

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1228

Thursday, September 12, 2024

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The Kirkton Fair - An annual tradition since 1869



Brian Slaughter of Lambton County judges the September heifer class at the Kirkton Fair on Saturday, Sept. 7. See Pages 12 and 13 for more Kirkton Fair photos. Photo by Murray Grant

St. Marys BIA recommends discontinuing downtown hanging-basket program

By Galen Simmons

As part of an overall effort to reduce the town – and its own – watering budget and improve streetscape appeal downtown, the St. Marys Business Improvement Area (BIA) board has recommended the town discontinue its summer downtown hanging-basket program.

Amid discussions at the Sept. 9 BIA meeting around the board's contribution of \$15,000 towards the town's

proposed purchase of 30 self-watering planters to replace the existing 24 downtown planters and drastically reduce the town's annual watering budget from more than \$30,000 to as little as \$5,000 – almost the same amount the BIA currently pays into to the town's watering budget each year – board members voted unanimously to recommend to town staff that the town discontinue the hanging-basket program.

Continued on page 2

Loucks looking to be the next Face of Horror

By Emily Stewart

A local, aspiring makeup artist is using her talents in special-effects makeup for a chance to be recognized by horror-movie greats and their fans.

St. Marys resident Alyssa Loucks has entered the Face of Horror Contest for the second year in a row. The contest awards the top horror fan \$13,000 and a photoshoot with actor Kane Hodder, best known for his role in *Friday the 13th* as Jason Voorhees, to be featured in horror magazine *Rue Morgue*. Face of Horror also raises money for Starlight Children's Foundation.

"I've been super excited," Loucks said. "I've been working really hard on doing my makeup looks and trying to learn more so that I have some extra pictures to put in this year."

Loucks loves anything horror but it took her a long time to dive into her interest. Growing up, she said her mother was not a fan of anything horror related.

"I never really got to (explore) that very much," Loucks said. "Now, being an adult, I'm able to watch some YouTube tutorials and really dive into that and learn the different techniques."

Through the tutorials, she learned skills including creating cuts and bruises, as well as shading and blending the makeup.

"It has always drawn me in how much they can look so realistic," she said.

Loucks said the length of time it takes for her to create a look depends on what she is working on. For example, she made a prosthetic horn for her devil look, which took extra time in addition to working with makeup alone. Her *Avatar*-inspired

Continued on page 2

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COMMUNITY

Loucks looking to be the next Face of Horror

Continued from page 1

makeup took between nine and 10 hours to complete, but usually her creations take less time.

As of Sept. 9, Loucks is in fifth place in the Face of Horror competition. She is looking to win and achieve some of her goals.

"It would mean a lot to me," Loucks said. "I really, really have enjoyed this journey that I've gone on, learning all these different techniques, and I think it would give me a great (start in) what I truly want to do. I would love at some point to be able to open a makeup studio or something like that, being

able to offer the service to do makeup – Halloween makeup or regular makeup as well.

"I really think this competition puts my face out there to not only people in the local area, but world-wide as well."

Each voter gets to place one vote for free each day. Extra votes can be purchased with proceeds going to the Starlight Children's Foundation. The first round of voting ends Sept. 12 at 9 p.m. Votes can be made by visiting faceofhorror.org/2024/alyssa-loucks. Loucks' work can be found on Instagram via @lovemissvixen or @ally04xo.



At right, St. Marys makeup artist Alyssa Loucks has once again entered the Face of Horror Contest as a way to showcase her horror-movie-makeup talents. Contributed photo

Discontinuing downtown hanging-basket program

Continued from page 1

"I don't know if anyone's noticed this summer; the hanging baskets sort of struggled," said BIA board member Lisa Fewster on behalf of the BIA's beautification committee. "When we do go over to self-watering, the pots are great. They don't need to be watered except every 10 days, depending on which variety you get.

"The (self-watering hanging) baskets are more shallow; it's every couple of days. So, are we really saving in that labour and water consumption to do it? No. If we figure just rough num-

bers; if we have 30 pots, how many times you have to water them, etc., we would be down to \$5,000 to \$6,000 a year for watering, as opposed to the \$30,000-plus (the town pays) now. If we do (self-watering) hanging baskets, we're looking at \$16,000 to \$17,000, so it's not really saving us anything."

As the town's tenders for watering and the purchase of flowers usually goes out in October, Fewster said she'd already been in contact with one local streetscape consulting firm to inquire about the creation of a timeline and plan for the placement and

planting of the self-watering planters to enhance the already busy looking downtown streetscape. In the meantime, she encouraged the board to recommend discontinuing the hanging-basket program now to give town staff time to factor that into the watering and flower-purchase tenders.

"I'm ok with that. Right now they look terrible," said BIA board member Dan Troyer.

"When they look good, they look really good, I think, but when they don't, it looks like things are completely unintended to," added BIA vice chair Alex Pritchard O'Shea. "You can't put a live thing up once and think it's going to be ok for three and half to four months."

"If the baskets go, something else has to (go there)," said BIA board treasurer Sue Griffiths.

By saving money on both the purchase and watering of hanging baskets next year, Fewster suggested possibly reinvesting that money into more well-established plants for the self-watering planters so they would look better earlier in the season.

In addition to recommending council and town staff discontinue the hanging-basket program, the BIA board also voted to have its beautification working group investigate alternate displays to replace the 80 hanging baskets on downtown streetlight poles.



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EDITORIAL

Debates are a critical part of election process

By Stewart Grant

In our current soundbite and echo-chamber culture, debates are an increasingly rare opportunity for citizens to absorb opinions from contrasting politicians.

Personally, I can tell you the last time I watched Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speak for any real length of time was during the 2021 federal leaders' debate; and prior to that it took a once-in-a-century pandemic to have me attentively watch him at the podium.

I think about this topic on the morning of Tuesday, Sept. 10, prior to the Trump-Harris debate that will take place in the evening.

Although Donald Trump has brazenly cast aside many long-honoured political traditions in recent years, such as participation in the 2023-2024 Republican Primary Debates and, most notably, the peaceful transition of power on Jan. 6, 2021, he has held with tradition and agreed to debate presidential foes Joe Biden on June 27 and Kamala Harris on Sept. 10.

The June 27 event showed exactly why debates are so important. From the moment that Joe Biden hobbled on stage with a blank look on his face, that entire evening showed the world the "best-before date" on Joe was well past. Out on that stage, there was no shelter for Biden's deteriorating capacity – it was out there for all to see. It was truly a shocking and surreal display that led Democrats from all sides to pressure the president to suspend his re-election campaign.

Similarly, both Donald Trump and Kamala Harris will be under the spotlight for a full 90 minutes on Tuesday night. For those tuning in, they will hear both candidates make their case instead of the spoon-feeding of selected quotes and spin-doctoring from their favourite "news" channel.

The fact is, many people watch and read

what they want to and, in the United States, Fox Angertainment Channel is far more popular with viewers than traditional news outlets. And for those around the world wondering why this 2024 election is so close, Fox News is the number one reason.

At the recent Democratic National Convention, there were many Republicans who took the stage to speak, such as former Trump White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham and former U.S. representative Adam Kinzinger. Both used their time at the DNC, on this huge national platform, to speak directly to Republicans to encourage them to vote for "country over party," as they explained why, in their view, Donald Trump is a threat to democracy itself.

However, Fox News quickly cut away from their DNC coverage when these Republicans took the stage. Faithful Fox viewers would never hear about these speeches. Try searching for "Adam Kinzinger" or "Stephanie Grisham" online at Fox News' website? Nothing about their DNC appearances shows up.

A similar omission occurred earlier this week when former Vice President Dick Cheney dropped the bombshell news that the longtime staunch Republican would be voting for Kamala Harris this fall.

Cheney said, "In our nation's 248-year history, there has never been an individual who is a greater threat to our republic than Donald Trump. ... He can never be trusted with power again."

Again, there is zero mention of Cheney's comments on Fox News.

The criminal lack of facts on Fox News and other outlets like it is the reason why it is so important for people to take the time to watch these debates or listen to speeches from both sides in their entirety, and hopefully draw some of their own conclusions instead of simply being told what to think by others who have their own agendas.

Bravo

We have 3 Bravos this week.

1) Bravo to the town for doing an amazing job of looking after the flowers on the Victoria Bridge.

2) Bravo to the person who donated their parking pass for Victoria Hospital in London. It was left at my doctor's office who called to see if I was still travelling there for chemo. I was invited to pick it up. It works great! There are still a lot of considerate people in our community. Thank you!

3) We spent many wonderful days at the Kirkton pool this summer. So grateful to have this outdoor pool in our area. The lifeguards are amazing young people too.

Boo

We have 1 Boo this week.

1) A big Boo to the canteen not being open at the Lincolns exhibition game last week.

*Please note all Boos and Bravos must be signed in order to be considered.

Bravos and Boos are submitted by community members and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the St. Marys Independent.

Quote of the Week

"The past 12 days have been a spectacle of athletic excellence and drive, and a proud display of everything that makes Para sport so special, unique, and important. It has been a superb Paralympic Games for Canada, and it has been a true privilege to witness all the athletes perform on such a grand stage. Congratulations to the entire team for their achievements."

- Josh Vander Vies, co-chef de mission, Paris 2024 Canadian Paralympic Team

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We have hit the sweater in the morning and regret it in the afternoon time of year.

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others?

Either email them to us at info@stmarys-independent.com with the title

"Overheard at The Coffee Shop", call 519-284-0041 or drop by the office to let us know!

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THOUGHTS
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Our 31st Annual Golf Tournament was a huge success!

We are thrilled to announce the success of our 31st Annual Golf Tournament, which took place on August 22nd at River Valley Golf Course. Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, participants, and community members, we raised an incredible **\$25,000** in support of St. Marys Memorial Hospital!

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Sept. 14, 9 AM - 1 PM | Pyramid Centre

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SPEED CHAT: BUDGET EDITION

Sept. 14, 9 - 11 AM | Farmers' Market

Our Speed Chat: Budget Edition event aims to bring the discussion to you in a casual environment, providing an opportunity to engage one-on-one with a member of council.

townofstmarys.com/budget or 519-284-2340, ext. 217

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Senior of the Week



Our seniors of the week are Paul and Sue Robinson. Sue was born and raised in St. Marys and Paul lived on a farm on the outskirts of Kirkton. On Aug. 23 they celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary. Together they have three children, six grandchildren and one great grandchild on the way. Paul is celebrating his 80th birthday on Sept. 11. For years they farmed at the family farm and for ten years now have been living in Rannoch. Both of them love the outdoors.

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, Contact us at 519-284-0041 or info@stmarysindependent.com.

COMMUNITY

UTRCA's Tree Power program returns to St. Marys this fall

By Galen Simmons

As part of the overall effort to expand and diversify the local tree canopy, the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority's (UTRCA) Tree Power program is returning to St. Marys this fall.

First launched in London more than a decade ago and then expanded to other municipalities in the watershed including Perth South, Stratford and St. Marys, the Tree Power program encourages local landowners to plant new trees by providing native, hardwood trees at an affordable price of \$25.

"We are excited to reintroduce this program for the third year, building on the successes of previous years," said St. Marys public works coordinator Thomas Redman in a press release. "This initiative is a fantastic way to enhance our town's tree canopy."

St. Marys residents can now purchase a tree via UTRCA's online shop at shop.thamesriver.on.ca/product/st-marys-tree-power/. The trees will be available for pickup at the municipal operations centre (408 James St. S) in St. Marys on Saturday, Oct. 5 from 8-10 a.m. Available tree varieties include Autumn Fantasy Maple, Bur Oak, Downy Serviceberry, Eastern White Pine, Hackberry, Native Red Maple, Norway Spruce, Red Oak and Tulip Tree.

This year, the UTRCA has added new evergreen species of trees to those available to provide an even greater variety of trees landowners in St. Marys can plant.

"Evergreens are being offered this year in an effort to offer more diversity to interested landowners," said UTRCA forestry and restoration supervisor



The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority's Tree Power program is returning to St. Marys for its third year this fall. Trees can be purchased online now and picked up at the municipal operations centre (408 James St. S) from 8-10 a.m. Oct. 5. Photo courtesy of Upper Thames River Conservation Authority

Rob Davies. "Among their many benefits, the evergreens will offer great protection in the winter months, reducing heating costs, and in the summer, they can reduce cooling costs.

"In addition, we have Serviceberry this year for the landowner who wants to plant something a little smaller in a confined space. They have a showy, white flower in spring and edible berries in late summer which are a favourite among local wildlife."

Since the program was first brought to St. Marys three years ago, Davies says the conservation authority has helped distribute 750 trees – a boon for the future of the community and tackling the challenges associated with climate change.

Weekend Quiz

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1. What Tower was hit first on 9/11?
2. What is the most violent level of tornado?
3. What killed Harry Houdini?
4. What is September's birthstone?
5. What is six in Spanish?
6. What year was the hot air balloon invented?
7. What is the smallest mammal in the world?
8. What country invented bubble gum?
9. What is the capital of China?
10. In the book of Daniel, what 3 men were thrown into the furnace?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

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COMMUNITY

Residents invited to Speed Chat: Budget Edition event Sept. 14

By St. Marys Independent staff

The Town of St. Marys is hosting a Speed Chat: Budget Edition event to collect input on the 2025 budget.

The event will take place on Saturday, Sept. 14 at the St. Marys Farmers' Market, located at the north end of Milt Dunnell Field (1 Veterans' Circle). This drop-in event will run from 9-11 a.m. and all residents and rate-payers are encouraged to attend.

The concept of the event is to offer residents an opportunity to ask questions and make comments in an informal setting about community matters, covering not only budget-related information but also important topics like asset management, housing, property taxes and roads. This event, similar to business speed-networking sessions, allows attendees to have

brief one-on-one discussions with each council member for three to four minutes. A bell will indicate when it's time to rotate to the next member, ensuring everyone has equal access.

Several council members, including Mayor Al Strathdee, are expected to attend. Additionally, town staff will be present to address any topics or concerns that residents may want to discuss.

Attendees can enjoy free coffee, courtesy of the town.

Additional information about the budget is available at www.townofstmarys.com/budget. Questions can be directed to André Morin, director of corporate services/treasurer at 519-284-2340 ext. 217 or amorin@town.stmarys.on.ca.

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Veterinary Purchasing Company Ltd. is dedicated to promoting educational excellence and supporting the pursuit of higher education. In 2023, Veterinary Purchasing launched the Higher Learning Bonus, designed to assist student employees enrolled in post-secondary studies. Through this program, student employees have the opportunity to earn up to \$3,500 (\$1.25 per hour worked as a student) to support their pursuit of further education. This year's recipients received a combined bonus of more than \$12,000! Featured above are some of our hard-working students! Veterinary Purchasing Company Ltd. is proud to support these outstanding individuals, who have shown remarkable potential and a passion for learning, as they embark on their next chapter. Pictured from left to right, Pat Hinnegan (CEO), Isabelle Lariviere, and Griffin Van Bolhuis. Are you a high school student looking for a job? Start earning hours toward your Higher Learning bonus and apply on their website at vpcl.bamboohr.com/careers. Contributed photo

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COMMUNITY

Convenience stores enter the alcohol market



Circle K's shelving and cooler display. Photos by Wendy Lamond

By Wendy Lamond

A significant change took place Sept. 5 as convenience stores in Ontario were allowed to start selling alcohol.

This will affect more than 4,000 stores across Ontario. To sell alcohol, owners and all staff involved in the sale must be at least 18 years old and complete an Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario approved training program. To be eligible for a licence, the stores must be fully enclosed and have less than 4,000 square feet of floor space, at least half of which is used for food products. Store owners have the

choice to decide whether coolers for storage areas will be locked.

In St. Marys, there are three businesses that are now licenced to sell beer, cider, ready-to-drink beverages and wine.

Circle K started selling on Sept. 5 and, according to owner Aesha Batel, alcohol sales have been good.

"It has been very busy and going well. We are waiting on our next shipment to come in as the shelves are looking empty already," Batel said.

Meadowridge Variety is hoping to be



Meadowridge Variety is busy getting ready to begin selling beer, cider, wine and ready-to-drink beverages. Pictured, owner Miriam Ryu shows a few of the beer choices available.

ready to sell by the end of this week or next. Owner Miriam Ryu shared they are working on getting everything ready to go. They are finishing a renovation for some added storage space. The other location that is now licenced is the Esso on Queen Street East. Like Meadowridge Variety, they are also working on getting their space ready for selling the beverages and expect to have drinks stocked and ready to sell in a few weeks.

With benefits being comparable pricing and the potential for more walk-in traffic, the businesses are looking forward to the change, though adding

alcohol is a new dynamic for staff.

By the end of October 2024, as part of the government's plan to expand alcohol sales, every eligible convenience, grocery and big-box grocery store in Ontario will be able to sell beer, cider, wine and ready-to-drink alcoholic beverages if they choose to do so. Both Foodland and Tremblett's Independent Grocer in St. Marys will be taking part with some of Foodland's employees already being trained, however no date is set for either location to begin selling alcoholic beverages at this point.



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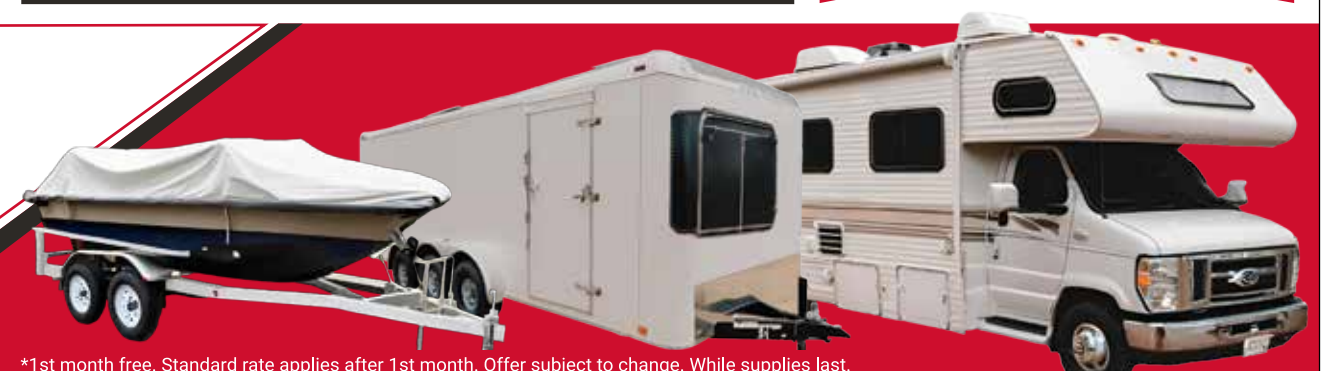
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COMMUNITY

Finch grateful for school supply drive turnout

By Emily Stewart

St. Marys resident Sean Finch is thrilled that the town came together to ensure students and their families have what they need for the back-to-school season.

Finch collected donations of backpacks, school supplies and gift cards for families in need ahead of the start of the school year amid the rising cost of living. He said several local businesses stepped up and contributed to the drive including:

- Your Independent Grocer
- Joe's Diner
- Sunset Diner
- Gilly's Pubhouse
- Lyric Flowers
- Zenfire Pottery and Mercantile
- Foodland
- Jacob's Liquidation
- Hearn's Ice Cream
- The Creamery



Sean Finch is thrilled the community came together to ensure students and their families in need have an easier start to the school year. Photo courtesy of Sean Finch

- Honey, Bee Good
- Home Hardware
- The Chocolate Factory
- River Valley Golf and Tube
- Betty's Bookshelf
- Dunny's Source for Sports
- Jackson's Guardian Pharmacy

Betty's Bookshelf and Dunny's Source for Sports' gift-card donations ensured children had new books and new shoes from their respective businesses to start off the school year. River Valley donated tubing passes, and Jackson's Guardian Pharmacy gave packages prepared for the students.

"I just want to give a huge shout out and say thank you very much," Finch said. "It just shows that the community can all pull together at times that people need help."

Finch also went to Costco with someone who bought 12 new backpacks filled with school supplies and gift cards for families in St. Marys. He also filled used backpacks he received with school supplies for those in London. All the gift cards donated went to St. Marys residents.

Finch called the experience heart-warming, noting some families shed tears of gratitude. He is looking to help more families in need around the Christmas season.

"If people would like to donate gift cards; even if the businesses would like to do something or people would like to do something again, I'll be doing something around Christmas time," Finch said.

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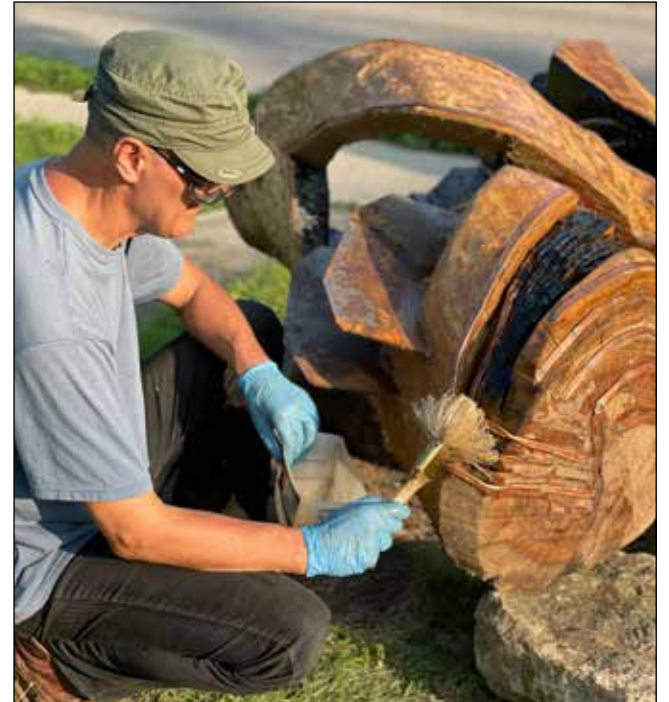
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COMMUNITY

From Helicopter Seed to Warp Drive: New Metamorphic Outdoor Sculptures in St. Marys



“Warp Drive: The Orion” is one of several sculpture in St. Marys artist Eugen Florin Zamfirescu’s outdoor sculpture series. Photo courtesy of Art of Ideas Gallery

The series of sculpture was created from the trunk of a large tree near James Street South and Church Street in St. Marys that was cut down last year. Photo courtesy of Art of Ideas Gallery

The artist, Eugen Florin Zamfirescu, at work on his sculpture, “Warp Drive: The Orion.” Photo courtesy of Art of Ideas Gallery

By Louise Kilianski

What I don’t know about art is a lot.

I come from a west-coast family gifted in the arts. My mother painted landscapes and portraits in oils. My sister is a gifted painter and creates using textiles. My brother made his living creating intricate graphic illustrations. My dad could execute a mean sketch of a broomstick-riding witch.

Sadly, as the youngest, the artistic gene seems to have petered out by the time it got to me. In my defense, I can manage a decent stick figure if needed.

So, the idea of having an original outdoor sculpture at our St. Marys forever home was never something I’d considered.

Enter artist (and friend) Eugen Florin

Zamfirescu with a vision to create a legacy from a huge, beautiful tree that was felled last year. It’s always sad to see an old beauty like that come down, but sometimes, it’s necessary.

The St. Marys Museum website, in its “Picture St. Marys” section, features historic postcard images of Jones Street East from the Reg Near Collection. These show a street lined with tall, majestic trees – a sight that, sadly, isn’t as common today. But, then again, we do have sewer systems and sidewalks now.

Florin had the wonderful idea of transforming the downed tree into a series of outdoor sculptures. With a touch of what I suspect was wizardry, he convinced the tree company to drop off pieces of the trunk near Church and James South.

You may have read Britton Theurer’s creative piece in these pages recently, written from the perspective of the old tree finding new life. It detailed the tree’s transformation and described Florin’s mechanical and technical approach to shaping the tree trunks into unique pieces of art under the theme of “warp drive” and constellations. Our piece is “Warp Drive: The Orion,” while Britt’s is “Warp Drive: The Andromeda.”

The artist spent countless hours crafting The Orion. He began by hoisting the trunk onto rocks, then cutting, carving, sanding, drilling and embellishing it with copper lines and metal extrusions. A touch of black and copper within the piece hints at the night sky – a nod to the stars above? Recently, he carefully adjusted the rocks

and turned the piece further east, as on a launch pad, angling it more skywards, as if inviting the viewer to look upwards and beyond.

I’m no artist, but when you look at and reflect on something for a while, ideas and images begin to emerge. Art always makes me pause and wonder – and I suppose that’s the point.

So, what do you see? Don’t be shy about examining the sculpture from all angles – unless I’m mowing the lawn without my glasses, in which case, watch your feet.

Florin will be following up with an article in the Independent about his inspiration for these sculptures. I doubt it will involve stick people, but you never know. So, stay tuned.

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COMMUNITY

Humane Society's Better Together capital campaign to expand outreach services

By Emily Stewart

The Humane Society of Kitchener-Waterloo and Stratford-Perth (HSKWSP) has kicked off the first phase of their Better Together capital campaign.

The Better Together campaign launched on Aug. 28 in a ground-breaking ceremony. The \$6-million campaign will address the critical need to expand the organization's services including the Pet Pantry program, mobile outreach unit, animal hospital, education and community programs, and physical capacity.

"I'm very excited," said HSKWSP CEO Victoria Baby. "I started here back in November, and as CEO I was thrilled to hear about the capital campaign that was coming up because I recognized, as a community member before working here, what a busy and overcrowded place we have here in Kitchener-Waterloo."

In 2023, the organization conducted 5,682 medical procedures and helped



A render of the planned new animal campus at the heart of the Better Together campaign, located at their current Kitchener location at 250 Riverbend Dr. Contributed photo.

6,743 animals with the Pet Pantry program. Demand for the Pet Pantry program grew exponentially, at 206 per cent from 2022 to 2023.

The outreach programs will help communities across 14 municipalities in the Kitchener-Waterloo and Stratford-Perth area. The mobile veterinary services will also travel up to 18,000 kilometres per year to service pets.

Better Together also plans to establish

an animal campus to host expanded services at the Kitchener location at 250 Riverbend Dr. The animal services officers are operating in a trailer, so the campaign aims to give them a physical office space. The new space will also have two conference rooms for meetings and parties.

"It's going to give us more room for expansion and growth in serving the needs of our ever-growing population

here," Baby said.

As of publication, the Better Together campaign reached more than half of its goal, at \$3.4 million. The City of Kitchener committed \$300,000 towards the campaign and the City of Waterloo will contribute \$200,000 as well.

Baby said the humane society offers more than 40 programs serving the community and their pets. The organization is also working with people experiencing homelessness and/or living in encampments to ensure their pets stay with them.

"There's people attached to animals, and we want to help keep people and animals together," she said. "So, when we have more resources in place, we're going to be able to do more work in the community and make sure that we're reaching out to people that need our services and supports."

The organization plans to move into the new building in the spring of 2025.

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COMMUNITY

The Kirkton Fair - An annual tradition since 1869



Brian Harris from St. Marys gets ready to compete in the 6500 lb and 7500 lb hot farm categories. Brian would like to sincerely thank all his sponsors for their support.



Drivers line up for their turn in the Kirkton Fair tractor pull. Despite the cool weather, spectators lined the hill to watch the events. Photos by Murray Grant



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COMMUNITY



These girls had a great time painting this car on Saturday, Sept. 7 in many vibrant colours to advertise the demolition derby held at the Kirkton Fair the following day. Pictured from left are Hannah Groot, Shelby Brand, Janelle Parsons and Anna Mather. Photo by Nancy Bickell.



Sunflowers galore adorned the flower entry table at the Kirkton Fair exhibit hall. Photo by June Grant



Children's admission ticket price of \$5 included all activities. Kate and Grant Erb had a great time on this inflatable. Photo by Nancy Bickell



The exhibit hall at the Kirkton Fair displayed hundreds of entries in both the farm crop and the vegetable categories. Photo by June Grant



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Lincs focused on 'building good habits' as new season arrives

By Spencer Seymour

The St. Marys Lincolns view the regular season as a 50-step journey in preparing to be the best version of themselves when the playoffs arrive, and as that process gets underway, the top priority is "building good habits."

"I just want to see us keep getting better," said head coach Jeff Bradley. "We have had some productive practices and some productive games in the pre-season, so right now, with the phase we're in as the season gets started, it's just about seeing improvement. Our game isn't in order yet like it was in the playoffs and that's to be expected at the start of the new year. We view the season as a 50-game process to get ready for the playoffs, so as we get started, we're in the stage of building good habits and developing our confidence like we did by the end of last year."

The Lincolns are coming off of an incredible 2023-2024 season and the most successful campaign in three decades after the team captured their first conference title in 30 years. St. Marys advanced to the Sutherland Cup Final where they were defeated by the powerhouse Listowel Cyclones.

Even though they didn't win the ultimate prize, the bench boss noted there were plenty of aspects of last year's squad the organization wants to replicate while also adding new elements to their dynamic.

"We were hoping it would be a very similar makeup of the team as we had last year. When I talked to (general manager) Pat (Powers) in the offseason about what we wanted to be, we wanted to be a little bit bigger and tougher to play against. Not that we weren't physical last year, but I think you're always trying to take some lessons from where we faltered, and Listowel was a big, heavy team, so I think we wanted a little bit more of that in our lineup."

The Lincolns boasts a strong returning core from last year's conference championship-winning roster, especially in their forward group, which includes arguably their best line during the post season.

"I'm very happy with our forwards," Bradley said. "It's a great group that we're starting the year with. We've got the (Owen) Voortman, (Luca) Spagnolo and (Jaden) Lee line coming back. Chase (MacQueen-Spence), who won the playoff MVP for the conference, and Noah (VandenBrink), who is going into his fourth year in the league and is such a good leader.

"Ryan Hodkinson seems like he's 10 times the



Ryan Hodkinson drives towards the net with the puck during the St. Marys Lincolns' exhibition game on Sept. 6 ending in a 4-1 win over the Stratford Warriors. Hodkinson had two goals in the win. Photo by McGinn Photography

player he was when he first got here, and he seems like he's ready to be a major impact player in this league. Blake (Elzinga) and Ryan (Cornfield) are both in similar situations where they will have more opportunities to really make a name for themselves."

Bradley further commented on Hodkinson, who he said could be poised for an even more significant breakout this coming season after his fantastic rookie year that ended with Hodkinson winning the team's Most Improved Player (MIP) award

"We knew Ryan would be a good player. He's going to be that really solid, 200-foot player who can do everything we need him to. He can put up points, kill penalties, take faceoffs and just play tough. We're looking at Ryan as a star player on our team and in the league in general."

As a team that builds a great deal of its structure on having responsible play in its own end, having their defence led by two ever-steady rearguards entering their third full GOJHL seasons and two

incoming junior hockey veterans, supplemented by a trio of well-regarded rookies, should put the team in a good position to maintain their defensive excellence.

"We know what we're going to get out of Ryder (Livermore) and Jacob (Montesi), and while we haven't seen Ethan (Coups) up close in a while, we're pretty confident we know what he offers us. With our newer guys, thankfully, we know them, as we had Hayden (Barch) and Rowan (Reid), and we know what they bring. Owen (Kalp) has some junior experience and we've seen him a little bit when he was in Chatham, and then Julian (Stubgen) adds a really good style to our blueline as well. I think it's a good mix of older and younger guys, and I think it really fits with what we want our defence to be."

Despite not entering with a high level of notoriety, Colby Booth-Housego quickly established himself in the league, finishing the season as a co-winner alongside Brandon Abbott of the Roy Caley Award for the lowest team goals against average (GAA) in the west. Booth-Housego also finished the 2023-2024 season with the second-best GAA in the entire league and the seventh-best save percentage. He is joined in goal by the incoming Nico Armellin, who posted a stellar 0.971 save percentage in two exhibition games.

"We're excited about our goalies," Bradley said. "Colby's goals-against average and save percentage were right near the top of the league last year, so he's looking to step into that starting job and we definitely believe he can do it. And then we know Nico has a really good pedigree. We've heard really good things about him, and from what we've seen, the kid can definitely play. He is going to push Colby just like Colby pushed Brandon (Abbott) last year and, hopefully, there will be some healthy competition out of that."

As coach Bradley reflected on the preseason, he noted several players as standing out for their strong play, including first-year defenceman Hayden Barch and second-year forwards Blake Elzinga and Ryan Cornfield.

"Hayden has looked really good. He's definitely got that junior maturity. He's not shy, he's a physical, smart player, but we knew we would get that out of him from when he was practicing and playing with us last year. If you just look at his point totals in minor hockey, people may not view him as a dominant player, but he is capable of being a dominant defenceman. I think the early indication is that he won't have a problem playing at this level.

"Blake and Ryan both went through some ups and

Continued on page 15

SPORTS

Lincs focused on 'building good habits' as new season arrives

Continued from page 14

downs last season," Bradley continued. "Blake wasn't playing for a portion of the playoffs, and then Ryan wasn't playing at the end of it. They both came back this year wanting another crack at it and thinking they could do better and learn from moments last year. They've both come in with a good attitude. They're practicing hard, they're playing responsibly and looking very organized in a typically very unorganized setting in terms of preseason hockey. They just look like they're ready to go."

As Bradley looked to the home opener on Sept. 13 and the first few weeks of the season more broadly, he explained what he hopes to see out of his team in the early part of the year.

"I want to see us play inspired hockey. We've got the banner ceremony before the game, some guys from last year are stopping by and the trophy is in the building, and I want the players to take it all in and get even more energized from it. As I said, in the home opener and over the first

few weeks, we want to be organized and see progress on the ice systems-wise, but most of all, start building those good habits. You can't just flip a switch in January and say, 'Now, I'm going to start playing with good habits.' You have to build it right from the start and that will be a big focus for us."

Knowing every season is a long, winding journey, Bradley isn't yet setting his sights beyond the process but did note that he feels the team coming within three wins of a league title creates a chip on the players' shoulders and a hunger for even more.

"I hope the experience of last year gives them a feeling of unfinished business. The players know what it took to get to where they got to last year. As hard as it was to do what we did, it will be even harder to go even further. But we're not focused on the end right now and we're not setting that as our goal right now. Right now, as the season starts, it's truly all about getting better every time we take the ice."

Crisp donates to Lincs' dressing room renovation project



St. Marys Lincolns' Alumni Group member Pat Payton, left, accepts a cheque for \$3,000 from former Lincolns' great Terry Crisp during last Friday night's pre-season home game against the Stratford Warriors. The money will purchase two stalls for the Lincs' dressing room renovation project. Crisp played two seasons for the Lincolns (1959-61) and then went on to a great career in the NHL as a player, coach, and broadcaster. Anyone interested in purchasing a stall or making a donation to the project is encouraged to contact Lincs' Team President, Brandon Boyd, at bboyd@lincs.ca or at 519-520-0799. Contributed photo

Lincs go 2-2 in preseason schedule



The St. Marys Lincolns finished their exhibition schedule with a 2-2 record, splitting home-and-home series with the Kitchener-Waterloo Siskins and Stratford Warriors. While many new faces were making their first impressions on the Lincs, one was reintroducing himself. Ethan Coups is back with the team and the hulking blueliner will be a key part of the Lincs' defence.



The preseason gives people their first looks at many players and one of the brightest standouts was Nico Armellin, not just for his brightly coloured gear. In two outings, Armellin posted a sparkling 0.86 goals-against average and 0.971 save percentage. Armellin stopped 33 of 34 shots he faced in portions of two preseason games. Photos by McGinny Photography

SPORTS

Lorentz wins two silvers, one bronze at New Jersey karate tournament

By Spencer Seymour

Sensei Jalyne Lorentz represented the Stonetown Karate Centre (SKC) at the Amerikick International Karate Championship hosted in Atlantic City, N.J. on Aug. 15-17.

Lorentz, a highly decorated competitor on the Ontario circuit, expanded her competition schedule to include tournaments like the Amerikick Internationals that are part of the North American Sport Karate Association (NASKA) circuit.

Competing in the 18+ Women's Black Belt 'AA' division, Lorentz captured two silver medals and one Bronze. Lorentz's pair of second-place finishes came in the Japanese/Okinawan Forms and American Kenpo Forms events, while her Bronze came in the Hard Style Creative Forms.

Sensei Jeremy Lorentz credited Jalyne's work ethic in pursuing more events on the NASKA schedule.

"We are so proud of Sensei Jalyne's dedication to sport karate and her determination to learn and achieve higher results at each NASKA tournament," said Lorentz. "This was a tough tournament with strong competitors, and with it being only her second NASKA tournament, we could not be more proud of her results.

"The NASKA circuit has definitely taught us that resilience is key and expanding our knowledge and consistent training is a winning combination. With just less than two months to go before the World Karate Championships in Portugal, Jalyne is training hard while sharing her knowledge with students at the dojo."



Sensei Jalyne Lorentz won two Silver medals and one Bronze at the Amerikick International Karate Championship hosted in Atlantic City, NJ on Aug. 15-17. Contributed photo

Ladies Slo Pitch league hosts year-end tournament



The St. Marys Ladies Slo Pitch League held its year-end tournament on Sept. 6-7. The B-Brew were crowned the 'A' division Champs after they defeated the Comets by a score of 13-8. Photo by Spencer Seymour



In the 'B' division of the tournament, the Wannabees emerged victorious to claim the championship trophy with a 21-18 win over the Free Agents. Photo by Spencer Seymour



The Wombats came away with an 11-2 win over the Mad-Batters in the finals of the 'C' division. Contributed photo

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MINOR SPORTS SCRAPBOOK



Jack Rietmeyer fires a shot towards the net during a U12 Boys Tier Three St. Marys Storm game earlier this season.



Lola Gropp winds up to toss the ball during a Canadian Tire U9 HP St. Marys Rockies game earlier this year.



Emerson Muir dashes to first base after getting a hit during a Kinsmen Club U9 WOBA Blue St. Marys Rockies game earlier this season.



Evan Wolfkamp launches a pitch during a Downie Optimist Club U13 OBA St. Marys Rockies game earlier this year.



Seth Mountain steps into a pitch during a Social Thirty-One U15 WOBA Red St. Marys Rockies game earlier this season.



Drew Glavin swings at an incoming pitch during a U18 OBA St. Marys Rockies game earlier this year. Photos by Spencer Seymour

HISTORY

HISTORIC ST. MARYS: Challenges and Triumphs - Baseball in St. Marys, 1889

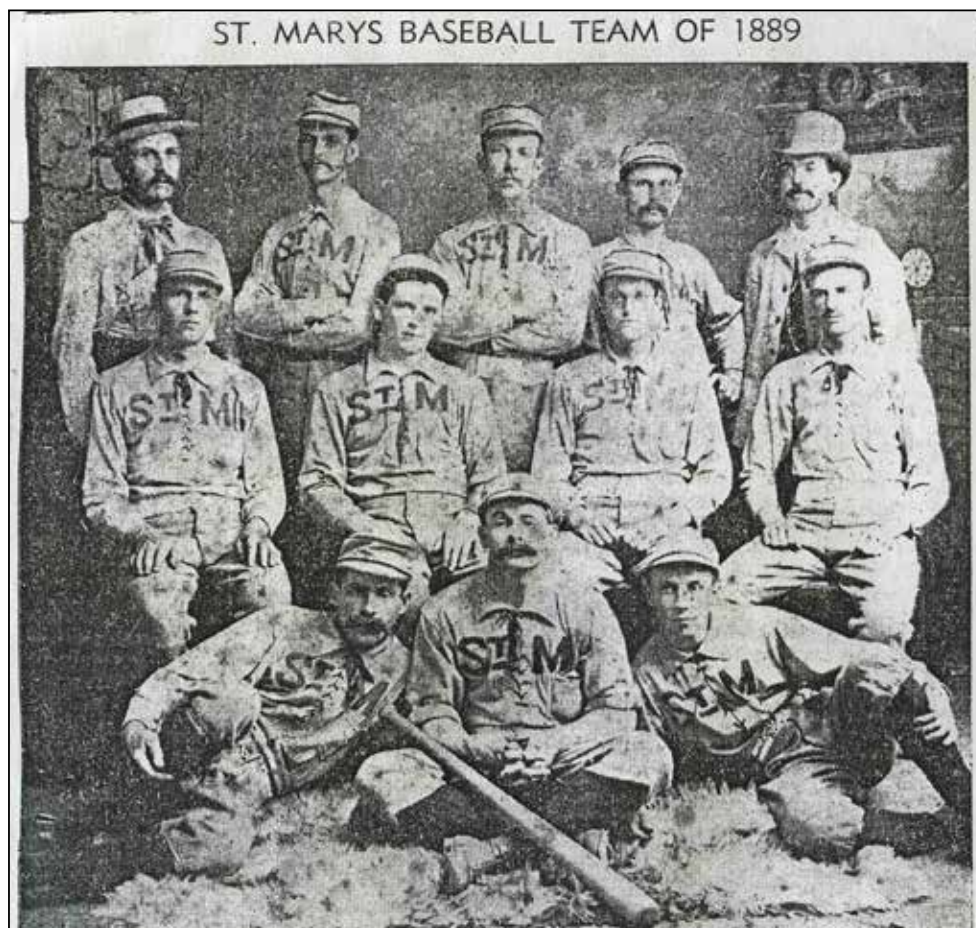
By Mary Smith

Baseball fans become discouraged when the team they support is having a bad season. (Blue Jays fans won't want to remember 2024!) But baseball is an optimistic game: batters go to the plate expecting to get a hit, pitchers are always looking for outs. And for true fans, if things aren't going well this season, there's always next year! This was George A. Graham's attitude 135 years ago. He had come to St. Marys in 1885 as innkeeper at the National Hotel. An advocate for the game of baseball, in March 1889, he placed a notice in the St. Marys Argus urging people to come to a meeting at his establishment "with the aim of organizing a baseball club."

There had been a local team in 1888, the St. Marys Beavers. They had not had a great year, losing to arch-rivals, Mitchell, in the final tournament in September. They had to play their home games on a poor field - an area roughly marked out on uneven ground on the Flats by the Thames River. There was no accommodation for spectators and there had been mishaps, as this short item from the Argus shows: "While the game of baseball was in progress on Thursday afternoon last, Duncan Miller, who was sitting near the home plate, was struck by a foul ball and his nose was broken. Dr. Midgely happened to be on the ground and attended to the injuries." Miller was the owner of a carriage factory. The fact that this prominent businessman and a town doctor were at the game on a summer afternoon suggests that local baseball did have considerable support.

In 1889, the Beavers reorganized. There were several reasons for being optimistic about the upcoming season. The team would be playing in the newly formed Perth County Baseball League and George A. Graham from St. Marys was the league's first president. Men from Stratford and Mitchell held other executive positions. The new league included St. Marys, Mitchell, and two teams from Stratford, one team formed from employees at the Grand Trunk Railway shops. There was also a strong rural league made up of teams from nearby places like Kirkton, Carlingford, Fullarton and Motherwell. They were always happy to play exhibition matches against St. Marys on any special occasion.

Best of all, town council had recently created an Athletic Association and this committee's first task was to improve conditions on the Flats, getting the field ready for a grand opening on Friday, May 24, Queen Victoria's birthday. An Argus editorial encouraged everyone to support this project: "Some old fogies may try to frown the thing down but heed them not! Aside from engendering a talent for amateur and



This picture of the 1889 baseball team was clipped from the *Journal Argus* (date unknown.) It is part of the St. Marys Museum's collection of historic images. The story of this team's successful season came from reports in the 1889 *St. Marys Argus*, on microfilm at the Museum.

manly sports, (it will) exert a great influence for good, inoculating in the youth of the town a spirit of friendly rivalry, honour and fair play."

On May 23, the Argus reported that the Athletic Association had completed the challenging project. "The unsightly hog's back running from north to south the full length of the ground has been entirely removed, the superfluous earth taken to level up the valley at the south end and other depressions; the sodding replaced, leaving a beautiful, level athletic park the equal of which exists in very few towns in the Dominion. The grandstand has also been completed. It is 72 x 25 feet, nine rows of seats sufficiently elevated to make the back seats equally good with the front for a view of the whole park. The roof will protect the occupants from the scorching rays of the afternoon sun. Also, a wire screen will cover the front so that no accident can occur from a ball being thrown or knocked into the stand."

The Association was still fundraising to cover the \$700 cost. They hoped that May 24 "Grand Demonstration" at the new Athletic Grounds would help reach that total. Events included a Cavalier Dress Parade on Horseback, Firemen's Hose Races, and competitions for both children and adults in the afternoon. Some were serious events: a half mile, and shorter dashes, high jump and hurdles. For fun, there

were also three-legged, egg and obstacle races. The featured event was a lacrosse match between St. Marys and Stratford. Baseball might have been gaining in popularity, but it was still a distant second to lacrosse, the town's favourite sport. The Beavers spent Victoria Day 1889 playing an exhibition game in Kirkton.

The baseball season finally got underway, and the St. Marys team won a couple early season games. Trouble started on July 1 when the Mitchell team came to St. Marys to play. Just before game time, it started to rain heavily, and although the showers stopped, the Argus reporter thought the field was "really unfit for play. The game was a very loose one on both sides, owing to the slippery grounds and wet ball." The St. Marys catcher, Louch, suffered a hand injury and was out of the game. His replacement "did fair work but he was not Louch." Then Mitchell lodged a protest against one of the St. Marys players, Charlie Clark, claiming he was ineligible to play because he now lived in Toronto. Charlie was the son of local flax merchant, James Clark, and had grown up in St. Marys. In 1889, the 23-year-old medical student was home for the summer from the University of Toronto. He withdrew from the game to avoid controversy. Mitchell defeated St. Marys 19 to 15. The bad feeling continued all season, especially after the Mitchell Advocate published an

account of the game, claiming that St. Marys had tried to cheat by fielding an illegal player.

That was the only league game that the St. Marys Beavers lost all season, the Stratford teams not offering much competition. Manager G. A. Graham had built a strong team. Two batters in the lineup, Arthur Hollis and G. H. McIntyre, were batting over 400. In mid-summer, the team added two players to upgrade their battery. The pitcher was "Soan" Ford, a 22-year-old pharmacy apprentice; the new catcher, Jim McDonald, had moved to St. Marys to manage a hotel. On October 10, the Argus announced: "The St. Marys and Mitchell baseball clubs will play for the championship of this league for 1889 in Stratford on Friday. Mitchell may be depended upon to do its usual amount of kicking."

On October 17, in the account of the game, the Argus reported that Mitchell, determined to win, and "knowing that if they played their own men against St. Marys, defeat was sure," imported a battery from Toronto - two semi-professionals - and played them under false names. "Who would have thought that Mitchell would have done such wickedness, would have sunk so low in the mire of dishonesty!" St. Marys played the game under protest and although at first, the batters were intimidated by the pitcher, they settled down and started hitting him as if he hadn't come from the city but "had spent the summer picking stones and hoeing potatoes." The game was called for darkness in the bottom of the eighth. St. Marys had one man out and two runners on base, with their best batters coming up. They had every expectation of winning despite the "ringers." St. Marys lodged a formal protest.

The 1889 season ended with this short item in the Argus: "The managing committee of the baseball team wishes to thank most cordially the citizens for their patronage and sympathy during the season. It is the desire of the club to keep their games free from anything that would savor of rowdiness or that would prevent the attendance of any lady on the ground. They have been successful in capturing the pennant for the County of Perth. On the appeal, the Mitchell team, evidently being ashamed of their conduct, did not put in an appearance at all, and the judiciary committee awarded the game to St. Marys with a score of 9 to 0, thus giving the St. Marys club the pennant."

This column tells the story of an obscure bit of local baseball history. Andrew North's seminar at the St. Marys Museum, September 19, at 7 p.m., will give a much deeper look at the history of baseball in this area. Contact the St. Marys Museum for more information: 529-284-3556.

Thorndale News

A section within the
St. Marys Independent

Thames Valley Widows Sons Rally thunders into Thorndale



Motorcycle riders thundered into Thorndale Sept. 8 as part of the Ride for Pitt-Hopkins organized by the Thames Valley Widows Sons. Photo by Nancy Abra



The first stop in the motorcycle rally was Thorndale's Mount Olivett 300 Masoni Lodge. Photo by Nancy Abra

By Nancy Abra

The silence of last Sunday morning in Thorndale was broken as 122 motorcycles thundered down King Street to Mount Olivett 300 Lodge on Harrison Street.

This invasion was the Ride for Pitt-Hopkins organized and hosted by Thames Valley Widows Sons based in London. This group of Freemasons share a passion for motorcycles and a desire to help others like the families dealing with Pitt-Hopkins Syndrome (PHS). Rally participants, most of whom are Freemasons, came from as far away as Chicago, Kentucky and Detroit, as well as from lodges in Windsor and throughout southern Ontario, from Algoma in northern Ontario and as far east as the Kawarthas.

Mount Olivett 300 Lodge in Thorndale was the first of the stops for the bike rally and lodge members were

on hand to greet the riders and their passengers as they came in for some quick refreshments and to pick up their poker card. The riders then advanced onto Aylmer and St. Thomas before ending up back at Rocky's Harley-Davidson in South London for a barbecue, music, raffle, auction and socializing later in the day.

PHS is a rare genetic disorder that affects the brain and nervous-system development. This disorder causes delays in walking, talking and impairments with communication and social skills. Children born with PHS also have a physical change in their facial structure, experience seizures and have trouble breathing. Many have the same characteristics as children on the autism spectrum, but this syndrome isn't autism. There is no cure for this disorder, but treatments can help manage the symptoms and somewhat improve

quality of life. Pitt-Hopkins doesn't affect children's life expectancy, but respiratory complications can be life threatening. Survival depends on the severity of the symptoms and availability of care and support.

This was the sixth-annual motorcycle Ride for Pitt-Hopkins fundraiser rally hosted by the Thames Valley Widows Sons to raise money in support of 13 families in Ontario who are dealing with Pitt-Hopkins Syndrome. Last year, they raised approximately \$15,000 and, with an increase in the number of participants in this year's ride, they are hoping they will reach \$20,000 as they continue to support and assist families in Ontario.

Upper Thames Conservation Authority held educational field day near Thorndale

By Nancy Abra

The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) held an educational field day last Sept. 5 at the Thorndale Demonstration Farm, located on the south side of Thorndale Road, just east of Prospect Hill Road.

Approximately 40 local farmers, curious residents, UTRCA staff and industry supporters attended.

The 23-hectare (58-acre) Thorndale Demonstration Farm, owned by UTRCA, is intended to demonstrate agricultural best-management practices that work together to improve and protect soil health and water quality while increasing crop yield as examples area farmers can use on their property. Currently, the property is planted with a cover crop of oats, peas and tillage radishes. Besides protecting the land from water and wind erosion, these crops benefit soil health.

UTRCA staff explained the various features of water retention and control installed on this property.

Along with contoured, controlled drainage, there are drain-cover structures positioned at the contoured elevation with the goal of these structures holding back water during a rainstorm, then releasing the water into the land gradually. Another feature on this property is a water-basin control with a berm designed to hold water for 24 hours after a major weather event. In 2023, UTRCA installed a water-quality monitoring system to collect water samples after large rain events.

The latest feature, which was installed on this property earlier this year, is the Storm Tech Storm Water Retention System. Normally, systems like this are used in urban applications, such as underneath parking lots. In this project, it was installed at the east end of the Thorndale Demonstration Farm to collect tile drainage from the surrounding five acres to test the design feasibility for agricultural applications. UTRCA staff will monitor this system to quantify how much water is held in its chambers and how much runoff is reduced during storm events.

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COLUMN

UKRAINIAN CORNER: What values should I pass on to the future generation?

By *Kateryna Maslova*

I'm far from being a conservative person, and there are few historical, national traditions of my country that I accept and use in my life. Most Ukrainian traditions are closely intertwined with religion, which I'm distant from. In Ukraine, I consciously avoided many of these aspects. I'm not a fan of Ukrainian cuisine; I prefer Mediterranean. My husband and son enjoy it, so I sometimes cook borscht and varenyky. I'm not fond of Ukrainian Easter and, at home, I always incorporated American traditions with the Easter bunny and chocolate eggs, avoiding traditional Ukrainian blessed baskets at church. My mom and sisters always follow these customs. Ukrainian wedding traditions – matchmaking, embroidered rushnyky (towels), and wedding contests – never appealed to me. I liked the lighter European celebrations. Moreover, living in Ukraine, I incorporated American customs into my life – Halloween, advent calendars – that always interested me more.

I love Ukrainian art selectively, just like the art of any other country, carefully choosing what I like. But living in Ukraine, you constantly encounter the history and culture of your country, both what you enjoy and what you don't. And whether you want to or not, you learn about it. My child was always surrounded by national customs through the education system. I understood that he would certainly receive general knowledge and theory. From there, he would choose what resonates with him. Even in kindergartens and school, regular events tied to these traditions were part of the curriculum. I enjoyed the fun, light-hearted approach to the holidays, but we didn't practice them at home.

Now I face a dilemma – I understand that my child shouldn't lose his national identity, but at the same time, I don't want to impose what isn't interesting to him and what isn't close to me. What values and traditions should I pass on to my child and what do I want to pass on? How do I find a balance between preserving my culture and what is comfortable for

both of us?

There have been four waves of emigration from Ukraine to Canada over the past 100 years. The Ukrainian diaspora is quite strong in Canada. There are Ukrainians in the third or fourth generation, born in Canada, who preserve and practice more national traditions, relics and symbols than I do. They hold these things in high regard. Sometimes, I even feel a little embarrassed by that.

Certain things are historically significant for Ukraine and carry their own symbolism. Ukraine is a world leader in wheat production. It has always been this way historically; we are a nation of farmers and grain growers. The land in Ukraine is ideal for wheat cultivation, and golden fields of wheat have adorned Ukrainian lands for centuries. The golden color of wheat is represented on the Ukrainian flag. Wheat and bread have always had symbolic meaning and are treated with great respect. They are celebrated in Ukrainian culture. But in my understanding today, in my comfortable life, bread isn't the healthiest product and if I had to choose, I'd prefer bread made from non-wheat flour. After enduring the Holodomor in 1933, which was a genocide against the Ukrainian people, when families were executed for gathering wheat spikes from the fields while the grain was exported and people starved to death, Ukrainians deepened their love and respect for bread. Historically, bread was something every housewife made daily, and it was always on the table. For all holidays, matchmaking, weddings, traditional wheat karavai – a sweet bread – was and still is prepared.

Throughout my childhood, I heard about how you must respect bread and never leave it unfinished or throw it away. This came from my family, especially my grandmother. In kindergarten and school, we were forced to finish bread; you couldn't refuse to eat it and you couldn't eat without bread. I was told that without bread, you wouldn't feel full. In Ukraine, there's a saying: "Bread is the head of everything." That's how things were. Back then, no

one talked about having a healthy relationship with food. I understand the importance of these things for my people, but at the same time, I recognize that these beliefs are outdated in today's world. I no longer pass these teachings on to my child, but will I be able to convey to him the true value of bread for the Ukrainian people without imposing these beliefs on him?

Ukrainian history is filled with tragedy, and that tragedy permeates the entire culture, especially literature. Many works included in the Ukrainian school curriculum reveal the difficult and sorrowful pages of our history. This is important because history is the foundation of national identity, and it's important to know what your people have gone through. However, I remember crying for several days after reading Ulas Samchuk's "Maria" about the Holodomor when I was in the 10th grade. I'm still not sure if I want to expose my son to such tragic works so deeply and closely. I feel like he already faces enough challenges in life, and I want to protect him from unnecessary emotional burdens as much as possible. I also want him to understand and respect our history, but not be weighed down by its sorrow.

In Ukraine, it was simple – you had to go through the school program. Some immersed themselves in it, while others listened superficially. But here, there's a choice not to know at all.

Yet, despite all these reflections, I realize that culture and traditions are not only about the customs of the past but also about what we create in the present. Perhaps our connection to the past, through the values we choose to preserve, along with the new traditions we create in Canada, will form the foundation of my son's identity. He will have the choice to take the best of both worlds and create something of his own.

After all, that is the essence of life in emigration; not just preserving the old, but creating something new while keeping a connection to your roots.

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COLUMN

FROM THE GARDEN: It's nothing to sneeze at!



By Nancy Abra

Where has the summer gone? As the days are getting shorter and there is a bit of a nip in the air, fall is fast approaching, but also another allergy season. One plant that gets blamed for many people's sneezing and sinus woes is Goldenrod. This is simply not true. The culprit is probably ragweed. The pollen of Goldenrod is heavy like most flowers and is not easily dispersed. Whereas the pollen of ragweed is lighter and can be airborne with a breeze. It blooms the same time as Goldenrod so that is probably the cause of most human allergy misery.

Solidago or as we know it, Goldenrod, is a lovely fall blooming perennial and can be found in meadows, pastures, along roads and in ditches. There are approximately 125 varieties of

Goldenrod that are native to North America and 30 species native to Ontario. There is even a small patch, by choice not by accident, in my vegetable and herb garden. I really love this tall beauty in my garden, adding a golden yellow colour to my garden. It is very popular in English and European gardens and is wonderful in flower arrangements. Matter of fact, many area florists carry Solidago as a cut flower in their shops, which they get from commercial growers.

Goldenrod is a member of the Asteraceae plant family and is easily classified based on the plant shape. One variety that is very common in this area is Solidago canadensis. It is very tall, reaching heights of 1.5 to 2 meters and has a plume-like flower head. Another variety that is quite common is the rough stemmed Solidago rugosa Miller with its elm-branched flowers. There is a club-like or wand-like Goldenrod and then there are a few varieties of flat-topped Solidago.

Goldenrod is a valuable plant in our garden, playing host to some beneficial insects such as the lacewing, the parasitic

wasp and the praying mantis as well as being a nectar source for butterflies and honeybees. Certain varieties of Goldenrod are also advantageous to our health. Practitioners of herbal medicine use Goldenrod in a traditional kidney tonic to counter inflammation and irritation caused from bacterial infections or kidney stones. A tincture or tea made from leaves and flowers of a certain variety of Goldenrod can be used for sore throats, snake bites, fever, kidney and bladder problems, colds, measles and even asthma. A poultice of Goldenrod can be used for boils, burns, wounds and sores. Our native Indians used to chew the leaves to relieve sore throats and chew the roots to relieve toothaches. I have also read that tea infusion of the flowers and leaves can be made into a jelly that has a slight anise or liquorice flavour.



Besides an excellent plant for our pollinators for our gardens and farm crops, their thick and intertwined root system prevent erosion in ditches and along the field edges. They help with rainwater infiltration and stop stormwater runoff. So next time you are going for

a country walk and you feel a sneeze coming on, don't be quick to blame Goldenrod. Take a moment to appreciate the fall beauty of Goldenrod and all the benefits it has in our environment.

Source - www.ontariowildflowers.com

Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett | 519 272 5742 | jtsquote@gmail.com



Dear Arborist,

My son wants me to plant a Linden tree or Basswood, what do you think?

Just want some....options.

Sincerely

Options

Dear Options,

I personally like Linden trees, they provide shade and have a nice shape. They are also fairly fast growing, at around 2 ft per year for some cultivars.

Apparently, you can also eat the young leaves like salad. However, I have never tried eating the leaves.

Unfortunately, I do tend to hear a lot of complaints about the mess this species makes. People say they drop little branches, drip a sticky liquid, seeds, and catkins.

So it might be better to plant something else - Maple, Beech, and Ginkgo Biloba are nice options.

Sincerely

The Arborist

Joel Hackett is a certified Arborist residing in the St. Marys area. Currently, he spends most of the year running Joel's Tree Service. For contact call 519 272 5742 or email jtsquote@gmail.com



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ST. MARYS, ONTARIO

Riddles

I'm light as a feather, yet the strongest person can't hold me for five minutes. What am I?

Your breath.

What can you break, even if you never pick it up or touch it?

A promise.

Which question can you never answer "yes" to?

"Are you asleep?"

What's something that, the more you take, the more you leave behind?

Footsteps.

What kind of lion never roars?

A dandelion.

What has a thousand needles but cannot sew?

A porcupine.

What's bright orange with green on top and sounds like a parrot?

A carrot.

Why do bees have sticky hair?

Because they use their honeycombs.

What do you call a bear with no teeth?

A gummy bear.

What's black, white and blue?

A sad zebra.

- Word Search -

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Word List

- September
- Cancer research
- Marathon of Hope
- Fall tradition
- Register
- YMCA
- Participate
- Walk
- Run
- Bike
- Rain or shine
- Fundraise
- Sponsor
- Volunteer
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The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

What is yours but mostly used by others?



Your name!

Carson Coulthard (2)

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Each Pet of the Week will receive a FREE treat bag from St. Marys Veterinary Clinic



Bailey (left) is a 14 year-old Congo African grey parrot; Kiara (right) is a four-year-old Solomon Island eclectus parrot. The two birds play peekaboo together. Bailey says "where's Bailey" and Kiara will reply "peekaboo". Kiara likes to say her name - Gorgeous Girl and can name Pokemon characters; Bailey says "bye, love you" when you walk out the door. He also knows the names of other pets in the house. Their owners are Michele, Taylor and William.



St. Marys Veterinary Clinic is pleased to be the sponsor of the **PET OF THE WEEK**

'Fall' Awareness

Many of our furry friends love to chew on sticks, pinecones or even pine needles. However, if ingested, these fun objects could damage or puncture your pets intestines. Acorns should be avoided aswell; they are toxic to dogs and could cause an obstruction.

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www.stmarysvetclinic.com

COLUMN

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Is Richmond Virginia the "best town" to visit in the U.S.?



By Paul Knowles

A few days ago, CNN published an article about the top ten "best towns" to visit in the United States. Number one on the list is Richmond, Va.

The CNN writers said "Richmond earns high scores for its top-notch museums and dynamic neighborhoods, and it's taking a hard look at its complicated history. Plus, it's got a diverse, chef-driven food scene, more than 30 breweries and ready access to surrounding wine country."

Having spent a few days in that intriguing city earlier this year, I would agree with a couple of qualifications.

Richmond definitely has a "complicated history." It was the capital city of the Confederation, a stalwart defender of slavery, and one of the most reluctant of American communities to accept desegregation. But the truth is I know about these things because the museums of Richmond

told me the story openly and inclusively – again, with a couple of qualifications.

Let's start with the best stuff. Our itinerary began with a visit to the Black History Museum (BHM) – and I suggest that every visitor's itinerary should do the same.

On arrival, we stopped to chat with a well-dressed man sweeping the street in front of the museum. Chuck Lewis is a very well-informed guide at the BHM and his father was a civil-rights lawyer in Richmond. Lewis was a goldmine of information about the history of civil rights in Richmond, and he surprised us by saying that despite the realities of history, he is proud to live in Richmond because the community has made so many advances in race-relations issues "without blood being spilled." The BHM's motto is "preserving stories that inspire" – a very proactive approach to a very difficult topic.

We found the same honest but optimistic take at two other fine Richmond institutions – the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the Virginia Museum of History and Culture. Both have rejected the still-perpetuated "lost-cause" theory, which claims the American Civil War was not about slavery but was

a just and even heroic attempt to protect the rights of the southern states.

Both institutions have extensive exhibits depicting the realities of Virginia's history. Again, visitors like me who know so little about the intricacies of American history can spend hours and hours in these fine institutions.

But here is where my qualification comes in. Yes, all three of these museums are doing a terrific job telling the truth about Richmond's history and it's significant that the latter are located on Arthur Ashe Blvd., named to honour the city's tennis and civil-rights hero. But sandwiched between the museums, and ironically also located on Arthur Ashe Blvd., is the national headquarters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, an organization dedicated to defending the "lost cause of the confederacy" fallacy.

In Richmond, we stayed at the Commonwealth Hotel, located just across the street from the Capitol District, home of the Virginia State Capitol and an extensive park filled with statuary commemorating civil-rights heroes. But here too, the fact that efforts to deal with history are still a work in progress was also evident.

The sculptures in the park were amazing, marking significant civil-rights achievements and honouring women who were community leaders through the centuries. We toured the Capitol building itself, an imposing structure designed by Thomas Jefferson, now the state capitol, but once the seat of government for the confederacy. This tour, conducted by a very articulate volunteer, was intriguing but clearly soft-pedaled the realities. In a room where horrendous legislation was once enacted, we were simply told this was the site of "important decisions, some good, some not so good." Hmmmm...

If you are a history buff, you could get lost for days down the rabbit holes of historical interpretation in Richmond. I think you might emerge

giving most of the institutions high marks for honesty and ongoing efforts to be inclusive with a couple of codicils.

If you're not a history buff, you will enjoy the amazing collection of art – including the largest collection of Faberge eggs outside Russia – at the Museum of Fine Arts, or your tour of the quirky Poe Museum, honouring the eccentric and mysterious life and death of Richmond native Edgar Allan Poe.

And as CNN's report noted, this is a great city for foodies. We dined at opposite ends of the food-presentation scale – dinner at L'Opossum, where the presentation was astonishing, the ambience dramatic and the food very well prepared; and lunch at Mama J's, a hole-in-the-wall diner with friendly service and excellent food. Oh,

and concerning wine country, we discovered a destination just outside Richmond, which combined two of the things I love: Viniterra, a lovely Rees Jones golf course (which I played badly), also home to the New Kent Winery.

So, is CNN right? Is Richmond the number one town in the U.S.? Well, it certainly is one of the most interesting with many terrific attractions (my pocket guide lists over 50), great cuisine and just enough controversy to grab your attention and make your visit an intellectual and philosophical challenge.

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



The striking Virginia State Capitol, designed by Thomas Jefferson, site of historic – and sometimes horrendous – acts of government. Photo by Paul Knowles



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Love Evelyn, Bruce, Nancy, Dan and family

THANK YOU



A special thank you to all my family and friends for all your help the day of the Teddy Bear Reunion.

Special thanks to Marshall Tent Rentals and the Public Works Department. Also, thanks to the Fire Department for filling the boat pool.

Thanks to Rosie for cooking hot dogs, Karen Payton for donating the quilt for the raffle and to Laurie Smith for the tickets.

Special thanks to all the businesses and private donors for their generous donations. Without all of you it wouldn't be possible to carry on.

Hope to see you next year with no rain!

Marlen Forman, Organizer of the Teddy Bear Reunion

CELEBRATION



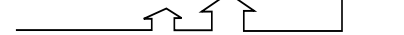
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| Wed. Sept. 11 - Christina Johnson, Guelph | \$50.00 |
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Contact Vic Mansfield 519-284-1542 or Don Feeney at donfeeney@quadro.net



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COLUMN

Straight from the Shelves

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Attention aspiring young writers; learn how to plan, write, and revise your very own short novel with TeNoWriMo (Teen Novella Writing Month)! Participants will learn the foundations of storytelling in October, endeavour to write a first draft of 25,000 words in November, then practise the art of revision on their piece in December. Meetings will take place over Zoom from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on the following Tuesday nights: October 15, 22, and 29; November 12; December 3, 10, and 17. Contact Laura at lmcash@town.stmarys.on.ca to sign up!

This Week's Recommendation

A flailing writer stumbles upon a winning story by a fellow writer who died before they could publish, leading the flailing writer to claim the story as their own. Intrigued? Well, I have two novels for you: "The Plot" by Jean Hanff Korelitz, and "Yellowface" by R.F. Kuang. In the former, Jacob Finch Bonner pilfers an incredible story shared with him by a stuck-up student of his writing program. In the lat-

ter, June Hayward lifts a manuscript off the desk of a rival writer moments after her death. While "The Plot" is tinged with elements of mystery and suspense, "Yellowface" deals with racial and cultural appropriation. Both novels are great reads and are available in hard copy and on Libby.

Up This Week

Fri., Sept. 13: Movies in the Park: The Garfield Movie^ (dusk)

Sat., Sept. 14: Open 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Mon., Sept. 16: Trivia Night at Gilly's Pubhouse~ (7 p.m.)

Tues., Sept. 17: Open 10:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Wed., Sept. 18: EarlyON Play and Read (9:30-10:30 a.m.), Mahjong Intro (1-2 p.m.), Mahjong! (2-4 p.m.)

Thurs., Sept. 19: Open 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

^Cadzow Park (177 Church St. S, St. Marys)

~Gilly's Pubhouse (17 Water St. S, St. Marys)

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Members of the St. Marys community benefit from the town's abundant public amenities and resources and should celebrate the unique distinction of its architectural landscape.

It is noteworthy local officials are bound by the town's official plan "to maintain the charm and attractiveness that are fundamental to the character and lifestyle of St. Marys" (Official Plan of the Town of St. Marys, page 3). In the spirit of this covenant, I take considerable umbrage with the posting in the St. Marys Independent edition of Aug. 22, 2024,

titled "If You Love Your Community, Sign the Petition." This posting, submitted by an anonymous group protesting infill developments in general, cites a list of negative arguments that are inconsistent with a wealth of reports published by municipal planners.

For an erudite discussion about the benefits of strategic infill planning, see the American Planning Association blog at www.planning.org/blog/9227414/infill-development-supports-community-connectivity/.

Further, the anonymous authors state "No objections by citizens possible." While objections to building code amendments are stringently regulated by various provincial legislation and local appeal bodies, it is incorrect and misleading to claim residents cannot successfully object to non-compliant developments.

I defend the right to protest any development that would negatively impact the community but cannot honour or support a protest mounted by a group hiding behind anonymity. When the anonymous authors stop trying to sow the seeds of uncertainty and doubt with nebulous generalizations and have the fortitude to identify themselves and the specific project(s) they are objecting to, I will consider signing their petition.

Jim Hill, St. Marys

LOOKING BACK



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

Silo explosion

25 years ago (1999)

The annual AlliedSignal scholarship award was presented this year to former D.C.V.I. student, Wesley Murray. The \$1,500 scholarship is presented annually to an employee's child. Wesley is enrolled at the University of Guelph and is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts degree in history.

A new lot development charge bylaw was approved by St. Marys Council last Tuesday, just hours before a deadline imposed by the province for getting a new fee schedule in place. As a result of the new bylaw, approved unanimously by council, lot development charges on single family dwellings will be reduced from the previous rate of \$1,980 to \$1,773.

In February of this year, Charlie and Sue Dunsmore of Downie began to raise and milk goats. They presently milk 44 and have a goal of 85.

50 years ago (1974)

Ski kite flying, something new to this area, had a real workout at Wildwood over the weekend as 13 competitors took part in the Free Flight Delta Kite Championship on the nearby lake. The organizer, and overall winner, was Bob Grant of London.

Bob Favacho reports the town swans appear quite happy on a pond near the local golf course. The only drawback is that the swans seem to have developed a taste for golf balls.

One suggestion heard regarding a location for the proposed tennis courts has been the former site of the Cold Storage on Elgin Street East at the C.N.R. tracks. It is pointed out this area is town-owned and would fit in nicely with ballpark recreation facilities further east.

75 years ago (1949)

Mr. and Mrs. J.G. Bell and Mr. and Mrs. J.J. McLaughlin left Tuesday evening by train for Jasper and Banff, Alberta. While at Jasper, they will attend the annual convention of the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association, which is being held at Jasper Park Lodge. They are travelling to Jasper via C.N.R. and returning east from Banff on the C.P.R. and will be away several weeks.

Ensilage flew in all directions on Andrew Hardie's farm near Thorndale on Friday when the pressure inside the silo being filled became too great. Several helping farmers fortunately escaped injury when they quickly climbed to safety on the roof of the barn. No one was hit by the large chunks of cement, but a wagon and part of the silo filler was damaged. Later, the spilled ensilage was hauled to Stuart Smibert's farm where an empty silo was put to use.

100 years ago (1924)

Among the new phones installed in St. Marys, most if not all of which are not yet to be found in the telephone book, are the following: Rev. J. Brown, Mrs. M.Y. Brown, Dominion Stores, F.W. Aylesworth, Thomas Fulcher, H.M. Hunter, John Hayes, Charles White, and D. McCulloch.

Miss Helen McKim, a fifth form student of the St. Marys Collegiate Institute, has won the scholarship for proficiency in French, German, and Mathematics and also the Free Tuition Scholarship for the St. Marys Collegiate at the recent departmental exams in connection with Western University, London.

J.W. Graham, acting for Edward Bearss of the Township of Blanshard, has issued a writ out of the Supreme Court of Stratford against Edward Ferguson of the Township of Fullarton for \$10,000 damages of alienation of the affections of the plaintiff's wife, Flora Eva Bearss.

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- Office desk, Bullet top table desk, 72 inches long 36 inches wide, Black Ebony on Oak veneer, solid oak headers, three legs, one leg is solid Oak, two legs are metal, black. Newly finished. \$150.00. CASH ONLY - St. Marys area Call 519-272-5951 and leave a message.

For Sale

- Office desk, Bullet top table desk, 60 inches long 30 inches wide, Natural Cherry on Cherry veneer solid cherry headers, three metal legs one black two silver colour. Newly finished, some flaws in the veneer. \$75.00. CASH ONLY - St. Marys area Call 519-272-5951 and leave a message.

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- Office Desk top, 60 inches long and 30 inches wide, Medium cherry colour on Maple veneer, solid Maple headers, newly finished. No legs or base supplied, you can obtain legs from Richleau, Amazon, Wayfair. Can be made into a table desk with legs. \$50.00. CASH ONLY - St. Marys area Call 519-272-5951 and leave a message.

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QUIZ ANSWERS

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| 1. North Tower | 7. Etruscan shrew |
| 2. EF5 | 8. USA |
| 3. Appendicitis | 9. Beijing |
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PRC & Friendship Centre events - See the Stonetown Crier on Page 5

St. Marys Public Library events - See Page 25

Friday, September 13

- Yard sale at 395 Elizabeth Street - 8 a.m. to ?
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 p.m.
- St. Marys Lincolns vs St. Thomas Stars at the PRC - 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 14

- Community celebration 2024 car show at Downie Optimist Community Centre, St. Pauls - 7:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Yard sale at 395 Elizabeth Street - 8 a.m. to ?
- St. Marys Farmers Market at Milt Dunnell Field - 8 a.m. to Noon.
- Town of St. Marys speed chat (budget edition) at St. Marys Farmers Market - 9-11 a.m.
- Scrapbooking garage sale at the PRC - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 p.m.

Sunday, September 15

- Terry Fox Run - Registration at the YMCA 8:30 a.m., Opening ceremonies 8:45 a.m.
- Bernice Coulson 85th birthday celebration at the Legion hall - 2-4 p.m.

Wednesday, September 18

- St. Marys United Church strawberry supper - 5-6:30 p.m., Takeout only, Call 519-284-3076 for tickets

Thursday, September 19

- St. Marys Museum seminar on the history of baseball - Call 519-284-3556 to pre-register

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