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FREE

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Christmas donations important for Helping Hand Food Bank

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Tillsonburg Helping Hand Food Bank coordinator Samantha Hamilton is asking area residents to consider donating food when making seasonal giving decisions.

"We do still purchase (in the winter months), but Christmas donations sustain us until Easter, when we do more food drives," she said. "If we don't see it in December, we don't see it all."

The need for food is year-round, but increases at Christmas.

One way to make donations is by using the pre-packaged grocery bags available at local grocery stores.

"It's a really easy way for people to help," Hamilton said, explaining it's easy for people to pay for a bag while shopping and then leave it in the bin on the way out.

Food drives at both local industries and businesses are a great help to the food bank.

"Small to large, it doesn't matter," Hamilton said. "We really depend on food drives from businesses to get us through the coming months."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 5

Tillsonburg council turns down feasibility study on new rec facility

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tillsonburg council turned down \$85,000 in funding for a feasibility study for what it terms a Multi-Use Recreational Facility (MURF) at the Nov. 24 meeting, but did set money aside to complete the study in the future.

The concept of a multi-use indoor facility

has been on the town's capital project list for several years in the future, but was brought forward after a presentation by Jesse Goossens, president of Basketball Tillsonburg, and Shane Curtis, past-president of the Kinsmen Club, last December. They raised the possibility of community partnerships in building such a facility. It could contain indoor soccer fields, basketball courts and other sports courts.

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CHRISTMAS DECOR HIGHLIGHTED IN TOUR

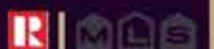
(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Amongst the stunning images in each of the locations included in the annual Tour of Homes organized by the Station Arts Centre, the concept of Christmas and welcoming people into the homes was captured well at the Lisgar Avenue home of Dennis and Christy Jeffery with Doreta Topan at the door, greeting guests while two giant nutcrackers provided an honour guard. The tour included six homes and businesses, and had more than 200 participants.

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Annandale House Christmas events start this weekend

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

This weekend will be a busy one at Annandale House with the opening of a new historic Christmas exhibit, seasonal splendour on display in each room, and the lighting of the tree.

With 2025 being the bicentennial of the town's founding, this theme carries through in the display at the Pratt gallery. Jen Gibson, collections and exhibition specialist at Annandale House National Historic Site, said the exhibit covers Christmas in the first half of the 1800s.

She said it's much different than today.

"They couldn't just get all the decorations from Canadian Tire because all their decorations were what they had around the house – nuts, feathers, wood, and evergreen boughs," she said.

In fact, the first store in Tillsonburg was opened by Benjamin VanNorman in the 1830s.

The Christmas tree in the display is decorated in such a way with popcorn, cranberries, and gingerbread cookies that a class at the museum baked. Gibson did point out that Christmas trees weren't popular until 1848, when the public became aware of Queen Victoria's tree.

"For families like the Tillsons (in the early years), they not likely had a tree because they wouldn't have had room," Gibson said.

Near the Christmas tree is a kissing ball, or kissing bough, made from greens, cranberries, and feathers.

Setters would greet their guests under the ball with a kiss of friendship," Gibson related. "It's kind of similar to what we do with mistletoe today."

The exhibit is broken down into several categories: winter fun, winter travel, gifts, Christmas communication, Christmas food and drink, and religion.

The food section even contains three 1800s recipes for gingerbread, mincemeat, and plum pudding.

Talking about gift giving in the 1800s, Gibson said, "They would have been handmade based on what they had around the house. They were less about abundance and more about thoughtful-

ness."

Life was hard for settlers in the early 1800s. When George Tillson founded the town in 1825, his was the only cabin in the area. Still, there is a section on winter fun in the 1800s, highlighting skiing, snowshoeing, and tobogganing.

"We want to emphasize it wasn't all work back then," Gibson said.

A classic sleigh is one of the highlights in the travel section.

"In that period, travel in the winter was easier than other times," Gibson said. "Because of the snow on the roads, there weren't the ruts to get stuck in the winter."

With many people have recollections of receiving heaps of Christmas cards when they were younger, it might be assumed this was the case in early Ontario. Not so, said Gibson. There were no Christmas cards in that time period, only letters, and in fact no post office until 1841. Seasonal letters would recap the family's activities over the past year.

"A letter in that time period would have been rare and to be treasured," she added.

Seasonal splendour

As has been the practice in the past, all of the rooms in Annandale House were decorated by volunteers. The site was also part of this weekend's tour of homes.

"Most people have gone really traditional," noted Kathleen Watkin, culture and heritage program coordinator, explaining how rooms are decorated is up to the volunteers.

New this year is an adopt-a-doll program where attendees can adopt a doll and take it home. Volunteer Mary Jane Kekes organized this and has been collecting dolls for it all year.

The annual tree lighting will take place on Nov. 28 at 7 p.m. There will be a band playing in the facility that evening, and Santa Claus will be in the Pratt gallery from 7 to 9 p.m. Children's author Nichola Zacher will be reading her book "Marley's Christmas Adventures" at ANHS on Saturday, Nov. 29, at 9 a.m.

Admission to Annandale House is by donation on Friday, Nov. 28, from 6:30 to 9 p.m., and throughout the weekend. Regular admission rates then apply



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)

Volunteers Nancy Sherman, left, and Leslie Cameron used a Christmas wedding theme in the room they decorated in Annandale National Historic Site. Each room is decorated by various volunteers as part of the annual Christmas festivities.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)

Jen Gibson, collections and exhibition specialist at Annandale House National Historic Site, puts the finishing touches on a sleigh in the Christmas in the 1800s exhibit that opens this weekend.

through the season.

Giving Tuesday

ANHS will be participating in Giving Tuesday with a fundraising campaign. Cultural Heritage Manager/Curator Kate Bakos said there has been a renewed emphasis on supporting communities.

"Local heritage thrives when local people support it," she said. "Every contribution made to ANHS stays here in Tillsonburg, directly enriching the programs, exhibits, and hands-on experiences that serve our community from youth to seniors."



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Admission is by donation all weekend.



Tillsonburg council briefs from Nov. 10 meeting

Draft plan of subdivision extended

Tillsonburg council supported a two-year extension of draft approval of a subdivision planned for North Street West.

The request for the extension came from Southside Construction Management Ltd. for a subdivision on the corner of Quarter Town Line and North Street West. The first phase of the 103-lot subdivision was approved in 2023, and consisted of 37 lots. This application for an

extension was in regards to the remaining 66 lots.

The approval for the second phase would have lapsed in February 2026.

Another four-way stop?

Tillsonburg council directed staff to look at the feasibility of a four-way stop at the intersection of Sanders Street and Hardy Ave. The action followed a recommendation from the town's Traffic Advisory Committee.

Free pickleball for students

A suggestion from the town's Recreation and Sports Advisory Committee to allow Glendale physical education classes to use the town's pickleball courts at no charge was accepted by council. The fee removal only applies for physical education classes.

Home construction slowing

While residential building activity in Tillsonburg slowed as of the end of the third quarter, industrial and commercial building increased.

Total permits issued for residential were \$22.4 million in 2025 for the first nine months, which compares to \$63 million for 2024, and \$92 million in 2021. Looking at the statistics by single-family dwellings, the number was up slightly from last year with 22 as compared to 16 in 2024. That still pales in comparison to the 63 permits issued for single dwellings in 2023 and 156 in 2021. Permits issued for townhomes were 32 in 2025, and 82 in 2024. Total permits issued for new dwellings were 62 in 2025, and 239 last year.

The value of industrial building permits issued in 2025 was \$50.7 million, up from the \$35.6 million in 2026, which was the highest value in the last five years.

Otter Lane declared surplus

Otter Lane, a small street off Parkwood Drive, was declared surplus by Tillsonburg council at the Nov. 10 meeting.

The process was started after the town received a request from an adjacent property owner interested in purchasing the property. The right-of-way was never improved and no objections were raised by town staff.

An appraisal will be done on the property. It can't be built on due to a municipal drain traversing it.

And the survey says

A recent survey conducted by Oxford County in prepa-

ration for coming county and town budgets showed most people feel the overall value they receive for their tax dollars is fair to good.

The number of the respondents more than doubled from last year's 150 to 322.

Respondents ranked various town services if the level of service should be improved, maintained or reduced. Roads and bridges led the improve category with 30.2 per cent of respondents asking for improvements, while 62.4 per cent wanted to see the level of service maintained. Bylaw enforcement was on top of the level of service most respondents wanted to see reduced at 33.9 per cent. While 51.3 per cent desired maintaining bylaw's level of service, only 13.1 per cent wanted to see it improved.

The results were extrapolated to be accurate for 95 per cent of town residents, and will be considered when preparing the town budget.

Deputy Mayor Dave Beres used the survey to provide a little education about residential taxes, saying only 57 cents of the dollar on tax bills received by residents goes to the town. The majority of the remainder goes to Oxford County and a small portion for education.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy, the town's representative on Oxford County council, commented that the county did a fantastic job laying out the responsibilities of county and town services in the survey.

Wildlife feeding restrictions

Tillsonburg council amended its animal control bylaw to provide more flexibility to restrict the number of birds feeders if it reaches the point of attracting vermin.

A report on the matter stemmed from a resident's complaint that a neighbour had an excessive number of feeders, which were attracting rats. While the suggested amendment wasn't meant to control the number of feeders, it did provide bylaw enforcement personnel with some teeth in situations where feeding wildlife was creating a nuisance.

Park bench donation

Town council gave a green light to a planned donation of a park bench for the Glendale Park.

The bench will be donated by the Ellenberger family and the Sooley family will provide labour for installation.

Jeff Helsdon
LJI Reporter

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Tillsonburg POST

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1. Everyone has a story

2. The news should be free for all to enjoy

3. Good news beats bad news

4. A Newspaper should be a community effort (contribute to your local paper!)

5. Newspapers document history

6. Newspapers strengthen communities

7. Advertisers, big or small, should profit from their ads (meaning sensible ad rates)

8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

Christmas donations important for Helping Hand Food Bank

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

One bonus in recent months has been farmers bringing their surplus to the food bank that would have been discarded. She cautioned that the food bank can't take meat, eggs and milk directly from farmers that haven't been processed.

The demand for the food bank has been increasing constantly in recent months.

"We are over-capacity every week," Hamilton said. "We are running out of appointments. We have so many people need us and needing us more often."

Asked the reason for the increased demand, Hamilton said people are at the breaking point, and living pay cheque to pay cheque.

"Now prices are increased, they are maxed out," she said, adding that some

people depend on overtime, and it hasn't been there lately, starting a cycle of putting groceries on credit cards.

The food bank is open for donations on Tuesday or Wednesday mornings at the back door. There is also a Cram the Cruiser event planned at Metro on Dec. 13.

One common question is whether anything particular is needed, to which Hamilton answered, "Everything."

"Anything works," she added. "Even if it's not typical inventory, it goes into the market. There's nothing we won't take."

Hamilton described the market as a section of the food bank where people can go to augment their allotment beyond the staples.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Volunteers at the Tillsonburg Helping Hand Food Bank have been busy stocking shelves amid increased demand. There are several avenues for donating beyond dropping off food, including purchasing bags of staples at the grocery store and participating in food drives at many businesses.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

HICKORY HILLS CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Hickory Hills Christmas Bazaar was a busy place on Nov. 22, with a bazaar, book sale, silent auction and penny auction. One of the most popular draws was the tea room that featured tea, sandwiches and cookies served at the tables.

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Money for study set aside to complete it in the future

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

At the March 10 meeting, council approved a feasibility study for the project after Andrea Greenway, Director of Recreation, Parks and Facilities, reminded council that any infrastructure funding from the province would require projects to be shovel-ready, including having a study completed. The issue was back before council Monday night to confirm funding sources for the study, but in the end, council delayed the study to a to-be-determined future date.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy said that if the study were completed and construction costs were \$23 million, which was more than Goossens and Curtin estimated, it could "cripple" the town.

Director of Finance/Treasurer Renato Pullia said that if the full amount were financed, it would push the town's debt limit to 22 per cent, approaching the 25 per cent limit. He said this would restrict debt for other projects, such as the public works yard, and a third ice pad. He explained the other issue was the capital forecast was prepared using potential development charge (DC) funding from future development in the town.

"If the town would proceed with construction prior to those DC funds being available, the town would have to finance the project through its funds,

through debt, and then pay back once those DC were available," he said.

Currently there is only \$1.5 million in the DC reserve for parks and recreation use.

Gilvesy understood the need to have projects shovel-ready, but significant repairs are required at the fire hall next year. If the MURF is seven to 10 years down the road, she questioned why to do the study now.

"Everything in this report demonstrates this could literally cripple the town financially if we move forward with it, especially in the next five years," she said.

Coun. Bob Parsons said there is a need for the MURF and questioned how long a study would remain valid.

Greenway replied the portion of the study that looks at site selection, environmental factors, economic and social benefits would remain valid, but the costs could change.

Deputy Mayor Dave Beres, whose turn it was to present the motion, said the suggested motion was that the study go ahead with \$28,000 of the funding coming from the facilities reserve and the remainder from the DC reserve. He raised the possibility of not proceeding and setting the money aside.

Parsons said with all the capital projects needed with limited funds, and this project taxing the town's debt load, he won't support the study.

"As much as I agree it's needed, we just can't afford it," he said.

Coun. Chris Parker agreed the MURF was needed, but also had concerns about debt capacity. He was in favour of keeping the money in reserve to complete the study later.

Coun. Kelly Spencer noted the study could identify the location and questioned what else might change.

Greenway answered the majority of things that would change would be the financial pieces, maintenance costs, staffing costs of running a new facility, and the construction cost.

"If we defer it, we are we putting other people off, potentially service clubs," said Coun. Pete Luciani, adding if the study had no future value, it would be a waste of money, but if there was some value, it should be done.

Gilvesy provided clarification received from staff that the DC money will be there, but the facility reserve money would need to be earmarked.

Spencer asked staff for their recommendation.

Pullia said it would be a prudent step, and there

are several factors to consider before building a \$25-million facility, including construction and operating costs relative to revenue.

"We don't want to build a facility, and then have a half a million dollars that would have to end up on the taxes just to operate it if there aren't enough fees being generated from users," he said, explaining this is why it is linked to DCs and growth, with the expectation there will be another 5,500 people in town when it's built.

"We're not saying no to the project, we're saying no to the project for now because it will exhaust our credit limit," Beres said.

Luciani and Spencer delivered the final words before the vote, saying the study should go ahead.

"If the feasibility study shows it might even be more than that, or we would never make that much money, then we know, and this is over," Spencer said. "I kind of agree if the shelf life is still going to be fine in seven to 10 years, and if the money is just going to be saved somewhere else, why not just spend it and get the feasibility study."

The motion to proceed with the study was defeated, but a subsequent motion earmarked \$28,000 from the facilities reserve to complete the study in the future.



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Police investigating break and enter near Courtland

Police are asking for the public's assistance in identifying the individuals involved in a break-and-enter near Courtland.

On Friday, Nov. 21, , at approximately 9 a.m., the Norfolk County Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to a reported break-and-enter at a business on Highway 3, just outside Courtland.

The investigation determined that at around 4:30

a.m. that morning, at least two unidentified individuals forced their way into a secure area of the property and attempted, unsuccessfully, to steal two sets of tires and rims from pickup trucks on-site. The suspects were last seen fleeing the area in a newer model GMC or Chevrolet pickup truck towing an older-style snowmobile trailer.

Police are actively conducting an ongoing investigation and are appealing to the public for assistance. Anyone with relevant information is urged to contact the Norfolk County OPP at 1-888-310-1122.

Should you wish to remain anonymous, you may call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or leave an anonymous online tip at www.helpsolvecrime.com where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward of up to \$2,000.



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GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

Weekend Quiz

by Jake Grant

1. What is the street address of the White House?	country in Africa by area?
2. What kind of dog is Scooby-Doo?	6. What does DNA stand for?
3. The practice of drawing electoral district boundaries to give one political party an advantage is called?	7. Who is Katy Perry currently dating?
4. What is the main body of an aircraft called?	8. What is Warren Buffett's company called?
5. What is the largest	9. Who is Bluey the dog's sister?
	10. True or False. A group of geese is called a gaggle.

This week's answers are found on pg. 23

EDITORIAL

Letter to the Editor

Legion thanks businesses, residents for their support

On behalf of the Royal Canadian LegOn behalf of the Royal Canadian Legion Varnavair Branch 153, we would like to thank the local businesses who responded to our mail appeal, the many establishments that allowed us to put poppy boxes in their premises, and of course, to citizens of Tillsonburg and area that generously donated to our 2025 Poppy Campaign.

We would also like to acknowledge the local businesses that included a Remembrance Day Message on their electronic signs, message boards and those that did window displays.

The response this year was still

generous as our donations topped \$24,000.00. This will allow the Legion to assist local veterans, their families, as well as veterans at Parkwood Institute. These funds also support bursaries to Glendale students and the Varnavair 153 Cadet Squadron.

Thank you to the many people that attended the cenotaph services and those that participated in the service as they were greatly appreciated by the veterans.

Once again, on behalf of the Tillsonburg Legion, our heartfelt thank you to our great community of Tillsonburg for their response.

*Yours in Remembrance,
Don Burton, Poppy Chairman*



A gaggle of geese.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

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

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

Competitive rider loves her little red horse



**EVERYONE
HAS A
STORY
TO TELL**

ROBIN KRAFFT

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Nikki Chesterman has fond memories of racing go karts, quadding, and snowmobiling with her family, but eventually she chose horse over cart.

Nikki lives just outside of town with partner Justin Craig, on a farm property which he manages, caring for 30 horses, chickens, ducks, geese, cows, donkey, sheep, goats and even a water buffalo. She helps him with hay and cleaning out the barn, and they often participate in parades and offer wagon rides with the draft horses.

From turtles and lizards to cats and dogs, Nikki always had animals growing up, but she felt a special connection

to horses. She remembers throwing Barbie dolls away if they came with the toy horse because the horse was what she wanted the most. She spent a lot of time with her grandparents, Milton and Ilene, and they connected her to family friends Al and Judie Atkinson, who introduced her to the equine world when she was 12 years old.

"Horses just had something calming about their nature and when you looked into their eyes it was like you were looking into their soul, and that is where I felt the most at home," Chesterman said.

She loved the sights and sounds of the barn and all of the work that was involved: helping with bailing the hay, keeping the barnyard clean, caring for the horses and training them to lead and ride. Later that year, she got Bandit, a little red shaggy quarter horse colt. He was a weanling, just five months old. It was love at first sight; she knew he was the one for her.

"We learned a lot together and grew up together to where we are now. I trained him and raised him myself (with Al and Judie's guidance) and put my own blood sweat and tears into it, but he's worth his weight in gold now," she said, smiling.

Al and Judie were excellent mentors, introducing her to the world of competitive horse shows. Nikki participated in numerous shows over the years, from pageant style shows which emphasize the bond between horse and handler to barrel racing and pole bending, where speed is the objective.

She graduated from the Veterinary Office Administration program at the University of Guelph. After her practicum placement at Rocky Rapids Vet Service in Alberta, she was offered a full-time job. She stayed for six years, gaining valuable experience in working with small and large animals, from pets and farm animals to wildlife and exotics. A typical day might involve treating a constipated python, x-raying an eagle with a broken wing, trimming hedgehog nails or helping with a bovine c-section.

Bandit was with her, and they competed in some local club shows during that time, but Nikki missed her family and wanted to come home. She returned to Tillsonburg at the end of 2019, just before the pandemic, and a few years passed before she was able to return to the Norfolk Saddle Club, where she had shown as a youth competitor. She got into ranch

riding, which involves various gaits and speeds while performing a pattern, like going over logs or performing spins.

Nikki loved it, and it was a good fit for Bandit too. They achieved the overall high point for the class a few years running, including this year, and moved up to a tougher breed level competition.

Her coach, Chanda Burke, encouraged her to join a group that was traveling to Tulsa, Oklahoma for another ranch division competition at the Color Breed Congress. It was daunting, but everyone was welcoming and supportive and they were feeling pretty confident in their abilities. The show would be livestreamed, and it was the biggest show they'd ever entered. Nikki didn't want to disappoint anyone watching from home, and she certainly didn't want to fall off during a live broadcast.

"Not only did we not fall off, but we came home with a Congress Champion, Reserve Congress Champion, 3x Top Five and 4x Top Ten," she said. "Words could not describe how proud I was of my little red horse. He showed me that if I was willing to try, he would be right there with me. He truly is my best friend that has been with me through it all."

The attempted murder of Ernie Simmons



**THE
STAGE
IS THE
WORLD**

LAUREL A. BEECHEY

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

A year later on December 15, 1969, about 4:45pm, Ernie was working on some machines in his yard when he was approached by a young man who was interested in buying a car, so Ernie took him to the south of the house where the old cars were kept. Doing so, he noticed new tracks in the fresh snow and knew he was in trouble. Before he could defend himself, a masked man stepped out from behind some old trucks and a third masked person, appeared.

The stories vary from here...was he shot outside or inside?

The first masked man fired a revolver several times and Ernie fell. The men kicking him, demanded money. Ernie having none on him, insisted they take him to the

house, or they'd get nothing. One man grabbed him by the arm, another by the hair, and they dragged him into the house.

The other version was there were six men who accosted Ernie, took him to the house for the cash and there he found the men had tied his senile mother up. Roughing Ernie further did not get him to tell where his stash was. He was then shot seven times: in the nape of the neck, upper arms, chest and groin. Ernie told them where the money was hidden. They found \$175, cut the phone line and ran, leaving him for dead. Ernie crawled to the window and saw the getaway car was a '55 or '56 Chevrolet, possibly two-tone. He then crawled over to the phone and spliced the wires together and called the police. A half-hour later the police and ambulance arrived to take both he and Grace to the hospital.

The mother, traumatised but not injured, was transferred to a senior home as there was no family to care for her on the farm. Ernie, although badly injured, was worried about the farm as no one was there to protect his collection. After only three weeks, he checked himself out of the Tillsonburg Hospital and went home. A neighbour, after not seeing any signs of Ernie in January, found him alone and dead in his house from pneumonia. Ernie's mother, Grace, never really recovered from the shock she experienced. She died a few months later in Norfolk General Hospital.

Having no living family or will, the Public Trustees of Ontario handled the task of disposing of Simmons' assets. The grand Mammoth Auction took place in Sep-

tember 1970.

Fifty years later, Skies Magazine, published Eric Duman's article on Sep. 8th, 2020, about a 'North American Aviation NA-64 Yale, built in 1940 that circled on Sep 5th, 2020, over a remote farm in Norfolk County, south of Tillsonburg. Shane Clayton, part owner of the RCAF 3372, worked for 19 months to return it to flying status' for just this occasion. To honour Ernest Van Simmons? No, it was to 'Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 'historic world-famous auction sale' that had Ernie Simmons name on it. Only fitting that the plane used was Yale 3372. one of Ernie's Yales, once rotting in his fields, now brought back to life "slipping the surly bonds of earth." [High Flight by John Gillespie Magee, Jr.]

Ernie's legacy lives on here in Tillsonburg with RCAF 3399. 3399 was made by North American Aviation, in Inglewood, Calif., Sep 16, 1940. It was a star in 1942 Warner Brothers movie, "Captains of the Clouds" with James Cagney! RCAF 3399 was disposed of Sep 25, 1946, as scrap in Hamilton but saved with many other Yales by Ernest V. Simmons. 3399 was then purchased at the 1970 Mammoth Auction by Mr. Don Goddard and obtained in 1987 by the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association [CHAA], whose restoration team was to restore it to air-worthy condition.

This was accomplished under the direction of ex-RCAF Wing Commander, Lou J. Hill, to whom the 3399 is dedicated to. She flew again on May 20, 2010 and the plane's home is at the Tillsonburg Airport, just as I believe, Ernie had hoped all his planes would one day.

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NATIVITY SCENES OF ALL SHAPES AND SIZES (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)
One of the things that set the St. John's Christmas Market apart from other bazaars was the more than 20 nativity scenes set up in the Anglican church sanctuary. Mary Wilson, left, and Pat Ankersmit look at one of the nativity scenes on display during the event on Nov. 22. The scenes on display came from church members and decorations the church had on hand. The event also featured a luncheon, baking and a bazaar.

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Peri-operative nurses are the unsung heroes of an operating room

HOSPITAL HAPPENINGS

LISA DAHM

Integrated Executive Assistant, AHI/TDMH

Throughout the year, Alexandra Hospital, Ingersoll (AHI) and Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital (TDMH), a part of Rural Roads Health Services (RRSH), are proud to celebrate recognition and awareness days for National Pharmacist Day, World Cancer Day, National Laundry and Linen Week, and Occupational Therapy Month. Not to mention, the more commonly known National Nurses Week, Pink Shirt Day and Patient Experience Week are also recognized.

You may have seen earlier in November

we celebrated Medical Radiation Technologist (MRT) week, and International Accounting Day as well as Nurse Practitioner Week and World Diabetes Day. Another group who deserves to be celebrated and who also has an awareness day in November is the peri-operative nurses.

Perioperative (Peri-op) Nurses Week is recognized annually on the second week of November - in 2025 that was Nov. 9 to 15. Peri-op Nurses Week is a celebration of every perioperative nurse and the vital role they play in making surgery safe. It is an important week celebrating the achievements and contributions of perioperative nurses to the medical field.

Perioperative nurses are a specially trained group of nurses who work in operating rooms and support the care of surgical patients. You may wonder what does a perioperative nurse do? They are vital to supporting the operating team and facilitating a smooth surgical procedure. This can be in the Pre-op clinic where you re-



The TDMH Peri-op team in a rare quiet moment.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

view your upcoming surgery and what to expect, to the care for the day of surgery. This might also be in clinics where you are seen after your surgery for follow-up.

They contribute significantly to helping patients recover from operations successfully by performing many duties to support surgeons and make patients comfortable throughout every stage of a medical operation, including completing intake forms and paperwork, educating patients about healthcare topics, assisting surgeons with performing procedures, handling instruments and obtaining them for surgeons, maintaining a patient's safety and comfort during an operation, monitoring patient vital signs during procedures and providing resources to patients for proper aftercare.

The TDMH peri-op nurse team are routinely involved in a range of surgery types including general surgeries, orthopaedics

including hip and knee replacements, cataracts and endoscopy, and that doesn't account for the emergency surgeries that can happen at a moment's notice. They're always ready to go and give their all to whatever patients might be under their care on a particular day. They're always on the move; surgery is a busy unit every day.

This team is regularly recognized by patients through patient experience surveys, receiving glowing feedback about the care they provide. Feedback from TDMH day surgery patients is 99 per cent positive and the peri-op nursing team is a big part of the reason why. The care and expertise they show the surgical patients is amazing.

Peri-op nurses could be considered the unsung heroes of any surgical department. We want to celebrate our TDMH peri-op nursing team for everything they do to support our patients. Not just during Peri-operative Nurses week, but every day.



BIG BAZAAR

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

St. Mary's C.W.L. Mistletoe Magic 2025 Bazaar was held in the church basement and the adjacent Father Langan Parish Centre on Nov. 15. Besides the typical bazaar items, the event included an optional lunch and a penny sale. Bill Hoff is seen here trying his luck at one of the penny sale items.

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Wiltshire Realty opens on Tillson Ave

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The opening of Wiltshire Realty at 67B Tillson Ave is a dream come true for owners Bryan and Amanda Wiltshire.

The grand opening of the office was on Nov. 14. The business was previously located in the back of the building behind Oldridge Heating and Cooling and Calm the Soul Yoga since its launch in 2022.

"I knew when I got my license originally, I would open a brokerage. I started real estate with \$13 in my chequing account," Bryan said.

He had been selling real estate since 2009, initially with Morgan Realty, and then Re/Max Tri-County Realty. Amanda began selling about five years ago, starting at Re/Max.

Since the company opened, they stressed the small-town touch, something Bryan said he learned from the realtors that assisted him.

"Relationships really matter in small towns," he said. "Trust and service really go a long way. There's certain things you can do to accomplish that, especially in a rural small town."

Since the business opened, he has shared the same values with the agents in the office. He stresses client satisfaction and low-pressure sales. Today, he is proud of the team he has assembled that share his values.

"I always enjoyed mentoring and helping new agents," he said. "Part of that got into a mentoring role, not just about real estate but sales in general."

Bryan was also glad to see the family name back on a sign in front of a business. His grandparents owned Wiltshire Sports in Delhi in the 1960s.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

The staff and ownership of Wiltshire Realty took part in a ribbon cutting at the recent open house. Left to right are: Craig Todt, Brianne Gurski, Bryan Wiltshire, Amanda Wiltshire, Melissa McDonald and Cam Hughes.

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Silliker, Bruder enjoy 'sweet' 2025 Captains/Veterans girls' basketball experience

JEFF TRIBE

Post Correspondent

Tillsonburg Gemini senior girls' basketball point guard Sophia Silliker found the 2025 Girls Captains/Veterans Basketball Game to be one 'sweet' opportunity.

"It's like a big hurrah because it's also my last year," she smiled Thursday, Nov. 20 at the Wood-

stock CI Devildome.

The annual event celebrates high school girls' basketball in Oxford County, along with Thames Valley Regional Athletics (TVRA) Southeast compatriot Lord Dorchester. Selected captains and veterans from Glendale, Dorchester, Ingersoll DCI, and Woodstock CI, Huron Park, College Avenue and St.

Mary's are combined in Team Black and Team Blue rosters, tipping off in what could be termed the basketball equivalent of 'friendlies.'

Sponsored T-shirts for each player, draw prizes, a series of basketball-related contests (bump, centre-court shooting and most baskets in a minute) and live announcing courtesy of

host coaches Eric Molinaro and Jason Poole contribute to a lively, celebratory atmosphere. Proceeds from the event support the WCI Festive Campaign for CAS.

The junior game, featuring Gemini Kate Bruder on the Blue entry along with players from Dorchester, St. Mary's, WCI and Huron Park faced a roster comprised of players from Woodstock CI, Ingersoll DCI and College Avenue.

Silliker suited up with a quartet of CASS teammates, three from Dorchester and two from Huron Park. The opposition was sourced from WCI, St. Mary's and IDCI. At the final buzzer, 12 points from St. Mary's guard Aliyah Anthony and 11 from WCI's Ava Bickell's led the Team Black to a 44-19 victory. CASS's Emily Pye had five in a losing cause.

It was strange to not suit up with familiar Gemini teammates Silliker admitted, but also fun to meet and play with people she'd only previously seen as opponents.

Athletics have been a big part of Silliker's high school experience, basketball, rugby and track. The 400 is her specialty in the latter, although she's adding the 800 this year, hoping to try out for the Brock University track team next year. While looking forward to that, she's also aware she'll miss high school teammates, a realization punctuated by the captains/veterans experience.



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Gemini junior Captains/Veterans representative Kate Bruder (left) defends against IDCI's Mackenzie Pirrie.

"It feels like I was in Grade 9 yesterday," Silliker admitted with a smile. "It's bittersweet."

Her Gemini compatriot had as much fun with less immediacy around athletic transition considerations. Bruder contributed four points, two behind Blue Team leader Reagan White from Huron Park in a 42-12 loss to Team Black. A strong core of WOSSAA AA champion Red Devils was paced offensively by Natalie Sutherland (12) and Addison Weicker

(11).

"It was nice to meet everyone from other schools, get to know people from other schools," said Bruder. "It was a really good game, nice competition."

A Grade 9 rookie during the 2025 season, Bruder has at least another three years of high school eligibility to build on an enjoyable first season.

"A great team of girls," she concluded. "We had lots of fun at every practice and every game."



(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Gemini point guard Sophia Silliker (left) battles St. Mary's guard Aliyah Anthony for possession of the ball.

Tillsonburg Glass moves into second in Club Oxford B

JEFF GWYN
Post Contributor

Tillsonburg Glass moved into second place in Club Oxford's B Division with two wins in play in last week.

Nov. 16
A Division
ReMax 3, Apple Shack 1

ReMax played a simple game, having their rushes and getting plenty of shots on net. They kept Apple Shack to the outside and limited rebounds. Apple Shack had some solid rushes but couldn't get any bounces to go their way. They fought hard until the end and did break out ReMax's shutout bid.

Rob Smith had a goal for ReMax. Kelsey VanYmeren had the goal for Apple Shack.

Fody's 10, Health Hut 5

Fody's looked unstoppable from the puck drop. Every rush seemed to have a scoring chance, and they had the flood gates opened in the first. They played a bit looser in the second and gave up some goals midway through. Health Hut looked shellshocked in the first, but did battle back to score five in the game. A short bench played a role in the slow start.

Shayne Johnson had four points for Fody's. Andrew VanWyk had five points for Health Hut.

B Division
Glass 5, Source 1

Glass was able to get the lead, and then keep Source from their breakouts. A solid defensive effort in the second made sure the lead was protected. Source couldn't get much going for the most part, but did have some chances late, and then fell victim to long empty-net goals.

Chris VanKasteren had four points for Glass. Brent Beekman had the goal for Source.

Carquest 5, RND 3

A solid first period gave Carquest the breathing room to focus a bit in their zone. They had more chances in the second, but didn't let RND get too close when it mattered. RND seemed a step behind in the first, but put some pressure on in the second and then just ran out of time to get the point.

Dana Kobayashi had two points for Carquest. Cody VanDeCappelle had a goal for RND.

B-Line 3, Prouse Mortgages 2

B-Line did well to stay focused the whole game and were able to try some different lines. They kept a dangerous Prouse Mortgages team away from the net most of the night. Prouse Mortgages couldn't get much sustained pressure, but did manage some good chances. They didn't give B-Line much in front of the net in this one.

Tyler Sergeant had two points for B-Line. Stephan Coulombe had two points for Prouse Mortgages.

gages.

Royal LePage 6, Airmount 0

Royal LePage has found their offense and are looking to keep it going. They pressured all night and didn't give much room on the ice. Airmount had to rely on breakout passes, but couldn't cash in. It was a tough night defensively as Royal LePage was pressuring much of the night.

Mark Klyn had a shutout and Landon Thibert had two goals for Royal LePage.

Nov. 19
B Division
Source 5, B-Line 1

Source had a bit of jump after their first loss in the last game. They held on and broke through late in the second to get back in the win column. B-Line was in this game until late when they lost momentum after Source's third goal, and were glad this one ended when it did.

Brent Beekman had four points for Source. Hunter Luscombe had the goal for B-Line.

Jeff Prouse Mortgages 5, Royal LePage 5

Prouse Mortgages looked to be in control of this one, as they were getting chances from different scorers and areas. They had to hold on for the point after a late push by Royal LePage. Royal LePage is finding ways to get points and are playing the full game. They didn't give up and tied it with five seconds left.

Kyle Underhill had three points for Prouse Mortgages. Nick Brotz had three points for Royal LePage.

Glass 3, Carquest 1

Glass has been moving up the standing with their simple game play. They took advantage of their opportunities and didn't let Carquest get many second chances in this one. Carquest were a bit frustrated in this one, having trouble getting pressure. They made a push at the end, but just fell short.

Chase Corbeil had a goal for Glass. Nathan DaCosta had a goal for Carquest.



(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Tillsonburg Glass and Source for Sports players battle for control of the puck in the neutral zone during a Sunday night game. Glass won the game 5-1.

CLUB OXFORD A DIVISION	GP	W	L	T	PTS
FODY'S AUTOMOTIVE	9	7	2	0	14
REMAX REALTY	9	6	2	1	13
THE HEALTH HUT	9	2	6	1	5
THE APPLE SHACK	9	2	7	0	4

CLUB OXFORD B DIVISION	GP	W	L	T	PTS
SOURCE FOR SPORTS	8	8	0	0	16
TILLSONBURG GLASS	8	4	2	2	10
CARQUEST AUTO PARTS	8	4	2	2	10
JEFF PROUSE MORTGAGES	8	3	2	3	9
B-LINE TRUCKING	8	3	3	2	8
ROYAL LEPAGE	8	1	5	2	4
AIRMOUNT FARMS	8	2	6	0	4
RND CONSTRUCTION	8	1	6	1	3

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Thunder lose a close one to first-place team

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

What an exciting game in the Thunderdome last Saturday. The first place Seaforth Centenaires were in town looking for revenge on their previous 3-2 loss to the Tillsonburg Thunder in October.

The first period set the tone of the game with no scoring. Both tenders were outstanding with Ben Blacker stopping all 17 shots for Tillsonburg and Seaforth tender Alex Hutcheson stopping a huge breakaway. The Thunder drew first blood, with Kurtis Heggie from Braden Roberts opened the scoring at 19:27 of the second with a shot from the point right along the ice through a maze of skates that found the back of the net. The rest of the shots werer stopped on both ends in the second period.

Seaforth evened it up at 19:15 of the third, and then slid a second in at 13:16 that just squeaked through Blacker's pads on a right wing rush. Two empty net goals sealed the Thunder's fate.

Although the Thunder are working

incredibly hard, and certainly never giving in to any of the top teams in the OEHL, the hockey gods are not relenting with a lucky bounce or greasy goal. The Thunder has also been struck with the Injury bug as Thunder Captain Justin Abraham went down with a knee injury in this game. The Thunder have been in every game that they fell short on. But the gods taketh and giveth...It is time for the later to kick in.

The Thunder play on the road on Friday at 8:30 against long-time foe Petrolia Squires. As I have said to many fans looking for which game to go on the road with the Thunder on, Petrolia is the place. In Petrolia, it is not a game...it is an adventure.

Saturday night, the Thunder travel to Milverton for a 5:30 p.m. puck drop. The Thunder are looking to stop the skid and start moving up the standings.

The next home game is on December at 7:30 p.m. versus the Delhi Flames. Delhi usually brings a bunch of fans to the Thunderdome so we all have to make sure they do not drown the Thunder fans out.

Aylmer, Norwich teams win fall classic bonspiel

NORA PETER

Post Contributor

The Fall Classic Mixed Bonspiel was held at the Tillsonburg Curling Club on the weekend with 12 teams competing for two trophies.

It was a day of fun and good curling with teams from the home club and teams from Ayr, Norwich, Simcoe, Aylmer and a curler who came in from Collingwood. The two trophies sponsored by Zeplyn Enterprises Inc. and E. & E. McLaughlin

Ltd were closely contested with the McClennan team from Aylmer the winner of the early draw taking the Zeplyn Enterprises trophy for the overall winner of the bonspiel scoring the highest points.

The late draw winner was the Janssens rink from Norwich who were awarded the E&E McLaughlin's trophy. The curlers want to thank our sponsors for their continued support and also send our appreciation out to the local businesses who generously donated to our draw table prizes.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Bonspiel convenor Les Peter awarded the E & E McLaughlin trophy on behalf of the sponsor to Team Janssens from Norwich. Left to right are: M. Hoogstraten, M. Corbett, J. Hoogstraten, D. Janssens, and convenor Les Peter.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Scott Wilson of Zeplyn Enterprises Inc was on hand to award the trophy to Team McClennan of Aylmer. Left to right are: Scott Wilson, H. Ivany, N. McClennan, A. McClennan and M. McClennan.

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Multi-Service Centre launches Giving Tuesday campaign

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

The Tillsonburg and District Multi-Service Centre is hoping the community continues to give to its Giving Tuesday campaign as it faces increased demand.

“As our community continues to grow, we’re committed to meeting their needs,” said Kathryn Leatherland, executive director of Tillsonburg District Multi-Service Centre.

Last year’s goal for the campaign was \$35,000, which was met. The goal this year is \$78,000, launching in time for Giving Tuesday on Dec. 2.

Leatherland said the increased campaign goal could be a challenge, but she is confident in the community’s past support.

“We find our community has been very generous to us in the past,” she said. “We have many community supporters, private citizens, and businesses who support the work we do in our community and continue to be generous with us.”

Tillsonburg Multi-Service Centre delivers a variety of services to the community, including Meals on Wheels, adult basic literacy, and safety checks. Its mission is to help people “live with dignity, hope, independence, and possi-

bility.”

Last year, the Multi-Service Centre supported more than 5,000 people, and is expecting a similar number for 2026.

“Many of our programs are experiencing an increase in people coming forward for service,” Leatherland said.

She attributed the increase need to the growing community, but also an increased need for bridging the gap between government-funded programs and people’s actual needs. For instance, there is an increase in request for Meals on Wheels, safety checks and the senior’s transportation program.

Leatherland said there is also an increase in adult literacy with people wanting to retrain to get a new job in today’s economy. There is no charge for adult literacy training.

“Every dollar donated supports people in the Tillsonburg area,” she said.

Fundraising dollars are also used to assist with volunteer recruitment for the centre’s many programs.

Fundraising appeals will be distributed next week throughout the community. An appeal will also be sent out to community supporters. Donations can be made through the web site at multi-servicecentre.com, by calling 519-842-9000 or stopping into the office at 96 Tillson Ave. Tax receipts are provided for donations of \$20 or more.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Tillsonburg District Multi-Service Centre is launching its Giving Tuesday campaign to contribute to the operational costs of the many programs offered by the facility. Kathryn Leatherland, executive director of the Multi-Service Centre, stands next to a promotional sign highlighting the many programs available.

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TOWNSHIP OF NORWICH NEWS



Township staff Christmas party nixed for now

LUKE EDWARDS

Post Contributor

Spreading Christmas cheer among Norwich Township staff won't include breaking bread, at least not yet.

Councillors altered a staff recommendation presented at the Nov. 11 council meeting, removing a section that authorized staff to plan a Christmas meal for Friday, Dec. 19. Instead, councillors opted for the traditional holiday bonus and directed staff to look at options for the future.

In the past, CAO Matt Smith said the township has traditionally held a holiday lunch with councillors and se-

nior staff following the last council meeting of the year.

"We'd like to share that out and have a meal with more of township staff," Smith said.

In light of that, the report recommended a staff wide meal on Dec. 19, with municipal buildings like town hall closing for the afternoon. Staff estimated it would cost about \$2,750 for the catered meal.

However, councillors were uneasy with the plan on a few fronts, mostly around the idea of holding it on a Friday afternoon.

"I'm going to be the Grinch I guess, but is this going to be paid for staff, that's a whole afternoon of staff," said

Coun. Adrian Couwenberg.

"I have no problem with acknowledging staff and the hard work they do throughout the year. I just question closing all the offices," added Coun. Shawn Gear.

Ultimately, council only voted to approve \$6,500 to pay for holiday gifts. Smith said staff have been looking at employee engagement and could bring forward a report in the coming months that looks at that, including possible staff events.

"I think important to promote a good community spirit," said Smith, adding at present they have no events that bring all of staff together.

Norwich joins call for province to reconsider speed camera restrictions

LUKE EDWARDS

Post Contributor

Councillors in Norwich have joined the chorus of calls asking for the provincial government to reconsider legislation that will ban automated speed enforcement cameras.

Coun. Shawn Gear put forward a motion requesting the province take another look at things, and received support from his colleagues at the Nov. 11 council meeting. Norwich had previously supported Oxford County's plan

to operate such cameras in an effort to reduce speeding.

"I personally don't believe the government gave this adequate time," Gear said.

Queen's Park has said it will look to other solutions to reduce speeding, though staff said there's little indication of what that will look like, especially from a funding standpoint. Other programs, such as one to help fill potholes, only covered a fraction of the cost, said CAO Matt Smith.

Gear said his motion acts as a reminder to the province that speeding remains an issue in municipalities like Nor-

wich.

"Let the upper government know we still have a speed enforcement problem," he said.

"We have an ongoing problem and we need a solution."

Some councillors had issues with the cameras, with Karl Toews calling it a form of government surveillance that makes some uneasy. However, they also acknowledged the success of the program.

"It's needed, and it was working," said Coun. Adrian Couwenberg.

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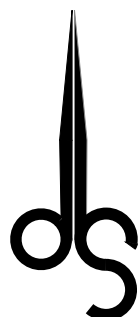
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MUSIC CORNER

Tax man by day, rock star by night: Attic Apostles play The Copper Mug on Friday



BEN ADDRESS

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

Dorchester-based cover band Attic Apostles are making their Tillsonburg debut at The Copper Mug this Friday, Nov. 28. If you are a fan of big choruses, air-guitar moments and packed dance floors, then this concert is the one for you.

The four-piece band, consisting of Kris Dixon on bass, John Raposo on vocals, Pete Acton on drums and Chris

Luty on guitar, have built a reputation in the London area for delivering entertaining nights built around classic rock, sing-alongs and crowd interaction.

The band has a sound that fits right in with what you hear on local FM radio dial.

"We can pretty comfortably slot ourselves in the classic rock genre. If you listen to the new 101.3, or 98.1, you will hear a lot of our setlist. We play a lot of Tragically Hip, U2, Queen and Journey," Luty explains. "One thing we aim for with song selection is whether or not it is danceable. If it has the right energy, it can motivate you to get up on the dance floor or sing along at your table, so you end up with songs like Footloose, The Middle and Just a Girl."

The Attic Apostles origin story is as small-town rock 'n' roll as it gets. The band was born not in a big studio but literally in an attic in Dorches-

ter. Attic Apostles started after Chris Luty and bassist Kris Dixon found themselves at a crossroads with their previous music projects.

"I was in a band that I was getting frustrated with as we did not have common interests and goals when it came to rehearsal and preparation for gigs," Luty says. "I was chatting with a friend who coincidentally also had a band that was imploding. I told him that I was kind of getting sick of the whole preparation for gigs and I built a music room in my attic and wanted to know if he wanted to come out and just jam. He said sure, and said that a singer named John Raposo was available. John has incredible pipes so I said sure. Prior to that, I had met a drummer when I was convening a soccer game just by virtue of wearing a Fender baseball hat."

What started as a no-pressure jam quickly took on a life of its own.

"We all met up in my attic and started to jam with no intention of gigging. The first song we jammed to was 'Gel' by Collective Soul and we all just sort of looked at each other and collectively muttered 'wow!' Three months later we were gigging," Luty reminisces. "We needed a name in a hurry so we put 'Attic' in a website called bandname-generator.com and went with 'Apostles' for no particular reason."

For Tillsonburg locals there is an extra hometown connection, so do not be surprised if you recognize the guy on guitar from your last tax appointment.

"I'm an accountant with a Tillsonburg accounting firm called BNG - Bossy Nagy Group. Fantastic company that has also supported another charity project I play in," Luty says. "I'm hoping to see a few fellow team members and clients out there that will get to

see this different side of their accountant."

Attic Apostles do not just stay parked on stage. With the band mostly on wireless gear they like to blur the line between performers and crowd.

"Peter Acton, our drummer, is the only one who is not wireless for obvious reasons. It is not unusual to see us out on the dance floor, raising a glass, in the aisles and behind the bar all while not missing a beat," Luty laughs. "Our mission every night is to engage you with songs that have the best sing-along vibes like Fat Bottomed Girls, Summer of 69 or Panama."

That focus on interaction fits right in with The Copper Mug's cozy, up-close atmosphere where the crowd is only ever a few steps from the band. Despite gigging regularly in the London area, this show will mark Attic Apostles first time playing Tillsonburg. You may have seen the band play

at the London Knights' Home opener street party but now here is your chance to see them in an intimate venue.

"We are really looking forward to playing in Tillsonburg for the first time. Typically, we play in the London area. I live in Dorchester and the rest of the band lives in London," Luty explains. "We appreciate the benefits of living and supporting businesses in a smaller town. The Copper Mug is a great venue for this."

With small town connections and a setlist packed with danceable hits, the Attic Apostles are gearing up to turn the start of the weekend into a full-on Friday night sing-along.

Attic Apostles perform this Friday at The Copper Mug. The show starts at 9 p.m. and is a free show with no cover charge. For more details and upcoming shows, you can follow the band on their social media at www.facebook.com/atticapostles

UPCOMING SHOWS

NOV. 27 - DAN HAMM
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 8 p.m.

NOV. 28 - ATTIC APOSTLES
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 9 p.m.

NOV. 29 - KARAOKE
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 3 p.m.

DEC. 5 - STUNT
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 8:30 p.m.

DEC. 7 - MUSIC TRIVIA
The Copper Mug
No Cover - 5:30 p.m.

DEC. 10 - EUCHRE NIGHT
The Copper Mug
6:30 p.m.

DEC. 12 - BOBNOXIOUS
Paddy's Underground
\$20 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed

DEC. 22 - DAYGLO ABORTION
W/ HELLAPHANT
Paddy's Underground
\$20 - 8 p.m. - All Ages/Licensed



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Calculator

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Book

I hang on the wall and show your face, but I never talk or leave my place. What am I?
Mirror

I'm white and thin with lines in rows; you write on me what your brain knows. What am I?
Notebook page

I can be cracked, I can be made, I can be told, I can be played. What am I?
Joke

I have a head and a tail but no legs. I'm often flipped. What am I?
Coin

I'm always running but never late. I show numbers on my face. What am I?
Clock

SUDOKU

		5			8			
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1	8	9	4					3
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5			1		2			9

Solutions on Page 23 Level: Beginner

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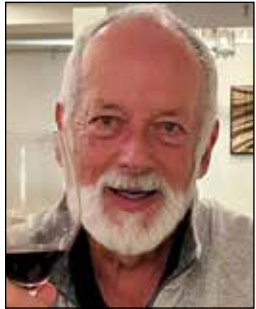
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WORD SEARCH
HOLIDAY FOOD

N	T	S	X	C	L	P	K	R	R	W	B	U	F	C	X	V	M	A	O
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- GINGERBREAD
- STUFFING
- CRANBERRY
- SHORTBREAD
- CIDER
- EGG NOG
- TURKEY
- SUGAR COOKIES
- POTATOES
- GRAVY
- PUMPKIN
- HOT CHOCOLATE
- ROAST
- YULE LOG
- PANETTONE

Walking in the footsteps of first-century Romans



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

PAUL KNOWLES

Tillsonburg Post Columnist

In Canada, it's pretty common to find a busy hockey arena at the centre of town. In many British and European cities, it's more likely a football (i.e. soccer) stadium. But in Vienne, a French town on the Rhone River, it's a theatre. And the unusual thing is – this theatre is about 2,000 years old.

The Vienne amphitheatre was just one of a number of amazing Roman finds we explored during our visit to Vienne. This was a fascinating stop on our Viking Rhone River cruise, which took us from Lyon to Arles, in southern France.

Vienne is a quiet French town; its population, listed at about 30,000, has been pretty much constant for the past 50 years.

But those 50 years are just a short paragraph in a long, long story that goes back to an era well before Christ. The community was a key Gallic capital until the apparently omnipotent Romans arrived around 47 BC. during the reign of Julius Caesar. The Romans made Vienne a provincial capital, and built a great many impressive structures in the town. What is even more impressive is how many of them still stand, or have been restored, today.

We did a walking tour of Vienne; as is often the case on Viking cruises, we were

offered a choice of a “leisurely” tour, a regular tour, or an “active” tour. I have to admit that our active tour in Vienne was far and away the most active of any of the thus-named tours during our cruise. That's because our guide led us on foot up a one-kilometer trek – I swear it was at a 90-degree angle – to an amazing vantage point overlooking the town and, most interestingly, the amphitheatre.

Okay, maybe it wasn't 90-degree tough. But it was worth the effort anyway.

The amphitheatre seated 13,000 people. And it is used today, for the extremely popular Vienne Jazz Festival, which attracts huge crowds of music-lovers each year. A famous player who performed here many times was Miles Davis, and you can find as much Miles Davis memorabilia for sale in the shops as you do Roman images.

But reminders of the Romans abound. Early in our tour – before the tortuous trek to the top (did I mention that?) – we saw still-standing Roman walls, aqueducts, drain systems, and archways. The people of Vienne have created a beautiful, park-like garden among ruins, beside one of the most impressive remaining walls.

We then walked past the ground level of the theatre, which, from that perspective, could only be viewed through openings in a fence. Thus, the climb to the top of the town.

There, we enjoyed amazing views of the theatre, of the entire town of Vienne, and of the Rhone. We also visited the Chapel of Notre Dame de Pipet – more of this later.

As we strolled back down the lengthy path, our guide assured us that the best was yet to come. Having just seen the impressive Roman theatre, that seemed unlikely. But it was true, nonetheless: right in the heart of Vienne stands a restored



The Roman amphitheatre, as seen from Mount Pipet, in Vienne.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

Roman temple, an enormous structure featuring everything you might expect – mighty columns, lots of fancy architectural details. It's the Temple of Augustus and Livia, constructed at the command of Roman Emperor Claudius, who ruled Rome in the middle of the first century AD. And it is breathtaking, especially as it sits right in the middle of a modern French town.

There are more surprises from the Roman era here, as well. I am familiar with European and British roads of today that follow the same route as roads built by the Romans. They say, if you find a straight motorway anywhere in Britain, for example, the route was laid out by the Romans. In Vienne, in a lovely park close to the Rhone docks, they have excavated a portion of a genuine Roman road; you descend several steps to get to that level, but then you are free to walk in the exact footsteps of Roman women and men from the first century. Amazing!

Now, let's make that climb back to the top of the town, to the height called the Mount Pipet. Because in addition to the incredible view, this is the site of the Chapel of Notre Dame de Pipet, an elegant church

dedicated to the Virgin Mary, especially connected to the story of an appearance of Mary to two children. That event – known as “Our Lady of La Salette” – occurred in a community about 170 km south of Vienne. The Vienne chapel – which features statues of Mary and the two children – is one of several in the region, dedicated to this “Marian apparition.”

The Christian history of Vienne is almost as old as the Roman story; and by the time Emperor Constantine converted to Christianity (in 312 AD) and brought the whole Empire with him, Vienne was already a place of Christian worship. Its first bishop, it is claimed, was a disciple of Saint Paul. Today, there are churches in Vienne whose founding dates back to the fifth century.

In short, seldom have I visited a destination that so immersed a visitor in its fascinating history.

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.



Local residents practice Tai Chi among 2000-year-old Roman ruins. (PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)



A Roman archway and part of a drainage system.

(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTO)

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 at the Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St., Ingersoll,
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November 28 and December 5.
 Join us. Walk ins welcome. Qualifications, love
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 and enjoy.

LADIES AUXILIARY TILLSONBURG LEGION TURKEY SUPPER
November 28: 5 p.m.-6 p.m.
 All the fixings, tea and coffee included for \$18
 per person. Cash at the door. Everyone welcome!

COMMUNITY PRAYER SERVICE
 St. Andrew's prayer group invites you to join us
 on **Saturday, November 29 from 10-11 am** for
 this special service at **Tillsonburg St. Andrew's,**
46 Brock St. W. All welcome.

WE ARE KICKING OFF THE CHRISTMAS SEASON WITH AN EVENING OF BEAUTIFUL MUSIC
Please join us for an evening of Christmas Carols on Thursday December 4 at 6:30 at Burgessville Baptist Church in Burgessville
 Featuring locale soloist, T.J Veld who has
 blessed us in the past with her amazing voice.
 Our pianist Carey-Sue Pilkey will accompany
 the audience with your favourite Christmas
 Carols. Feel free to bring a friend! All are
 welcome. Snacks to follow.

CHRISTMAS WITH COMMUNITY LIVING
Friday, December 5 – Free will donation.
St. John's Anglican Church,
46 Ridout Street West, Tillsonburg, Ontario
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 Christmas music and a good old Carol Sing.
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CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
December 6: 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Delhi United Church,
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 please contact Dorothy Stedman: 519-717-6109
 stedmanles@gmail.com

The Bayham Beachfest Committee invites you to the
PORT BURWELL CHRISTMAS PARADE
December 6: 6 p.m.
 Meet Santa after the parade at the Marine
 Museum. Grab a candy bag from the Vienna
 Swans and enjoy a hot chocolate or cider
 courtesy of the Port Burwell Historical Society.
Floats are to arrive at the Legion at 5:30 p.m.

JOIN US FOR THE TILLSONBURG KINETTES' ANNUAL BREAKFAST

WITH SANTA
Saturday, December 6: 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Tillsonburg Community Centre, Lions Auditorium
 - Enjoy a yummy pancake breakfast
 - Meet Santa and take a photo with him!
 - Sing along to your favorite Christmas songs

AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT
December 6: 10 a.m. - noon
St.Paul's United Church,
88 Bidwell St.Tillsonburg
 It's a pajama party as Messy Church celebrates
 "And to all a good Night." Christmas crafts and
 lots of fun plus a hot lunch.
 We ask that children be accompanied by an
 adult.

TILLSONBURG ANNUAL SCARF BOMB
December 6
Drop off at Tillsonburg Sobeys or Tillsonburg Zehrs
 We are looking for donations of gently used or
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 coats. We accept socks in sandwich bags.

CEDARVIEW'S CHRISTMAS BAZAAR
December 6: 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.
Cedarview Senior Living,
511 Finkle St., Woodstock, ON
 Enjoy unique artisan and handmade goods,
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DELHI & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY
Meeting December 8: 6 p.m.
Delhi Friendship Centre,
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 OUR CHRISTMAS POT LUCK SUPPER.
 Bring your favourite dish to share, plate &
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MUSIC JAM AT THE TILLSONBURG LEGION
Friday, December 12: 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
 Featuring Ken Lighheart and the Northshore
 Ramblers. Only \$7 admission. Cash only. All
 welcome.

TILLSONBURG LEGION LUNCH
Wednesday, December 10: Noon-1 p.m.
 Homemade turkey pot pie, stuffing, cranberries,
 coleslaw, coffee and tea for \$15 per person (hst
 included). Cash only at the door. Everyone
 Welcome!

MUSIC JAM AT THE TILLSONBURG LEGION
Saturday, December 27: 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
 featuring Ken Lighheart and the Northshore
 Ramblers. Only \$7 admission. Cash bar

available. All Welcome.

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 Looking for something to do in the evening or
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 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. Hope to see you on Sept
 8th at the Ingersoll Pipe Band Hall!

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

TILLSONBURG LIONS
 The Tillsonburg Lions meet on the 1st and
 3rd Tuesdays. You are invited to their 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.

OXFORD GRIEF CARE:
 FREE Monthly Grief Support Group
 Register at: oxford.griefsupport@von.ca or 519-
 539-1231 Ext 6299 or 6296

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

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

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

MEMBERS GENERAL MEETING
1st Wednesday of every month
Starting at 7 pm
 Not a member contact us to join
 The Wagner Memorial Teeterville Legion
 Branch 526. 3890 Teeterville Road, Teeterville,
 Ontario. For More Information Call, the Legion

519-443-5588
<https://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, Ontario
 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

OXFORD PHILATELIC SOCIETY
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday (2-4 p.m.) and 4th Tuesday (7-9 p.m.)
September to May
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>

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UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE WAGNER MEMORIAL, TEETERVILLE LEGION BRANCH 526
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For More Information call the Legion at 519-443-5588 or check out our website at teetervillelegionbranch526.ca

PROGRESSIVE EUCHRE
Friday, December 12
Registration at 6:30 p.m., Starting at 7:00 pm
 Everyone is Welcome.

WINGS & THINGS PUB NIGHT
Friday, November 28, Starting at 5:00 p.m. (Until Sold Out)
 Cash only, we do not have debit, or ATM.

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TOUR OF HOMES

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



Jeff and Darlene Miller admire the Christmas tree and decor at 82 Denrich during the Station Arts Centre's Tour of Homes. Each home in the tour had unique features and wowed those taking part.



Kenny and Bryan Jelsma's home in Delmer was the one exception to all the Tour of Homes locations being in Tillsonburg. Besides the interior decorations, the Jelsmas went all out lighting up the exterior of their home. Shirley Cairns, left, and Debbie Cairns were impressed by the fireplace mantle in the home.



The main floor recreation room in Dennis and Christy Jeffery's home on Lisgar Ave. was impressive with a stone fireplace that dominated the room and the Christmas decorations throughout, including outside.



One unique feature in the Gledhill home on Demeyere Ave was transforming the bar for the evening into part of the Tour of Homes with Treacy McIntyre serving snacks and treats to those on the tour.



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We wish our community well this holiday season, and invite you to start the New Year with us on a healthy footing!

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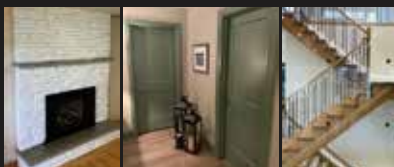


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6	7	1	3	2	9	5	8	4
7	5	2	8	3	6	4	9	1
1	8	9	4	7	5	6	2	3
3	6	4	2	9	1	8	7	5
9	2	6	7	5	4	3	1	8
4	1	7	9	8	3	2	5	6
5	3	8	1	6	2	7	4	9

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