairs and also has a bistro.

Residents are housed in five home areas, with each having rooms for 32 residents and its own dining room and lounge. Each home area has its own name, with local handles like TurtleFest. An outdoor courtyard is in the centre of the facility.

"One of the features of the design is that residents have access to the courtyard," said Sheena Campbell, vice-president of communications and engagement, for peopleCare Communities.

A suite for visiting families to stay overnight is designed similar to a hotel room.

"This is a quiet space, a space to spend the night, or at least get cleaned up," Campbell said.

The rooms are a combi-

nation of private rooms and rooms with two beds. Residents are welcome to bring belongings to make the space their own.

One difference from traditional long-term care facilities is the absence of nursing stations. Campbell explains this was done purposely so that, for instance, nurses can sit in the lounge and complete charting while interacting with patients.

The three-floor facility has one large kitchen, and food is then moved to the server for each home area.

Before the residents start moving in, staff are still being hired for the facility, and orientation will start Aug. 4. Positions open include RNs, RPNs, PSWs and recreation staff. When all staff are hired, about 200 people will be employed. Dr. Derek Vaughan, a local physician, will be assigned to the facility.

Prior to the opening, staff have been busy receiving everything from bedding to plates and utensils to kitchen equipment. Bedding, for instance, is received in bulk, and then pillows and sheets need to be distributed to each room.

Residents will be added gradually, with a few added

per day over two months.

Construction is on schedule for the facility that saw a ground-breaking in January 2025. Jenn Killing, vice-president quality care, explained the company has a mandate from the government to build the beds. Tillsonburg was identified as having a shortage of long-term care beds.

"The ministry loves it when you get your town onside," Campbell said. "It was really a wonderful collaboration that got us here, and got us here so quickly."

The concept is to create more beds to prevent people from leaving their community when they can no longer live alone.

"The idea is we want people to age in place so they don't have to leave family, friends and their community," Campbell said.

"This end of Oxford County is underserved, compared to Woodstock, which has lots of beds; Tavistock has lots of beds," Killing said.

She has been on site, overseeing everything that is coming into place for next month. The facility is accepting applications from people for a wait list.

The opening of a new long-term care facility brings excitement for staff.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Part of the peopleCare team stand in front of the new three-story long-term care facility on Maple Lane. Left to right are: Elizabeth Owoye, Staffing Services Coordinator; Jennifer Killing, Opening Operations Lead for peopleCare Communities and Grace Akah, Director of Care.

Director of Care Grace Akah will oversee the facility's clinical and operational needs while ensuring compliance with policies. She worked as a director of care in the GTA, and is looking forward to being in a new facility.

"We have opportunities to shape the culture, to meet the first residents," she said. "I heard it's an exciting experience, but I've yet to experience it personally, so I'm really looking forward to it."



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

The outdoor courtyard is accessible to residents in all five home areas of the new facility, and is completely enclosed.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Kitchen staff are readying for the opening by unpacking equipment, plates and utensils. Although the opening is a month off, they are busy with preparations.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

An empty room ready for residents to move in. Both single and double rooms are available.

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George's Auto Repair celebrates 40 years

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

When George Stuyt started George's Auto Repair 40 years ago, the typical automobile was a different machine than today.

While the computer is the heart of a vehicle today, the electronics were more limited in 1986, although still crucial. Stuyt started in automotive as an electrical technician after initially starting post-secondary education as an electrical engineer. But according to Steve Sandham, the present owner of George's Auto, the company's founder discovered he had a knack for diagnosing electrical problems in vehicles and became a licensed mechanic.

"He started renting the far bay," Sandham said of the building at 10 Bridge St. W. "This was the feed mill at the time. As the business developed, he rented another and another until he purchased the building."

Stuyt's wife, Annette, was

an integral part of the business, handling the administrative side.

"He grew up in Tillsonburg," Sandham said. "He was the small-town, hard-working, honest mechanic. George prided himself on being able to figure out things a lot of people couldn't."

Stuyt's knack for handling electronics came in handy as vehicles evolved. There were cases he diagnosed issues in vehicles that baffled dealership mechanics.

A celebration was held on June 26 to mark the 40th anniversary of the business, to show appreciation to customers, and talk about old cars and new ones.

"They're not even the same machines," Sandham said of today's cars. "Everything used to be mechanically controlled. Now you're driving a series of computers on four wheels."

For instance, he said the throttle pedal, which used to be mechanically linked to the engine, is no longer mechanically connected. Sandham

said the gas pedal is technically the accelerator position sensor and is electronic. Likewise, he said the steering wheel is not mechanically connected in new vehicles and is all electronic.

Sandham started working at George's Auto as a high school co-op student. He then completed his apprenticeship there and became licensed. Sandham comes from a local family with an automotive background – his grandfather, Murray, owned the service department at Eichenberg Motors. Sandham continued that tradition when he purchased George's Auto in 2018. Stuyt continued to work part-time until 2021, assisting with the transition and electrical diagnosis.

Today, the emphasis on electrical diagnosis continues after Stuyt's retirement.

"We try to continue everything George started," Sandham said. "Electrical diagnosis used to be something that was a specialty, but it's changed to something that is

required based on the evolution of the automobile."

Working on automobiles today requires being able to handle electric vehicles and hybrids.

"Those have been around so long they're almost an everyday occurrence," Sandham said of hybrids. He elaborated that electric vehicles still need routine service for their brakes, steering, and suspension. As the owner, he is still on the floor fixing vehicles, so he has a good handle on vehicle changes.

With the shift toward greater automation and electric vehicles, Sandham still sees a bright future for independent automotive repair shops, which are busy.

"There is a high demand for qualified technicians," he said.

His future plans are to continue the service that George's Automotive has offered.

"I like to continue on that small-town feeling and continue what George and Annette started," he said.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

George's Automotive owner Steve Sandham recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of the business.

Oxford County Council approves pay raise for themselves

LEE GRIFFI

Post Contributor

Tillsonburg Mayor Deb Gilvesy was amongst the members of Oxford County councillors who voted against a motion to give members of the next council a pay hike.

In a recorded vote, Warden Marcus Ryan, Deputy Warden Bernia Martin and councillors Brian Petrie, David Mayberry, Jim Palmer, Mark Peterson and Phil Schaefer voted in favour of the increases. Councillors Deb Tate, Jerry Acchione and Deb Gilvesy voted against the move.

"You will see adjustments recommended to all three positions, warden, deputy warden and councillor...to maintain the sixtieth percentile pay target," explained the county's director of human services, Rebecca Smith. "We are also recommending to keep the practice consistent of adjusting council's pay based on whatever is approved for a non-union adjustment in each budget year," she added.

In dollar figures, the move will cost taxpayers about \$40,000 in the next term of council. The warden jumps from \$110,455 to \$111,830; the next deputy warden will earn \$46,613, up from \$41,841; and

eight councillors will see an increase of \$3,844 to \$41,336, up from \$37,492.

"I'm not going to be on council, so I'm not going to be getting the raise," said outgoing warden Marcus Ryan, who has already said he will not be seeking re-election as Zorra Township's mayor. "I voted for it because I'm still going to be an Oxford resident, I'm still going to use the services, I'm still going to pay the taxes. I very much want us to attract and retain the best councillors we can to spend my tax dollars."

Gilvesy explained politics can be a difficult job at times, but she doesn't see her role as one of employment.

"We're not here to collect a paycheque or a wage or a salary. We're here for public service."

Woodstock City/County Councillor Tait made it clear why she voted against the move.

"Times have changed, and it's very hard on our residents with all the (tax) increases we have had over the years, and of course the cost of living is up."

Ryan said lowering compensation in any sector does not result in increased productivity. He added more people will not be attracted to the warden's chair without offering a good wage.

Tait explained her concern is people will run for public office just for the monetary rewards as opposed to the right reasons.

"The people who are doing it

for the money means we're not getting the best people to serve the community and I've seen it...We're not the private sector and it's not a job."

Some municipalities in Ontario have other methods of setting elected officials' pay, including London and Guelph, which use independent citizen

remuneration committees to review council compensation, while others have a formula tied to inflation and automatic indexing formulas.



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LEGION 100 1926-2026

Legion celebrates its centennial across the nation

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Soldiers returning from the First World War brought with them both physical and emotional injuries, but received only limited support at home. As early as 1915, the first support groups were formed, including the Great War Veterans' Association.

The initial purpose of these groups was to advocate for care and support for the returning veterans.

A year after the Armistice was signed to end the First World War, Canada celebrated its first Armistice Day on Nov. 11, 1919. In 1931, an act of Parliament changed the name to Remembrance Day.

In 1921, inspired by Canadian John MacRae's poem *In Flanders Fields*, France's Anna Guerin came up with the idea of selling poppies to raise funds to assist veterans. The GWVA adopted the idea.

The concept of amalgamating the various veterans' groups started at the Unity Conference in 1925. That year the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League was formed. Incorporation followed in 1926 and was made official by an Act of Parliament

passed on July 17, 1926.

Adjustments to the organization's name were made between 1959 and 1961, with the British Empire Service League being dropped and Royal added with the permission of Queen Elizabeth II.

Locally, the Tillsonburg Branch 153 was chartered in 1929, with Dr. R.E. Weston as the first president. In the early years, the Legion met in a variety of rented facilities. Then, after the Second World War, the number of members jumped from 70 to 170 in a year. A home was purchased at 30 Lisgar Ave as the first permanent Legion building in town. It was named Varnavair, a composite of veterans, army, navy and air force.

The Legion Ladies' Auxiliary was formed in 1952. Changes in the Royal Canadian Legion membership structure in the 1960s allowed social and affiliate memberships. With the increase in membership, planning began for a larger facility at the current location on Durham Street. Construction started in 1969, and the building was opened in 1970.

Today, Branch 153 not only supports veterans, but also the community. The local branch sponsors minor sports teams, among other things, but is also still a



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

The Legion Ladies' Auxiliary meals are one fundraiser for the organization. These popular events typically see every seat filled and are sold out.

gathering place for veterans and organizes Remembrance Day activities. And, true to its initial purpose, the branch holds a veterans' coffee hour, providing an opportunity for those who served to gather and talk of their experiences.

Confidence is everything in motocross

CHRIS ABBOTT

Grant Haven Media

Hannah Cole, racing on the Honda Canada GDR Fox Team, made up some ground Sunday on her 'home' track – Moncton's Riverglade MX – finishing fourth overall in the Women's MX division.

It was her best performance so far in the eight-race Canadian Triple Crown series, presented by Makita.

Seventh one week earlier (July 5) at Gopher Dunes, near Courtland, Cole showed promise in her second of two motos that day.

"I was in third, just couldn't keep up with the pace for that one I guess," said Cole. "I was running up front, but I just maybe got a little bit distracted and kind of made too many mistakes in the middle of the moto which led to getting passed. Not getting through the corner smooth doesn't seem like a lot, but it can add up. It's seconds here or there that make the difference really. But at the end of the day, it was still a good day. I feel like I pushed the whole moto as hard as I could."

With a seventh, seventh and eighth in first three WMX motos, Cole is looking to make up even more ground going into the final three races. The series concludes at Walton.

Earlier in the season, Cole admitted she was struggling with her starts.

"I had two really good starts today (at Gopher Dunes), which put me up closer to the front, so I'll take that as a win. I'm really just looking for those little wins every weekend at this point. I know it will lead to something great here soon, but

just taking the little things as positives for now and keep moving forward, keep going. Just not going to give up."

"She (Cole) has been battling through injuries, just a couple small ones, nothing major," said Derek Schuster, Honda Canada GDR Fox Racing owner. "But I feel that's hindered her practice, training, confidence, all those things, and confidence is really important."

Honda Canada GDR Fox Racing teammate Dylan Rempel, from Aylmer, excelled in the 250 Pro division, finishing 1-2 for second overall at Gopher Dunes.

Rempel red T-shirts were all over the Dunes – 120 'DR24' shirts in total.

"They're all gone," said his mom. "I'm going to get more."

"A lot of buddies and family here today," Rempel smiled.

It was one of Rempel's best performances of the year, matching his second overall in the Calgary season opener, even if he came out of the first lap of the second moto in fifth.

"I love Gopher Dunes – it's my favourite track. The first moto today, I was gone. I didn't get as good of a start in the second moto. I was charging hard in that last one, but couldn't get it done."

Rempel said he wasn't going to complain about a second, but added with a laugh, "I wish I would have won. It would have been nice!"

Sixth in Round 2, and third in Round 3, there have been some highs and lows.

Going into the second half of the season, Rempel said his goal was to "work hard and just have more fun and hopefully start winning some more motos."

He did that in Round 5, winning 1st



(CHRIS ABBOTT PHOTO)

Honda Canada GDR Fox Racing's Dylan Rempel (24) didn't get the start he wanted in the second 250 Pro moto in Round 4 of the Triple Crown Series, but he clawed his way back to second place.

overall in Moncton on July 12, pushing him within 11 points of the 250 leader, Ryan Malinoski, with three races to go.

Dylan Wright, Honda Canada GDR Fox Racing's ace in the 450 Pro division, went into Round 4 at Gopher Dunes with three consecutive first overalls from Calgary to Quebec.

He won the first moto, despite apparent mechanical issues, but more mechanical issues hampered his second moto and he did not finish, giving him fifth overall.

"In the first moto, it looked in some ways probably worse than we actually thought it was once they got off the track," said Schuster, "because it was putting engine oil onto the exhaust, which makes it smoke really bad."

The engine was carefully checked before the second moto. The valve cover was pulled off, they pulled cams out to check them...

"Everything looked good enough where

they decided not to change engines," said Schuster. "The crankshaft ended up going in the second moto. It probably happened because it probably did get a little too low in oil the first moto, and too much stress on that engine, too much heat. It was probably like... just a crank bearing or something like that, that locked up."

Wright jumped back in the saddle at Riverglade MX in Moncton, New Brunswick on July 12.

After Round 4, Wright led the 450 Pro division with 184 points, 12 points ahead of second-place Harri Kullas. Third-place Sebastian Racine had 148 points.

Second overall in Moncton, Wright still leads the 450 Pro standings with 231 points, ahead of Kullas at 219 points.

Honda Canada GDR Fox Racing's rookie, Braxton Zeitner, who has been racing in the amateur division this year, was expected to make his Triple Crown Series debut later in the season.



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"I think that's one of the biggest things that he does, he educates people," said co-owner Leslie Irwin. "It's about doing the right thing for the home owner. A lot of the jobs that we get are from word of mouth. Family values are very important to us. For us it's always been family first, that's just who we are."

Using Forest City Custom Exteriors' proprietary 'Siding Selection Wizard' and 'System Thinking' approach, they ensure every siding, roofing, and trim component is engineered to withstand Southwestern Ontario's unique climate. Their exteriors stand up to real seasons - the wind, the ice, the heat - and every detail is measured, fitted, and finished to keep your property solid for years.

"I think a lot of it is making people fall back in love with their home again," said Irwin.

"It's like an exterior envelope of the home," said Hunt. "Siding, soffit, fascia, eavestroughs, roofing, windows, doors, and exterior repairs."

When you hire Forest City Custom Exteriors, you are partnering with an expert who values durability and transparency above all else, providing expert



Forest City Custom Exteriors provides quality workmanship and products for exterior renovations.

siding and roofing solutions in London and southwestern Ontario.

"My office is wherever I set up site."

If there is work in Tillsonburg, St. Thomas or London - that's where he's going. They have done work in Owen Sound, his home town, and Parry Sound for commercial properties, and Kitchener-Waterloo for property management buildings. They also do work for custom homes.

RESIDENTIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

There are many options for siding, and Hunt recommends higher-quality engineered wood or steel siding.

"Even in the last five years, there's probably five or six more times the products that you can choose from."

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The 'System Thinking' approach enhances building performance and aesthetic appeal while strictly respecting your project timelines, safety requirements, and the necessity for low-impact execution on active commercial sites.

MANAGED PROPERTIES

Forest City Custom Exteriors helps property managers throughout Southwestern Ontario maintain high-value building envelopes with professional exterior systems designed for longevity.

Focusing on proactive, high-performance materials and reliable crews that get the job done right the first time, means less hassle for property managers and better living for tenants.

CUSTOM HOMES

Using a 'System Thinking' approach, they ensure every architectural detail - from complex siding to custom trim - is executed with technical precision and delivered on schedule.

From complex architectural siding to airtight window systems, Forest City Custom Exteriors' team brings the technical expertise and coordination required for high-end residential projects.

"We don't just finish houses; we protect your reputation with exteriors that function flawlessly and impress from the curb."

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Fireflies in the garden ignite childhood memories



**IT'S
STILL
JUST
DIRT**

CRYSTAL TROJEK

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Fireflies, a drop of the summer sun, blinking in the thick darkness of a summer evening.

I first imagined them described in the pages a book, their tiny lights swimming without boundaries, leaving without remorse from unknown homes to unknown destinations. A firefly was the magic of imagination, one of the things other kids encountered in other places and times. For me, their description was a tiny spark living in the secret depths of summer story book pages, never seen in person.

Years ago, my dad decided to go fishing at the conservation area on a sultry summer evening. We packed up as a youthful moon began to stir a few sleepy stars while reaching for the darkening clouds that dappled a reddish sunset sky. Stepping quickly towards the car in the creep-

ing darkness, I saw them in person. Fireflies, hovering above the long and dusty grass and weeds that lined the edges of a gravel road.

I almost missed them, so quickly was I escaping from the black tide of a summer evening that threatened to encircle me. I jumped onto the cool seat of the car, pulling my feet inside while quickly reaching to safely close the car door when I noticed them. Fireflies. For a few brief moments we watched them dancing and blinking along the now almost abandoned road, until the car headlights divided a small portion of that gravel path from the now sunless sky and showed us the way home.

I did not see fireflies again for many years, I didn't expect to see them. I thought fireflies were quite selective of where they chose to dance in the summer air beneath a cloud filled sky, or under a bright full moon. Their tiny lights flashed in the solitude and peacefulness of a natural world, far from many humans, but close to the green earth that welcomed their bright hearts whenever they chose to visit.

A few summers ago, I was "drawing the blinds" as my mom used to say, just at dusk and my weary eyes paused for a last look at the back garden disappearing into the darkness, and there they were, in my little town garden. Fireflies had found me once more. I walked outside to view them

from the safety of the upper deck, wondering if their small troop was wandering through on their way to another pleasant and suitable destination of quiet woods and pleasant waters.

I asked if they lived in the cedar hedge, snug during the day from the heat of the sun, or rested in the cool trees. I imagined them living under hosta leaves, or dangling from ferns, exploring coral bells and bleeding hearts, introducing themselves to rabbits and other creatures who frequent my garden, or resting in the coolness of the mulch that covered the ground.

I wondered what they ate. How did they know when to creep from the summer vegetation, and happily dot the garden with brief drops of sunlight? Did they pass the days of autumn and winter with ladybugs and such insect friends beneath the fallen leaves, beyond the frozen reach of arriving snowflakes. They must wait for their moment to rise in the thick night air that was liberally flavoured with the scent of multitudes of roses in my sunnier garden places.

A bit of scientific research revealed nothing so carefree as I imagined those tiny lights to be in my garden, or found in that long ago discovery in the semi darkness along a rural road. Fireflies are a mere dot of blinking light, seeking a chance encounter with another dot of blinking light, males and females flash

looking for mates. The eggs are deposited amongst the gardens debris, preferably leaves and the damp recesses of a shade garden. The hatched larva might also light up while hunting such fine meals as earthworms, just another tiny creature residing in my botanical spaces.

I wondered if a passing bat might eat a firefly, since it advertised its whereabouts so readily. I wondered if a toad might scoop one from the ground. I chose to happily linger and witness its present occupation, just a moment in the garden to be glad one is alive.

I can see them beyond the window in my summer garden, examining the plants. Perhaps they are oblivious to everything, concentrating on their tiny lights, as tiny fairies travelling through a tiny moment in time. Fireflies are absent from my morning walks in the garden, or perhaps they are not. As with many things in my garden, perhaps fireflies are never absent, perhaps they are just waiting for me to get to their unnumbered page, and write of them before recording another chapter in the open book that is my garden. The book that owns no last page, and it is mine.

The Tillsonburg Horticultural Society is on summer break from meetings. Members are invited to the Summer Social on Aug. 4. Regular meetings resume on Sept. 1 at the Senior Centre.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)

FINE GARDENS

The Tillsonburg Horticultural Society's annual members' tour included stops at seven different members residences to view the gardens. (Photo 1) From left, Lucy Mainville, Betty Koppens and Shelley McKechnie admire the colours in Tim Charlton's gardens. (Photo 2) Sharon Grainger talks to visitors at her residence while they look at the cone flowers, day lilies and hostas in her gardens.



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FORM 6
SALE OF LAND BY PUBLIC TENDER
Municipal Act, 2001
 Ontario Regulation 181/03, Municipal Tax Sale Rules

SALE OF LAND BY PUBLIC TENDER

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF TILLSONBURG

Take Notice that tenders are invited for the purchase of the land described below and will be received until 3:00 p.m. local time on August 19, 2026, at the Tillsonburg Municipal Office, 10 Lisgar Ave, Tillsonburg, Ontario

The tenders will then be opened in public on the same day as soon as possible after 3:00 p.m. at the Tillsonburg Municipal Office, 10 Lisgar Ave, Tillsonburg.

Description of Land:

1. Roll No. 32 04 050 055 29000 0000; 44 JACKSON CRT., TILLSONBURG; PIN 00033-0201 (LT); PART OF LOT 48, PLAN 41M86; DESIGNATED AS PARTS 23 & 24, 41R5384 SUBJECT TO EASEMENT IN FAVOUR OF THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF TILLSONBURG OVER PART 24, 41R5384 AS IN LT44360 SUBJECT TO EASEMENT INFAVOUR OF UNION GAS LIMITED AS IN LT62003 TILLSONBURG; File No. 25-07
 According to the last returned assessment roll, the assessed value of the land is \$197,000

Minimum tender amount: \$34,567.94

Tenders must be submitted in the prescribed form and must be accompanied by a deposit of at least 20 per cent of the tender amount, which deposit shall be made by way of a certified cheque/bank draft/ money order payable to the municipality.

Except as follows, the municipality makes no representation regarding the title to or any other matters relating to the land to be sold. Responsibility for ascertaining these matters rests with the potential purchasers. The assessed value, according to the last returned assessment roll, may or may not be representative of the current market value of the property.

Pursuant to the Prohibition on the Purchase of Residential Property by Non-Canadians Act, S.C. 2022, c. 10, s. 235 (the "Act"), effective January 1, 2023, it is prohibited for a non-Canadian to purchase, directly or indirectly, any residential property, as those terms are defined in the legislation. Contraventions of the Act are punishable by a fine, and offending purchasers may be ordered to sell the residential property.

The municipality assumes no responsibility whatsoever for ensuring bidders/tenderers comply with the Act, and makes no representations regarding same. Prospective bidders/tenderers are solely responsible for ensuring compliance with the Act and are advised to seek legal advice before participating in this sale.

Transfers of properties that contain at least one and not more than six single family residences and are transferred to non-residents of Canada or foreign entities, are subject to the Province's Non-Resident Speculation Tax (NRST).

This sale is governed by the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Municipal Tax Sales Rules made under that Act. The successful purchaser will be required to pay the amount tendered plus accumulated taxes and any taxes that may be applicable, such as a land transfer tax and HST.

TAKE NOTICE: Where a refund is claimed by a qualifying first-time Homebuyer under the Land Transfer Tax Act, the Municipality requires the purchaser to retain legal counsel to complete the transfer.

The municipality has no obligation to provide vacant possession to the successful purchaser.

A copy of the prescribed form of tender is available on the website of the Government of Ontario Central Forms Repository under the listing for the Ministry of Municipal Affairs.

For further information regarding this sale and a copy of the prescribed form of tender, visit:

www.OntarioTaxSales.ca

or if no internet access available, contact:

Ted Lyons
 Revenue Manager
 The Corporation of the Town of Tillsonburg
 10 Lisgar Ave
 Tillsonburg ON N4G 5A5
 1-519-688-3009 Ext. 4020
tlyons@tillsonburg.ca
www.tillsonburg.ca

Local artist Serena Smith finds inspiration at Tri-County's Got Talent competition



BEN ANDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

For Tillsonburg singer-songwriter Serena Smith, performing at the first-ever Tri-County's Got Talent tryout at The Copper Mug Pub was not part of the plan.

Serena has been performing under the stage name KEROSXENE the last several years while quietly developing her sound. While new music has yet to be released, the local artist has taken the past few years to focus on growth, self-discovery and finding her creative voice.

That personal journey received an unexpected boost on this past Saturday during the inaugural Tri-County's Got Talent tryout at The Copper Mug Pub.

The evening showcased an impressive lineup of performers from across the county with judges Chris Soares of 107.3 FM; Daniel Jones, who is the lead vocalist of

The Sugar Kings; and Sally-Jo Atkinson-Jones, who is a long-time supporter of the local music scene. The three judges were faced with the difficult task of narrowing down an evening full of talented contestants.

After the music stopped, the judges selected Jonathan Hilliker in first place, Stunt in second and Cindy McMaster in third to advance to the finals. Before the evening concluded they had one more surprise.

Serena Smith was named the official runner-up and will step in should any of the top three be unable to compete in the finals. The experience is one that almost never happened.

"Honestly it happened really fast. I did not plan on being in town when I heard about the contest a few weeks back, but I ended coming home early. I wanted to go support Dominik Desousa and Rachael Moore who are two of the most talented singers I have in my life," Smith explained. "When I walked into The Copper Mug, it was the two of them telling me if I did not at least try that I would regret it in the morning. One thing leads to another, and the judges are calling up first, second and third place to the stage to advance their amazing talent to the finals. After I thought everything was said and done, the judges pulled me aside and said I was the

runner-up. It was a super heartwarming reminder of the love and support I have behind me even in times where I do not really have that confidence in myself."

While fans have patiently waited for new music since her 2022 releases, Smith has been busy behind the scenes rediscovering herself as both a songwriter and performer.

"I have been writing here and there over the years but only recently have felt like I have found my voice as a growing woman and evolving artist again," Smith says. "I have made close connections with a few super-talented singers and producers from different walks of life, and have small projects cooking up with a few of them that should come to fruition by the end of this fall."

Rather than rushing to release singles, her main focus is on building something meaningful close to home.

"For the next year I just want to focus on getting a method to my madness down. I'm thinking staying local and focusing on the connections I have right in front of me. Buckling down and writing songs that I can finally put into a small collection for the people who have been in my corner since before KEROSXENE existed," Smith says with a smile. "The biggest thing I took away from the Tri County's Got Talent night was just a reminder that with the love, support, and sometimes push, from

the ones around you, your dreams are actually not as far away as you may think."

With new collaborations underway and several projects expected later this fall, KEROSXENE appears ready for an exciting new chapter. Smith's performance at Tri-County's Got Talent served as a reminder that some of the area's brightest emerging artists are developing right here in Tillsonburg.

Those hoping to follow in her footsteps will soon have another opportunity. Tri-County's Got Talent second tryout takes place Friday, Aug. 1 at The Copper Mug in Tillsonburg. Doors open at 7 p.m.

Performers from Tillsonburg, Strathroy-Kentville, Delhi, Ingersoll and everywhere in between are invited to sign up at the door and showcase their talent. Registration is \$25 and payable night of at the door.

The top three performers from each tryout night will advance to the Tillsonburg fair finals on Aug. 15, with the overall winner announced Aug. 16. The grand prize includes a featured appearance on 107.3 FM along with a professional song recording.

For Smith, a last-minute decision turned into one of the most memorable nights of her musical journey and a huge reminder that sometimes all it takes is a little encouragement to take the stage and discover just how close your dreams really are.

UPCOMING SHOWS

JULY 17 - JAW RAWK
The Copper Mug
Free Entry - 8 p.m.

JULY 18 - KICKN KOUNTRY
Tillsonburg Legion #153
\$8 - 12 p.m.

JULY 19 - MUSIC ON THE LAWN SERIES W/ NORTH SHORE RAMBLERS
Annandale NHS
Free Entry - 7 p.m.

JULY 24 - MUSIC BINGO
The Copper Mug
6:30 p.m.

JULY 25 - DANIEL HAMM
The Copper Mug
Free Entry
8 p.m.

JULY 30 - THE SADIES
Paddy's Underground
\$40 - 8 p.m. - all ages/licensed

AUGUST 1 - TRI-COUNTY'S GOT TALENT TRYOUT NIGHT #2
The Copper Mug: 7 p.m.

AUGUST 7-9 - BUDDIES FEST
The Mill, Paddy's Underground & The Copper Mug
3 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed - www.buddiesfest.com

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Norfolk Pro Rodeo returns this weekend

It's more than just a rodeo, it's a weekend celebration of agriculture and western lifestyle

CHRIS ABBOTT

Grant Haven Media

Are you ready for a high-energy, action-packed weekend?

The annual Norfolk Pro Rodeo returns July 17-19 at Timmermans Ranch, west of Simcoe on Nixon Road.

This year's rodeo features three full professional rodeo performances – Friday evening (gates open at 5 p.m.), Saturday afternoon (gates open at 1 p.m.) and Sunday afternoon (gates open at 11 a.m.) – with live country concerts and a wide range of family-friendly attractions.

“Last year was the first year we added the Friday night rodeo,” said Krista Timmermans. “We did it because we’ve been selling out the Saturdays, the last few years now. We have a limited capacity,

so we wanted to add another show so more people could enjoy it – and make a whole weekend of it if they wanted to.”

George Canyon, a headliner from the 2011 & 2018 Norfolk County Fairs, will be on stage Friday night (9-10:30 p.m.) following the 7 p.m. rodeo, which Timmermans says has accelerated Friday ticket sales. A two-time Juno Award winner with multiple CCMA awards, Canyon has had 29 singles on Billboard country charts in Canada (more than half in the Top 10).

Canadian legend Aaron Pritchett, also well-known to Norfolk Fair ‘Party on the Track’ fans, headlines Saturday’s entertainment following the 4 p.m. rodeo.

It’s much more than just a rodeo, say organizers, “it’s a celebration of agriculture, community, and the western way of life.”

Sanctioned by the International Pro Rodeo Association (IPRA), the Norfolk Pro Rodeo will showcase top professional athletes and stock, delivering heart-pounding competition in every event. Fans can expect classic rodeo action including bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, bull riding, steer wrestling, team roping, barrel racing, and breakaway roping.

“It’s a full professional rodeo. It’s a stop on the tour and the athletes can gain points every weekend,” said Timmermans. “If they get enough points, they can go to the finals in January.”

The full IPRA Rodeo schedule, with rodeos across North America, from New York to Texas to California to Quebec, can be found at www.ipra-rodeo.com/schedule.

The Norfolk weekend includes three rodeo performances: Friday, July 17 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, July 18 at 4 p.m.; and Sunday, July 19 at 2 p.m.

“Sunday is a family-focused day, there’s tons of kids stuff all day and there is discounted family packs Sunday.”

Beyond the rodeo arena, the Norfolk Pro Rodeo offers a full weekend experience for all ages.

Attendees can enjoy:

- Live country concerts featuring George Canyon (Friday) and Aaron Pritchett (Saturday) and local stage entertainment through the day Saturday and Sunday. For a full list, see norfolkrodeo.com/music/

- A wide variety of food trucks and vendors.

- A kids zone with inflatables, games, and activities.



(FILE PHOTO)

Norfolk Pro Rodeo fans can expect classic rodeo action including bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, bull riding, steer wrestling, team roping, barrel racing, and breakaway roping with three rodeos at Timmermans Ranch, July 17-19.

- Farm animals and agricultural displays celebrating the roots of the community.

- Local vendors showcasing western lifestyle goods and products.

“The layout, and schedule, is very similar to last year,” said Timmermans. “We also try to add some new surprises every year to change it up – this year we have a video wall, right

beside the bull chute, for some more crowd interaction.”

Established in 2016, the Norfolk Pro Rodeo has grown into one of the region’s premier summer events, bringing together visitors from across Ontario and beyond for an unforgettable weekend of entertainment.

Tickets are available online at NorfolkRodeo.com

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BRINGING OUT THE CLASSICS (JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)
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Fishing derby was another success

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Lake Lisgar was lined with anglers trying to catch the largest fish as part of the annual fishing derby on July 4.

Rosemary Dean, who organizes the free family event with her family, said there were 352 participants this year, which was down from past years.

"It's all about the families," she said. "It's all about the kids. Whether one comes or 500, it's all about the kids."

The derby has had more than 500 people in some past years.

Dean was thankful the weather was good, noting there were only two or three

light showers that didn't last long.

"We were all prepared for it, not knowing what the weather was going to be," she said.

Besides the prizes for the largest fish, which were broken down into species, there were grab bags for all and random participation prizes. Dean said the kayak winner was especially excited and heard he was practicing in his swimming pool the next day.

The largest bass caught on the day was a 20-inch large-mouth. There is also a category for most unusual catch, which has included shopping carts and real estate signs in the past. Dean reported there

were no exceptionally unusual catches this year.

"We had lots of turtles," she said. "Not that we encourage people catching them, but there were lots of turtles."

The derby is strictly catch-and-release, where everything that comes out goes back in.

"Bring it in, get it measured as quick as you can, and get it back in the lake," Dean said of the goal.

She did note that no carp were caught.

"We haven't had a carp in several years out of that lake," she said, suggesting that category may be changed.

The event always coincides with Ontario's free family

fishing week, when no license is required. This year followed that pattern.

Outside of the fishing, Dean gave a nod of thanks to the Rapid Relief Team for helping with the food, Suppa Swirl for the free ice cream for participants, and the Lions Club for promoting the event and assisting on derby day.

"Without support from our donors we wouldn't be able to do it as a 100 per cent free event," she said.

With the derby complete, planning is already underway for next year.

"When one year stops, we're already starting to get things in place for the next year," Dean said.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



Jett Mejaski, left, and his sister Emmy inherited their parent's love of fishing and are regular contestants in the Lake Lisgar fishing derby.



Watercraft of all types were launched on Lake Lisgar for the annual derby, including this fishing kayak.



Logan Visscher releases a largemouth bass he caught after it was weighed.



Lily Wegg proudly displays a sunfish, one of seven she caught while fishing with her grandfather.



Dean Culp, left, and Dave Metselaar, right, were two of the volunteers measuring the length of fish caught on derby day. Here, they are checking the length on Aiden Gilroy's sunfish.



The rowing club dock was a popular spot on the morning of the derby, with people standing elbow to elbow, hoping to catch something.

Leaning into history: the famous Tower of Pisa



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

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

It turns out, one of the world's most famous destinations is the result of a mistake. In fact, a series of mistakes.

We had the chance to visit Pisa, and verify for ourselves that the Leaning Tower of Pisa is, indeed, leaning – and not simply an optical illusion. This was a day trip that was part of our terrific Viking Mediterranean cruise.

Pisa is a city in the beautiful region of Tuscany. If you are visiting this part of Italy, be sure to allow time to enjoy the area, and make Pisa one relatively small part of your stay. I say this because, while every traveller wants to see the Leaning Tower, the entire experience can be accomplished in a few hours.

The tower is one of four historic buildings located in the “Square of Miracles,” a UNESCO World Heritage Site. There you will find the Pisa Cathedral, a round, domed building known as the Baptistry of St. John, the Camposanto, as well as the Leaning Tower.

All of them are built in the wrong place. Because, the subsoil in the area of the Square of Miracles is, to be somewhat Biblical about it, “shifting sand.” The unstable topography means that it isn't just the famous tower that leans –

everything here is susceptible.

We got an immediate introduction to this local reality when our enthusiastic guide led us into the Square through what she called a back door. After the trek from the coach park, we followed a wall to a gate with a tower, and entered the Square from the side.

That tower in the wall – not the iconic one by any means – was also askew. The guide explained that darn near everything in this part of Pisa is off-centre, because of the unstable terrain.

Our first view was of the Baptistry, a large, round, domed Gothic building constructed over a 200-year period starting in 1152. And although the word “leaning” does not appear in its name, it does, in fact, tilt slightly, leaning 0.6 degrees toward its neighbour, the Cathedral.

Speaking of this, it's good for prospective visitors to know that you can see all of these amazing buildings from the outside, free of charge, but it will cost you up to 35 euros if you want to enter all of them.

The Pisa Cathedral – officially, the Primatial Metropolitan Cathedral of the Assumption of Mary – is a striking, Medieval masterpiece started in 1064 and completed in its original form in a surprisingly short time. It was finished in 1092.

Nearby sits the Camposanto Monumentale, which is an enclosed cemetery, created in the centuries following the construction of the Cathedral and the Baptistry, and today, famous for its frescoes.

I've saved the best – or at least, the most famous – until last: the Leaning Tower of Pisa. I confess – I knew almost nothing about this modern wonder of the world. I didn't know it is actually the free-stand-

ing bell tower of the Cathedral. I didn't know that it began to lean during construction, so that the engineers of the time tried to compensate architecturally, with the result that the tower actually has a bit of a banana shape. And that the ongoing problems of unstable sand caused the project to end up significantly lower than planned – the tower is 56 meters high; it was intended to stretch 70 meters. That still involves a climb of 300 stairs, if you are so inclined, and are willing to pay the entrance fee.

This series of mistakes, adjustments and miscalculations has resulted in one of the most famous buildings in the world. Our guide laughed as she said, “We appreciate in Pisa this mistake very much.”

The reason for that gratitude is immediately apparent when you consider the crowds of tourists wandering around the Square – approximately half of whom are posing for photos as they “hold up” the tower.

Like many historic buildings, the tower took forever to build – 199 years, in three stages, beginning in 1173.

The Tower was close to the public for 10 years, ending in 2001, as engineers sought to counter the continuing lean. They were moderately successful – the lean was reduced by just under half a meter, and the tower was open for climbing once again.

The tower is certainly still leaning – it tilts 5 degrees, or four meters off true, enough that it is clearly evident, and very dramatic. Nonetheless, the engineers of the most recent adjustment assure us that the tower is stable for at least another 300 years – and it has surprisingly withstood four strong earthquakes, since 1280.

So it will probably be fine if you de-



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

The tilt of the Leaning Tower of Pisa is clearly evident - caused by unstable subsoil.

cide to climb those 300 steps. For us, after exploring the square, and looking at the tower from every direction (it leans to the south, by the way), we found our best perspective as we enjoyed a refreshing treat on the terrace of a nearby gelato shop.

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



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

It's not the famous tower, but this tower on a wall in Pisa is also leaning.



A souvenir market only steps from the Tower.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)





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How do you prevent a Summer cold?
Catch it in the Winter!

What do frogs like to drink on a hot summer day?
Croak-o-cola.

How do bears keep their den cool in summer?
They use bear conditioning!

What does the sun drink out of?
Sunglasses!

What do you call a snowman in July?
A puddle.

What's black and white and red all over?
A sunburned zebra.

What do you call a dog on the beach in the Summer?
A hot dog!

Why are gulls named seagulls?
If they were by the bay, they'd be bagels!

SUDOKU

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Solutions on Page 30 Level: Beginner

PET OF THE WEEK



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WORD SEARCH

AT THE GRILL

V	T	Z	B	M	T	C	R	N	H	M	I	I	G	A	H	N	N	W	L
S	R	S	U	R	B	E	E	D	M	M	V	C	S	I	S	H	E	A	T
K	G	U	R	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	S	E	U	H	T	T
E	T	A	G	V	S	O	P	L	C	D	K	D	C	S	A	T	O	O	H
W	E	P	E	V	K	Y	P	R	D	D	R	Y	K	H	R	N	N	P	M
E	M	Z	R	A	L	E	L	I	O	A	U	D	F	F	I	G	Z	A	B
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CHICKEN
- DELICIOUS
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FLAREUP
GRATE
HEAT
- MARINADE
PROPANE
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JULY 25 | 9 AM - 12 PM
SPORTING GOODS SWAP MEET
Oxford Fish and Game Club,
545324 Pattullo Ave, Woodstock
Club members will be selling a wide variety of shooting, hunting, archery and fishing related items from their own collections. Admission \$2:00.

JULY

JULY 24 | 1 - 4 PM
KEN LIGHTHEART AND THE NORTSHORE RAMBLERS
Tillsonburg Legion, 16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON
\$7 Cash at the door. All Welcome!

JULY 18 | 1 - 4:30 PM
KICKN KOUNTRY LIVE BAND
Tillsonburg Legion, 16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON
Food available noon to 2:00 pm. Cash bar. \$8 admission at the door. 19+ Event.

JULY 17 & 18
BRANTFORD UKULELE FESTIVAL
Tickets for the 2026 Brantford Ukulele Festival, set for July 17th and 18th are going fast! Register before April 17th to get in on the Early Bird special. Get details on performers, workshops and more at brantfordukulelesociety.org.

JULY 19 | 2 PM
DECORATION DAY FOR FORESTVILLE CEMETERIES
Hillcrest Cemetery, 638 Charlotteville Road 1, Forestville
Rain or shine. Bring your lawn chair, a friend, and umbrella. Music will be provided by “Blue Chicory”. Everyone welcome!

JULY 25 | DOORS OPEN 6 PM
LIVE COUNTRY MUSIC SHOW FEATURING THE COUNTRY BELLES
Tillsonburg Legion, 16 Durham St, Tillsonburg, ON
Advance tickets \$35 available online or at the Legion. Tickets at the door \$40. All Welcome! For more info call 519-842-5281.

AUGUST

AUGUST 1 | 9 AM - 12 PM
HEAVENLY CLOSET CLOTHING SALE
Springford Baptist Church, 422 Main St W in Springford (In the basement of the church)
Clothes, shoes, boots, handbags, backpacks will be available by purchasing a bag for \$5 and stuffing it with as many items as you can in the bag. Bags will be supplied by the church. Enter side door near parking lot. Proceeds will be donated to the Tillsonburg Foodbank.

ONGOING CLASSES, CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

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

STARTS 7 PM
THE TILLSONBURG & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS MUSIC ON THE LAWN
Annandale N.H.S. , 30 Tillson Avenue
JULY 19 - “North Shore Ramblers”
JULY 26 - “1962” – Cindy McMaster
AUGUST 2 – “Blue Sky” – Archie Wright
AUGUST 9 – “ Kickin Kountry”
AUGUST 16 – “North Shore Ramblers”

BEGINNING AT 6:30 PM
AUGUST 23 – “George Fulop”
AUGUST 30 – “Blue Sky” – Archie Wright
Bring your own lawn chairs. (Music may be cancelled at short notice due to weather. Call 226-970-1432 for cancellations.) Goodwill offering will be taken.

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

MONDAYS | 7 - 9 PM
MODERN SQUARE DANCING IS FOR YOU!
Thames Valley Dance Club
Looking for something to do in the evening or something new to try? Modern square dancing is a great way to learn something new, have fun, meet new friends, relieve stress, and get some exercise! All you need is comfortable shoes and casual clothing. No experience or partner is required and anyone over the age of 12 is welcome (children from 12-15 with an adult, please). **The 2025-2026 season has started at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall, 108 Wonham St. S. Ingersoll.** The first night is free, and after that the cost is \$7.50 per person each Monday, paid monthly at the start of the month. For more information, contact Julie at 519-535-3314.

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

3RD WED. OF MONTH | 10 AM - NOON
LYNN RIVER PROBUS CLUB
Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, ON.
Corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe.
Enter via Culver St.
Our retired and semi-retired members enjoy diverse interest groups, friendship and fellowship. We have interesting speakers at our monthly meetings as well as time to socialise. Current and prospective members are welcome to join us at the Army, Navy & Air Force Club, Simcoe, which is on the corner of Water St. and Culver St. Simcoe. Enter via Culver St. For more information, please visit our website at: lynnriverprobus239.com or email lynnriverprobus239@gmail.com

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS | 7 - 9 PM
SATURDAYS | 10 AM - 12 PM
LEARN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU (BJJ)
North Broadway Baptist Church
Thanks to donor support, we’ve been able to purchase mats and uniforms, and our instructors generously volunteer their time. This isn’t a business—any donations go straight back into the program to help buy more uniforms, mats, and equipment. If it’s within your means, a \$20 monthly donation helps support the program, but if not, classes are completely free. **Classes are open to anyone 14 and older.** If you’d like to try a class, please arrive about 15 minutes early to sign waivers and get fitted for a uniform. Information can be found at: <https://www.northbroadwaychurch.ca/nbmfa>, <https://www.facebook.com/northbroadwaymfa>, <https://www.instagram.com/northbroadwaymfa/> Inquires can be made at: nbmfa@northbroadwaychurch.ca

EVERY OTHER FRIDAY | 1 - 4 PM
SPRING INTO THE INGERSOLL COUNTRY MUSIC JAMBOREE
Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St. S., Ingersoll
Join us, walk ins welcome. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Perform, listen, dance & enjoy! May 1, 15 & 29, June 5 & 19.

WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS
TILLSONBURG BRIDGE CLUB
Two games weekly at the Tillsonburg Senior Centre - 45 Hardy Ave.
SOCIAL BRIDGE - Wednesdays, 7:00 p.m. A relaxed, friendly game for learners, returners and everyone else.
DUPLICATE BRIDGE - Fridays, 1:00 p.m. Still friendly, but a bit more structured and competitive. Please arrive 10 minutes early. Questions? tburgbridge@gmail.com or FB: TburgBridge

SATURDAYS, JUNE 6 - SEPT. 19 | 10 AM - 4 PM
PLATTSVILLE & DISTRICT HERITAGE SOCIETY
2026 EXHIBIT - HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS THAT BRING US TOGETHER
Archive & Museum at Chesterfield, 816661 Oxford Rd 22, Bright (June 20 - visit us at Plattsville 175)
Donations accepted. Refreshments. For private viewing email plattsvillehistoricheritage@gmail.com or call 519.535.1417.

1ST AND 3RD TUES. OF MONTH
TILLSONBURG LIONS
The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their dinner meetings in the Lion's Den at the Community Centre. If you are interested in giving back to your Community contact Jim at 519 409 0876 for more information.....all are welcome.

1ST WED. OF MONTH | 7 PM
WAGNER MEMORIAL TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526 - MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING
The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON
Not a member? Contact us to join. For More Information Call, the Legion 519-443-5588. www.teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

WOULD YOU LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO HELP AT ONE OF OUR EVENTS? WE WELCOME YOU!
The Wagner Memorial, Teeterville Legion Branch 526 - 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville, ON
You do not need to be a member to Volunteer, Just contact the legion and leave your name and number and purpose of your call. Someone will get back to you as to where you might be needed. Students and Adults welcome. **Open hours. Wed.- Fri. 3 pm-10 pm, Sat.1 pm-10 pm, Sun.1 pm-6 pm. For More Information call, the Legion at 519-443-5588 or teetervillelegionbranch526.ca**

VON OXFORD SUPPORTIVE CARE PROGRAMS
Navigating any form of grief can feel overwhelming; however, with the right support, guidance, and education, individuals can discover a pathway to help in the healing of grief. VON Oxford Supportive Care Programs offer assistance for grief stemming from various circumstances, such as the death of someone, caregiving, serious illness diagnoses, and life transitions. Through education, connection, and compassion, our programs create a safe space for individuals to explore their emotions and learn effective coping mechanisms during the grieving process.

Contact us today to learn more about VON Oxford Supportive Care Programs:
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Phone: 1-888-866-7518
All Programs are Free-of-charge.

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IN MEMORIAM

In Loving Memory of



HOARE, Jackie (Brinn)

December 19, 1942 - July 20, 2022

*Sadly missed and always remembered
by your loving husband Ken.*

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WEEKEND QUIZ

by Jake Grant

1. The Daytona 500 takes place in what US state?
2. What is the largest ocean on Earth?
3. What are the birth flowers for July?
4. Who won Wimbledon 2026?
5. What part of the brain controls hunger?
6. The fear of fire is known as what?
7. What is the primary mountain range in Iran?
8. Who is Percy Jackson's father?
9. What was used to fill thermometers before mercury?
10. What is the name for what an archer carries their arrows in?

This week's answers are found on pg. 30

OBITUARY

JUDY KRAFFT

NOVEMBER 16, 1947 - JUNE 7, 2026



It is with grief and sorrow that we announce the peaceful passing of Judith Marlene Krafft, nee Saunders; she will be deeply missed by her family. She is survived by her daughter Robin, grandchildren Alora and Keith, sister Barbara Ann DeVos, brother Lyle (Linda)

Saunders, and cousin Bob (Debbie) Lidstone. She loved her niece and nephews, Trevor (Jessica) Brown, Meagan (David) Shaw, and cousins George Friedrich, Mary Beth (Steven) Burt, Cindy (Dave) Wood. She loved and stayed in contact with all of her extended family. Predeceased by her mother and father, Mary and JB Saunders, Aunt Doris Walls, Aunt Betty and Uncle George Friedrich, and brother-in-law David DeVos.

Judy was a mother, teacher, caregiver, and friend to many. She always had time to listen. She wanted to help in any way she could, always offering sage advice and solutions to problems. Growing up on the farm outside of Walsingham, she loved her horses, the swing up in the haymow, and wandering along Big Creek. She grew to have an incredible and wry sense of humour, and laughter would often ring out from the old farmhouse during a rousing game of Trivial Pursuit after family dinners. She was a sharp and flamboyant dresser, coordinating her colour palette and her unique jewellery.

She loved to travel, but closer to home, she spent time in nature. Long Point, which she called 'heaven' was a frequent destination and she planned many camping trips there with her daughter and grandchildren. She arranged vacations to Deerhurst Resort and enjoyed exploring and sharing adventures with Alora and Keith. It was much more comfortable than canoe camping in the north, which hadn't impressed her.

In later years, Judy enjoyed watercolour painting, using beautiful landscape photos as her subjects, and gifting her paintings to friends and family. Judy taught for several years across Norfolk County, including schools at Fairground, Port Rowan, St Williams, Houghton and Walsh. Her students loved her and when they spotted her out and about, they always came to say hello and enjoyed a conversation with their favourite teacher.

The family would like to thank the staff at Tillsonburg Hospital and Maple Manor for the excellent care she received, particularly from the palliative care team. Thank you to Wareing Cremation Services for their compassion and support during a difficult time.

In keeping with her wishes, cremation has taken place. A celebration of life will be held at a later date for close friends and family. Wareing Cremation Services, 161 Broadway St., Tillsonburg, Ontario was entrusted with Final Arrangements. Messages of remembrance and condolence may be shared at wareingcremation.ca

**Show Your Community Spirit.
Support Local News!**

OBITUARY

NORMA JEAN NICKOL

(DEC. 4, 1946 - JULY 10, 2026)



Peacefully, at home, surrounded by her family, Norma Jean Nickol (née Cowan) passed away at age 79. She was born December 4, 1946, daughter to Fred (1988) and Dorothy (née Sumner) Cowan (1985), with whom she can now be reunited, alongside her devoted husband of 60 years, Brant 'Doc' Nickol (2026); son, Dan (2025); brother, Doug (2025); sister, Barb (2016); sister-in-law, Eleanor (2025).

Norma is lovingly remembered by her brother, Harvey Cowan; daughter, Karol McFarlane (Ted); son, Andy Nickol (Kathy); sister-in-law, Jeanne Cowan; and by her many grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews. She was the heart of her family - the glue that held everyone together. She openly welcomed all she met and became honorary 'Mom' to many. She was proud to be affectionately known as 'Mommy Dearest', 'Grandma', 'GG-Ma' and 'MFA' (My Favourite Aunt). Norma's warmth and generosity will be remembered by everyone fortunate enough to have known her and her great sense of humour. She embraced life with courage, strength and positivity.

In her spare time Norma crafted gifts of love, making countless sweaters and blankets. She acquired vast collections of whimsical earrings, cats and Santas. Norma was always ready to share a laugh or a pan of her notorious mac'n cheese. She loved to host her family's traditional homemade perogy days; working closely, creating memories and teaching the art of making a wonderful feast. She will be remembered for her delicious lemon meringue or peach pies and lazy holubtzi.

For more than 35 years, Norma was respected for her dedication and hard work as Office Manager at Dodsley Fuels Ltd., and Dodsley Propane.

Norma will be deeply missed as her legacy lives on in the family she cherished, the lives she touched and the memories that will forever bring smiles to those who loved her.

The Gathering of Norma's Family and Friends will take place on Sunday, July 26th, 2026, from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, at the Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 153, 16 Durham Street, Tillsonburg, Ontario. Everyone who knew Norma may leave Letters of Condolence, share favourite memories, photos, order flowers or make memorial donations to The Canadian Cancer Society or The Poppy Fund via Norma's online tribute page at www.verhoevefuneralhomes.com or by contacting the Maurice J. Verhoeve Funeral Homes, 262 Broadway, Tillsonburg (519) 842-4238, which has been entrusted with all arrangements, with confidence.

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2. Pacific Ocean
3. Larkspur & water lily
4. Jannik Sinner
5. Hypothalamus
6. Pyrophobia
7. Zagros Mountains
8. Poseidon
9. Alcohol
10. Quiver

SUDOKU

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

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DENALI ULTIMATE
4X4 CREW CAB
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*Based on stock #26G339. See dealer for details. Offer expires July 31, 2026.

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*O.A.C. Based on stock # 26C292. \$1,055.12 D.O.D., \$4,371.14 COB. 16,000km/year allocation. Excess KM cost \$0.16/km/year. A/X/D rules apply. See dealer for details. Offer expires July 31, 2026.

FINANCE FROM **\$141** /WEEKLY*
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RS 4DR ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

At 4.49%*
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*O.A.C. Based on stock #26C354 with a price of \$44,703.50 \$1,000 D.O.D., \$8,209.03 COB. A/X/D rules apply. See dealer for details. Offer expires July 31, 2026.

LEASE FROM **\$139** /WEEKLY*
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Up to
\$3,921
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At 3.9%*
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