

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1207

Thursday, April 18, 2024

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Lincs win first conference title in 30 years



The St. Marys Lincolns ended a 30-year drought on Sunday when they became Western Conference Champions. The Lincolns defeated the London Nationals 5-2 thanks in large part to an explosive four-goal second period. The Lincs now head to the Sutherland Cup Finals where they will play the Midwest Champion Listowel Cyclones and the Golden Horseshoe Champion Fort Erie Meteors. Photo by McGinny Photography

By Spencer Seymour

The St. Marys Lincolns are 2024 Western Conference champions after defeating the London Nationals 5-2 in game seven this past Sunday to claim the Bill Weir Trophy.

Reaching a seventh game was a journey that began last Wednesday when the Nationals defeated St. Marys 3-2 in overtime to take a 3-2 series lead. The loss came despite the Lincolns outplaying London for large swaths of the game, including in the first period when the Lincs led in shots 15-8.

Head coach Jeff Bradley felt his team deserved a better result for the effort they put in.

"Honestly, I thought we played really well," Bradley told the Independent. "Your frustration or anger turns into more of a numb feeling that is hard to explain. In the first period, we thoroughly outplayed them and then got unlucky with their goal, which gave them a little bit of momentum and then you could see our focus shifting a little bit to getting into the extracurricular stuff."

Just over eight-and-a-half minutes into the game, Jaden Lee opened the scoring for St. Marys followed by a powerplay marker by Noah Vandenberg just under five minutes later to put the Lincolns ahead 2-0. However, an otherwise stellar first frame was soured by a goal credited to Michael Kopcok with under 90 seconds left in the period, who sent a floater on goal that hit off the hand of Lincs' defender Ryder Livermore and bounced by goaltender Brandon Abbott.

The flukey goal sparked the Nationals who found their footing in the second period, culminating with yet another unfortunate moment of bad puck luck for the Lincolns, ending with Riley Wood batting home his 10th of the playoffs.

A back-and-forth third period went without a goal at either end, resulting in overtime that lasted just two minutes and 28 seconds before Colton Chipman scooped a big rebound and buried the win-

St. Marys council amends downtown-patio policy to eliminate on-street-seating option

By Galen Simmons

Though additional amendments to St. Marys' downtown-patio policy may be coming following an upcoming update to the town's 2021 downtown-parking study, St. Marys councillors voted recently to eliminate a provision that gives businesses the option to establish patio seating in on-street parking spaces.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Marys' business economic support and recovery task force recommended the town permit the seasonal installation of privately owned on-street features – specifically the use of the municipal right of way for seasonal patios, bistro tables and retail-display tables – so businesses would have the

Continued on page 2

Continued on page 14




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COMMUNITY

St. Marys council amends downtown-patio policy to eliminate on-street-seating option

Continued from page 1

option of using the combined sidewalk and on-street parking area in front of their buildings to establish additional seating and retail space while maintaining a pedestrian thoroughfare.

In early 2021, council approved a pilot for the downtown patio and retail-space policy that ran for the 2021 patio season. After making observations through the 2021 season, the trial program was made permanent in March 2022. Following a recent review of the town's downtown-patio policy and last year's installation of boardwalk-style walkways overtop on-street parking spaces that divert pedestrian traffic around sidewalk patios, council voted at its April 9 meeting to eliminate the option to establish patio seating in on-street parking spaces.

"Initially when we developed the policy, we were working with proponents. They wanted that provision," town director of public works Jed Kelly said. "Staff would prefer to move it so all the seating is back on the sidewalk with only boardwalk-style pedestrian bypasses. I'm sure everyone is aware of all the recent incidents we've had in the downtown core with vehicles leaving the roadway, so the working theory is that if the seating is moved back on the sidewalk, we do have that on-street parking to kind of act as a blocker."

While reviewing the downtown-patio policy, Kelly said his department received a number of other concerns including that abutting or consecutive patios in one area adversely affect parking for patrons of nearby businesses; that downtown patios shouldn't be allowed to expand beyond a business' frontage; that patios

are not equally available to all merchants because of varying road elevations in downtown St. Marys; and that overall, the patios have a negative impact on available downtown parking.

While Kelly told council it could consider adding provisions to the policy in the future that prevent massing of patios in one location or allow businesses where patios can't be established because of a steep road grade to establish patios in front of vacant buildings or elsewhere downtown, he recommended waiting for the results of the town's 2024 parking-study update before making any decisions one way or the other.

"I understand that ... you want to gather more data, and I'm fine with that," Coun. Jim Craigmile said. " ... I'm all for your possible amendment down the road of only having one patio per block. It really struck me last year that on Water Street having two close together; I really believe if that corner store was not vacant, there might have been a lot more talk about losing parking spots in front of that building. ... It just caught my eye. I think if I was a business owner there, I would have been a little perturbed having two patios taking up probably six spots right in front of my store."

Kelly also told council businesses are

only allowed to expand their patios beyond their building's frontage if they get permission from the neighbouring business that would be affected.

Discussing the need to update the downtown-parking study, Kelly told councillors a lot has changed in the downtown core since the study was first completed by town staff in 2021.

"We were looking at it to refresh it for May and the one thing we did notice ... is the whole downtown; there has been so many changes even with the block just with the businesses and the uses in a few years, even," Kelly said. "So, we were going to incorporate some kind of peak-hour usage - analyze when the businesses were open - to try and understand. Maybe we were concerned that maybe our study was skewed if (our data collection) started too early (in the day)."

Council will consider further amendments to the town's downtown-patio policy when Kelly brings back his findings from the downtown-parking study update, at which time councillors will have a better notion as to how these patios affect downtown parking both for specific business and as a whole.

Patio season runs from May 15 to October 15 each year.

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COMMUNITY

Dr. Graham Shantz appointed as AMDSB director of education

By St. Marys Independent staff

The Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB) board of trustees announced Monday that Dr. Graham Shantz has been appointed director of education, taking over from outgoing director Dr. Lisa Walsh.

Shantz took on this role after 26 years with the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB). His most recent position with WRDSB was associate director. In that role he was responsible for leading the human resources and equity, information technology, finance, planning and facilities functions.

Prior to becoming the associate director, Shantz first joined WRDSB as a teacher in 1997 and served in a variety of positions including principal, executive officer, superintendent of student achievement and wellbeing and coordinating superintendent. During his tenure, he supported student achievement, the migration of the IT network to cloud services, recovery from a cyber incident, changes in hiring practices that now reward lived experiences, transformation to more accessible school buildings and new facilities that incorporate nature in architectural and landscape design.

He has worked closely with librarians, trades, educators and non-education staff to create innovative solutions that centre students. Shantz was born



Dr. Graham Shantz will replace Dr. Lisa Walsh as director of education at the Avon Maitland District School Board. Photo courtesy of Avon Maitland District School Board

and raised in the district and is a former AMDSB student. Shantz studied at the University of Western Ontario where he earned his Masters and has

a Doctorate in Education from the University of Southern Queensland, Australia.

"I am very excited to be returning to Avon Maitland as the director of education," Shantz said in a press release. "I have the most wonderful memories from my time as a student. It will be an honour to work for the system where I started my education journey. Avon Maitland ensured that I was prepared for life's challenges and opportunities, the same goal we have for all of our students."

"AMDSB is delighted to welcome Dr. Graham Shantz as our new director of education," AMDSB board of trustees chair Robert Hunking said in the release. "He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the position and we look forward to his leadership in working together with our students and staff."

Hunking also thanked Walsh for her seven years of leadership at the board.

"We want to express our appreciation to Dr. Lisa Walsh for her excellent leadership and vision over the past seven years as director. Lisa's focus on teamwork, service and leadership has resulted in the significant progress of AMDSB. Her 35-year career in education has been exemplary and inspiring, and we wish her years of health and happiness in this next adventure of retirement."



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EDITORIAL

Where would we be without volunteers?

By Galen Simmons

For the past decade, I've had the pleasure of reporting on and writing about governments at all levels.

With that experience under my belt, I've gained a good understanding of how the work of governments at the local, provincial and federal levels fit into our daily lives. The conclusion I've come to is our local governments and the councils we elect to make decisions have the most direct impact on us.

From planning for new development and attracting economic opportunity to ensuring residents can enjoy a high quality of life through the provision of municipal services and recreational programming, events and spaces, local governments make the decisions that matter most to Canadians.

Having sat through a decade's worth of municipal budget meetings, I also know how difficult it can be to balance municipal revenue and funding from other levels of government with the ever-rising costs of running a municipality. With the goal of, at very least, maintaining municipal-service levels and saving enough money to cover future replacements and maintenance of local infrastructure, changes in provincial and federal governments and the shifts in priorities that come with those changes can make the municipal-budget process feel a little like trying to put a 1,000-piece puzzle together that doesn't have all its pieces.

Yet while upper levels of government might not offer the consistency and stability local governments need, one thing communities across the country and beyond can rely on is the power of volunteers.

From the smallest, rural towns to the biggest cities Canada has to offer, volunteers consistently and without fail give their time for the betterment of their community. Whether it's raising money for hospitals and crucial social-support organizations or sitting on the local boards and committees that help municipal councils make their most-important decisions, volunteers are everywhere and their unpaid and sometimes underappreciated work is what truly makes a community shine.

In exchange for a little recognition now and then, volunteers do the work that makes a community unique and keeps municipalities and myriad other organizations pushing the needle forward with the services they provide.

And, when a municipality falls short in providing for its residents, volunteers are always there to pick up the baton and carry it on to the finish line.

This week is National Volunteer Week, so I'd like to thank each and every person who has ever volunteered their time to give back to their community. Whether you think your efforts were big or small, you've truly made a difference.

Thank you!

Bravo

We have 1 Bravo this week.

1) Bravo to Callum Hughson for his letter to the editor offering "diverse perspectives necessary for well-rounded discourse" on the Carbon Tax controversy. The letter was well written, respectful and informative.



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

Boo

We have 1 Boo this week.

1) Boo to the town for not having any taxi service for the residents of our town. We used to have two taxi companies!



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

Quote of the Week

"It's absolutely unbelievable. I've been going to the games since I was five years old and I was part of those crowds so being able to feel the support from our fans who made the trip was unreal."

– St. Marys Lincolns' forward and hometown boy Ryan Hodgkinson commenting on the massive contingent of Lincolns' fans who traveled to London for game seven, where the Lincs won the Western Conference Championship.

Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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Finally OJ can rest in peace knowing his wife's killer is dead.

I can't believe it is already time to put off my spring cleaning until next 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!

GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

Restoring small-town journalism, one community at a time!

St. Marys Independent

Publisher

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Regional Editor

Galen Simmons • galen@granthaven.com

Graphic Design / Sales Inquiries

Tyler Carruthers • info@stmarys-independent.com

Business Development

Heather Dunbar • heather@granthaven.com

Billing Administrator

Cindy Boakes • boakescindy1576@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant

Wendy Lamond • wendylamond74@gmail.com

Contributors

June Grant, Nancy Bickell, Mary Smith, Nancy Abra, Lauren Eedy, Spencer Seymour, Sarah Cairns, Paul Knowles, Jake Grant

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2
info@stmarys-independent.com | 519.284.0041 | granthaven.com



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The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS OF THE WEEK

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Spring cleaning is a chance to hit the reset button on your life.

Your mind is a garden and thoughts are seeds. You can grow flowers or weeds.

The best way to find out what we really need is to get rid of the things we don't.

Decluttering your mind, heart and home will make your life simple but significant.

COMMUNITY

St. Marys Firefighters train for water rescue



The St. Marys Fire Department conducted still-water rescue techniques at the St. Marys Quarry last weekend. Photo courtesy of the Town of St. Marys

By St. Marys Independent staff

Last weekend, the St. Marys Fire Department practiced still-water rescue techniques at the St. Marys Quarry.

They used specialized personal protective equipment, ropes, poles and a stokes litter basket to simulate water rescue scenarios.

"This is a high-risk, low-frequency event. This is one of those events that doesn't happen a lot but when it does happen, it's dangerous. We do it now so our members are refreshed in their water-rescue training. You will see us practicing for still-, swift- and ice-water rescue all year round," said fire Lt. Robinson in a press release.

"One or two firefighters would enter the water to save the victim or the patient, and somebody would stay back to pull them out. We have other op-

tions such as a Fortuna boat, which is a specialized rescue boat for water and ice. Or, in the worst-case, most dangerous part, our members must go into the water and swim up to the person."

"The highly trained members of the Go Team are knowledgeable in all things water, ice and cold-water safety, and know how to help somebody if they were to fall in the water or through the ice," added Fire Chief Richard Anderson.

"Being mindful of your surroundings near water and ice is crucial. Anyone venturing out should always share their plans with someone, carry ice picks depending on the season and wear a life preserver. These precautions can provide you with additional time and energy in case of an emergency."

STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



A VERY MERRY UN-BIRTHDAY

April 29, 6 - 7 PM | Pyramid Centre

Come out to celebrate everyone and no one's birthday with Town of St. Marys EarlyON! This program is for children ages 0-6 and their parents/caregivers.

townofstmarys.com/earlyon or 226-374-6544

EARTH WEEK 2024

April 15 - 20

- Town-wide Litter Collection Campaign (April 15 - 20)
- Thames River Clean-up Project (April 20, 8 AM - 12 PM)
- Tree Donation Program

townofstmarys.com or 519-284-2340, ext. 213



SPORTS WALL OF FAME

Nominations open until April 30

Do you know someone who has made a significant contribution to sports in our community? Nominations are now open for the Sports Wall of Fame!

townofstmarys.com/sportswall or 519-284-2160

CAMP PRC

Registration is now open for the following camps:

- PA Day Camps
- Summer Camp (starting July 2)
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Senior of the Week



Shirley Elliott is our senior of the week who recently celebrated her 90th Birthday at her home in Thorndale along with her family, friends and neighbours. Shirley is mother of four and a special granny to 10 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. Shirley loves to read, and enjoyed farming, baking, gardening, travelling, and playing cards with the ladies. She also received her 50 year pin from the Thorndale Women's Institute.

Happy Birthday Granny!

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

COMMUNITY

Cleaning up the Thames River for 25 years

By Wendy Lamond

When Todd Sleeper started the Thames River clean up 25 years ago, it was after witnessing a lot of garbage and other debris in the area he grew up around on Fish Creek.

Being an avid fisherman and canoeist, Sleeper wanted to clean up the river and educate people on how to help the environment. That was when he decided to join forces with the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority. Over the years, it has grown to having 17 communities involved with more than 40 cleanup sites.

Speaking with the Independent, Sleeper shared the troubles of getting the word out before the days of the internet and social media. He used letters, stamps and fax machines to get the original media release out about the new project to help clean up the river.

"We asked volunteers to clean up a section of the river near their home or where they like to experience the beauty of the Thames, and care for it all year," Sleeper said.

That was when the Adopt-a-River program was created. With much of the debris having been in the river for more than 100 years, the first few cleanups were difficult but the volunteers stuck with it knowing the positive effects the program would have on the aquatic habitat.

Over the past 25 years of the program, Sleeper said the Town of St. Marys, volunteers and local businesses have all been wonderful and have had a hand in its success over the past quarter of a century.

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ST. MARYS THAMES RIVER CLEAN UP 25TH ANNIVERSARY

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BBQ @ 12:00pm

Contact: Todd Sleeper (519-275-1551) td.sleeper@hotmail.com

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This year, the cleanup is taking place on Saturday, April 20. Volunteers will meet at Milt Dunnell Field at 9 a.m. for registration. The cleanup will finish up by noon and those who participated will meet for a barbecue afterwards where everyone's names will go into a draw for a Nova Craft Canoe.

For more information about the Thames River Cleanup and a list of other locations outside of St. Marys, visit www.thamesrivercleanup.ca.

Weekend Quiz

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- Who created the first gasoline powered car?
- What was the supercontinent on Earth called?
- What was the first space probe sent to space?
- What does RRSP stand for?
- When did Nixon resign?
- What is the most dangerous chemical element?
- Who voices Joy in Pixar's Inside Out?
- What follows Millions, Billions, and Trillions?
- What is the capital of Australia?
- How many colors are there on a rubix cube?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

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COMMUNITY

War Amps 2024 key tags en route to St. Marys



St. Marys residents can expect to receive their 2024 War Amps key tags in the mail starting this week. Each key tag has a confidentially coded number. If you lose your keys, the finder can call the toll-free number on the back of the tag or place them in any mailbox, and The War Amps will return them to you by courier, free of charge. The War Amps receives no government grants. With the public's support of the Key Tag Service, the Association is making a difference in the lives of amputees, including children, by providing financial assistance for the cost of artificial limbs, peer support and information on all aspects of living with amputation. Those who do not receive their key tags in the mail can order them at waramps.ca or call toll-free 1 800 250-3030. Contributed photo

cheers to

90

years!

Join us to celebrate the birthday of
GEORGE QUINN
Saturday, April 27, 2024 at St. James Lodge Hall
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Open House: 1:30 to 4:00pm
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Rebecca El. Photography

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COMMUNITY

Towne and Country Cheese Shoppe fundraising for Imagination Library

By Emily Stewart

Buying the best-selling specialty cheeses from Towne and Country Cheese Shoppe could help ignite a love of reading in a young child.

Towne and Country Cheese Shoppe is running a fundraiser for Dolly Parton's Imagination Library in St. Marys. Customers can order from a selection of popular cheeses including aged cheddars, flavoured cheeses and blue cheese from an online form. For every cheese order, 20 per cent of the proceeds will be donated to the local Imagination Library.

Jenn Stacey, owner of Towne and Country Cheese Shoppe, said Chantal Lynch, owner of Hyggeligt Fabrics, approached her about doing a fundraiser. Lynch runs the local chapter of the Imagination Library and was inspired by the muffin-and-cheese

fundraisers done at schools.

The Imagination Library, founded by the iconic country artist, brings books to children under the age of five to encourage them to develop a love of reading. The St. Marys Imagination Library brings books to young children residing in the N4X postal code.

"It's really nice to put an actual book in front of them and sit down and have a bedtime story and get kids encouraged doing other things because we know that as they age, the screen is just going to dominate," Stacey said.

"And literacy is the foundation for all learning," Lynch added. "It is just so fundamental and this way, every child that's registered under five, they even get a book with their name on it, so it's personalized then. It's exciting for them. The post office loves book day. It's the best thing."

The fundraiser is entirely online. Having an online fundraiser gives out of town customers – including those residing in Stratford, London, Thornedale, Wellburn and Uniondale – a chance to pick up the cheese when it's most convenient.

"You click on the link, you place your order, you pay for your order, it gets sent to me. When I have your order prepared, you get an email back stating that it's ready so you can come in any time to pick it up," Stacey said. "It's convenient for the purchaser as well."

So far, the fundraiser has been slow, but Stacey is promoting the cause on social media more often to boost fundraising sales. An order came in during the interview with the St. Marys Independent on April 10. Customers also have an option to just make a mone-

tary donation to the Imagination Library without purchasing cheese.

"When we look at our social-media platforms and where people are," Lynch said, "sometimes the cheese is not a good option, but they really like the idea, so they can do that as well."

The St. Marys Imagination Library is putting together a \$300,000 endowment fund. So far, the fund is nearly halfway towards that goal.

"Once we get there, we're done," Lynch said. "It will fund itself, which is just so fantastic."

Cheese orders and donations can be made via tinyurl.com/imaginationlibrarycheese. More information about the St. Marys Imagination Library can be found by visiting stmarysimaginationlibrary.com.



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COMMUNITY

Scrap metal and e-waste pick-up April 27

Support Firefighters and Kinsmen causes and tidy up, too!

By St. Marys Independent staff

It's that time of the year to purge as the St. Marys Volunteer Firefighters and Kinsmen Club of St. Marys take to the streets on Saturday, April 27 to pick up scrap metal and e-waste.

The pickups not only benefit homeowners, but proceeds from the scrap-metal collection support Muscular Dystrophy Canada, while the e-waste collection supports Cystic Fibrosis.

Residents must have items to the curb no later than 7 a.m. April 27 and are asked to separate scrap metal from e-waste to assist volunteers. As the pickups are fundraisers, please leave the donations for the firefighters and Kinsmen.

The following items are considered e-waste and will be picked up:

- DVD and VCR players
- Cameras, cellphones, pagers, portable media players and PDAs

- Computers, keyboards, mice, copiers, scanners, fax machines and printers
- Radios, monitors, televisions, tuners, video projectors, record players
- Telephones, answering machines
- Small appliances, speakers, fax machines and microwaves

The following items are not acceptable for pick-up:

- Household bulk items
- Hazardous liquids or paint
- Household garbage
- Brush and yard clippings
- Tires
- Construction or demolition materials
- Commercial or industrial materials

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MOMENT
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St. Marys council celebrates local volunteers who are “Strong as Stone”

By Galen Simmons

St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee and town councillors celebrated the contributions of six local residents with the presentation of Strong as Stone awards at the April 9 council meeting.

The Strong as Stone program allows residents to nominate locals whose selfless deeds contribute to the quality of life in St. Marys. To be eligible for the award, nominees must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Their unpaid volunteer contributions provide extraordinary help to families or groups in St. Marys;
- They continually volunteer their time, talent and energy without pay to improve the quality of life in St. Marys; or
- They have been voluntarily involved in a program or project that has had a lasting benefit for St. Marys and its residents.

“We went through a very difficult time during the pandemic, and we started a program called Strong as Stone to recognize some of the incredible deeds going on in our community,” Strathdee said.

“... You’ll see by the nominees tonight, it’s a broad reflection of our community – young and old, people from different backgrounds, people who are contributing to our community in tremendous ways and sometimes aren’t always acknowledged. Tonight, council wanted to ... recognize some outstanding leaders and people ... who make our community a town worth living in.”

Nominated by John McIntosh and Ken McCutcheon, Cindy Bilyea was presented with a Strong as Stone award for her strong work ethic, something that led her to become board chair for several local organizations including St. Marys Minor Hockey, Quadro Communications and the St. Marys Healthcare Foundation.

She was instrumental in helping Quadro become the successful entity it is today and she also piloted a highly successful fundraising campaign during her time with the healthcare foundation, an organization that benefits the entire community.

St. Marys DCVI Grade 10 student Daniel Grieg was presented with a Strong as Stone award after being nominated by Gwen Ament and Bessie Hounsell for his volunteer service with several organizations and initiatives including community dinners, community picnics for newcomers, Simple Dreams Ministries’ To St. Marys With Love dinner and the St. Marys Public Library.

Grieg also serves on student council and he is described by his nominators as a self-starter who seeks these volunteer opportunities out himself, consistently demonstrates consideration and enthusiasm, and is a positive role model for others.

Ine Keller was nominated for her Strong as Stone award by Michele Ivanouski and Ruth Anne Beavers. Keller has volunteered with Home Support Services since 2017 through which she gives up her time to teach seniors’ fitness and falls-prevention classes. Her role requires her to travel to many sites to offer these free classes, which help local seniors stay active in their later years. According to her nominators, Keller is eager to teach any level of exercise and her enthusiasm helps motivate those who attend her classes.

Retired Perth County Paramedic Services commander Jeff Sager was nominated for a Strong as Stone award by Mike Rumble and Julie Jeffrey. During his 40-year career with the paramedic service, Sager saved and touched the lives of many St. Marys residents. His volunteer efforts also benefited the community. For example, Sager once arranged to have an Ornge helicopter visit during an Evan’s Touch the Truck fundraiser event, and he also helped organize a mock disaster with community partners.

Sager has also channeled his PTSD diagnosis into pastoral care to support St. Marys’ firefighters, improving their lives in the process.

Nominated two separate times this year by Gwen Bradley, Kim Jones, Julie Docker-Johnson and Marilyn Haywood, Pam Zabel was presented with a Strong as Stone award for her volunteer works across a number of local organizations and initiatives, something she carries out with what her nominators describe as “infectious enthusiasm.”

Zabel has been the co-chair and one of the top fundraisers for the Coldest Night of the Year walk for the past several years, and she also contributes her time and energy to causes like the Nourish Market, community dinners and the Terry Fox Run. Zabel has sat on several local committees including the recreation advisory committee and the planning and fundraising committee for the Grand Trunk Trail.

Finally, original St. Marys Kinette member Phyllis Spearin was nominated for a Strong as Stone award by Terri Iredale and Sherri Barber. A member of the club for 55 years, Spearin attends monthly meetings and participates in annual fundraisers. She also rep-



St. Marys council presented Strong As Stone awards to six local residents at the April 9 council meeting. Pictured in back row from left are Coun. Rob Edney, Mayor Al Strathdee, Coun. Jim Craigmile, Coun. Marg Luna, Coun. Fern Pridham and Coun. Dave Lucas. Pictured in front row from left are Cindy Bilyea, Phyllis Spearin, Pam Zabel, Ine Keller, Jeff Sager and Daniel Grieg. Missing is deputy mayor Brogan Aylward. Photo courtesy of the Town of St. Marys

resents the club in the community and mentors other members.

Her nominators say Spearin personifies Kin Canada’s values of excellence, pride, integrity, inclusiveness and compassion.

“It’s a small gesture, but I just want to

say it means a lot; everything everyone does for the community,” Strathdee said. “One of my predecessors said to me one time, ‘If it wasn’t for volunteers, we wouldn’t be able to afford to live in St. Marys.’ ... We really appreciate all their efforts and it really makes this community special.”

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#NVW2024 #EveryMomentMatters



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Carpe Vinum hosts grand opening



Pictured above are the Stephens family at Carpe Vinum Wine & Gifts. Pictured from left to right are Lucie, Sandy, Alexandra and Luc. Photo by Stewart Grant

By Stewart Grant

Carpe Vinum's new owner Sandy Stephens hosted a grand-opening event on Saturday, April 13 at the 12 Water St. N. store location.

The many in attendance enjoyed seeing the store's fresh look which has been a make-your-own wine store for over 20 years but is now rebranded as Carpe Vinum Wine & Gifts.

"When I bought the store, I wanted to offer St. Marys another option when it came time to buy gifts for events like Mother's Day, birthdays and anniversaries," said Stephens. "We carry

a wide range of unique gifts, some of which you can't get anywhere else in Perth County."

As a traditional wine-making shop, Carpe Vinum offers a wide range of fine-tasting wines at affordable prices.

Stephens reflected to the crowd as he cut the ceremonial, grand-opening ribbon.

"My dream was to move to a small, pristine town where I could join the downtown business community. I'm literally living the dream."

Volunteers are at the heart of United Way's work



Outgoing campaign co-chairs Rob and Leslie Edney take part in the 2022 St. Marys Bed Race as part of the UWPH campaign kickoff. Photo courtesy of United Way Perth-Huron

By St. Marys Independent staff

Volunteer Week happens April 14-20 and United Way Perth-Huron (UWPH) is celebrating the passion and commitment of the volunteers who bring so much to the organization.

"We're proud to acknowledge the incredible people across our region who help make UWPH the strong, 100 per cent local organization it is," said executive director Ryan Erb in a press release. "Volunteers contribute to what we do in so many ways, from addressing envelopes, to fundraising in the community to sitting on our board and committees that work on an incredible variety of pressing issues in the communities we care about. We deeply appreciate every one of our 600-plus volunteers and the time and effort they invest in United Way's work."

At the recent Spirit of the Community Celebration marking the end of the 2023-2024 fundraising campaign, UWPH took time to recognize seven people seven people from across

Perth-Huron with Volunteer Spirit awards in appreciation of the work they did on the organization's behalf in their regions.

Lee Anne Andriessen (North Perth), Andrea Bernard (Stratford and area), Don Dingwall (St. Marys and area), Tabatha Fisher (Goderich and area), Wendy Haggitt (Southern Huron), Susan Moffat (board of directors) and Patricia Smith (Northern Huron) displayed love for their community and dedication to UWPH's mission of helping ensure vulnerable people across the region have the chance for a brighter future. For more on each of the volunteer award winners, visit UWPH's Facebook page during Volunteer Week at facebook.com/United-WayPH.

United Way also recognizes outgoing campaign co-chairs Rob and Leslie Edney for their work over the past three years. As the organization's highest-profile volunteers, they have been advocates for the organization and helped push the organization to even greater heights.

THANK YOU
to all our volunteers for your dedication to our communities!

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Celebrating National Volunteer Week

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Our volunteers help us build hope in St. Marys. Thank you!

ARTS & CULTURE

Writing Poetry

By John A. Cull, *The St. Marys Poetry Circle*

"And me happiest when I compose poems."

So wrote Irving Layton, the Romanian born Canadian poet, (1912 -2006) in his poem, *The Birth of Tragedy*.

'Happy, happier and happiest' are three degrees open to everyone in almost any situation. In my case, I was lucky to approach The St. Marys Poetry Circle several years ago, tentatively offering my attempts at poetry at a monthly meeting in town. The atmosphere at those meetings was one of generous, kind support whether the poetry presented made any sense; presumably the poem made sense to the presenter. Only "The Shadow knows"* what transpires within the human mind as it searches for meaning, perhaps, resolution.

(*"Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men?... The Shadow knows!" - from the popular radio drama, "The Shadow" in the 1930's)

The act of writing, whatever the purpose, requires thought and consideration before the right words are chosen that best reveal the author's intention.

In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Layton also refers to the poet as, "A quiet madman, never far from tears."

Growing up in my extended families, I was well aware of the value of the play of words within the generations. Wit and meanings meant interpretations and new insights. Kudos to my elementary and secondary school teachers, especially K.C. Seale and Mary P. Carter, who were able to communicate a love of words and poetry to the receptive, developing minds of students. Popular poems, *Casey at the Bat*, the American baseball poem written in 1888 by Ernest Thayer, and *The Cremation of Sam Magee*, by



Members of The St. Marys Poetry Circle: Rosemary Radcliffe, George Allan Tucker, V.J.Knutson. Photo by Robert Anderson

Robert Service, were always enjoyed. Further study and understanding of poetry remained the student's choice, and for some poets the struggles continue.

Every day, I read on my computer, 'The Poem of the Day' posted by the Poetry Foundation, poetryfoundation.org . I do know some of them and I don't presume to understand some of them; however, the process of learning requires constant practice and so I keep forging ahead at improved understanding.

At one time, I quite enjoyed my penmanship which now travels uncontrollably all over the page. Fortunately, some skill on the computer's keyboard allows me to write and revise at the same time. With this skill, I can now bore multiple readers whenever I send them the latest poem.

English poet John Milton, (1608 - 1674) instructs me with the follow-

ing:-

"The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." (from his long epic poem "Paradise Lost".)

And so, suspended between those two poles, I continue plying the keyboard, sometimes even making sense.

As mentioned, the St. Marys Poetry Circle, sometimes in a straight line and sometimes elliptically, allows its members to write and share new work or old favourites.

You are welcome to join us at Barista's on Water Street, St. Marys, once every month, to read your own work or share a favourite poem or scratch your head in wonder or confusion. Contact: alizonsharun@gmail.com

Ways to Celebrate National Poetry Month in St. Marys:

Take a stroll downtown and read po-

ems in store windows, on this year's theme, "Weather" - curated by the St. Marys Poetry Circle and sponsored by the B.I.A.

Join us for "Dinner Poetry", Wednesday nights in April, at Tutt Co. restaurant, Queen St. East, with poets from the St. Marys Poetry Circle, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Reserve a table at tuttco.ca , 226-301-4919

Hurry to reserve your seat for "Weatherludes" at Riverwalk Commons, 84 Water Street South on Saturday, April 27, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Members of The St. Marys Poetry Circle are joined by violist, Glenna Theurer, for a lively evening on the topic of weather, which affects us all and dictates the rhythm of our lives.

Entrance is by donation (suggested minimum:\$15) with proceeds after expenses going to Upper Thames River Conservation Authority to fund local education and river conservation programs. Space is limited. Reserve seats at rwcommons.ca; or 647-992-9620

Spring Dance

By Susan Snelling, *St. Marys Poetry Circle*

Slowly

they move

out of the musky barn

away from crowded noise

into freedom.

May grass

Bright scents

Bite of air

Bursting with sunshine

The cows dance

Into life.



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Food available plus prizes

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Pickerel Fish Fry. Details to follow
\$18/person Serving from 4:30pm-6:30pm. Takeouts extra

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COMMUNITY

After the Storm



This fallen tree on Ingersoll Street was evidence of the large windstorm on Friday night which knocked out power for several hours throughout the area. Festival Hydro crews were very busy on Friday and into Saturday responding to outages in the St. Marys area but also in Stratford, Brussels, and Hensall. Many residents expressed their appreciation online to the hard-working employees of Festival Hydro who were out there in nasty windy conditions restoring power to residents, while the utility's social media administrator did a good job of providing status updates to the community. Photo by Stewart Grant



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SPORTS

Lincs win first conference title in 30 years

Continued from page 1

ning goal.

Bradley explained the team's mindset going into overtime which, unfortunately, wasn't executed the way they needed.

"We knew that they rely heavily on certain players and the longer overtime lasts, the better it was for us. So, if they're going to make a mistake, let them. Don't interrupt them if they're making a mistake. Don't be the team that makes a mistake. Play solid hockey, be patient and control the offensive zone. Once we get there, don't throw pucks away to make something happen. I don't know why we made the mistake, but we did."

Arguably, the Lincolns' biggest focus going into game five was starting on time, which had been a problem through the first four games of the series. Despite the loss, the head coach felt good about the way his team came out of the blocks.

"It was really good because when things start to happen on a consistent basis, you start to wonder if it's just a trend or if it's what we are. Seeing that we're able to play the way we're capable of playing at the start of the game, we know we're able to do that. There shouldn't be any reason we don't do that on Friday night."

Lincs rout Nats in game six

With no reason not to start on time last Friday, the Lincolns couldn't have started more on time, scoring just seven seconds into the game, not only setting the tone for the rest of the night but also setting a new all-time team record for fastest goal to start a playoff game.

Owen Voortman pounced on an errant pass by a London defender, which the native of Thunder Bay rocketed by Nationals' goalie Hayden Sabourin. Coach Bradley explained how every Lincoln on the ice played a role in the game's first goal.

"Owen scored the goal, which is great. It was a good read by Owen, but also a great job by the four guys behind him. Our defenders took away their wingers, we had their centreman taken away, and then we had up-ice taken away. Right from puck-drop,



The St. Marys Lincolns celebrate winning the Bill Weir Trophy as the Western Conference champions this past Sunday after defeating the London Nationals 5-2 in game seven. Photo by McGinny Photography

we were ready to execute. We were ready to play hard."

While the Nationals got several quality chances of their own, Abbott played one of his strongest games in a Lincolns uniform to date, stopping all 36 London shots in the game, 15 of which came in the first. Meanwhile, the Lincolns' offence continued picking up steam with Voortman scoring his second of the night exactly 11 minutes and 50 seconds later, this time shorthanded. Four minutes and 33 seconds after that, Ryan Hodgkinson put the Lincs ahead by three, a lead they carried into the intermission.

In the second, another strong play by Hodgkinson on the penalty kill led to a breakaway for the hometown forward who deked out Sabourin and buried his second of the night. According to Bradley, the rookie forward has established himself as a lineup regular in the GOJHL.

"It's beyond the point of surprise and

even making a point of it, to be honest. Ryan is just a really good player and a very important player for us. And now you just come to expect it. There's no surprise at all that he did what he did. Mike Herman directs a high-pressure penalty kill that takes some thinking and for a first-year player to become one of those dependent players so seamlessly as a rookie speaks to Ryan's intelligence level and ability."

Later in the second, Lee fired a powerplay goal to make it 5-0 for St. Marys, a goal that would force the Nationals to yank Sabourin and replace him with Carter Froggett. In the third, Voortman completed the hat-trick to make it 6-0 Lincolns, the eventual final score.

Bradley credited Voortman for his calm demeanour and wide array of skills.

"I just don't think pressure affects him, certainly not in a negative way. He's there to play and the attributes

he possesses, they're great to have in a high-pressure situation. He's got really good speed for a big man. He's got the size. He's got a really good stick. He's smart. He's got a really good shot. Everybody wants to play with Owen because he just makes life easier for everybody else."

Lincs meet the moment in game seven

A wait that lasted 30 years finally came to an end on Sunday when a 5-2 victory, led by an explosive second period, gave the series and the Bill Weir Trophy to the Lincolns.

The emotions of the win were wide-ranging for the head coach.

"We're relieved," remarked Bradley. "We're certainly proud and happy. We believe we're the best in this conference. We have believed it for a while. We knew it was a tough conference, but we did believe we were the best and we're excited for an opportunity to compete for the Sutherland Cup. It's been a few years since I've been in them. I was fortunate enough to go to three of them. It's a really fun time and it's always a good challenge and a fun challenge and something to be proud of that we're able to reach this point."

Bradley described the feeling of seeing his players able to take their moment to celebrate their accomplishment.

"I was just happy for them. They get harped on. They get talked to about faceoff responsibilities and breakouts and forechecking and all the stuff that make up our game-plan. You're telling them a lot what to do and sometimes you don't get to see them enjoy their success, so for them to have a moment to do that, I'm just honestly really happy for them. They're good kids. They're respectful. They love hockey."

The support the Lincolns received was astonishing, with seemingly over half of the arena made up of St. Marys fans who made game seven sound and feel like a home game.

"The thing you do notice is you definitely didn't feel alone in there," Bradley said. "We really enjoyed playing

Continued on page 15



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SPORTS

Lincs win first conference title in 30 years

Continued from page 14

at home and winning that game six, but you aren't sure if you're going to feel that again. And fortunately for us, we did feel it again and we felt it in an opposing arena. Seeing some former players come back and having some parents come up and thank me and thank our staff really means a lot. Having them come up and acknowledge us, you get to see where the kid comes from and you understand why they are such good kids."

Neither team appeared to be at their absolute best in the first period. The Lincs' head coach was satisfied with the period but acknowledged they knew they had to go to another level to be victorious.

"The first period was a good road period for us, but we didn't quite have that top gear.

"System-wise, the way we played was proper but we were just doing it to do it and we had to kick it up a notch. We didn't want to play not to lose, we wanted to play to win and I thought in the second period we certainly did that."

A league-leading 13th goal of the playoffs by Chase MacQueen-Spence opened the scoring at the 5:11 mark of the second frame, followed just 40 seconds later by the eighth of the post-season by Billy VanSumeren. Less than four minutes later, Cohen Bidgood scored on a power-play, a goal that forced the Nationals to make a goalie change for the second straight game. However, just 38 seconds later, the fourth goal in two games for Voortman made it 4-0 Lincs and prompted London to call their timeout.

From there, said Bradley, the Lincs refused to get complacent and instead continued playing incredibly hard.

"Our guys do a tremendous job of defending and we don't defend on our heels. We defend on our toes and we can be aggressive when we need to be. We can sit back when we need to. Our players have a really good gauge of how to play in certain moments and last night was not a moment to sit back and let them come to you. With a 4-0 lead, we kept pushing. We were extremely aggressive in the defensive zone. It was great."

The Nats stopped the bleeding three minutes later with the second of the playoffs from Blake Arrowsmith. The Lincolns shut the Nationals down for the rest of the second and much of the third until, with the goalie pulled in favour of the extra attacker, Wood cut the St. Marys lead to two with a



Captain Adam Barkley lifts the Bill Weir Trophy to commence the St. Marys Lincolns' celebration of the team's first Western Conference title in 30 years. Photo by McGinny Photography

minute and 43 seconds left.

However, a herculean shift by Maddox Callens keeping the puck tied up in London's end of the ice coupled with an empty-netter by Lee sealed the deal for St. Marys.

"The whole team should get some recognition for that game," said Bradley. "It took not only the 20 guys who dressed but the guys who weren't playing. They're a real big part of what we're doing here and I know they want to play and they're good enough to play. Them helping prepare our guys to practice and being a part of team meetings, that matters and they're a huge part of our team. Everybody from the training staff all the way up to Brandon Boyd and Pat Powers; it was a full team effort last night."

Several Lincolns' players spoke to the Independent after the game including Bidgood, whose goal went down as the game-winner. The 17-year-old felt the bond of the players was a big part of their victory.

"This group of guys is incredible," said an ever-jubilant Bidgood. "We all knew we had to do this for each other and we knew we had to do it as a family. This team is so tight together and we battled through it together."

Part of the reason for the team's tight-knit bond is the number of returning

players leading the squad, including MacQueen-Spence, who won the Playoff MVP award after leading the GOJHL in both goals and points in the post-season. MacQueen-Spence scored 13 goals and 26 points and had points in all but one of the 15 playoff games the Lincolns played.

"No words can really describe it," said MacQueen-Spence. "This team has been through a lot this year. Same as the guys who were here last year, we got to this spot but couldn't get the job done and this year we did so it's just an unbelievable feeling."

Last year's conference-final loss to the Leamington Flyers helped lay the foundation for this year's success, and part of last year's squad was Cole Schnittker, who, during the St. Marys Radio broadcast, expressed his elation for his former team hoisting the Bill Weir Trophy.

"I feel so good for those guys," Schnittker said. "I've never met a more deserving group of players than the ones I played with and even the ones I didn't play with out here today. These guys have worked their asses off to get where they are right now, and they are some of the best guys you will ever meet."

Also, during the St. Marys Radio broadcast, former sports reporter Pat Payton joined and delivered high praise for the Lincolns.

"I was at the game the last time we won this league," said Payton, who covered the 1993-94 Lincolns squad, the last to win a west final. "I can't believe it was three decades ago, but this team deserves it all. This is one of the best Lincolns' teams I've seen in a while."

General manager Pat Powers summarized his feelings quite succinctly after the game.

"Winning rules."

Powers added, in addition to being thrilled for the players, he was incredibly happy for Jeff Bradley and the entire staff, whose work ethic and dedication to the team are second to none.

"The opportunity to see Jeff and his staff have success and be rewarded for all their sacrifices is the best thing for a GM to see," Powers said. "Jeff is the most committed coach in my experience and to see him get the recognition he deserves is very gratifying for me."

Captain Adam Barkley was overwhelmed immediately after the game but did detail how it felt lifting the Bill Weir Trophy over his head as he skated back to his teammates.

"This is amazing. I actually don't know how to describe this right now. Seeing all the boys smiling and happy to win and happy for each other was just the best feeling. Emotions are going through the roof right now."

Team president Brandon Boyd called the victory "rewarding" for the people who help run the team behind the scenes.

"It's rewarding for all the community support that we have from the businesses to our volunteer group," Boyd said. "The people who have been here with us through thick and thin of the dark times and putting in the thankless hours to get back to this point. It was also rewarding seeing how many fans travelled to this game and how it galvanized our community."

Perhaps no one summed up the night better, however, than Luca Spagnolo.

"It's surreal," said an emotional Spagnolo. "It's the best feeling in the world. I almost started crying when we finally won. This town deserves it. They've been waiting 30 years. They always fill up the PRC. They travelled incredibly and packed out this barn. Looking up and seeing our fans gives us a huge boost of adrenaline. You feel like you can run through a wall. This is the best town to play hockey in, by far."

SPORTS

Lincs win first conference title in 30 years



Chase MacQueen-Spence was awarded the MVP Trophy for his incredible playoff run. In the post-season, MacQueen-Spence led the GOJHL in goals (13) and points (26) in just 15 games.



One of the many special moments in the aftermath of the Lincs' conference title victory was the impassioned embrace of teammates and brothers Ryan and Josh Cornfield.



You'll struggle to find harder-working coaches than, from left to right, the trio of Mike Siddall, Jeff Bradley, and Mike Herman, who led the Lincs to their first conference title in 30 years.



The Lincolns have a top-notch training and equipment staff, including, from left, Mark Elgersma, Tyler Scott, Scott McCutcheon, Kaitlyn Monkhouse, and Carleigh Gardiner.



Owen Voortman celebrates his hat-trick goal during last Friday's St. Marys Lincolns playoff game against the London Nationals. The Lincs won the contest 6-0 to force game seven. Photo by Stewart Grant



Cohen Bidgood fights through a check during this past Sunday's Lincolns game in London. The Lincs beat the Nats 5-2 to win the Bill Weir Trophy with Bidgood scoring the game-winner. Photos by McGinny Photography

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Johnathan Muhtar maneuvers out front from behind the net during a U9 LL Boys 1 St. Marys Rock game earlier this year.



Theo Shute patrols the blueline and tracks the puck during a St. Marys Ford U9 LL Boys 2 St. Marys Rock game earlier this season



Ellen Robson carries the puck into the offensive zone during a Bickell Built Homes U13 HL Girls St. Marys Rock game earlier this year.



Chase Hinrichs plays the puck through the neutral zone during a U13 LL Boys St. Marys Rock game earlier this season.



Zach Larmer fires a shot from the point during an A.N.A.F. U15 A Boys St. Marys Rock game earlier this year.



Chloe Phillips wins a faceoff during a U13 B Girls St. Marys Rock game earlier this season. All photos by Spencer Seymour

SPORTS

From the sports desk: Without enforcement, the spectator code of conduct is just words on a sign

By Spencer Seymour

The photo with this article is the Spectator Code of Conduct hanging in the Rock Rink at the Pyramid Recreation Centre (PRC). When enforced, it's a comprehensive list of inappropriate behaviour for visitors to the rink. When it isn't, it's nothing more than words on a sign. Unfortunately, right now it's the latter.

I've spent many hours at the PRC and far too often, these rules go unfollowed. Unfortunately, the recourse for dealing with that is woefully inadequate.

The reason for this is the only policy implemented by the arena is the R-Zone reporting system. As one of multiple tools in dealing with these issues, the R-Zone would be a worthwhile component. The problem is, currently, the R-Zone is the only tool.

If someone breaks a rule at the PRC, you can file an R-Zone report at guest services and the subject of that report may be banned from the arena. In theory, a useful tool but there are glaring holes that the people running the arena don't seem willing or able to acknowledge.

Earlier this year, I filed an R-Zone report. While taking photos of a game, a spectator started swearing and screaming verbal abuse at an official. I told them to knock it off and there was no need to act that way. This was met with a less than amicable response, with this person shouting at me to not speak to them again.

I told guest services about the individual and the attendant responded by saying I could file an R-Zone report. They didn't get up and investigate. A few minutes later, once the game was done, I filed one. Unfortunately, I didn't know the person's name.

This is the fatal flaw in the R-Zone system; if you don't know the person you're filing a report about, your report isn't worth the paper it's printed on. It's understandable why. If you can't put a name to an incident, how do you punish them?

As I was filling this report out, I saw the subject of my report standing roughly five feet away in the lobby. I considered walking over and asking for their name, but given the hostility displayed by them just minutes earlier, I doubted they would give me their name for a report that could get them banned. My asking could cause another altercation given the "don't speak to me again" comment, this time in a crowded lobby with kids around. An arena worker would have slightly better odds of getting a name for this report, so I pointed them out to the guest-services attendant.

That clearly didn't happen, as no name was put on the report – which I didn't learn until I reached out to the arena. No one at the arena contacted me until I reached out. Nevertheless, nothing could be done with that specific report, which means my report was pointless. If you don't know the name of the person you're reporting, your R-Zone report is pointless.

So,, what happens when a fan from another town comes to the PRC and screams and swears at an official? No one from St. Marys is likely going to know the person's name and the people from the same place are unlikely to snitch on someone they may see or talk to regularly. Without any actual au-



thority, it's not prudent for another spectator to ask for their name so they can go file a report.

Here's another key problem. Not only did the guest-services attendant not investigate the situation or request another staffer to do so, but they also didn't obtain the name of the person when they were standing within spitting distance of the guest-services booth. Evidently, that wasn't viewed as their responsibility. Apparently, there is a lot that happens at the PRC that isn't the responsibility of the arena staffers to deal with.

On a different day, with a different guest-services attendant, a group of teenagers were carrying each other around on their shoulders and running through the lobby. All it would take would be for an elderly person to come around a corner and you're talking about a potential tragedy. I watched the guest-services attendant turn their head directly to the group of teenagers and watch what they were doing for several seconds before turning their head back to the computer without saying a word.

The list of examples I've witnessed or have been informed about by the people directly involved is much longer than I'm able to include here.

This isn't because those individuals are bad workers. From floor hockey to wrestling matches to verbal abuse and everything in between, I've watched plenty of different arena workers ignore something blatantly against the rules, even when it happens directly in their view.

When it's every arena staffer, that indicates a lack of direction from leadership not making it clear part of everyone's job is stopping code-of-conduct violations when they see them.

This point has been met by arena leadership with

the notion that arena staffers can't see everything. However, they can see what is right in front of them and they have the authority to do something about it. What did I get back on that point? Arena staffers can't see everything. In other words, my point went ignored, much like how code-of-conduct violations go ignored at the PRC.

Going back to the verbal abuse issue, this isn't a problem specific to St. Marys. Every arena is seeing an increase in verbal abuse from spectators to the point that referees are quitting en masse. That makes it so frustrating when an argument in defence of the R-Zone is that similar policies are enacted in most arenas and they work well.

If incidents like this are increasing in virtually every arena, and every arena is more or less responding the same way with a policy in the ilk of the R-Zone, then that should be an indication that a policy like the R-Zone isn't working.

Earlier this year, I posed one simple question to four referees who are or have been regular or semi-regular officials at the PRC – how often do you file R-Zone reports? If anyone had reasonable grounds to report verbal abuse, it would be the officials who are often the brunt of said abuse.

Their response? All four said they don't file R-Zone reports, and when asked why, one said it doesn't result in any tangible benefit.

"I know no refs who do (file R-Zone reports)," said one referee who frequently works at the PRC. "I think the leadership at the arena has a big disconnect to what's actually happening there. I mean, they are never (at the PRC) at eight o'clock at night on a Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday when these games are happening."

If the goal is to curb incidents of verbal abuse and the only recourse for doing so is the R-Zone, and these incidents are increasing, then the R-Zone isn't working well.

It's also worth pointing out that associations and, more importantly, parents have a role to play in this. If this problem is only getting worse, then no one is being proactive enough to stop it. Even an announcement made over the P.A. system at the start of every game reminding fans of the code of conduct would be a small but potentially very helpful addition.

But arena leadership has to step up even more. At minimum, arena staffers should put a stop to violations of the code of conduct when they see them. At maximum, the arena should hire a part-time, seasonal employee whose job is to attend every youth sports game and enforce the code of conduct.

President Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here." At the PRC however, the buck is passed off by arena leadership to someone else. In all of the hockey and ringette games I watched this season, I don't recall seeing arena leadership inside the actual rink once.

Plain and simple, PRC employees seldom, if ever, stop code-of-conduct violations, and arena leadership doesn't appear willing to or interested in acknowledging and fixing that. Until that changes, the PRC's Spectator Code of Conduct is just words on a sign.

SPORTS

David Schneider's parents visit CBHFM



Pictured from left to right are Elena Schneider, Steve Schneider, Scott Crawford, and Lindsay Earle. Elena and Steve are the parents of Toronto Blue Jays' player Davis Schneider and last Tuesday, the pair visited the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum (CBHFM) to see their son's uniform on display from his record-breaking debut series. Schneider hit a home run off James Paxton in his first major league at-bat and, with nine hits and two homers against the Boston Red Sox in his first MLB series, tied the record for most hits in a player's first three games. Contributed photo

Springtime in St. Marys



We tend to take for granted the beauty this town has to offer. This picture was taken on a morning walk looking East on the Grand Trunk walkway. Photo by Wendy Lamond



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COMMUNITY

Rae tables the Growing Agritourism Act

By St. Marys Independent staff

Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae recently tabled the Growing Agritourism Act at Queen's Park.

The Growing Agritourism Act aims to mitigate some of the risks involved with agritourism operations on farms across the province. To benefit from the liability protections in this bill, agritourism operators would have to clearly inform visitors of the inherent risks associated with farm operations.

"Agritourism is ripe for growth over the coming years in Perth-Wellington and across Ontario," Rae said in a press release. "This legislation, if passed, will remove barriers to investment, provide consistency across Ontario's agritourism providers, and ensure participants are aware of the inherent risks associated with farm activities."

"Thank you to MPP Rae for tabling this piece of legislation," said Darlene Downey, board chair of Farm Fresh Ontario and owner of Downey's Farm Market, in a press release. "We are grateful for his leadership in putting forth the Growing Agritourism Act. This act will give peace of mind to farm operators across Ontario, allowing us to continue to welcome visitors to our homes and farms, sharing our passion for agriculture through fun and educational experiences."

As the first of its kind in Canada, the Growing Agritourism Act would remove barriers to investment in the agritourism sector across the province.

"This bill will serve as a benchmark for the rest of Canada to strive towards," Rae said in the release. "Many of our farm families in Perth-Welling-



ton, and across Ontario, are choosing to offer agritourism activities on their farms. They are opening their homes to the public to share their love of the land and animals. It is important we ensure all parties know the inherent risks associated with walking on to an active farm operation."

In 2022, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture conducted a local food and agritourism survey of their membership. More than 40 per cent of the respondents indicated that they would sell value-added products ranging from baked goods and wool to preserves and prepared meals, as well as provid-

ing on-farm experiences. Agritourism provides opportunities to both diversify farm income and raise awareness of the farm and agriculture sector with urban neighbours.

"Agritourism is one of Ontario's premier food, farming and visitor exports, but faces many challenges which limit its economic potential – one of which is liability exposure," said Andrew Siegwart, president and CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario. "TIAO welcomes the introduction of the Growing Agritourism Act,

which we believe will provide businesses with the necessary protection against frivolous claims and equip them with the confidence to grow and invest in compelling agritourism experiences that enhance the competitiveness of Ontario's tourism industry."

"Ontario farmers are innovating through agritourism opportunities and connecting with Ontarians by selling exceptional local products, educating consumers on where their food comes from, and growing our provincial economy through new rev-

enue streams," added Drew Poelstra, president of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture. "The Growing Agritourism Act 2024 will reduce red tape and help agritourism operators grow and diversify their operations across Ontario."

This is MPP Rae's second private members bill since being elected two years ago. His first private members bill, Bill 141, Life Lease Act, aims to improve transparency and accountability for life lease communities. He also introduced Motion 63, which called on the Government of Ontario to build out its clean, green nuclear fleet.

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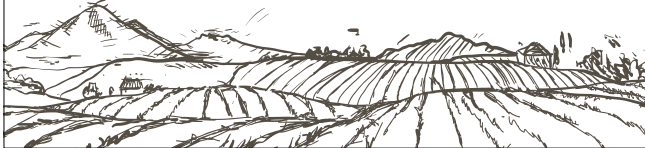
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HISTORY

HISTORIC ST. MARYS: The Reid and Robinson Families

By Mary Smith

In 1995, Hope Harris of Callander, Ontario, had a special package delivered to the St. Marys Museum. It was an autograph album that had belonged to her maternal grandmother who had lived in St. Marys many years ago. Mrs. Harris included this note: "This album belonged to my grandmother, Charlotte Cecilia Rogers of St. Marys, Ontario. The entries 1879-1880 must have been made shortly before she married John Reid of St. Marys as she is still being addressed as Lottie Rogers in the book. My mother, Charlotte Caroline Reid, was born to this couple on September 6, 1881, and Charlotte Rogers Reid died about ten days after giving birth to my mother. I feel this beautiful album should be in the keeping of the St. Marys Museum."

Last week's Historic St. Marys column in the Independent described Lottie's album and the messages that her friends and relatives had written in her book. These messages convey the impression of a pleasant, intelligent young woman with many warm, supportive friends. She was the youngest in her family. Her parents and her older siblings loved her and were surely glad that she was making a happy marriage. When she died just ten days after her little daughter was born, these friends and relatives must have shared her husband's grief. Along with their great sorrow, the family had to decide how to provide for Lottie's newborn baby.

It was decided that little Charlotte would stay with her paternal grandparents, Robert and Margaret Reid. There were several practical reasons for this. First of all, John was close by – he and Lottie had lived in the west ward, not far from his parents' house. John's father, Robert, owned a foundry on Thomas Street, manufacturing and repairing agricultural implements. John worked there as a machinist. John was the oldest in his family; a sister and three brothers still lived at home and could help their parents with their little niece. Lottie's parents, Nicholas and Ann Rogers, were not as conveniently located. Their home was on James Street in the south ward of St. Marys. Also, the Rogers were in their 60s and all their children had left home. They would have been concerned for little Charlotte and ready to help. But they agreed to her living with the Reids.

As it turned out, John Reid, Charlotte's father, did not stay very long in St. Marys after Lottie died. As a machinist, he had skills that could be



Back row: Edwin Robinson, Margaret Reid Dusty, Fred Robinson, Charlotte Reid Robinson. Front row: Cora Dickson Reid (married to Andrew Reid), John Wood Reid, Margaret Wood Reid

used anywhere. He crossed the border to the United States, eventually settling in Youngstown, Ohio. However, he did keep in touch with St. Marys. He probably returned home in November 1885 for the wedding of his sister, Margaret (Maggie), to Gilbert Dusty, a longtime friend of the Reid and Rogers families. John definitely was back in St. Marys a few weeks later. That was the occasion of his second marriage in February 1886. His new wife was Hannah McIntyre, the daughter of Thomas and Elizabeth McIntyre, well-known local residents. Hannah was a first cousin of Gilbert Dusty, John's new brother-in-law.

John and Hannah returned to Ohio but little Charlotte, just four-and-a-half years old when her father remarried, stayed in St. Marys with Robert and Margaret Reid. John and Hannah were soon the parents of two little boys and perhaps that was enough for Hannah to manage. Meanwhile, Gilbert and Maggie Dusty went to North Dakota where Gilbert had been homesteading. In 1888, they had a baby boy who did not survive. Then Maggie suffered another terrible blow: Gilbert died of influenza in 1890. He was just 29 years old. Maggie returned to St. Marys. She never remarried but was, from that time on, an important part of Charlotte's life as she was growing up.

In 1896, Robert and Margaret Reid, daughter Maggie, and Charlotte, now 15 years old, moved to Ridgeway in the Niagara Falls area. Robert Reid died there on November 2, 1898, of heart failure, at the age of 64. His

youngest son, Andrew, by that time living in Toronto, purchased a family plot in Mount Pleasant Cemetery. Robert Reid was buried there. Following her husband's death, Margaret Reid moved to Toronto along with her daughter and granddaughter. In the 1901 census, Margaret, 68, was the head of the household. Maggie, 38, was a saleswoman, while Charlotte, 19, was working as a clerk in an office. Andrew Reid, his wife Cora, and their young daughter, Rosalind, lived nearby.

On August 10, 1907, Charlotte Reid, 25 years of age, married Fred Kimball Robinson, age 34, in Toronto. The officiating minister, John A. Turnbull, now at a city church, had been minister at First Presbyterian Church in St. Marys from 1884 to 1890, and had married the two couples, Maggie and Gilbert Dusty, and John Reid and Hannah McIntyre, in St. Marys two decades earlier. The groom, Fred Robinson, and his family were also St. Marys people. Fred and Charlotte may have known each other slightly in St. Marys although Fred was nine years older and Charlotte had just been 15 when she left for Ridgeway. But somehow, they reconnected in Toronto. The 1911 census shows Fred and Charlotte Robinson living on Hewitt Avenue, a pleasant area, not far from High Park.

Fred Robinson had been born in St. Marys on August 26, 1872, to James and Agnes (Gooding) Robinson. He had three younger brothers: Edwin, Bert, and Harry. The Robinsons lived on the southwest corner of Elgin and King Streets and attended St. James Anglican Church, just two blocks

away. For some years, Ed Robinson was the organist at St. James. When Fred Robinson married Charlotte Reid, Ed was his brother's best man. The photograph with this week's column was probably taken about the time of the wedding. The newly married couple are standing on the right with Charlotte's aunt, Maggie Dusty, and Fred's brother, Ed, to the left. Charlotte's father, John Reid, is seated front centre, with his mother, Margaret Reid, on the right, and his sister-in-law, Cora Reid, (his brother, Andrew's wife) on the left.

In 1910, James Robinson, age 70, died in St. Marys. Fred and Charlotte invited Agnes to live with them in Toronto and she accepted. Fred's brothers also left St. Marys and gravitated to the city. Throughout most of their married life together, Fred and Charlotte had one or more of his brothers living in their household as well as his mother, Agnes, until she died in 1937. Fred Robinson worked first as a salesman and then started his own business, Black Diamond Coal. His brother, Ed, was a bookkeeper for a trust company in Toronto. He never married. Bert Robinson worked for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway in northern Ontario. He enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force in April 1916 and was sent overseas. He died in April 1917 during the Canadian assault on Vimy Ridge. He is commemorated on the cenotaph in St. Marys.

Fred and Charlotte Robinson had two daughters: Barbara, born in 1910, and Hope, born in 1915. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Fred's business failed and, Hope remembered, they went through some very lean years. She went to business school and then worked as a bookkeeper to help support the family. Fred Robinson died in March 1939, age 66. That same year, Hope Robinson married Sidney Deane Harris. They lived first in Swift Current, Saskatchewan, and then in North Bay where they enjoyed all the activities that area had to offer. Her mother, Charlotte, joined them there until she died in 1955. Hope and Deane Harris had three children: two sons, Sidney and Michael, and a daughter, Mary. Hope's son, Michael, was a member of the Ontario Progressive Conservative Party. He served as premier of Ontario from 1995 to 2002. Hope Robinson Harris, who donated Lottie Roger's autograph album to the St. Marys Museum, died in November 2016 in her 102nd year.

Thorndale News

A section within the
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St. George's-on-the-Wye host children's Eclipse Day Camp

By Vicki Govier, director of children's ministry at St. George's on the Wye

St. George's-on-the-Wye Anglican Church in Thorndale held a children's Eclipse Day Camp April 8.

Nineteen children attended and learned through song, crafts and games about the eclipse and how big God is that He put the sun and moon in place!

During the eclipse, we went on a nature hike, pausing every few minutes to put our eclipse glasses on to check the progression of the moon across the sun. Parents and grandparents joined us as we came back and we had a wee campfire and roasted marshmallows at the peak of the eclipse. We were all filled with a sense of excitement and awe throughout the event.

I know this is a day that we will all reflect back on and remember when and where we were for the April 8, 2024, eclipse.



St. Georges-on-the-Wye Anglican Church in Thorndale held a children's Eclipse Day Camp April 8 with 19 area children in attendance. Photos courtesy of Vicki Govier



Harper Buck, 9, wears her decorated eclipse glasses at the children's Eclipse Day Camp April 8 hosted by St. George's-on-the-Wye Anglican Church in Thorndale.

An entrepreneur's sweet success

By Nancy Abra

One does not necessarily need a specific professional degree to be a successful entrepreneur, but it does start with a good idea followed by passion, determination, creativity and some out-of-the-box thinking.

After some ladies raved about Sharyl Vandendries' homemade caramels she had brought to a luncheon, they wanted more. This motivating idea in 2014 led to the beginning of Vandendries' business, Shake the Sugar Tree.

Vandendries started making her famous caramels for friends and family to enjoy. She explained she chose Shake the Sugar Tree for her home business after Pam Tillis' country hit of the 1990s. The song was about the complexities of love and, for Vandendries, it emphasized the necessity for women to love themselves, to take time out of a busy schedule and do something special for themselves like indulging on a sweet treat or two.


Since then, Vandendries has been selling her sweet treats at area craft-show markets and has added more delectable delights to her product line. In the last couple of years, she has hosted craft markets in Thorndale, one in the spring and another in November for Christmas, which focus on bringing together local artisans and entrepreneurs.

"Over the years," said Vandendries, "I have met a lot of wonderful entrepreneurs and artisans. My shows are about being positive, sharing our talents and crafts, and having good quality products for people to purchase. Also, I am a proud, premium sponsor of I Love Thorndale. This type of partnership is important as they help promote our small businesses as well. This platform enables everyone to support each other in our community."

For more local businesses in the Thorndale area, visit to www.ilovethorndale.ca.

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COLUMN

HOSTING UKRAINE: Update on Nataly from the market

By VJ Knutson

“Do you remember the first year we were here, and like crazy we started working all the jobs in the world?”

I decided to check in with Nataly this week, as it is coming up to the two-year anniversary of her family’s arrival in Canada and as guests in our home. I do remember how crazy it was. The kids were in school, Ruslan was working every available moment. Nataly too. Alina, their eldest got accepted at a circus school in London and we were always scrambling to find rides, or Nataly and Ruslan were doing it on no sleep.

“It all started with the fact that I prepared 2 cakes for Alina’s birthday, just two weeks after arriving,” Nataly reminds me. “Then I made perogies for the Thames Valley Community to thank them for all their help, and Beverly Grant and Carol Miller put in orders for perogies and cabbage rolls. Then I wanted to thank everyone who helped us move into our own home and I made pies, got on my bike, and distributed them.”

She is still cooking for everyone, having cooked a dinner for Lorna and her friends, teaching a class on perogy-making with others, and even made 350 dumplings for St Marys with Love. Not to mention that she cooks every day for her stall at the Stratford market on Saturdays.

Nataly admits that for much of that first year, she and Ruslan were run-



ning on adrenalin, triggered by the war and forced evacuation. Now two years later, they still keep a busy schedule, but Alina will soon be sixteen, and there is hope that with an extra driver in the house, things will be more manageable.

What perked my interest, recently, was a warm dish dropped on my front

doorstep. “Gluten-free” the label stated. It was lasagna!

“Are you selling lasagna now?”

“Yes. Vegetarian and gluten-free.”

Lasagna, perogies, dumplings, borscht, cabbage rolls, stuffed peppers, cakes, pastries...the list goes on. Nataly’s newest recipes come from her Bulgar-

ian ancestors, as she is half Bulgarian.

It’s a family affair, this business of preparing food with love and gratitude for the country and its people who have so kindly embraced them. De Varenkyk now has an online store, with pages on Facebook and Instagram.

One day the family dreams of having their own store. Maybe with tables where friends can gather and chat over homemade food and fresh coffee. (My dreaming here). With their energy, and ambition, and Nataly’s cooking skills, I believe it will happen for them.

In other news, a month into our English Support lessons in Stratford, our beloved teacher Tanya is no longer available, so we are looking for one or two teachers to fill the gap. The classes run Saturdays from 1:00 – 3:00pm. Currently, there is one class, suitable for intermediate learners, but we would also like to create a class for beginners.

I am also still looking for accommodations for the Ukrainian couple in their 60’s, beginning in May. As previously mentioned, they do have job possibilities, so they could rent a room, or would do well in a live-in care situation.

Well, that’s all for now.

Until next time.

(Reach me at english.knutson@gmail.com. I did find one reader’s email in my junk box, so if I haven’t responded, please try again.)

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ST. MARYS, ONTARIO

Ask the Arborist

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

Dear Arborist,

Due to the high wind this weekend, a tree on my front lawn fell over and hit the house. It’s fairly close to the road, I am not sure it is my tree. What steps should I take regarding this?

Sincerely

What To Do

Dear What To Do

You are not alone, the wind brought down many trees this week. The first step is determining whether it is your tree. Normally, if it is within 32 ft of the centre line of the road it belongs to the city or municipality. If the city or municipality denies it belongs to them, then the next step is to determine if it is covered by insurance.

Normally, if a tree hits the house the insurance will cover everything but removing the wood.

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

COLUMN

WHAT'S FOR DINNER: More recipes for a cool, sunny, spring day



By Lauren Eedy

Two delicious, fresh and low-calorie recipes full of protein and flavour. These are both wonderful dishes for a cool, sunny, spring day and are straightforward to prepare. I didn't have luck finding fresh scallops, but frozen worked well after defrosting, rinsing and patting dry. Bon Appetit.

Chef John's Pasta Primavera

Prep: 20 minutes; Cook: 20 minutes; Serves: 6

- 1 bunch fresh basil
- 3 cups chicken broth, divided
- ½ cup olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 lb fettucine pasta
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 large leek, white and light green parts only, chopped
- 1 bunch green onions,

- chopped
- 2 jalapeño peppers, deseeded and diced
- 2 pinches of salt
- 2 zucchinis, diced
- 1 cup chopped sugar snap peas
- ½ cup shelled English peas
- 1 bunch asparagus, stalks diced, tips left whole
- ½ cup grated parmesan cheese, or as needed

Method:

- Fill a large pot with slightly salted water and bring to a rolling boil. Hold basil by the stems and dip leaves into the boiling water until bright green, about two seconds. Immediately immerse basil in ice water for several minutes until cold to stop the cooking process. Drain well, remove leaves from stems and discard stems.
- Blend basil leaves with 1 cup chicken broth, ½ cup olive oil and garlic in a food processor or blender until smooth.
- Stir fettucine into the same pot of boiling water, bring back to a boil and cook pasta over medium heat until cooked through but still al dente, about eight minutes.

- Heat remaining 2 tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Cook and stir leek and green onion until softened, about five minutes. Add jalapeño and salt; cook and stir until soft, about three minutes more.

- Increase heat to medium high. Stir in 2 cups chicken broth, zucchini, sugar snap peas, and English peas into jalapeño mixture; bring to a simmer and cook for five minutes. Add asparagus and continue to cook, about three minutes more.

- Pour ¼ cup basil garlic mixture into zucchini mixture and cook until heated through, about one minute. Remove from heat.

- Place pasta in a large bowl; pour zucchini mixture over pasta and pour remaining basil-garlic mixture over dish. Spread parmesan cheese over top. Toss mixture briefly to combine and tightly wrap bowl with aluminum foil. Let stand for five minutes until the pasta soaks up all the juices and oil. Toss again.

Pan-Seared Sea Scallops with Corn Purée

Serves: five

For the Corn Purée:
4-5 ears of fresh corn* (can

substitute 3 cups frozen sweet corn, thawed following recipe directions)

- ½ tsp salt
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chicken broth
- 2 tbsp butter
- Pinch of cayenne
- ½ milk (cow, oat, soy, almond; your preference)
- 2 tbsp olive oil

For the Scallops:

- 1 ¼ lbs medium sized dry sea scallops. (about 25)
- 3 oz dry, cured chorizo, chopped into small pieces (I substituted with pancetta)
- 20 red and yellow cherry tomatoes, halved

Scallions, chopped

Method:

- Boil corn for five minutes, drain in colander and allow to cool.
- While corn is cooling, sauté sliced shallots in a saucepan with 1 tbsp olive oil over medium heat for about five minutes. When finished cooking, turn heat off and add butter to melt.
- When corn is cool enough to handle, cut kernels from cob and reserve ½ cup for

garnish.

- In a food processor, combine remaining corn kernels, chicken broth, salt, cayenne, milk and shallots with melted butter. Blend until thoroughly combined and smooth.

- Transfer purée to a medium bowl and set aside.

- Divide the scallops into groups of similar size so you can cook batches of similar size together.

- Ensure scallops are patted dry with a paper towel. Salt, set on paper towel to blot excess moisture.

- Heat a large cast-iron skillet or saucepan over medium high heat and add chorizo. Cook for two to three minutes and, using a slotted spoon, remove from pan, leaving the oil.

- Keep pan hot and add scallops. Cook for two minutes per side, being careful not to overcook. Scallops should be golden brown. Sear in batches of seven so not to crowd the pan. Add a little olive oil between batches if needed.

- Serve scallops on a bed of corn purée, garnished with remaining fresh corn kernels, halved cherry tomatoes and cooked chorizo.

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Solutions on page 31

- Word Search -

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APRIL IS POETRY MONTH

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Word List

- Structure
- Form
- Rhyme
- Alliteration
- Rhythm
- Stanza
- Line break
- Pattern
- Elements
- Verse
- Repetition
- Theme
- Symbolism
- Limerick
- Couplet

THE WEEK AHEAD

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PRC & Friendship Centre events - See the Stonetown Crier on Page 5

St. Marys Library events - See Page 29

Friday, April 19

- Royal Canadian Legion hot dog/sausage lunch at Noon
- Rotary Club Rural Urban Night at the PRC - Social 5 p.m., Dinner 6:30 p.m.
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 20

- Thames River clean up - Meet at Milt Dunnell Field at 9 a.m. for registration
- A.N.A.F. Bob Lang & Butch Hammond Memorial Pool Tournament - Opens at 10 a.m. for registration
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 p.m.

Monday, April 22

- Community Dinner at St. Marys United Church - 5 p.m., Sponsored by St. Marys Lions Club

Wednesday, April 24

- SMCP presents "My Narrator" at Riverwalk Commons - 7 p.m.
- St. Marys Poetry Circle "Dinner Poetry" at Tutt Co. bistro - 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Thursday, April 25

- SMCP presents "The Death of Me" at Riverwalk Commons - 7 p.m.



The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

What would you call a train that has a cold?



A-choo-choo train!

Hendrix Terpstra (2)

Hey Kids... Every Riddle Kid that appears in the paper gets a FREE MILKSHAKE at the Sunset Diner!

TONS OF FUN FOR KIDS EVERY WEEK!

PET OF THE WEEK

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



Our Pet of the Week is Ember, a four month old Doberman. She likes to play with toys and her dog mate, Chip. Ember is a potential show dog and is being trained by her owner, Glynnis Elliott.



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

What are the best ways to ensure our pets will be returned home should they go missing?

Microchipping is a convenient way to ensure your pet will return home, should they go missing. The chip holds your contact information which ensures that if your pet is found, you will be contacted.

Collars and ID tags - Another simple prevention technique is ensuring your pet always wears a collar with an ID tag attached.

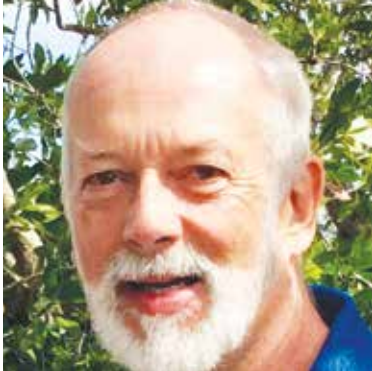
GetmeHOME.ca - The GetmeHOME identification number can be found engraved on the back of your pets rabies tag. Pet owners REGISTER and attach this tag to their pet's collar.

You must ensure to keep your contact information accurate and up to date

500 Water Street South St. Marys
www.stmarysvetclinic.com

COLUMN

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Not the usual rides, glitz and amusing animals of Orlando



By Paul Knowles

We discovered this place with a collection of parks, just outside Orlando, Fla. It has great rides, a restaurant named for an animal mascot and amazing displays of over-the-top glitz.

Disney World? Well, we did also visit Disney – more of that in the coming weeks – but I am talking about an elegant, small city named Winter Park, a destination that is really the opposite of Disney, except both are great places to visit.

Winter Park had its beginnings as a winter getaway for well-to-do folks from the chilly north. It was originally named Lakeview – it adopted its current name in 1887. It has grown – the population is now something near 30,000 – but it hasn't moved far from those roots. Today, it is still known for its stately homes, beautiful natural settings, high-end shopping and dining, and focus on the arts. Winter Park is also home to the highly reputed Rollins College, a liberal-arts college founded in 1885 by Congregationalists from New En-

gland.

All of that may explain why this certainly is not Disney.

Winter Park's parks are just that. The city is dotted with green spaces, often used for arts events and concerts. One highlight is the Winter Park Sidewalk Art Festival in mid-March. Held in Central Park and along adjoining streets, it attracts over 200,000 visitors each year.

Okay, I promised you rides and that doesn't seem likely in this setting, does it? But the thing is, Winter Park is situated on not one but three beautiful lakes. They're linked by quaint, narrow canals lined with wooden planks and a venerable operation called Winter Park Scenic Tours has been conducting boat tours of the lakes and canals since 1938. That's 33 years before Disney World opened.

The tour suits the ambience of the town. It's leisurely and friendly. The guides are very well informed, excellent communicators and funny as heck. The company operates about 10 small boats; they leave the docks in a miniature flotilla.

The time on the lakes is interesting, and the dozen or so passengers on each small boat get to see Rollins College and the elegant homes – celebrity owners are specifically not identified out of respect for their privacy – but the highlights are the passages through the one-lane canals lined with trees and gardens and tiny boathouses, always

including the possibility that somebody is going to have to back their way out of the canal to make room for an oncoming vessel. In our case, it was oncoming kayakers that did an about face to allow our passage.

These comfortable tours are a highlight for any visitor to Winter Park and they cost – wait for it – \$20 for an adult and half that for a child. Winter Park may have a justifiable reputation as a high-end community, but that price is totally low-end for anything Orlando and worth every penny. Yes, Americans do still use pennies.

There are plenty of places to eat and drink in Winter Park across the spectrum of price and cuisine, but we were quite taken with the gastropub with an animal mascot. Not a cute rodent, but a beast dubbed The Ravenous Pig, which is the name of the place. It could also describe some of the diners, I suppose, including yours truly.

The Ravenous Pig is owned by the head chef and the menu changes every day depending on what produce is best and freshest.

The food is great, the wine list very good, the products on the on-site brewery are excellent, but the best thing about it was the service – everyone from the guy doing the free valet parking to the person at the welcome desk to the manager were over-the-top friendly and helpful.

The walls of the place are



Our guide/captain on the boat cruise. All photos by Paul Knowles

well decorated with unique art and sculpture, often featuring pigs, of course, but that is not the over-the-top glitz I referred to earlier.

Winter Park is home to a number of good museums and galleries, and chief among them, from my point of view, the Charles Hosmer Morse Museum of Great American Art.

What makes the Morse special is this is the home of perhaps the most comprehensive collection of the spectacular work of glass-making genius Louis Comfort Tiffany anywhere in the world.

Most of us know about Tiffany lamps – and there are plenty of those here – but this museum houses dramatic Tiffany windows, miraculous mirrors, elaborate vases, amazing jewelry and, in fact, entire rooms

including the gob-smacking Tiffany Chapel, a unique and lavishly decorated chapel which Tiffany created for the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

I'm not sure this chapel inspires worship of anyone but Tiffany. It's that impressive!

We came away convinced that Winter Park is an ideal break for anyone on a theme park pilgrimage to Orlando. Those parks are definitely fun, but Winter Park's stylistic ambience coupled with the warm welcome we encountered everywhere makes for a delightful and relaxing day out.

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 astonishing Tiffany Chapel, now at the Morse Museum.



One of the quaint, wood-lined canals that are part of the Winter Park Scenic Cruise.

OBITUARY

Lang



Betty Marie Lang, age 69, of St. Marys, formerly of Stratford, passed away at her residence in St. Marys on Monday, April 8, 2024.

Born in Stratford daughter of the late Wesley and Alice (Tuffnell)Shean. Betty is survived by her true love and best friend of 50 years Gerry Lang.

Proud and loving mother of Melinda Lang (Kelly Ballantyne), Jillian Lang, Christopher (Kimberly) Lang and Andrew (Lindsay)Lang. The amazing grandmother and great grandmother of Heather, Kyle (Rylee), Ewen, Hannah, Abigail, Gavin, Kensington, Maddix, Lawson and Karson. Betty will be remembered by her sister Nancy Hughes and her in-laws David (Leslie) Lang, Kristanne Lang, Kirk Lang and along with nieces and nephews.

Family and friends are invited to a Celebration of Life for Betty on Sunday, April 28, 2024, from 2-4 p.m. at the Stratford Country Club, 53 Romeo St, North, Stratford. As expressions of sympathy memorial donations may be made to the Heart and Stroke Foundation or Diabetes Canada through the W. G. Young Funeral Home, 430 Huron St, Stratford. www.wgyoungfuneral-home.com

IN MEMORIAM

Watson

In memory of Eleanor who passed away April 14, 2009
Sweet memories will linger forever
Time cannot change them, it's true
Years that may come cannot sever
our loving remembrance of you
Lovingly remembered by Bruce, Clayton, Treacy, Tim, Ryan and families

THANK YOU

Bryan

The family of Ann Bryan would like to sincerely thank everyone for the messages, cards, flowers, food, and donations following our mother's passing. Your kindness and thoughtfulness is appreciated.

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IN MEMORIAM

Ball

Martin Thomas
March 10, 1981 –
April 19, 2020

In loving memory of our precious Martin who left us suddenly 4 years ago, on April 19, 2020.

In life we loved you dearly

In death we love you still,

In our hearts you hold a special place

That no one else can fill.

It broke our hearts to lose you

But you did not go alone,

Part of us went with you

The day you were called home.

**Always loved.. forever missed.. and never forgotten
Mom and Dad, sister Lisa and family, brother Murray and family, your daughter Abbigale and your fiancée Amber.**



CELEBRATION

Happy 60th Anniversary



to Bob and Sandy Bedgood, Married April 17, 1964

Lots of love from Vicki & Kevin Inchley and Steve & Joanna Bedgood; your grandchildren Holly & Matt, Alex & Krystal, Danny & Katie. Emily & Zac, James & Isabelle, Lewis and John. And your great-grandkids, Jesse, Skylar, Violet, Lyle and Lucy. XOXOXO

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OBITUARY

Mills



Keith, formerly of Woodham Passed away in his home at the Exeter Villa on Sunday, April 14, 2024, following a lengthy battle with cancer.

Keith had a natural aptitude for all things mechanical and worked in a variety of settings, including McLean & Foster Construction and Exeter Furniture, putting those and

other skills to use. He especially liked steam powered equipment and enjoyed trips to the Blyth Steam Festival. A favourite animal friend, he often offered a forever home to a needy cat. Keith and his bike with the big box were a presence in Exeter for many years as he shopped, ran his errands, visited and generally was out and about.

Survived by his sisters, Donna Van Arenthals of Lucan and Doris Richardson of St. Marys, and their families. He was predeceased by his parents Clarence/Duff and Grace (Youngson) Mills, and brothers-in-law Martin Van Arenthals and Dennis Richardson.

Cremation will be followed by a private burial at Kirkton Union Cemetery. In Keith's memory, an expression of sympathy may be made to the Canadian Cancer Society or a charity of your choice. Condolences may be forwarded through www.haskettfh.com.

IN MEMORIAM

Leigh Youse



May 31, 1968- April 23, 2021

Always gentle loving and kind,

A beautiful memory you leave behind.

Love Roger, Carol, Patti/Doug, Tim and the Youse and Quinn families.

CELEBRATION

Florence Craig is 80!

Join us in celebrating Florence Craig's 80th birthday with an Open House at Browns United Church & School

136545 13th Line, RR#4 St. Marys

April 27th 1-5pm



Instead of gifts, we kindly request donations for the food bank. Let's celebrate this special milestone for someone that has touched many lives. Please contact Lexi at 519-320-9375 if you have any questions.

COLUMN

Straight from the Shelves

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Join us in the 2/3rd Hall at the Pyramid Recreation Centre on May 1 at 7 p.m. for an evening with author Iona Whishaw. The \$25 ticket, available for purchase at Betty's Bookshelf, includes both entrance into the talk and a copy of Iona's latest book, "Lightning Strikes the Silence", which is not yet available to the public. A ticket is required for entry and refreshments will be served. If the ticket cost presents a financial barrier for you, please contact the Library as ticket subsidies may be available.

This Week's Recommendation

"Lightning Strikes the Silence" is the 11th book in Iona Whishaw's Lane Winslow Mysteries series. In it, Lane goes to investigate an explosion that rocked King's Cove, finding an injured Japanese girl hiding in a nearby cabin. While Lane attempts to locate the girl's family, Inspector Darling and Sergeant Ames are investigating the death of the local jew-

eller, found deceased in his office, apparently murdered by brute force. Will either mystery be solved? Find out in "Lightning Strikes the Silence". Place a hold on our forthcoming Library copy or receive your own copy on the night of the Iona Whishaw author talk.

Up This Week

Friday, April 19: Open 10:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Saturday, April 20: Dungeons and Dragons (10:30 a.m.)

Monday, April 22: Open 10:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Tuesday, April 23: Open 10:30 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24: EarlyON Play and Read (9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.), Mahjong Intro (1 p.m. - 2 p.m., 6 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.), Mahjong! (2 p.m. - 4 p.m., 6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.)

Thursday, April 25: Scrabble (6 p.m. - 8 p.m.)

Letter to the editor: Carbon pricing doesn't work on the farm

The Letter to the editor in the April 11 edition regarding carbon pricing asks for clarity, a fuller analysis and the presentation of facts.

The information provided by Mr. Hughson indicates that "farmers' fuel costs are exempt from the carbon-pricing policy, effectively eliminating the financial impact of the policy on agricultural operations." Mr. Hughson is partially correct that some fuel costs are exempt from the fuel charge under the Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act (GGPPA), however, this exemption is narrowly applied to only gasoline and diesel that can only be used in a restricted set of qualifying, on-farm-only equipment (tractors, farm trucks and generators).

The exemption does not apply to natural gas and propane, two fuels that are crucial to drying grain to prevent it from spoiling, heating barns so livestock and poultry do not suffer in winter and growing and storing horticultural products such as mushrooms and ginseng. Fuel use in agricultural production is highly price inelastic, meaning that the price has little impact on the amount used to produce food. In this context, carbon pricing is a poor mechanism to drive behavioural change and reduce emissions.

The Agriculture Carbon Alliance's Show Your Receipts campaign documents the negative impact of carbon pricing on farmers in Canada. In one peak month in 2023, 50 farms paid \$329,644 in carbon tax. The increase in the fuel charge that came into effect April 1 would have made that total \$431,545. This added cost to production cannot be recovered from the market. It is money coming straight out of farmers' businesses.

Farmers are on the front lines of climate change and recognize the need to take real action. Rather than a punitive, indiscriminate price on fuels, we believe promoting further emissions reductions in the agricultural sector is best achieved through building the capacity of farmers to adopt beneficial management practices (BMPs), investing in the adaptation of precision agricultural technologies at multiple farm scales and developing programs that incentivise enhancing the ecological goods and services (EG&S) provided by farming activities.

Thank you to the St Marys Independent for this opportunity to provide an agricultural analysis and viewpoint to the carbon-pricing discussion.

Ethan Wallace, Huron-Perth director, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Derek Van De Walle, president Perth County Federation of Agriculture

Letter to the editor: Perth South residents side with St. Marys library board over funding dispute

As longtime residents of Perth South, my husband and I were surprised and disappointed to learn of the possible drastic reduction in the funding to the St. Marys Public Library (SMPL) which could spell the end of free access to that library for Perth South residents. We agree with the SMPL board's decision not to reduce its funding request to the township.

As a past representative on that board for Perth South and past chair of The Friends of the St. Marys Library, I know firsthand that the SMPL is a gem offering much used and needed services. We must remember that the Township of Perth South

surrounds the town of St. Marys making the SMPL easily accessible to our township's population.

During these challenging economic times, it is critical that people of all ages and means have free access to their local libraries. Libraries serve as a unique social hub where a multitude of needs are met.

Therefore, we ask (Perth South council to) fully fund the request of the SMPL made to (the township) in January 2024. Fair cost sharing will continue to enable free access to critical services for Perth South residents.

Respectfully,

Carol and Robert Passmore

LOOKING BACK



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

Lights out

25 years ago (1999)

A big 18-wheeler caused a little excitement downtown on Friday morning when it failed to negotiate a turn at the Queen and Wellington Street corner, taking out a light pole which landed on a new car. The driver was charged with an improper right turn.

The Downie Central School ski trip was held recently. Everyone had a great time at Talisman and survived with no broken bones.

St. Marys Children's Choir baked 617 apple pies as a fundraiser at the United Church recently. The event raised over \$3,000 for the choir.

50 years ago (1974)

Rotarian Maurice Oliver left by air on Saturday for South Africa where he is taking part in a group study exchange for six weeks. Five other district Rotarians were with him. They planned a day's stop in Rio de Janeiro on the way.

Walter Bradley, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Bradley, has been promoted to chief building inspector for the city of St. Catharines. He has been a senior inspector with the department since 1962.

The Bunny Bundle Canoe Race took place on Sunday morning. A St. Marys couple, Leonard and Brenda Pearson, were winners of the mixed amateur class, while Rick DeBrabandere and his sister Ann placed second. The organizers believe that over \$10,000 was raised for charity from the event.

75 years ago (1949)

Citizens who have not yet cleaned up the accumulation of dirt and rubbish which may be lingering on their premises are asked to do so before May 1 according to the Medical Officer of Health.

One junior Sunday School attendee at the United Church, who started home on Sunday after the weekly lesson, lost the way and ended up several miles from town.

Ward Allen of Kirkton won the fiddling championship of Middlesex Country on Friday night at the Western Sports Fair. Runner up for the championship was 85-year old William Hyde of Hensall.

100 years ago (1924)

On Friday evening the Cheerio Club of St. James church held a special meeting in the gymnasium for the purpose of organizing for softball. Rev. Mr. Farney presided and it was decided to enter two teams in the Girls Softball League. The Club's membership has passed the fifty mark and new members are added every week.

The room formerly occupied as the Clerk's Office in Town Hall, but has recently been vacated by reason of the amalgamation of the Clerk and Treasurer's Office, has now been turned over to the Public Health Nurse. It has been newly painted and decorated and the long counter has been substituted by a table and several chairs.

We suspect that the man who says that all the bobbed-haired girls will be bald in ten years is trying to scare his daughter out of the idea of getting hers done.

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A working camcorder that will play Hi-8 digital tapes. Phone 519-284-3774

Wanted to buy

All collectibles including sports cards, beanie babies, Funko pops and stamps. Highest prices paid. Free appraisals. Are you downsizing or need an estate clean out? We can help. Call or text Stan anytime 519-868-3814.

Wanted

I will pay cash for antiques and collectibles. Coca Cola, Pepsi or any pop company. Brewery items - Kuntz, Huether Labatts, etc. Old radios and gramophones, wristwatches, pocket watches, old fruit jars - Beaver Star, Bee Hive etc. Any old oil cans and signs - Red Indian, Supertest etc. Any small furniture. If you are moving or cleaning out stuff please contact me - 519-570-6920.

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- 2022 Nissan Murano Platinum V6 AWD, Charcoal Grey, 16,000 kms, Excellent condition with remaining factory warranty, \$36,900.
Also - Reese Pro Series 16K 5th Wheel Hitch, \$300.
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3	4	2	7	1	8	5	6	9
6	1	8	5	7	9	3	2	4
4	7	3	8	2	1	9	5	6
2	9	5	4	6	3	7	1	8
7	2	1	3	9	4	6	8	5
5	3	4	6	8	7	2	9	1
9	8	6	1	5	2	4	7	3

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FULL TIME CLERK

Please refer to the City of Stratford website at www.stratford.ca for details of the duties for this position, minimum qualifications, and application submission process.

Application forms will be available on the Stratford Police Service website under the "Careers" link.

Completed application packages for this Full Time Clerk position will be accepted until April 30, 2024.

Please mail or deliver completed applications to Stratford Police Service, 17 George Street West, Stratford, ON N5A 1A6.

We thank all applicants for their interest; however only those selected for testing will be contacted.

Stratford Police Service

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We currently have openings for the following position:

POLICE CONSTABLE

Please refer to the City of Stratford website at www.stratford.ca for details of the duties for this position, minimum qualifications, and application submission process.

Application forms will be available on the Stratford Police Service website under the "Careers" link.

Completed application packages for this Police Constable position will be accepted until May 2, 2024.

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TOWN OF ST. MARYS

2024 LEAF & YARD WASTE COLLECTION

Leaf and yard waste is picked up from mid-May to mid-November.

NORTH & WEST AREAS	SOUTHEAST & SOUTHWEST AREAS
April 22	April 29
May 6	May 13
May 20	May 27
June 17	June 24
July 29	July 22
August 26	August 19
September 23	September 30
October 21	October 28
November 4	November 11
November 18	November 25

LEAF & YARD WASTE DROP-OFF LOCATIONS

Leaf and yard waste can be dropped off at the following locations year-round, free of charge.

Municipal Operations Centre
408 James St. S

Open seven days a week from dawn to dusk. Enter off South Service Rd.

St. Marys Landfill
1221 Water St. S

Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday: 8:00 am - 4:30 pm
Saturday: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm
Sunday, Monday, Thursday: Closed

Landfill hours are subject to change. Visit www.townofstmarys.com/landfill or call 519-284-2340, ext. 221 for details.

Leaf and Yard Waste Collection Map



COLLECTION REQUIREMENTS

Leaf and yard waste must be placed in kraft-style brown paper bags or open, rigid, reusable containers (weighing less than 48 lbs) and set at the curb by 7:00 am.

Leaf and yard waste that is set out in plastic bags or raked into piles on the boulevard or street will not be collected.

ACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

- Grass clippings
- Leaves, plants & weeds
- Branches
- Hedge & tree trimmings*
- Fruits & vegetables

UNACCEPTABLE MATERIALS

- Top soil, sod & rocks
- Christmas trees
- Lumber/treated wood
- Plastic plant pots/trays
- Stumps & large branches
- Household/food waste
- Plastic bags

**Hedge and tree trimmings must be no longer than 3 ft. with a diameter of 3 in. or less and must weigh less than 44 lbs.*