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## Oxford OPP officer celebrating 50 years of women in policing

LEE GRIFFI  
*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

The Ontario Provincial Police has reached a milestone of half a century of female police officers and locally, one cop decided to put her thoughts to paper to pay tribute.

Randi Crawford is the Oxford detachment's community safety and media relations officer and the overwhelming pride she feels to be an OPP officer led her to write '50 Years Proud.'

"I was trying to think of what I could say to capture this. It's a remarkable thing. I went back to my grade 11 English days and thought I could write a poem. I sat down and wrote it in maybe 20 or 25 minutes."

She added it just flowed from pen to paper because of the immense pride she has in her role with the OPP and being a woman in policing.

"It was to thank those women who came before me and to celebrate those I am with now and also to pave the way for the those coming in the future."

Crawford is regularly out in the Oxford community at various events and the Gazette asked her if she has girls and young women coming up to her and asking what it's like to be a police officer.

"You gave me goosebumps by asking that question. One of the reasons I took the community safety and media relations role was because I love talking to people about this career. I try to make myself available to anyone who has questions."

She added females from elementary school age up to adults ask her what it's like and what they have to do to join the ranks.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

## Norwich retirement home closing its doors as staff told they won't be paid

LEE GRIFFI  
*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

First it was a police investigation into missing rent money. Then, notice of a massive hike in rent being charged to residents. Now, Trillium Norwich Retirement Home is closing its doors without giving residents and families legal notice. On top of that, staff members have been told they won't be getting a nickel for showing up to work.

Cheryl Williams has been an employee since June of last year and she told the Echo she is one of the longest-serving employees.

"The turnover was horrible because of how staff were treated." She added Julie Vitias, the home's former manager, was the root cause. Williams, 62 years old with health issues, said she was berated.

"She would make comments like I should be grateful she gave me a job at my age. I was yelled at in front of other staff and residents. All the stuff you would expect from a bad manager."

Vitias is currently at least one of the subjects of an OPP investigation into what the OPP said is at least \$50,000 in missing rent payments. As for staff payroll. Williams explained it started a few months ago.

"We weren't getting our pay on time and it was coming through e-transfers, which was odd, by a numbered company which was different from the business."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 8



The controversy surrounding the Trillium Norwich retirement home has reached a new level as staff were recently told they would not be receiving pay for recent and future hours worked as the home is scheduled to close on Monday. (JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)



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# Writes poem about her pride in being on the force

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I am also a recruiting ambassador for the organization and I want to get as many people hired as possible and everyone has such a unique skillset they can bring to the role."

As to her future with the Ontario Provincial Police, Crawford said she is focusing on her current position for now but there are many opportunities to advance in the future.

"I am loving what I am doing so I haven't thought too far down the road. One thing I do say in the poem is women are in so many different roles in the OPP and that's exciting."

The Gazette asked Crawford where she sees her career going with the force. She explained there are women in a number of command roles, something she now sees as an opportunity.

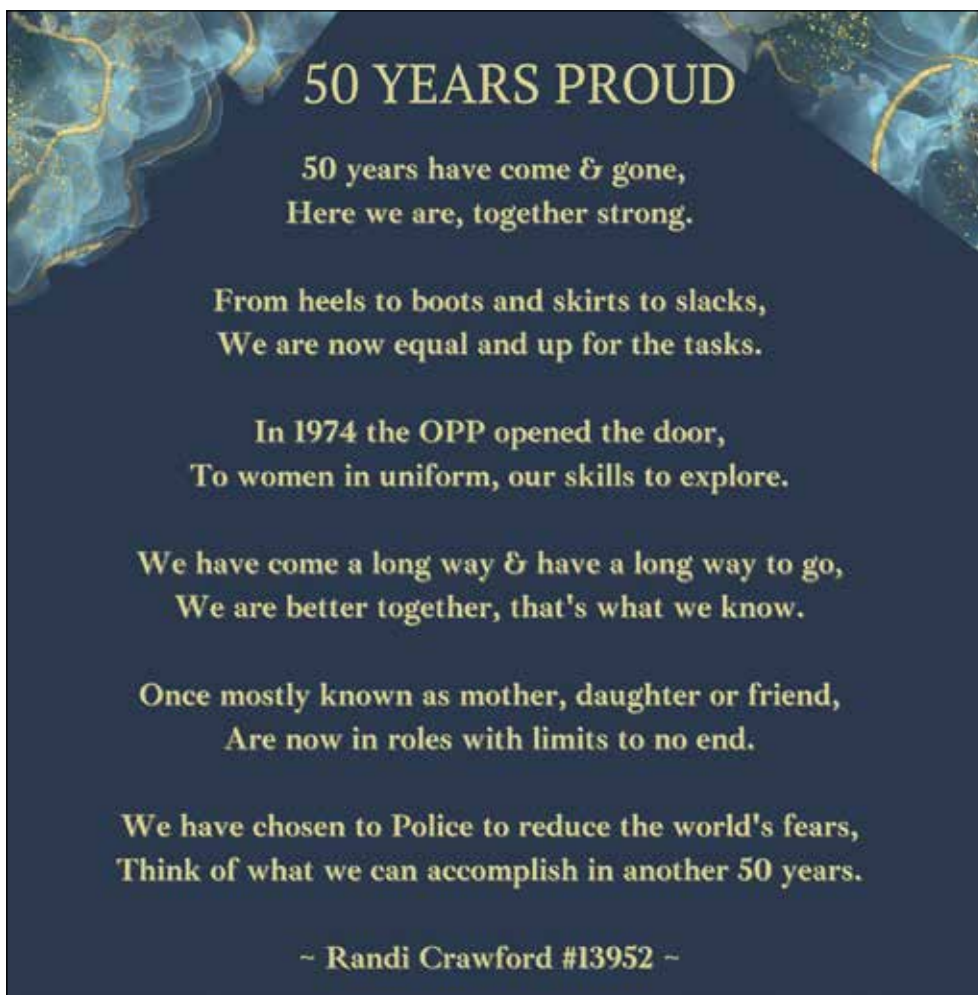
"50 years ago, I wouldn't have had as many options to choose from and now because

they are endless it's hard for me to give you an answer."

On Oct. 30, the OPP unveiled a new mural at an event for members to honour the anniversary at its General Headquarters in Orillia. On May 27, 1974, 15 women reported for training to the OPP Academy and one month later, they were counted among the OPP's provincial constable graduates. By the end of that year, 39 women had been selected to serve. Over the last 50 years, close to 2,500 female recruits have been sworn in.

There are a total of 97 officers in total at the Oxford OPP and 30 of those are women.

"We have other wonderful roles here like our administrative clerks, special constables in our court office and auxiliary officers so there are women in those roles as well, explained Crawford, who added the first uni-



Oxford OPP officer Randi Crawford wrote a poem to celebrate 50 years of women in an OPP uniform.



Crawford credits her 21-year-old daughter Melanie as one of the reasons she traded a healthcare career for policing (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

form for female officers wasn't exactly conducive to the job.

"The first women graduates wore skirts, blouses, heeled shoes and they carried a purse with a built-in holster," explained Crawford. "They soon discovered the women were not able to perform their duties so very shortly afterwards they were given uniforms closer to what the men were wearing. Today we wear the exact same equipment."

Crawford is approaching her 12th year of policing after leaving her first career as a physical and occupational therapist. She explained it was time for a change and a new way to make a difference.

"I was helping people and without sounding like a cliché, I helped people in health care but I wanted to do even more. My daughter at that time was 11 and I had a goal of creating the safest Ontario I could for her. What better way to do that than become a police officer."

She explained the roles and responsibilities officers present are endless.

"We provide safety for all our communities in Ontario. That is such an honour but it's also a big responsibility and an amazing accomplishment."

Frontline officers work shifts and Crawford readily admitted police is a career where family support is necessary, especially when children are involved.

"Everyone questioned me. My husband, mom, sister and my friends. I told them I had a humungous drive to do this. I wanted to give as much of myself to the community as possible and I was willing to take the risks involved to keep you all safe."

Provincial Police detachments across the province have recently held recruitment events in the hopes of getting more people interested in a policing career, and that includes women. Crawford explained there are several reasons people have doubts about joining the ranks.

"Sometimes I think people are hesitant because they have younger children and they aren't sure how to make a career change. Childcare is a big concern but when we talk about equity, it's not just women taking care of the kids any more. It's becoming much more even in our generation."

By 2005 the number of women in the OPP stood at 15 per cent and today that figure has jumped to 21.5 per cent.

Crawford has given the Gazette permission to use her email address, Randi.Crawford@opp.ca, so anyone interested in a career in policing can reach out.

"I see (The Gazette) as an ally. You really want to see the best for our community. You are out there and want to showcase these types of stories. Maybe it will reach a young girl who is 16 and isn't sure what she wants to do. Maybe this story will help her say hey, I do want to do this or at least ask about it."

# Golspie Dairy Wins two first place prizes for their cheeses

EMILY STEWART

*Echo Correspondent*

Golspie Dairy announced in an Oct. 23 Facebook post that the farm finished first place twice in the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair Cheese and Butter competition. The crowdie cheese won the top prize in the fresh cheese category and St. Oda won in the bloomy rind category.

"It was a really great surprise," Marja DeBoer-Marshall, Golspie Dairy co-owner, said. "We entered both of those cheese just kind of on a whim. You never know what's going to pan out but to find out that they both placed first in their category was really amazing. It definitely made our day."

Currently, Golspie Dairy carries four different cheeses. The St. Oda and crowdie cheeses are newer products.

"We've had more time to work on their development and kind of tweak things to get them to where we want them," De-

Boer-Marshall said.

DeBoer-Marshall said that participating in competitions is a great way to receive feedback from the judging panel and get both praise and comments on what to improve.

"If you're thinking about making changes," she said. "Then it kind of guides where you should be looking and what you should be doing to bring out the best in your cheese and make it more sale-able."

Golspie Dairy is done with competitions for 2024. However, the farm is looking to enter the St. Oda and crowdie cheeses again in the American Cheese Society Competition in 2025. The American Cheese Society Competition takes place every June in Englewood, CO.

"We'll see how they do at that show," DeBoer-Marshall said. "It'll be a little harder because we have to ship the cheese across the border, so that's a bit of 'roll with the dice,' how the cheese does in transit."

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# Victoria Quilts Oxford November 13-17 online auction supports those living with cancer

JEFF TRIBE

Echo Contributor

An online auction Wednesday, Nov. 13 to Sunday, Nov. 17 is supporting Victoria Quilts Canada Woodstock/Oxford branch's (VQCWO) ongoing mission to provide warm, flannel-wrapped 'hugs' to cancer patients at a time they need it most.

"We make quilts for people living through cancer," explained VQCWO Co-ordinator Mary Moore of a non-profit group which combines craft with compassion.

The VQCWO online auction features 83 items, hand-made and donated by VQCWO members, including placemats, Christmas stockings, baby items and 39 signature quilts. The listing includes one king, two queens, two doubles and a remainder of twins and lap quilts. Interested persons can view the items through creating an account at [32auctions.com/vqc2024](https://32auctions.com/vqc2024) and also in person, Tuesday, Nov. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Sally Creek Community Centre, 330 Lakeview Drive in Woodstock.

Online bidding will open on the 13th at 9 a.m. and close on the 17th at 8:30 p.m. Available payment methods include e-transfer, cash or cheque.

Providing quilts for those living with cancer is a concept which originated in the United States, named in honour of Victoria Ann Morrison. Her best friend Deborah Rogers founded Victoria's quilts in part due to Victoria's comment she got cold while undergoing chemotherapy treatment. It has since migrated through Ottawa-based Victoria Quilts Canada (VQC) founder Betty Giffin to 24 communities across Canada. The concept is simple, providing both physical and emotional comfort through handmade quilts hand-delivered or mailed to recipients, free of charge. 'Lap quilts' measure 50 inches by 70 inches, designed to provide individual creature comfort to individuals following chemotherapy in the hospital, and at home. "That's exactly what we say," said VQO head of publicity Andrea Aikenhead. "It's like a warm hug."



Victoria Quilts Oxford Co-ordinator Mary Moore (left) and head of publicity Andrea Aikenhead show off some of the handiwork from their roughly 60 county quilters. An online auction will offer 83 items and support the organization's provision of quilts to those living with cancer, free of charge.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTOS)

The quilts are hand-made by volunteer quilters, using materials provided free of charge through a combination of individual, organizational (for example, 100 Women Who Care) and corporate (Toyota) donations and fund-raisers including the upcoming auction. Quilts have flannel on the back to be cozy, with their fronts 100 per cent cotton.

"So, they can wash it and wash it and wash it," said Moore.

VQC produced 16 quilts in 1999. To date, roughly 100,000 quilts have been distributed across Canada by the organization. Anyone can request a quilt for an individual through the 'Request a quilt' tab on the VQC website ([victoriasquiltsCanada.com](https://victoriasquiltsCanada.com)). Requests from the organization's head office in Ottawa are then directed onward to regions across the country.

VQCWO has produced 2,000 quilts for Oxford County recipients, with an additional 1,000 for surrounding areas including Sarnia not served by other chapters. As news of the local organization's existence has spread, requests for quilts have grown to close to 20 per month.

The VQCWO branch aims for a three to four-day turnaround between request and delivery says Moore. "You like them to get the quilt as soon as possible."

Ideally, they are hand-delivered, however will be mailed when that is not possible, their arrival offering a combination of physical and psychological support. "It brightens their day," said Moore. "It just blows people away strangers are thinking of them and doing this for them."

The first names of recipients, positive thoughts and



their progress is noted in the branch's monthly newsletter.

"We let them know people are thinking of them," said Aikenhead.

Each quilt is unique, with a variety of colours and styles available for different tastes, including one memorable 'camo' option.

"It was for someone who had been in the reserves," Aikenhead explained.

The county organization has roughly 60 'keen quilters' says Aiken and regularly scheduled meetings the second Wednesday of the month at the Sally Creek Community Centre and the month's third Wednesday at Cherished Pieces, a quilting supply store at 142 Broadway Street in Tillsonburg. VQCWO also supported the foundation of a branch in London, which is doing terrific and a friends' group of quilters in Windsor.

"We supply them with fabric and what they need," said Moore.

Some quilters come in just to pick up supplies during monthly gatherings, others make a day of it and stay.

The organization represents a productive combination of passionate and creative quilters enjoying their craft while supporting a great cause. Those seeking more information are invited to email [vqwoodstock330@gmail.com](mailto:vqwoodstock330@gmail.com), visit the website <https://www.victoriasquiltsCanada.com/branches/br-woodstock.html> or the Victoria's Quilts Canada Woodstock/Oxford Branch Facebook page.

"It's a feel-good thing," Aikenhead concluded. "You get so much more back from it than you give."

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8. Newspapers should be locally-owned and operated

# Southwestern Public Health invites community input to help shape its new strategic plan

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The health representing Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas wants to hear from the public as it embarks on its new strategic plan.

Southwestern Public Health has launched a community feedback campaign to help shape its five-year strategic plan. Throughout November, the health unit will host staff town halls and interviews with community service providers to gather perspectives from health and social service partners. The public is encouraged to participate through an online survey.

“It is important for us to hear from a range of people across the region to better understand how we are meeting the community’s needs, and where we can dig deeper into what matters most over the next five years,” says Cynthia St. John, Chief Executive Officer at the organization.

The Ontario Public Health Standards require health units to review and update their strategic plans every three to five years.

“This regular review ensures that we continue to address the evolving health needs of our communities while aligning with provincial public health mandates,” she added.

“The past five years have been remarkable for our health unit, and for public health in general,” explained St. John. “The COVID-19 pandemic underscored just how vital it is to have collaborative input related to population health, and that sentiment rings true in all aspects of our work. Listening ensures we can continue our momentum in addressing the health inequities and challenges that impact our communities for a healthier, more vibrant region.”

While health units are mandated by the province to offer certain programs, St. John explained public health is one pillar in the larger health care system and while hospitals, primary care, and emergency services provide healthcare to individuals, public health focuses on health at the population level.

“We have three core functions - health protection, health

promotion, and illness prevention. Input from the public can shape how we will prioritize our work and allocate funding within these functions.”

She added residents can help shape how we approach areas like mental health and wellness, chronic disease prevention, environmental health, and family health.

“While we are mandated to deliver certain programs, community input is invaluable for tailoring our approach to better meet local needs.”

While there are several in-person sessions scheduled for staff to participate this month, there are no in-person events for the public.

Southwestern Public Health is the result of a merger of two former units in 2018 and the current document was approved in 2019. As a result, St. John expects this strategic plan to be different from the previous version.

“The merger brought an opportunity to expand our vision and reflect the unique characteristics of a larger, more diverse population and we created a strategic plan within a year of merging. We anticipate that our new strategic plan will incorporate even more insights from this broader geographic and demographic perspective in addition to considering potential changes in our community needs, particularly in light of a global pandemic.”

She added she and her team are eager to hear what matters most to residents when it comes to their health and wellness which includes feedback on current programs and services, and ideas for addressing new or emerging health concerns.

“We value insights on how to make our services more accessible and effective, so we’re particularly interested in hearing about any barriers to health and suggestions for new initiatives.”

A draft plan is expected to be completed early in 2025. The health unit’s sessions for staff and board members to gather internal feedback are expected to play a critical role in implementing the plan.

“These internal sessions will take place alongside community partner consultations and broader community consultations

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

I would like to propose a sensible idea for affordable housing to developers and government officials dealing with housing. After World War II, many Canadian cities built “wartime housing” for the military returning home. These homes were smaller with the necessary basics in which a family could live without builders’ upgrades as they are know today. The housing lots may have been a smaller size. The cost of building a smaller house has to be more economical than the larger million dollar versions that few people can actually afford. I know that the younger people wish to have a home as large as some of their parents, but it took them 40 to 50 years to get there! Perhaps the municipal fees for home builders and developers could be lowered as an incentive to build smaller homes. Let’s build these starter homes or bungalows for the first time home buyers. There is also a shortage of these homes for retirees who want to size down, but still want to own their own home. What goes around comes around! I strongly feel that these ideas will make housing more affordable for more people of all ages.

For Home and Country,

Anya Donaldson,  
Advocacy Coordinator,  
Oxford District Womens’ Institute

via a survey, allowing us to create a plan that incorporates both professional insights and resident and/or client perspectives.”

The online survey can be found at [https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SWPH\\_stpl2024\\_Public](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SWPH_stpl2024_Public). The final opportunity to provide feedback is Nov. 29. Those who cannot access the survey online can complete a printed version at the St. Thomas or Woodstock public health unit locations.

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# On your mark, get set, laugh: Festival of One Act Plays returns for fourth edition

EMILY STEWART

*Echo Correspondent*

The latest edition of the Festival of One Act Plays will feature a selection of one-act plays by American playwright Bruce Kane.

The Festival of One Act Plays: On your mark, get set, laugh will feature eight plays by Kane. The fourth edition will be at Theatre Woodstock on from Nov. 15 to 17.

The characters range from actors meeting the younger version of themselves, middle-aged versions of Batman and Superman, an actress dealing with creative block, a jealous car computer, and many more.

"This is the ultimate of variety in theatre," Ted McLaughlin, executive producer, said. "Every type of little situation you could imagine is going to be in there. Different styles, different types of comedy. It's just going to be a whirlwind of theatrical experience. There are no boring points in

this at all."

Some of the productions have intertwining themes, and others do not. Rehearsals began in Sept. where 21 actors in 24 different roles met once a week for short rehearsals.

"The difficult part is putting the entire production together and being able to change the stage quickly so that the next play can proceed within a minute of the last play ending," McLaughlin said.

He is looking forward to the fourth edition of the festival and added the company is already planning their fifth edition for November 2025.

"We've now established a great tradition. We are hoping for many, many more. We're going to try to keep them fresh, we change them up all the time. We're looking for new ideas."

One Act Play (OAP) Community Theatre announced on social media on Sept. 23 a new start for OAP Community Theatre as an independent company after the run of

Festival of One Act Plays Four. In 2025, OAP Community Theatre will start hosting their productions at St. David's United Church.

McLaughlin launched a GoFundMe campaign to cover several costs that come with being a newly independent company including rental fees, royalties, event insurance, and other expenses. As of Nov. 3, about \$570 of the \$5,000 goal has been raised. The GoFundMe campaign can be found by visiting [www.oapcommunitytheatre.com/community-support](http://www.oapcommunitytheatre.com/community-support).

"Like any brand-new community theatre, there's a lot of start up costs," McLaughlin explained. "Our community has been rallying around us to try to help us out."

On your mark, get set, laugh will run at Theatre Woodstock on Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m., and Nov. 16 and 17 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$20 and can either be purchased in-person at 22 Reeve St., by calling 519-537-2582 or visiting online at either [theatrewoodstock.com](http://theatrewoodstock.com) or [www.oapcommunitytheatre.com](http://www.oapcommunitytheatre.com).



(TED MCLAUCHLIN PHOTO)



(TED MCLAUCHLIN PHOTO)



(TED MCLAUCHLIN PHOTO)

## OFA kicking off Cultivating Local workshops

LEE GRIFFI

*Local Journalism Initiative Reporter*

If anyone is thinking about selling agricultural products directly to consumers and wondering how to get started, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture can help.

The Cultivating Local Workshop Series gets underway next week and comes in response to demand and growing interest in seizing local selling opportunities.

Nine workshops have been scheduled and will run until February to provide key experts and resources for producers and prospective producers to learn more about the opportunities to sell in-demand products in Ontario.

Tracey Arts is the OFA representative for Oxford and Elgin counties and said they are giving people what they asked for.

"It has been an ask from our members

and comes out of a survey we did in August and September. It's not just for farmers, but also for those interested in getting into some sort of farming. They can ask questions and meet people who can help them start up."

She added the sessions will also be useful for farmers looking to diversify and will help participants connect with the right people.

"There are nine different and free workshops covering a wide range of topics. There will be different expert speakers related to each topic. Even if people can't watch them live, they will be recorded and be available on the OFA Hub to view. You don't have to be a federation member to attend or watch after the fact."

Workshop topics include market trends and in-demand local products, getting started in value-added agriculture, food and beverage as well as selling at farmer's markets and selling to restaurants.

Arts added the OFA has partnered with several stakeholders to provide the best available information.

"We have partnered with Farm Fresh Ontario and Farmer's Markets Ontario and others. They are the experts and can help with questions participants may have. Some people sell at their farm and others are markets, but many don't know how to get into one side of the business."

The concept of food to table at restaurants is one that has taken off over the last decade or so, something Arts said needs to be fully taken advantage of.

"That is that niche at some restaurants. They support local and get products close to their doors. It's a great thing to be able to have an establishment highlight their beef is sourced from Bob's farm just down the road. It's great to see restaurants try and boost the local economy this way."

She added the goal is to help get people

who want to get into farming the information they need to make that happen and assist those currently in the business to expand their sales opportunities.

Arts explained while she isn't looking to add to her dairy operation in Oxford, she is committed to purchasing from local suppliers as often as she can.

"I work very hard to make sure that's what I do. We know what our (food) regulations are. We know our food is safe and healthy and I want to make sure I feed my kids the best. It's their nutrition we are talking about. I take them to the grocery stores and markets with me to teach them how to pick our good meat and produce."

Sessions run on Thursdays from Nov. 2024 to Feb. 2025 with the first one set for Nov. 14 from 10 a.m. to noon. More information and registration details are available at <https://ofa.on.ca/cultivatinglocal/>.

# Notice required by law not followed

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

I think it's one of Gil's other businesses."

The person she is referring to is Gil Scholyar who is listed on the Retirement Home Regulatory Authority (RHRA) website as being the majority owner of the home. He was also the owner of another Trillium Home in Toronto that surrendered its license two months ago. A source told the Gazette that home had no residents when the license was turned in.

Williams said Anna Nikitenko, listed as Trillium's general manager, made a rare appearance in Norwich on Nov. 1 after staff wasn't paid on Oct. 31. Despite assurances payroll would flow, it didn't happen.

"She very nonchalantly said there's no more money, we aren't giving anyone any money. Just go to the labour board. In the same sentence, she asked us to volunteer to take care of the residents. I asked her if she was getting paid and she wouldn't comment."

An email to staff from Nikitenko to staff stated "...we have not received the funds needed to cover payroll payments for both past and current periods. I understand the impact this has on your livelihood, but the situation is beyond my control."

The Echo attempted numerous times to get more information from her through phone calls and texts, including

asking her if she was still getting paid. She would not answer.

Williams said Scholyar has not visited the home in her time there.

Some employees refused to work for free while the one who stayed asked for a record of employment (ROE) in order to apply for employment insurance once all residents have found new living quarters. Williams said the answer was bizarre.

"She said no, in order for us to get the ROE we had to hand in letters of resignation. We said no, that's quitting meaning we would be punished by EI by giving letters of resignation. We have to wait until after the 11th to get them."

Williams figured she is owed about \$4,000 making it difficult to pay her rent and other bills. The Echo reached out to Nikitenko asking for an explanation as to why staff won't be paid, why the home ran out of money and why she attempted to raise rent potentially illegally. While she read the initial text message, further messages were ignored. Several phone calls were also now answered. She was also asked if she was receiving a pay cheque.

She added the ten or so staff members at the home are wonderful and care deeply for the residents which is why they are sticking around. Williams said there will be about four residents remaining by press time, but if they ar-

en't placed elsewhere, she and her team won't be going anywhere.

"What are we supposed to do? Most people have been very supportive but we get the odd comment that we are stupid for working for free. You try spending a year and a half caring for these people and then just walk out on them. I can't do that."

The province is providing emergency funding for residents and their families. That money is paying for transportation to the long-term care or retirement home they were admitted to along with one month of rent. Staff members sticking around will get nothing.

"Ontario Health at Home is paying personal support workers to come in and help us, but we are not getting paid," explained Williams. "They are wonderful, they are here to help. We just want to be paid for our work."

The Echo asked Oxford MPP Ernie Hardeman why the province wouldn't provide lost wages to staff members.

"Maybe we need to look at that and we had quite a discussion (with the RHRA). This is the first time I have had to deal with this and I'm not the only one dealing with when someone doesn't live up to their obligations."

Hardeman added he is hopeful the labour board will become involved in the situation as soon as possible.

"I hope the owner realizes he doesn't

have the power to tell his employees you're done and send them off without paying the wages that are owed."

Before announcing it was closing its doors, Trillium also informed at least some residents of a massive rent increase, something not permitted under the Landlord Tenant Act. The Act sets a yearly maximum hike in rent, normally close to the rate of inflation. For 2024 that number sits at 2.5 per cent. One resident's family who reached out to the Echo said their loved one's rent, set at \$1,500 was set to rise to just under \$4,000.

Williams said the current residents are being fed but should the food run out the local United Church and Salvation Army made it clear they would step in and provide good, nutritious meals for the remaining residents.

"A lot of former residents' family members also said they would step up and help if needed," said Williams.

The Trillium Care Norwich building is for sale and was listed in April with a price tag of \$2 million.

Two GoFundMe page has been set up, one by a neighbour and the other by a former employee. Both said all funds or anything else donated will be distributed to staff members still on the job.

About 25 employees and members of the community held a rally and media availability at the home on Tuesday.

## Recent Woodstock overdose deaths linked to fentanyl

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Woodstock Police believe fentanyl is to be blamed for two recent fatal overdoses in the city.

Inspector Jamie Taylor explained while he couldn't fully connect the deaths, he said odds are the drug was the root cause.

"Typically, autopsies will be done on overdose victims to determine the cause of death. We believe them to be fentanyl based on the paraphernalia we saw at the scene. Purple fentanyl was used by the victims in both instances."

Taylor added police will do a thorough and complete investigation any time a sudden death occurs.

"We look at where the person came from, who their suppliers are and how do we prevent this from happening again. There are investigative techniques we use when we come to these."

Police are reminding residents that all fentanyl is dangerous, regardless of its colour. They add if you or someone you know is using substances, please take the necessary precautions but also seek help, get a naloxone kit.

Southwest Public Health has a number of resources available at <https://www.swpublichealth.ca/en/community-health/>

community-substance-use-prevention.aspx?\_mid\_=105449.

### Police issue scam alert

The Woodstock Police Service is warning citizens about fraudulent calls claiming to be from "Publishers Clearing House"(PCH). PCH is a legitimate company based in New York that offers sweepstakes and prize-based games; however, it does not email or call its winners.

Several local residents have told police they were scammed out of thousands of dollars. The PCH caller tells the victims they have won a substantial amount of money, however, they asked for \$10,000 to pay the taxes on these winnings. They requested the funds be transferred through a financial institution, and when that isn't possible, they will request that the cash is placed inside a rolled-up magazine, which is then to be gift-wrapped and mailed to a provided address.

Police say these are not legitimate calls and you should never provide personal information or send money to any organization that contacts you via phone or the Internet. Do not call the telephone number back as this will certify that your number belongs to a real person, and the number will be distributed to scam call centres.

### Weapons call leads to charges

Two 18-year-old and one 16-year-old

male from are facing serious weapons charges after police were dispatched to a call on Oct. 25.

Police say the three teenage males allegedly approached two young females in Brompton just after midday, brandishing a black replica handgun. The gun was pointed directly at one of young females and threats were made, causing the victims to leave the area. Police add the suspects entered a black vehicle and began to follow the girls as they were walking away. Police add one of the females was then forced to provide her social media information to the males at gunpoint before they fled the scene.

The three males are charged with possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose and two of them also face a charge of pointing a firearm.

Woodstock Police are reminding the public that replica firearms appear identical to legitimate firearms, and they will be treated as legitimate until it can be confirmed otherwise.

### Police asking for help from the public following tragic fatal collision

Officers responded to a serious motor vehicle collision at the intersection of Springbank Avenue North and Sloane Street on Halloween at approximately 8:45 p.m.

A 60-year-old male delivery driver from Woodstock was struck by another vehi-



Woodstock Police say a bad batch of fentanyl is to blame for two recent overdose deaths in the city (WOODSTOCK POLICE PHOTO)

cle while returning to his parked vehicle. Despite immediate medical attention, the injured man was airlifted to a hospital in London due to the severity of his injuries but eventually died as a result.

The driver of the other vehicle was not injured in the incident and did remain on the scene. Police say they are conducting an ongoing investigation and are urging anyone with information to come forward.

Police can be contacted at 519-537-2323.



# Women's Institute meeting draws nearly 80 members

JEFF HELSDON

*Echo Contributor*

Although Women's Institutes are known for many things associated with history, the group still significantly contributes to the community today.

Ontarians can see the results of the group's work over more than the last 120 years. Pasteurization of milk, painted lines on highways, sex education in schools and flashing lights on a school bus are a few of the many policy items Women's Institute can take credit for. History buffs will also know of the Women's Institute role in creating the Tweedsmuir history of many rural areas.

The Women's Institute movement was started by Adelaide Hoodless and Erland Lee in 1897 in Stoney Creek.

"It was started as an education and social thing for rural women," said Nancy West, a member of Brown's Women's Institute in northwest Oxford County and one of the organizers of the Oxford district meeting in Mt. Elgin on Oct. 19.

Money raised by the group helps local charities such as the Canadian Cancers Society and MS. After a rural house fire, the Women's Institute provides financial assistance.

"There's a huge component that helps children's hospital," West added.

Other initiatives the Women's Institute assists with are raising awareness of human trafficking, awareness of Lyme disease and ticks, and lobbying for affordable homes. The Oxford group recently made a \$1,000 donation to Welkin, a mental health organization in Wood-

stock.

Members participate in sewing bees for hospitals to make bags for ice packs and receiving blankets. They also prepare kits for those admitted to the hospital who have nothing with them.

At the Oct. 19 meeting, Bryan Smith of the Food Rescue Federation of Oxford spoke to the 79 ladies in attendance about reducing kitchen waste and using green cone food digesters in the backyard. He suggested that individuals audit their home garbage and make one improvement at a time. He also runs a pumpkin rescue Facebook page, organizing pick up to provide waste jack-o-lanterns for animal feed.

Smith also presented some food statistics West found startling: 40 to 60 percent of food produced in Canada is wasted, and 19 percent of people in Oxford don't have food security.

Scholarships are another local effort, often done in conjunction with 4-H. At the meeting, local student Pieter Sutherland was presented with the Maryn Pardy scholarship. He is studying electricity at Fanshawe.

Recommending policies for improving rural life is still an initiative of the Women's Institute. West said recommendations are made locally and then move up to the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario and Federated Women's Institutes of Canada. There is also an international blanket organization that is tied in when necessary. And the groups still record their local history.

Sadly, like many service clubs, Women's Institutes are suffering from the



A silent auction at the Oxford District meeting of the Women's Institute is one of the fundraising tools for the group. Nearly 80 women turned out for the event, but the group is in need of new members. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

aging of their members and not enough new members joining. Many branches have closed in Oxford but are still present in Tavistock, Plattsville, Cornell, Mt. Elgin, Brown's and Lakeside. The St. Mary's branch, which was respon-

sible for starting the local museum, has closed.

West encouraged those who want to make a difference to join the Women's Institute. Information is available at [www.fwio.on.ca](http://www.fwio.on.ca)

# Square and Rounding dancing celebration in Woodstock

LINDA CHARLTON

*Secretary, SWOSDA Executive*

It was an incredible celebration on Oct. 26 for the 65th anniversary of Square and Round Dancing in South Western Ontario (SWOSDA).

It all took place at the Maranatha Christian Reformed Church in Woodstock. Dancing started at 2 p.m. with squares in the main hall and rounds in the large foyer. Both rooms were kept moving with seven callers and seven cuers until 9 p.m. with a break for a catered supper. 114 dancers participated over the course of the day.

There were dancers in attendance from as far away as New York State, Windsor and Ottawa and everywhere in between.

Woodstock Mayor Jerry Acchione gave welcoming remarks during the opening ceremonies. He congratulated us on our 65th anniversary and wished us a great event. He was a good sport and joined in a dance aimed at beginners and called by Tom Charlton, square dance caller for Silver Streak Squares (Plus Dance Club), Woodstock. Acchione also enjoyed watching round dancing (choreographed ballroom dancing).

Time was made during the afternoon to present Stan and Mary Smith with the Ontario Trillium Award of



Round Dancing (choreographed ballroom dancing).

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Merit. Stan and Mary have held many positions on several executives and travelled widely to promote square



Modern Square Dancing.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

dancing. All of us in SWOSDA also congratulate them on their achievement.

We thank all the dancers for supporting SWOSDA and attending our monthly dances - SWOSDA meets across South Western Ontario in September to November, and January to May.

It was truly an incredible celebration and an amazing day that will not be soon forgotten.

# Woodstock Ingersoll Echo

## Pick Up Locations

### WOODSTOCK

Tim Hortons - 805 Vansittart  
 Tim Hortons - 942 Dundas  
 Tim Hortons - 857 Devonshire  
 Tim Hortons - 715106 Oxford Rd 4  
 Tim Hortons - 566 Norwich  
 Coffee Culture  
 Early Bird Coffee - 375 Dundas  
 Early Bird Coffee - 815 Juliana  
 Beantown Coffee  
 Subway - 385 Springbank  
 Crispy's Fish & Chips  
 Jack-O's Sports Bar  
 Reel Treats  
 Dino's Dining Lounge  
 Two Guys & A Whisk  
 Chuck's Roadhouse  
 Quesada Burritos  
 McDonald's - 980 Dundas  
 McDonald's - 499 Norwich Ave  
 Norwich Pub  
 Zehrs  
 Foodland  
 Sobeys  
 Scott's No Frills  
 Your Farm Market  
 Shoppers Drug Mart - 333 Dundas  
 Food Basics  
 WalMart  
 Friendly City Tire  
 Canadian Tire  
 Woodstock Ford  
 Woodstock Toyota  
 Gord Anderson Automotive  
 Woodstock Anderson KIA  
 Woodstock Nissan  
 Woodstock Hyundai  
 Honda Woodstock  
 Dubois Mazda  
 Woodstock Jeep  
 Pioneer Gas Station  
 Sunrise Variety  
 7-Eleven  
 Daisy Mart  
 110 Beale Apartments  
 325 Lakeview Drive Apartments  
 City Hall  
 Civic Centre Arena  
 Woodstock Ag Society  
 Woodstock Public Library  
 Oxford County Building  
 Royal Canadian Legion  
 Woodstock YMCA

Woodstock Moose Lodge  
 Canada Post - 1074 Parkinson  
 Reeves Community Complex  
 South Gate Centre  
 Fanshawe College  
 Chartwell Oxford Gardens  
 Woodingford Lodge  
 Cedarview Retirement  
 Woodstock Watershop  
 Woodstock Home Bldg Centre  
 Prime Barbershop  
 Ocean Spa  
 Wellington Street Denture Clinic  
 Goodwill Community Store  
 Peavey Mart  
 Haight's Garden Centre  
 236 Norwich Ave, Unit 2  
 Holiday Inn Express  
 Days Inn by Wyndham  
 Quality Hotel & Suites  
 Best Western Plus  
 Pharmasave - 310 Juliana  
 Woodstock General Hospital - 310  
 Juliana

Juliana  
 Pittock Conservation Area  
**INNERKIP**  
 Innerkip Kommunity Food Market  
 Innerkip Family Pharmacy  
 Innerkip Seniors Apartments  
 Innerkip Wing House  
 Tim Hortons

**BEACHVILLE**  
 Beachville Museum

**INGERSOLL**  
 Riverside Minimarket  
 Canadian Tire  
 GOJU RYU / Ingersoll Karate  
 Circle K  
 First Choice Hair  
 Shoppers Drug Mart  
 Island Breeze Laundromat  
 Louie's Pizza & Pasta  
 McDonald's  
 Miss Ingersoll  
 Subway (174 Culloden Rd)  
 Pita Pit (174 Culloden Rd)  
 Elm Hurst Inn  
 Tim Hortons (75 Thames St S)  
 Tim Hortons (10 Samnah Crescent)  
 Evergreen Coffee Lounge  
 The Olde Bakery Café  
 Post Office  
 Cooperators

McFarland Rowlands  
 Foodland  
 Tremblett's Independent Grocer  
 Salvation Army Thrift Store  
 Kraft Korner  
 Hometown Style  
 Frank's Convenience  
 King's Variety  
 Ingersoll Variety  
 Ingersoll Barber Shop  
 Benjamin Moore / Rietta's Décor  
 Ingersoll Public Library  
 City Hall  
 Oxford Manor Retirement Residence  
 Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre  
 Alexandra Hospital  
 Ingersoll 50+ Centre  
 Woodingford Lodge  
 Gardens of Ingersoll  
 Home Building Centre  
 Comfort Inn  
 Ingersoll Cheese & Ag Museum

**THAMESFORD**  
 Circle K  
 Thamesford Variety  
 Thamesford Arena / Hall  
 Shell Gas Station  
 Pioneer Gas Station  
 Thamesford Pizza  
 Tim Hortons  
 JC Graphics

**EMBRO**  
 Embro Food Market  
 Kintore Coffee Co.  
 Highland Restaurant  
 Embro Hub - Fuel & Coffee  
 Cambrocourt Manor  
 Embro Pharmacy

**TAVISTOCK**  
 Sam's Independent Grocer  
 Shell Gas Station  
 Queh's  
 D&D Homestyle Café  
 Tim Hortons  
 Renaissance

**HICKSON**  
 Hickson Post Office

**HUNTINGFORD**  
 Esso on Highway 59  
**ST. MARYS**  
 St. Marys Independent

# Discover Rural Oxford exhibit a first-year success

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Close to 40,000 people attended the recent Canada's Outdoor Farm Show and many of them stopped by the first-ever Discover Rural Oxford Exhibit.

The display was the brainchild of the Rural Oxford EDC and Ronda Stewart, the group's Economic Development Director, said it was a true collaborative effort.

"From idea stage to program design to execution, Crystal (Van Roekel, Project Coordinator) coordinated this initiative with such thoughtful care. We are grateful to our Board of Directors, Canada's Outdoor Farm Show, our community partners and dedicated volunteers, and of course the 15 rural business owners who rallied together to make this exhibit a success. Thank you all for trying something new with us!"

Van Roekel explained the exhibit was a success based on feedback from the participating businesses and visitors.

"Having the opportunity to showcase these businesses on an international stage, with approximately 7,000 attendees passing through the exhibit, highlights the potential of programs like this to elevate local businesses and help them reach new levels of growth and exposure."

She added businesses gain valuable brand exposure, and the opportunity to showcase their products directly to consumers.

"Each of them offered an interactive taste or touch experience, allowing attendees to engage with the products firsthand. This helped forge deeper connections with potential customers, providing a memorable way for them to learn about and appreciate the products."

The participating businesses were incredibly grateful for the opportunity, as it's not something many of them would have pursued independently due to budget constraints, availability, and other limitations. By presenting them collectively as part of a cohesive Rural Exhibit, Rural Oxford EDC was able to effectively promote the diversity within the rural community while fostering collaboration among the group. This unified approach amplified their individual strengths and showcased the richness of

the rural business landscape.

Several of those with a spot in the exhibit were pleased to provide their input, including Stefan Cartmale of Bright Cheese and Butter Manufacturing Co.

"The opportunity to work together with other rural businesses and to have everything so well coordinated for our benefit was tremendous. I highly recommend being part of this opportunity and I hope that we are able to do it again!"

"I was proud to be featured by ROEDC in the outdoor farm show. Not only was my brand well represented, but being featured along other rural Oxford businesses allowed for excellent networking, camaraderie and brand exposure. I would do this event again without a second thought," said Erica Merchand or Bear + Fox Apparel.

"The exposure, collaboration, and community feel were amazing. It was very well organized. We felt supported and felt treated like royalty. Amazing job," added Alisha Wilson with Transitions Equine Assisted Learning.

Marja DeBoer-Marshall of The Golspie Dairy explained having the opportunity to showcase our products and build brand awareness at such a large trade show was very valuable to our business.

"Due to our small size, it would have been impossible to have our own booth and staff it for the length of the show, so the chance to work with ROEDC and other local small businesses was the perfect fit."

Van Roekel said they plan to be a part of Canada's Outdoor Farm Show again in 2025.

"We anticipate an even larger presence next year. Our goal is to elevate the brand so that it becomes recognized as a staple exhibit. We aim to build on the success of this year, creating a stronger connection with attendees and solidifying our reputation as a must-visit exhibit that showcases the diversity and innovation of rural businesses."

This collaborative project between Rural Oxford Economic Development and Canada's Outdoor Farm Show is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness.

You can learn more about what businesses were showcased at the Discover Rural Oxford exhibit here: <https://rural-oxford.ca/discover/>.

## Golspie Dairy Wins two first place prizes for their cheeses

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Meanwhile, Golspie Dairy is anticipating a busy holiday season. Golspie's eggnog will return to the retail shelves in the second half of November.

"We made it last year for the first time and we really liked it," DeBoer-Marshall said. "We only made one batch last year so we're going to make a few more batches this year, so hopefully everyone who wants some, can get some."

De-Boer Marshall also encourages customers to visit the retail store on 455259 45th Line, Woodstock and sample all of Golspie's cheeses.

"If people would like to try the cheeses that won awards and other cheeses that we're still working on and still quite proud of," she said. "Definitely stop by and come give them a try."

More information can be found by visiting [golspiedairy.ca](http://golspiedairy.ca).



Golspie Dairy took home two awards at the recent Royal Fair. (FACEBOOK PHOTO)

# Echo

Contribute to your local community newspaper! Send articles, sports or event recaps, and photos to [info@theecho.ca](mailto:info@theecho.ca)

# Trunk or Treat fundraiser

Adams Building Supply on Parkinson Road welcomed the community for its Inaugural Trunk or Treat fundraising event on Oct. 25, hosted by Jamie Adams and Tasha Birtch.

The event drew hundreds of costumed children, all eager to collect treats from the creatively decorated car trunks. Trunk or Treat is designed as a safe and enjoyable Halloween celebration, allowing kids to “trick-or-treat” without the typical concerns of traditional outings. With no entry fee, families enjoyed an evening filled with Halloween fun, collecting candy and participating in festive activities. All donations

collected during the event were directed to support United Way Oxford, reinforcing the community spirit of the occasion.

“Let’s have fun and make a difference together,” said Adams, expressing gratitude to all who participated and contributed. Adams Building Supply, a newly opened and trusted building supply partner, serves Woodstock, Oxford County, and the surrounding areas. A family business in Woodstock for over 61 years, formally known as Allen Building Centre on Peel Street. The company is committed to fostering community engagement and support through events like Trunk or Treat.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Nicole and Dumitru Ionita with Isia and Alina hope to fill their treat bags.



Hundreds of parents and children lined up for their pick of treats.

# Pumpkin Fest in Ingersoll

The Ingersoll Cheese and Agricultural Museum hosted its annual Pumpkin Fest event on Oct. 26 and it was one of the most memorable celebrations to date. The festival featured a lively pie eating contest, costume competition, music, face painting and a variety of

family-friendly activities. Attendees enjoyed the festive atmosphere and the highlight of the event was the generous contribution of pumpkins from the Ingersoll Kiwanis Club. Children received free pumpkins (while supplies lasted), adding to the joy of the day.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Hundreds of people attended the family-friendly event.



Becky Raymey and Brooklin tour the Fire Engine on display.

# 50 years after graduating, last class of Woodstock General Hospital School of Nursing meets again

CONNOR LUCZKA

Echo Correspondent

In 1973 a directive from the province shut down the Woodstock General Hospital School of Nursing, ending nearly 80 years of the Friendly City's home-grown program – but there are still those that remember it.

Fifty years after graduating, 19 members of the class of 1974 gathered at the Elm Hurst Inn and Spa in Ingersoll on Oct. 17. There, over dinner in a private room, the alumni met again, ate, drank, and reminisced about the historic school and the earliest days of their education.

Berndena Robinson, Nancy Martin, Sandy Holtby, and Lee Sander sat on one end of the long dinner table that evening and shared their stories with the Echo. When asked why they originally wanted to get into nursing, many said it was due to convention at the time, that women were either a teacher or a secretary or a nurse, and that they were following in the footsteps of their family members or loved ones.

“My mother was a nurse,” Robinson shared. “My mother-in-law was a nurse, and my cousin was a nurse at Woodstock.”

Many, including other alumni at the event, chose Woodstock because of its locale, with all the 42 graduating members

coming from area municipalities like Thamesford, Woodstock, or London, among others. Additionally, the small class size in a small centre was another positive factor.

Robinson, Martin, Holtby, and Sander quickly recalled the woman who ultimately decided if they would be accepted into the school - Eileen Minty, then director of the program.

Having just graduated high school, being 17 to 19 years of age, every prospective student had to sit down for an interview with Minty before being accepted.

“I was 19 when I went into nursing, but even then, I was socially inept I think living on the farm,” Martin laughed. “She was the matron. We were all scared of her.”

“I was late for my interview,” Robinson agreed, as the others gasped. Originally hailing from London, she had taken a wrong turn and when she came in late, she said Minty was surprised she came at all. Despite getting off on the wrong foot initially, she must have impressed the matron since she joined the class of 1974.

Adding to the oversight Minty had on the program, as director she lived on the first floor of the residence while some of the students lived on the second floor. An old, wooden building the alumni



The Woodstock General Hospital School of Nursing's class of 1974, the last graduating class of the historic school, pictured at their 50th reunion in front of the Elm Hurst Inn and Spa on Oct. 17. Back Row: Lynne (Costello) Westman, Elaine (Brown) Gauthier, Heather Kacan, Nancy (Sillery) Martin, Connie (Ball) Taylor, Kim (Flannigan) Fedorenko, Pauline (Neutel) Cawood, Heather (Squire) Patterson, Lee (Ralph) Sander, Beth (Howe) McLaughlin. Middle Row: Sandy Holtby, Helen (Van Gastel) Crombez, Joy (Peel) Bevan. Front Row: Pat (Leedham) Elliott, Cindy (Campbell) Thomas, Sheila (Harvey) Beacom, Berndena (Monk) Robinson, Jane (Moss) McCartney, Diane (Cole) Klingenburg. (CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

regaled how every groan and creak could be heard through the whole structure – and that there was a curfew and sign out sheet for those in residence.

Classes were quite different from contemporary post-secondary programs, too, Holtby said. Punctuality was a given, as was rigorous testing and having “no hair on the collar” (having your hair up and presentable), but a student's personality was also accounted for – their bedside manner was just as important as their marks.

Holtby had brought her

original nurse's cap, as did a few others. She explained that as a student everyone was expected to have their cap pressed and starched every day, they worked. They had red stripes when they were students and got to replace it with a black stripe once they graduated.

Having earned their stripes at the Woodstock school meant that they could “fly anywhere” and find employment, Robinson said, but like many post-secondary programs it had its limitations. Their learning didn't stop after graduation.

When asked if they were prepared for what their careers would entail, they laughed.

“In my first job I felt that wow, my learning is just beginning,” Martin said.

This was not the first time that the class of 1974 have gotten together at the Elm Hurst. According to Pat Elliott, another alumnus and one of the organizers, the group meets regularly at the local inn as many remained in the area post-graduation. Some could not come due to illness, distance, or having passed away, but due to the milestone year

there were some graduates that came from as far as British Columbia.

Elliott also shared some documents with the Echo, like her first ever pay stub

as a nurse. Dated Nov. 7, 1974, her regular rate was \$4.69, and her total take home was just over \$288 – a good wage for the time, she assured.



The class of 1974 included in the Daily Sentinel Review, what the Woodstock Sentinel Review was formerly known as. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

## GRANT HAVEN MEDIA

Work with local media to distribute special discounts or offerings. This can help attract new customers and encourage repeat business. Want to learn more?



heather@granthaven.com

226.261.1837

St. Marys Independent The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Goderich Sun INDY STRATFORD TIMES NORFOLK FARMS BRANT FARMS stmarys radio Woodstock Ingersoll Echo SIMCOE/ADVOCATE Tillsonburg POST

# Toys and collectibles galore in Woodstock



Three rooms were packed with Vendors and eager collectors.

The Woodstock Toy and Collectibles Expo took place on Nov. 3 at the Oxford Auditorium and the Mutual/Market Buildings at the Woodstock Fairgrounds. The event drew collectors and enthusiasts from across the region. Early admission, offered from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. for \$10.00 per person, allowed eager attendees a first look at over 200 vendor tables filled with an eclectic mix of both vintage and contemporary items. General admission followed, with tickets priced at \$5.00 until 1 p.m., and late arrivals could enter for just \$3.00. Children under 12 enjoyed free entry when accompanied

by an adult. The expo featured an impressive variety of collectibles, including comics, retro video games, Funko Pop Vinyl, Lego, action figures, Transformers, and much more. Attendees also had the opportunity to sell their unwanted collectibles, with many vendors offering instant cash for items. The event included several prize draws throughout the day, culminating in a special grand prize drawing for a key issue graded comic book. The Woodstock Toy and Collectibles Expo proved to be a delightful day of nostalgia and community, celebrating the joy of collecting. (RON YUZARK PHOTOS)

**BROADWAY COMES TO**   
**Ingersoll Theatre of Performing Arts**  
 88 Thames Street South, Ingersoll

presents  
**The Play That Goes**  
**WRONG**

by Henry Lewis, Henry Shields, and Jonathan Sayer



Directed by: Rebecca McNall & Michelle Murphy  
 Produced by: Laura Penny

Show Dates: November 29, 30, December 1\*, 5, 6, 7\*, 8\*  
 \*Matinee Performance

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# Remembrance Day

## November 11th, 2024

*Our community honours all who sacrificed their lives for our country.*



## The Poppy Campaign honours and supports Canadian veterans

**JEFF TRIBE**

*Echo Correspondent*

Ernie Guy does not know the details of his father Ernest's seven years of World War II military service.

It's not because Ernie wasn't interested. Simply that his dad couldn't bring himself to speak of it.

"I would think the horrors of war are a little too much to remember," said the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 55 Woodstock 1st Vice President on the verge of the 2024 Poppy Campaign. "It's just got to be something else."

Ernest Guy, who was born in Liverpool, England, joined the Toronto Scottish Highland Regiment in 1939, trained in England and was deployed to France as a member of the British Expeditionary Force. Escaping capture through 'The Miracle of Dunkirk', the senior Guy redeployed to North Africa, subsequently seeing action as a machine gunner in Italy, back to France, Holland, Belgium and into Germany.

While his father did not provide details of his service, Ernie has read enough military history to gain an understanding of what he went through.

"He was in the thick of it. He saw the whole nine yards and a little bit more. He didn't get enough of WWII, he had to go to Korea."

Ernie served his nation as well from 1958-69, five years with the artillery before transferring to the signal corps. His service was in a time of uneasy Cold

War peace, Guy prepared to put his life on the line when and if necessary.

"I was ready to go," he said quietly.

Subsequent to Ernie's active service, he has spent the last 20 years with the Royal Canadian Legion.

"It deals with the honour of the men and women who went before me and those who lost their lives to give us our freedom.

"That's why I'm here. To honour those people."

Today's legion is an active social hub not only for veterans, but associate (family members of veterans) and affiliate (no military connection) members. Dinners, dances, darts and shuffleboard competitions are among the opportunities available through local legions, who welcome new members.

However, the institutions have never lost sight of their charter, serving those who have served and supporting those who suffered either physically or mentally.

"We contribute to their welfare every year," said Guy.

Although the two world wars may have the highest profile, Canadians served in conflicts including Korea and Afghanistan, as well as a wide variety of international peacekeeping roles. The annual Poppy Campaign is the primary fundraiser supporting veterans in need and their families.

"It goes directly to the veterans," emphasized Guy, such as those supported through the Veterans Care Program at



Royal Canadian Legion Branch 155 Woodstock 1st Vice President Ernie Guy's ongoing service honours those who have gone before him including his father Ernest, whose lengthy military career is recognized inside the local branch. The Poppy Campaign, which directly supports veterans and their families, opened Friday, Oct. 25 and runs to Nov. 11.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Parkwood Institute in London, or those living in nursing homes.

Compared to the societal expectation of 'toughing it out alone' and not speaking of one's experience in Ernest Guy's time, there is also a growing understanding of and support for how the mental health of service personnel can be negatively affected by their service. That wounds may be psychological as well as physical, how PTSD is a very real and serious thing and may present different challenges.

The Canadian Legion website identifies a range of mental health, addiction, peer support, transition to civilian life and near homeless or homeless needs and/or related support services.

"There are people on the street who need our help," said Guy.

A sacred symbol inspired by Canadian John McCrae's poem In Flanders Fields, the poppy was adopted by the Royal Canadian Legion in 1921 as a visible reminder of veterans' service and sacrifice. Opening the final Friday in October (the 25th this year), the campaign runs through until November 11th. A

more recent tradition invites attendees of cenotaph services to collectively pin their poppies on a styrofoam cross at the conclusion of official ceremonies.

During the campaign, members of the public can purchase poppies in person from legion volunteers, through poppy boxes at a variety of locations, or online by visiting [www.poppystore.ca](http://www.poppystore.ca) or [www.amazon.ca/legion](http://www.amazon.ca/legion).

Those seeking more information on The Poppy Campaign, annual cenotaph services or legion membership are invited to contact their local institution, a list including Woodstock (519-537-3112), Branch 119 in Ingersoll (519-485-2580), Branch 495 in Beachville (519-423-6363) and Branch 318 in Embro (519-475-4904).

At the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month, our nation pauses to remember those, who volunteered, served and sacrificed. Woodstock's annual cenotaph (413 Buller Street, in Victoria Park behind the courthouse) service will begin at 10:15 a.m. with the pre-laying of wreaths, continue with sentry march on and welcome

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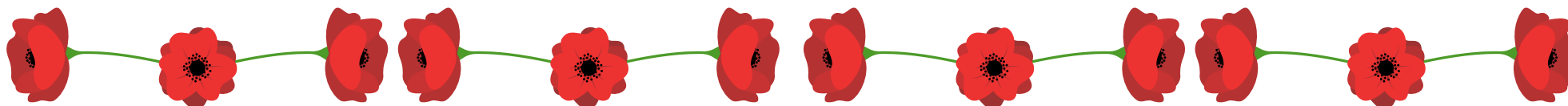
## Lest We Forget

November 11th, we recognize the sacrifices made by our heroes in uniform.



**ERNIE HARDEMAN**  
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# Giving Pte. Archie Minler his flowers, even if it's only poppies

CONNOR LUCZKA

Echo Correspondent

Since June of 2022, all new streets in the Town of Ingersoll are named in honour of local war veterans. Minler Street, assumed by the Town of Ingersoll that year, is one of those streets.

The street is named after Pte. Archie Eschelby Minler, featured in the Oxford County Library and Ingersoll Cheese and Agricultural Museum's 2022 "A Hero Lived Here" postcard program.

For any resident in town, Ken Minler, one of Archie's descendants, hopes that they can recognize not only its significance to the Minler family, but to the wider community as well.

"Whoever lives there on Minler Street in Ingersoll, if they don't know, there's a (per-

son) behind that name," Minler said. "He's the one that paid the ultimate sacrifice."

Minler worries that as we get further removed from not only the First World War but the Second World War as well, the sacrifices made by veterans get more distant – as do the values that they fought for.

So, for this Remembrance Day, Minler is thinking of Archie, among others of Ingersoll's soldiers.

According to an article included in the June 29, 1916, edition of The Ingersoll Daily Chronicle, the telegram that informed Archie's mother Mary of his death was only delivered a few hours after she read a new letter from him, perhaps the last he ever wrote.

"The telegram informing her of her son's death was received only a few hours after the receipt of a letter from him in which



Since June of 2022, all new streets in the Town of Ingersoll are named in honour of the town's war veterans, including Minler Street, which was assumed by the town that same year. (CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

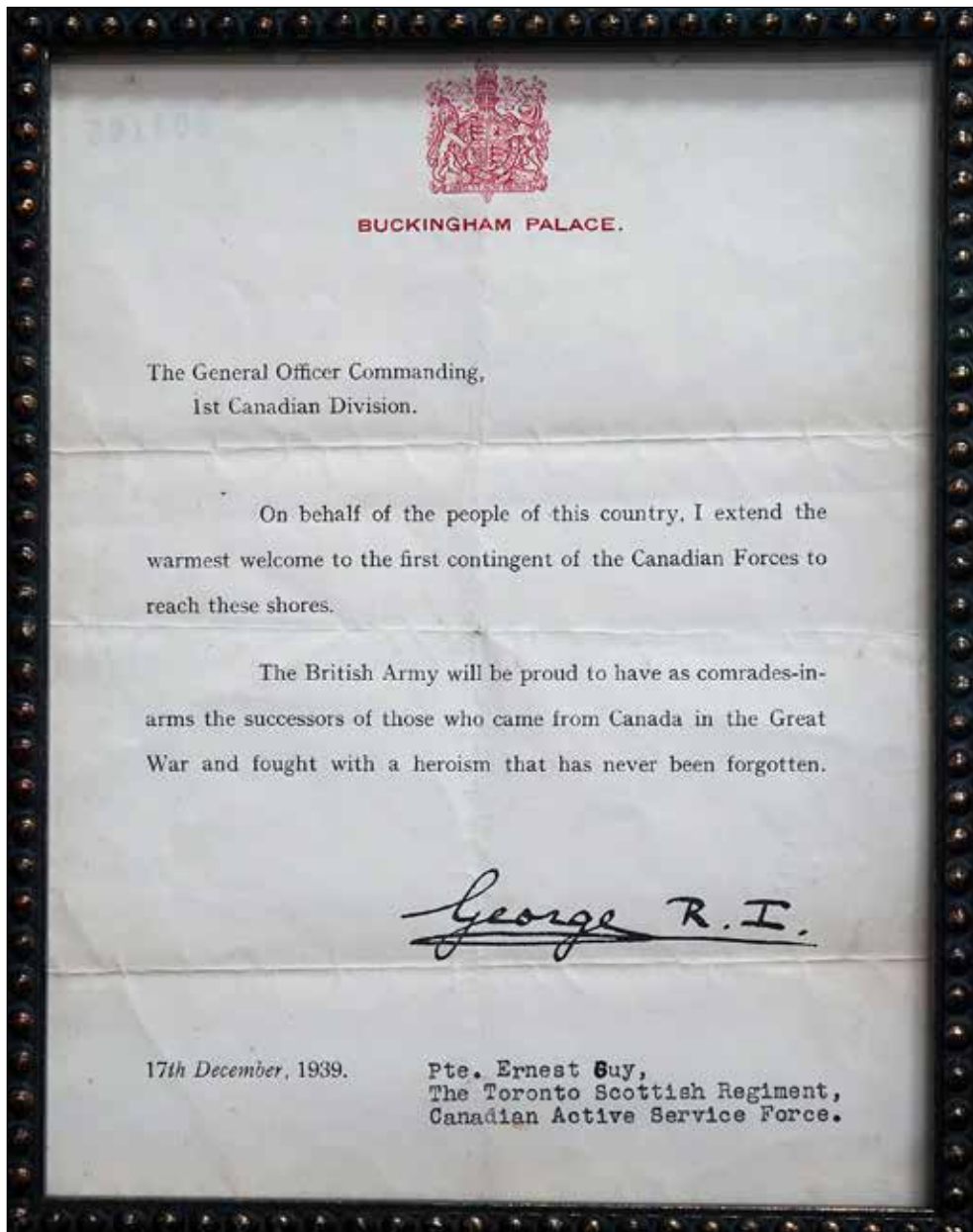
he stated he was well," the article reads. "The shock under the circumstances was unusually severe."

Archie was killed in 1916. He was 22 and

spent his last birthday in the trenches of Europe. According to that same news article, he was a "brave spirit" that was one of the first of the district to enlist.

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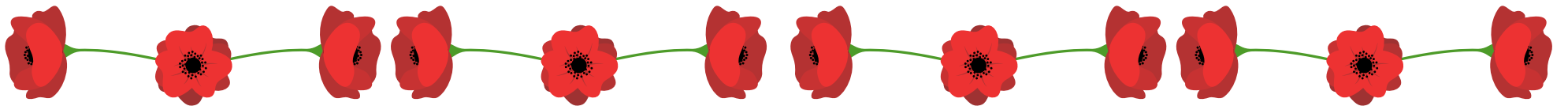


This letter of appreciation, signed by King George VI, is part of the tribute to Ernest Guy hanging inside Royal Canadian Legion Branch 155 Woodstock. (JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

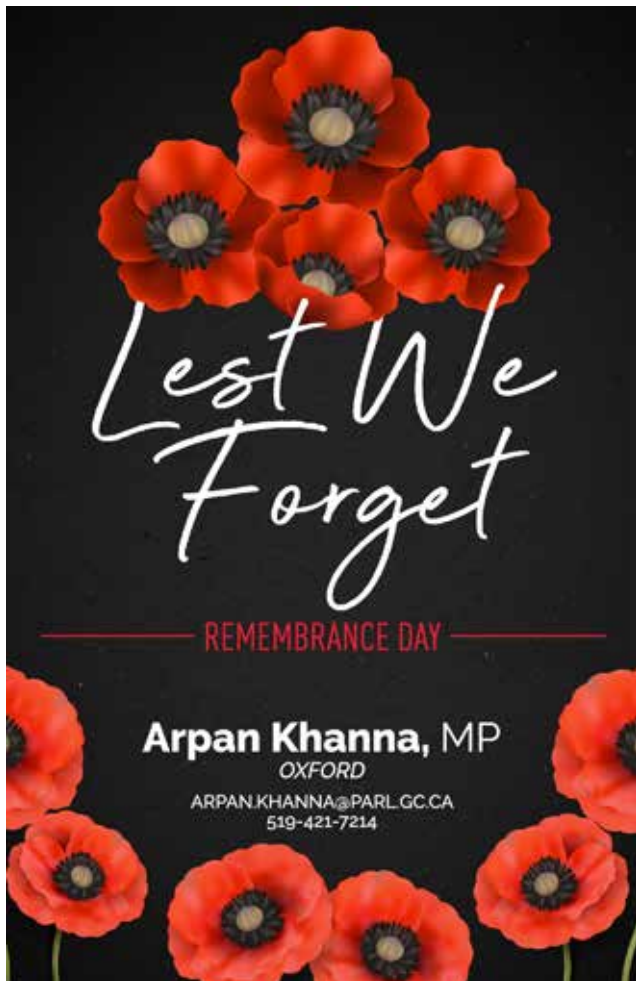
ing the walking march at 10:45 a.m. The Last Post will follow O' Canada at 10:58 a.m., followed by two minutes of silence,

a fly-over courtesy of the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association (CHAA) and a list of official ceremonies.





## A Night in the Mess 2024 brings familiar musical friends together



**JEFF TRIBE**

*Echo Correspondent*

A group of old friends are gathering Saturday Nov. 16 for their annual reunion upstairs at the Hillcrest Legion, Branch 119 Ingersoll.

The 'friends' description for A Night in the Mess 2024 covers a committed ensemble of musicians volunteering their time, a crowd of appreciative fans, and familiar World War I and World War II era songs which have become an important and appreciated part of the group.

"They are old friends," agreed musician Ted Comiskey, "they are."

The evening's inception stretches back 22 or 23 years says Comiskey, birthed at a suggestion from Bonnie Mott for a post-Remembrance Day musical celebration harkening back to a wartime tradition. Amidst the horrors of war, men and women would gather in mess halls Comiskey explained, gathering around a piano to relieve their stress through sharing music.

"There would always be a piano there," and the gathering singing war songs, "or just whatever was popular at the time."

"I think it built morale," Comiskey added later, "and I suppose other than ammunition, there's nothing more needed than morale."

Although linked to Remembrance Day, the concert was scheduled for the following Saturday, respecting November 11th's sanctity and solemnity before adding a lighter touch to honouring the contribution of Canadian veterans.

"Not forgetting the sacrifice they made, the thou-



Hillcrest Legion, Branch 119 Ingersoll began its poppy campaign Friday, Oct. 25 says President Rob Mabee, and as per normal, it will run through to Saturday, Nov. 11. The legion will also be hosting a light luncheon following the Remembrance Day service at Ingersoll's cenotaph.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

sands of young men and women who died so we can have what we have today."

The first 'Nights at the Mess' were celebrated inside St. James Anglican Church, before expansion of both band and crowd encouraged a transition.

"We thought let's take it up to the legion," said Comiskey.

The event's cast of musical characters has remained consistent: Comiskey, Jim Gonder, Bob Breen, Carolin French, Joe Todd, Cathy Cannon, Peter Cox and Hugh Montgomery.

"It's pretty well the same group," said Comiskey, "and you don't have to ask them twice."

A mixed instrument and voice group gets together for an afternoon run-through, before taking things live beginning at 7 p.m. that evening.

"As long as they have the key and the tune, they're off to the races."

The songs also tend to be familiar, and while the set list may vary, fans can expect to hear familiar wartime marching songs or tunes including Pack up Your Troubles in Your Old Kitbag, It's a Long Way to Tipperary, By the Light of the Silvery Moon, Sentimental Journey, Lili Marleen, There'll Always Be an England, and The White Cliffs of Dover.

There is a universality to the music says Comiskey, noting the very Irish 'Tipperary' was also a German marching song.

"They sang their own version of it, certainly," he said, adding although Lili Marleen was Germanic in origin, it was also a favourite among Allied troops.

"Music has no politics to it."

Red Petalled Flower will also be performed, a remembrance tribute poem Comiskey penned and subsequently put to music. Several years ago, an accompanying music video (available for viewing on YouTube) was shot featuring Woodstock veteran Ernie Guy, Comiskey's son Christopher, volunteer actors and the gracious cooperation of the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association.

Advance tickets for A Night in the Mess 2024 cost

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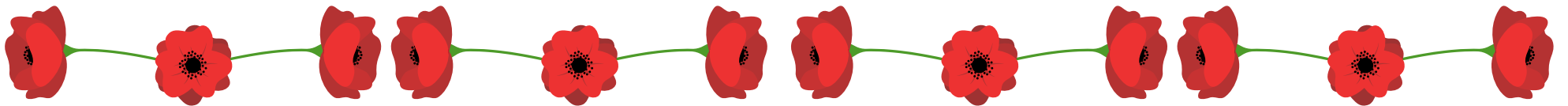


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Pte. Archie Eshelby Minler was one of the first of the district to enlist in the First World War, according to the press of the time, and ultimately gave his life to the conflict “so that we still have a free country,” according to descendant Ken Minler. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

“During his long absence he displayed a keen interest in the welfare of those at home,” the article reads, writing regularly to his mother and other friends. His letters were always bright and hopeful, and they were eagerly awaited.”

Prior to joining the war effort, Archie was a labourer, as listed in his enlistment forms, and was a member of the local cavalry unit, 24th Grey’s Horse. His brothers Murray and Ezra also fought in Europe, though they were able to return home after its close.

Archie’s grave is at Menin Gate Memorial in Ypres, Belgium, close to the fields that inspired Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae’s iconic poem “In Flanders Fields.”

According to the Canadian Virtual War Memorial, an online registry to honour the fallen Canadian soldiers that have died in action since confederation, Archie’s name joins the other

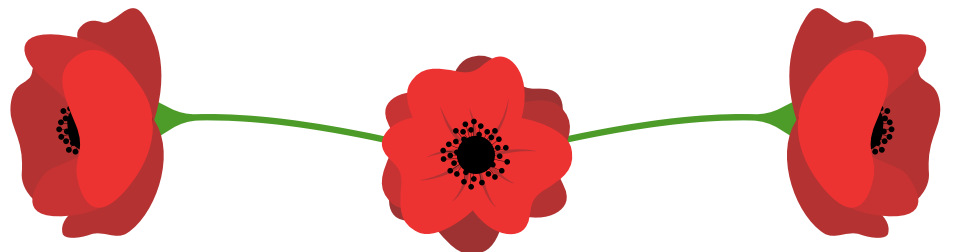
55,000 men who “were lost without trace during the defence of the Ypres Salient,” upon the Belgian memorial.

His name is also inscribed closer to home in the Ingersoll Honour Roll, a memorial outside of town hall that lists those locals that “paid the ultimate sacrifice,” as Ken Minler put it, and a headstone in the Ingersoll Rural Cemetery that he shares with his mother.

“They went over there and paid the ultimate sacrifice ... so that we still have a free country,” Minler said.

Matt Sweetland, Ingersoll’s engineering director, told the Echo the local department maintains a list of First World War and Second World War veterans killed in action like Archie Minler for the street names of forthcoming applications.

Residents can spot streets with a veteran’s name by the poppy insignia included on the sign.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

\$15 (\$17 at the door) are available at the Ingersoll legion, Lesser Jewellers and Patina’s Gifts of Arts and Crafts. Coffee and munchies are included and a cash bar is available. All proceeds are donated to the legion.

“So, they can do whatever they need to do,” said Comiskey.

In conclusion, he emphasized the importance of never forgetting the sacrifice of our veterans and their families, and how their musical group both embraces and enjoys its small part in that.

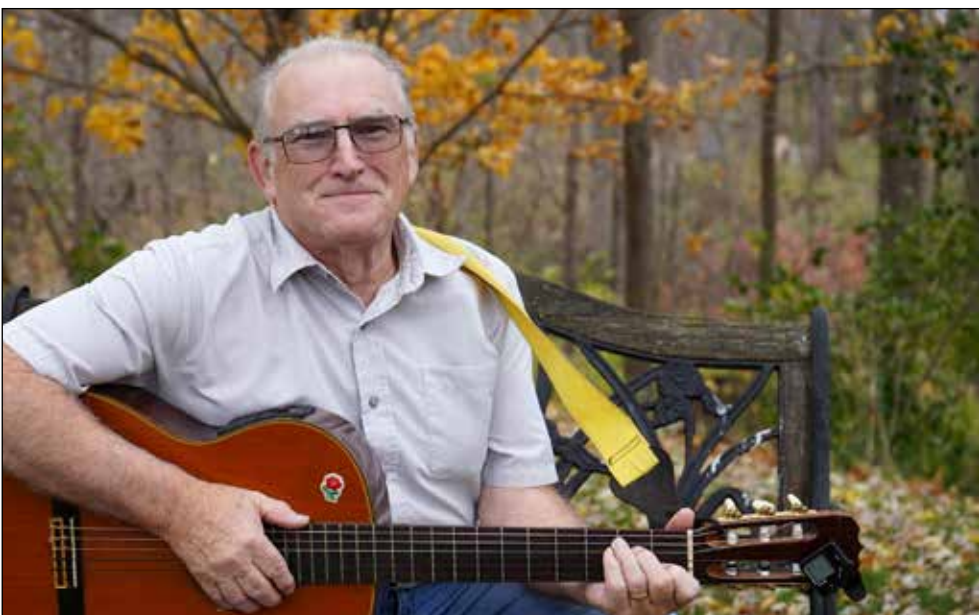
“It is our responsibility to make sure

that we don’t forget.”

**Remembrance Day in Ingersoll, 2024**

Hillcrest Legion, Branch 119 Ingersoll began its poppy campaign Friday, Oct. 25 said President Rob Mabee, and as per normal, it will run through to Nov. 11.

The community’s Remembrance Day cenotaph service is expected to begin at around 10:45 a.m. The legion will be hosting a reception featuring a light lunch at its 211 Thames Street North location following the conclusion of official ceremonies.



Ted Comiskey will be among the musical team performing at A Night In the Mess 2024, Saturday, November 16th at Hillcrest Legion, Branch 119 Ingersoll. Advance tickets are \$15 (\$17 at the door) and are available at the Ingersoll legion, Lesser Jewellers and Patina’s Gifts of Arts & Craft. (JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

Remembrance day  
Lest We forget

# Woodstock Ingersoll Echo **SPORTS**

## CASS Knights quarter-final victory expands Halloween costume options

**JEFF TRIBE**

*Echo Contributor*

The Woodstock College Avenue (CASS) Knights' theft of a 35-26 TVRA South East AA quarterfinal victory over the visiting St. Thomas Central Elgin Titans Thursday, Oct. 31 both extended their season and expanded their Halloween costume considerations.

Maddy Miller, heading out that evening as the duck in a duck/duck hunter pairing, got the concept before teammate Maryam Siddiqui, who planned on dressing as a bear, a scary bear.

"We kept stealing the ball, so we should be going out as criminals who steal things," Miller explained to Siddiqui.

Although the final margin of victory was close to



CASS Knight Maryam Siddiqui (left) rises to challenge Central Elgin's A. Neil as the latter attempts a layup.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

double digits, the game didn't play out that way. The Knights led 11-4 after the opening quarter but Central Elgin roared back to trail just 17-15 at the half, taking a 23-20 lead into the final eight minutes. The visitors still led 25-23 in a see-saw battle with just over three minutes remaining, when CASS's Chloe Jones squared accounts on an offensive putback. Miller alertly stole the inbounds pass on an unofficial one-woman press, taking the ball to the hoop for a 27-25 Knights advantage. Down the stretch, CASS pushed that narrow margin out to ten on subsequent thefts courtesy of Siddiqui, Jones and Arianna Pastoor, taking a game which had been exceptionally tight, into a more comfortable zone.

"We wanted it at the end," credited CASS coach Sean Latimer.

"We worked together," added Siddiqui.

"Teamwork," agreed Miller.

Jones finished with 13 points to lead the Knights offensively, Siddiqui added eight, Miller five, Sukhmeet Randhawa four and Kyleigh Sim one field goal. H. Wedlake and A. Neil split Titans' scoring with 16 and 10 points respectively.

A Western Ontario Secondary Schools Athletic Association (WOSSAA) berth is expected to be on the line Tuesday, November 5th when the Knights are scheduled to travel to St. Thomas Parkside to take on the Stampeders, who put together an undefeated 8-0 regular season.

"Play our hearts out," Sim summed up of the Knights' gameplan.

In other TVRA AA Senior Girls' basketball quarter-final action on Halloween, the St. Thomas St. Joe's Rams downed the Ingersoll DCI Blue Bombers 34-14 as Parkside defeated Woodstock Huron Park 44-24.

The Huskies qualified for their quarter-final with a 40-29 qualifier win over Tillsonburg Glendale Tuesday, Oct. 29. Huron Park took a 9-4 lead out of the first quarter, were up by four at the half and six heading home, extending their lead with a 7-2 advantage through the final eight minutes.

"It was really back and forth, really close," said Huskie Payton Cowan. "They were playing good defence, hard to work around that."

Huron Park was able to both limit Glendale's offence and capitalize on full court pressure, added Olivia Elias.

"That helped too."

She finished with 21 points to lead all scorers, Cowan added ten, Jorja Mayes four, Mylee Hagadorn a three-



CASS Knight Maryam Siddiqui attempts to steal the ball from Central Elgin's K. Scott.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

point field goal, and Carli Minnaas one basket. Sophia Silliker had 12 for Tillsonburg.

The Huskies had started slowly on offence said coach Brandon Thomas.

"But they hung in there, worked hard on D and got the result we were hoping for."

### TVRA South East AA Junior Girls' Basketball

The CASS junior Knights' will join their senior counterparts in a AA semi-final game Tuesday, November 5th in St. Thomas, after a solid 29-12 victory over the Woodstock Huron Park Huskies on All Hallows' Eve.

The Knights are scheduled to take on the hometown St. Joe's Rams with a 4:30 p.m. tipoff.

Also on Halloween, the Woodstock St. Mary's Warriors battled the Parkside Stampeders, dropping a 30-10 decision.

### TVRA South East A Girls' Basketball

Technically as the lone A representatives from the TVRA South East, but with solid regular seasons, the Woodstock CI Red Devils automatically advance to their respective WOSSAA A draws. The junior Red Devils finished with a 6-2 record while the seniors ended their regular campaign at 7-1.

## PJHL Standings

SOUTH DOHERTY DIVISION	GP	W	L	OTL	T	SOW	SOL	PTS
1 - NEW HAMBURG FIREBIRDS	15	12	3	0	0	0	0	24
2 - NORWICH MERCHANTS	15	11	2	0	0	2	0	22
3 - WELLESLEY APPLEJACKS	15	9	4	1	0	2	1	20
4 - WOODSTOCK NAVY VETS	14	9	4	0	0	0	1	19
5 - DORCHESTER DOLPHINS	14	6	6	0	0	0	2	1
6 - TAVISTOCK BRAVES	16	6	9	1	0	1	0	13
7 - HESPELER SHAMROCKS	14	3	9	1	0	0	1	8
8 - PARIS TITANS	15	3	10	2	0	0	0	8

WEST YECK DIVISION	GP	W	L	OTL	T	SOW	SOL	PTS
1 - EXETER HAWKS	17	12	3	1	0	0	1	26
2 - PETROLIA FLYERS	16	11	3	2	0	1	0	24
3 - NORTH MIDDLESEX STARS	13	9	3	1	0	1	0	19
4 - PORT STANLEY SAILORS	13	8	5	0	0	0	0	16
5 - THAMESFORD TROJANS	15	7	8	0	0	0	0	14
6 - MT. BRYDGES BULLDOGS	14	5	5	2	0	0	2	14
7 - AYLMEER SPITFIRES	17	6	10	1	0	0	0	13
8 - LUCAN IRISH	15	2	13	0	0	1	0	4

# Roberts carries Knights into senior football championship game



Official Dave Frank signals a touchdown as Woodstock College Avenue Knights running back Jevaughn Roberts cruises into the endzone during a 42-0 TVRA semi-final win over the Ingersoll DCI Blue Bombers Thursday at London's City Wide Field #1, Blue Bomber Michael Fruin giving chase on the play.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)



Ingersoll DCI Blue Bomber Spencer Krajewski strives to elude Woodstock College Avenue Knights' Mateen Nadiri Thursday, Oct. 31 at London's City Wide Field #1. Krajewski had three touchdowns the previous week in a 28-27 quarter-final win over Strathroy.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

## JEFF TRIBE

*Echo Contributor*

Jevaughn Roberts hit the ground running on a windy Thursday, October 31st at London's City Wide Field #1, carrying the Woodstock College Avenue (CASS) Knights into the Will Rice TVRA Senior football championship game with a four-touchdown performance.

"Jevaughn is an incredibly talented running back," credited CASS head coach Ryan Stafford following a 42-0 semi-final win over the Ingersoll DCI (IDCI) Blue Bombers, pointing to 250 yards rushing included in Roberts' four majors.

A strong breeze played havoc with IDCI's air raid, but didn't affect the Knights' ground assault.

"If anything, it makes me faster," Roberts smiled. "Pushes me."

He recorded two TD's in the first quarter, Craig Sutherland adding a third that with two point after tries by place-kicker Kaleb Krupp, lifted the Knights to a comfortable 20-0 lead. CASS put the game away in the third quarter, Roberts finishing with touchdowns three and four, and Benedict Nikoi, a talented back in his own right, contributing a 14-yard score, that with Krupp points after and a safety, rounded the final.

"It's hard on a windy day to throw the ball," said Blue Bombers offensive tackle/defensive end Zach Paton. "Next year," the Grade 11 two-way lineman added, looking forward to a lengthy list of potential returnees and junior graduates.

IDCI qualified for the semi-final game with an exciting 28-27 road victory over Strathroy the week previous, slot receiver Spencer Krajewski gathering in three touchdown passes from quarterback Declan Thompson, his third with 40 seconds remaining. Trey Dawns had the other IDCI TD and a two-point conversion, with Qurron Kelly adding the second two-point conversion.

"That was awesome," said Bombers coach Terry Parker, "it was important to get that one."

Crediting Roberts for being one of the province's premiere running backs, Parker gave the Knights full marks for the victory.

"We just couldn't stay with them," said Parker, retiring after five enjoyable seasons with the IDCI program. "It has its ups and downs, but you meet some great kids."

The Knights shut London Montcalm out 35-0 in their quarter-final game and are now looking forward to a re-

match with powerhouse St. Thomas St. Joe's Rams. St. Joe's shut out CASS 30-0 at home Sept. 26, a game the Knights, missing several key players, approached strategically.

"They've been talking on us all year since that first game," said defensive end Tykan Zehr. "We've got something to prove."

No one is taking anything away from the undefeated, 7-0 Rams who cruised into the final with wins over IDCI (35-0) and Tillsonburg Glendale (47-12), conceding they are a 'great team.'

"Go out and show out," summed up Zehr. "We know their strengths, they know our strengths, just play ball."

The championship game, which kicks off at 2:15, Friday, Nov. 8 in St. Thomas at St. Joe's, will be the Knights' third in a row, a streak including a title over London Clarke Road two years ago, and a loss to Arva Medway last season.

"Our job is not finished," said Stafford, looking forward to a productive week of practice and preparation. "That's the message, 'Be there and be ready.'"

## TVRA JUNIOR

The IDCI Junior Blue Bombers followed their senior counterparts onto City Wide Field #1, punching their ticket to the final with a 30-0 shutout over Aylmer East Elgin. Slot receiver Gavin Laidman scored first-half touchdowns 45 seconds and 6:07 into the game, that along with Colton Thompson points after, single point and safety, gave the Blue Bombers a 16-0 halftime lead. IDCI finished the job with Laidman's third major, 90 seconds into the third quarter and a Liam Thompson TD late in the fourth. Colton Thompson added his third and fourth points after, rounding the 30-0 final.

Ingersoll DCI opened playoffs the previous week with a 49-12 win over London Montcalm, also at City Wide #1. The Blue Bombers got off to exactly the kind of start they were hoping for, Connor Thomson running the opening kickoff back roughly 70 yards for a 6-0 lead.

"Call it 74," interjected IDCI quarterback Logan Janzen. "A little more precise."

Ingersoll's Muw Shina-Wahab caused a fumble on the ensuing kickoff, springing the ball loose around the Montcalm 23.

Janzen found Laidman 'wide open' around the five on the next play, Ingersoll's first from scrimmage.

"Right where I wanted it, up high," said the 6'2" receiver, who took the ball into the endzone from there.

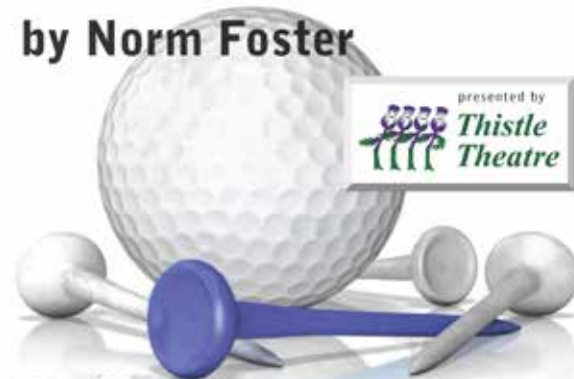
Laidman added two more TDs, a 55-yard reception on a shallow cross and a 60-yard jet sweep. Connor Thompson also finished with three majors, the kickoff return and two receiving touchdowns, Oliver Ball counting the seventh on a 15-yard screen pass. Colton Thomson was 7-7 on point-after tries, middle linebacker Lucas Martz finishing with double-digit tackles.

The Bombers will also face the undefeated St. Joe's Rams in the final beginning at 11 a.m. Friday, November 8th at St. Joe's. The Bombers are also looking for redemption following a 42-6 regular season loss Friday, Oct. 18.

"They're just a complete team," credited IDCI coach Nick DiCiocco, hoping a 'David versus Goliath' narrative will play out in the final. "It will take a very concerted effort on our part."

## The Ladies FOURSOME

by Norm Foster



Tickets: \$25  
Producer: John Turvey  
Directors: John Hazeleger & Doug Turvey  
November 8, 9, 10, 14, 15 & 16, 2024

The day after their friend Cathy's funeral, Margot, Tate and Connie gather for a round of golf in honour of their recently departed fourth. There they are joined by another woman, an old friend of Cathy's they'd never met. Over eighteen holes, secrets and confessions unravel as the women discuss love, sex, children and everything in between.

Box Office: 226-785-3353 [www.thistle-theatre.com](http://www.thistle-theatre.com)

# Huron Park Huskies use 'Plan B' to get to their 'A destination'



**JEFF TRIBE**

*Echo Contributor*

The Woodstock Huron Park Huskies welcomed a little 'Plan B' to finish off their 'A Plan,' a TVRAA South East AA semi-final playoff encounter with the undefeated Ingersoll DCI Blue Bombers.

"We've just got to be on our A game," said Huskie Gavin Jansen.

Huron Park earned the right for the rematch with a home-court 25-20, 25-22, 19-25, 25-16 quarter-final win over the Lord Dorchester Beavers Thursday, Oct. 31. The Huskies do run a varied offence, but a powerful attack is anchored by middle hitters Parker McLeod and Jaxson Finnie whose net presence contributed to the first two wins. "We play middle as much as we can," said Jansen. "When they triple block, we change it up, when they quit, we go back."

The Beavers, shorter in stature but solid in volleyball adjusted through the third game, pushing the match into a fourth with tenacious defence and a varied attack of their own.

The Huskies began separation from a tight fourth game tied at ten, McLeod rejecting a long Dorchester set, powering home a centre kill and combining on a block to open a 13-10 advantage, upped to four points on a long Beavers kill. The visitors called time out, trailing 17-12 on a point containing a nice Huskies defensive dig and Jansen tip, one of several scoring shots during the fourth game including the eventual winner.

Huron Park's momentum continued past the break however, Finnie and Sasha Levin combining on a block whose 'Plan B' trajectory included a fortuitous bounce off the

latter's hand and head before finding a hole in the Beavers' defence. Huron Park maintained its focus, extending a six-point lead to nine by the game's conclusion.

The win advances the Huskies to TVRA South East semi-finals, Wednesday, Nov. 6 at Ingersoll DCI, an important goal says Finnie.

"At this point, we've got nothing to lose," said coach Eryn Orr, looking for a young, developing team to leave its best game on the court. "And see what happens."

The undefeated Blue Bombers - who took care of quarter-final business the same day by a 25-19, 28-26, 25-18 margin over Aylmer East Elgin - will host the Huskies at 10:30 in one semi-final. The Woodstock St. Mary's Warriors will take on the St. Thomas St. Joe's Rams in the other, with the winners of those games advancing to the Western Ontario Secondary Schools Athletics Association (WOSSAA) AA tournament.

"We got the job done," said St. Mary's coach Vanessa Pye of her squad's 25-8, 25-11, 25-14 quarter-final win over Tillsonburg Glendale. St. Mary's beat St. Joe's 25-14, 25-18, 26-28, 25-20 during this regular season. Last year, the Warriors also beat the Rams during the regular season but were defeated in the playoffs.

"Hopefully history does not repeat itself," Pye concluded.

## TVRA South East AA Junior Semi-Finals/Final

Two WOSSAA AA berths are on the line as the host Blue Bombers face Woodstock St. Mary's Warriors, and St. Thomas St. Joe's plays Lord Dorchester at 9 a.m. The semi-final winners will meet in the TVRA final, regional tournament berths in hand.

The Blue Bombers qualified with an 18-25, 25-18, 25-19, 25-22 win over the visiting Aylmer East Elgin Eagles Thursday, October 31st, while the Warriors swept Tillson-

CONTINUED TO PAGE 21

Huron Park Huskie Travis Ernst (left) follows the progress of a kill through an attempted Lord Dorchester block featuring T. Lucas (left, at net) and L. Bradish. (JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20  
burg Glendale 25-15, 25-8, 25-19.

“Good passes so we could get our attack going,” summed up Warriors setter Matthew Polidori. “And honestly, defence wins games, so good defence.” “And big blocks,” interjected middle Kiefer Hagar. ‘Clean volleyball, both offensively and defensively,’ agreed St. Mary’s coach Denys Reid. “And everyone played their part - a total team effort.”

Reid expects the homecourt Blue Bombers to be buoyed by a partisan crowd, looking to overcome that momentum along with ‘strong swingers,’ requiring the Warriors to be tough at the net.

“So strong blockers and strong defence.”

TVRA South East A Finals The Woodstock CI Senior Red Devils will host Woodstock E.S. Notre Dame and the juniors St. Thomas Arthur Voaden Vikings Wednesday, Nov. 6 in back-to-back matches, with WOSSAA A berths on the line.

The senior game is scheduled to begin at 3 p.m. with the juniors to follow.



Huron Park Huskies Parker McLeod (left) and Travis Ernst (right) meet Lord Dorchester’s L. Pulajsa at the net.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

## Oxford Road 59 (Vansittart Ave) bridge in Woodstock

### Temporary closures northbound on OR 59 bridge and Tecumseh Street

Oxford Road 59 (Vansittart Avenue) bridge and Tecumseh Street in Woodstock will temporarily close to all northbound vehicle and pedestrian traffic on two (2) days in November for Phase 2 deck pours. These are additional closures to the ones already in place.

Road closures are expected to take place the week of November 25 but are subject to change due to weather or other factors. Signs will be posted in advance. During this period:

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West to Oxford Road 30 (11th Line)  
East to Oxford Road 4
- Tecumseh St. will be open to local traffic southbound only for a period of 6-9 hours, then it will re-open to local traffic only in both directions after work is completed.
- Access for emergency responders (fire, police and ambulance) will be maintained on Oxford Road 59 northbound with support from police at the intersection of Devonshire and Vansittart Avenues.

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# Final celebration for Old St. Paul's 190th anniversary ends Remembrance Day

CONNOR LUCZKA

Echo Correspondent

If walls could talk, Woodstock's Old St. Paul's Anglican Church could tell the whole story of the Friendly City – right from its very inception to today.

And while there has been some discussion of keeping or dropping the “old” moniker from the church, according to at least one member of the congregation, it should be something to be celebrated.

“We should be proud of being old,” Shirley Woodall, the church's historian, told the Echo. “Because we are old.”

This year was the 190th anniversary of the building and all the history it has seen. Starting in April, with a Canadian artist's tribute concert, the celebration kicked off and carried into spring and summer with a host of events, including free tours of the church.

The church, found down an unassuming driveway at 723 Dundas St. in Woodstock, was built in 1834 under the direction of Captain Andrew Drew.

Drew had arrived in Canada from England in 1832 as Admiral Henry Vansittart's agent, who intended to invest money into the fledgling settlement. Vansittart, himself a predominant figure in early Woodstock history, financed its construction with the intention of a town growing around it.

The first settlement that became Woodstock was established in 1721, but it wasn't until 1851, well after Old St. Paul's construction, that it was incorporated as a town. Then, in 1891, it became the city it is today.

“It used to be extremely important,” Woodall said about the building and the community it fostered. “Because the majority of the half pay officers that came here were wealthy enough, and they contributed to the community and started the library, built the courthouse, were able to decide on a jail. All those things wouldn't have happened with just the pioneers that were here. From 1800 until 1834 there was very little activity, and only about a half a dozen pioneers that were here at that time – and they were busy looking after themselves.”



If walls could talk, Woodstock's Old St. Paul's Anglican Church could tell the whole story of the Friendly City – right from its very inception to today. (CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

Woodall also shared that the church's history isn't centred around the Anglican faith, rather that it is a reflection of Woodstock's history. During the Rebellions of 1837 to 1838 the church's central tower was used as a jail, since there wasn't one at that time.

After the first and second world wars, two memorials were commissioned in the church - a large stained-glass window for the soldiers that never returned from the first world war and an organ likewise for the soldiers that never returned from the second world war.

The church's eminent history even caught the attention of Canada's sovereign. Tara Mundy, loyal greetings officer for King Charles III, sent a letter this summer saying that the King sends “heartfelt congratulations” and conveys “his warmest good wishes” as the church celebrates the milestone year.

As 2024 nears its end, the church is hosting the last celebration for the year - the Christmas online silent auction. There are 300 items up for auction, though organizers say that the item list has grown closer to 400.

There is a \$10,000 goal for the auction, with proceeds going to the core missions of the church, including hosting The Inn, a homeless shelter, and the mainte-



Shirley Woodall, church historian, and Sue Robinson, deputy warden, pose in front of the iconic Old St. Paul's stained-glass window, a memorial for the soldiers that never returned home from the first world war and one of the many historical features of the church. To celebrate its 190th anniversary, the church is hosting an online auction with over 300 items, which ends on Remembrance Day. (CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

nance of the remarkable church.

As of publication, \$1,296 has been raised. The church's leadership thanks sponsor TransArctic Inc. and the local businesses that have contributed to the auction. It can be accessed from Nov. 5 to Nov. 11 at <https://www.32auctions.com/oldstpaulsauction2024>.

Winning bidders can pick up their items on Nov. 14 from 5 to 7 p.m. and Nov. 16 from 9 to 11 a.m. at the church.



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# Dancing around politics with Americans before Election Day



STEWART GRANT

Publisher

It's been over a year since I've set foot in the United States, but last week Laurie and I attended a travel industry event in South America that was comprised of about 70% Americans and 30% Canadians.

There wasn't much political talk on this trip. Everyone is generally smart enough to steer clear of politics in business settings, but the retreat offered a few opportunities to gain some insight as to where people stood heading into the Nov. 5th election.

In Punta del Este, Uruguay, we enjoyed a wonderful sightseeing day with a couple from Michigan and another couple from Tampa. These were four of the nicest people that we could ever hope to meet. One of the gentlemen is not only a travel agent owner but also a pastor. At lunch, he opened the door to a political discussion by saying, "Up until this week, I had never thought much about the impact that our election has on other countries. I've been talking to some Canadians this week who follow this closer than I do."

"For sure, the election affects everyone in some way," I replied, and gave an example of how I worried about the U.S. pulling out of NATO and how that could affect Canada at some future point.

The table seemed to agree that NATO was a good thing, and our

Tampa friend said, "Yeah, I don't think he [Trump] would really do that, it's a lot of bluster with him." He added that Trump had been President once before and everything hadn't fallen apart.

"He won't have any guardrails this time though," I replied. "All those people who kept him in line last time won't be there this time around and he'll surround himself with yes-men."

"He will still have to get things through the Senate and the House," the Tampa man replied. I thought about pursuing it further by saying that Trump could circumvent those checks by issuing Executive Orders, but decided it was enough. The Michigan man also resigned, saying that he already voted anyways.

We then talked generally about the election was impacting the travel industry, as they are finding that some of their clients are pushing back their decisions until after the votes are counted. I joked, saying, "Maybe you'll see a surge of people wanting to buy one-way tickets to Canada."

Overall, we had a nice and pleasant conversation, and while we soon shifted to other topics like family and vacations, I couldn't help but privately assume that our new friends probably voted for team "R" like they probably have done in the past. After all, Fox

News has warned them about the dangers that Kamala Harris, and the millions of dangerous illegal immigrants, would inflict on the nation.

At dinner earlier in the trip, we sat with a couple from Florida (and formerly from Indiana) who felt they were in a safe space speaking with two Canadians and shared their fear and distaste regarding a possible Trump presidency. They talked about the abortion issue and how it worried them. They also talked about January 6th and how Trump was a threat to democracy.

Our third and final political discussion was on a shore excursion in Brazil with five Canadians and two Puerto Ricans. The woman representing Puerto Rico tourism was telling us all about the positive attributes of their region and I joked that "wow, it sounds much nicer in Puerto Rico than that comedian at the Trump rally made it out to be a few days ago." Despite being a representative of Puerto Rico, she had not heard of the controversial comments. Everyone gets their news from different places I suppose.

Although political discussions were rare at the travel industry retreat, the few that we had reinforced the fact that this is a truly divided country, with people basing their voting decisions on completely different information, or in many cases lack of information.

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# Weekend Quiz

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|---|---|
| 1) What are Novembers' two birthstones?                 | 6) In what country is the Taj Mahal located?        |
| 2) In what year did Sportsnet cut ties with Don Cherry? | 7) The "Venus de Milo" is a statue of what goddess? |
| 3) What day is Remembrance Day?                         | 8) Psychology is the study of what?                 |
| 4) Who wears orange in Scooby Doo?                      | 9) Which Beatle had dyslexia?                       |
| 5) Who plays Dexter in Dexter?                          | 10) In what Ocean do typhoons occur?                |

**This week's answers are found on pg. 35**



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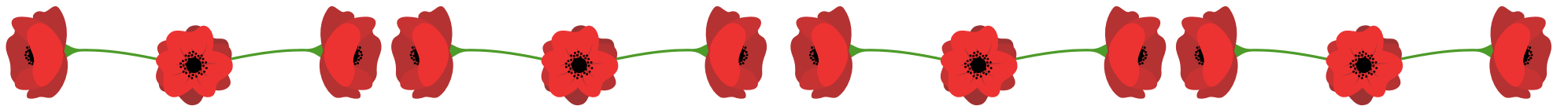
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# Route to the Past – Last Man from Ingersoll to be Killed in WW1

SCOTT GILLIES

*Contributor*

John Joseph Rawlinson was born in Newton Cheshire England on November 2, 1893, and trained to be a shoemaker before emigrating to Canada and settling in Ingersoll around 1912. While living on Charles Street East, he found work at the John Morrow Screw & Nut Company, one of the major manufacturers and employers in the town.

In January of 1916, John enlisted, along with fellow English ex-patriots, with the 168th Battalion, Oxford's Own. He was 22 when he joined up with other locals in "B" Company of the 168th.

Basic training for these lads included military drills at the army camp in London Ontario, forced marches from Ingersoll to Salford, or Beachville or to Woodstock, with full kit. Being as he had residence in town, he was not required to sleep at the Soldier's Home, the converted McCarty House Hotel on Thames Street immediately north of the Grand Trunk railway lines.

As a member of the 168th, JJ would have also been required to perform guard duty of the Morrow Company and some of the other local industries including Ingersoll Machine & Tool Company which, like his employer, was manufacturing artillery and bullet shell casings for the war effort, and the Ingersoll Woollen Mill on Charles Street East which had received a large order for underwear for the Canadian troops. The necessity of guarding these local industries stemmed from concerns over sabotage by enemy aliens and spies.

The 168th trained as a unit, with Headquarters and "A" Company being based in Woodstock. "C" and "D" companies were situated in Tillsonburg and Tavistock. Major Thomas Gibson, a lawyer from Toronto but born in Ingersoll, son of postmaster Joseph Gibson, was the recruitment officer for the battalion while Lieutenant Colonel William Thomas McMullen, a lawyer from Woodstock, was Commanding Officer.

Like other young men of the time facing an unknown future, JJ found love. On April 7, 1916, he married Lily May Demmeny Smith from Galt. The Ingersoll Chronicle and Canadian Dairyman newspaper reported that a quiet wedding took place at the home of machinist James and Agnes Adams on Charles Street East. They lived in the block of houses between Mill and McCarthy Streets.

When the 168th shipped out in October of 1916, they arrived in England but were soon transferred to other battalions which badly required recruitments to fill the gaps in their lines due to heavy fight-



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

ing. Many of the men from the 168th found themselves now reporting to the officers of the 21st Battalion, an Eastern Ontario regiment which was seeing an awful lot of action on the frontlines.

Twenty-three-year-old John Joseph Rowlinson was taken on strength by the 18th Battalion and appears to have been in the thick of things for the duration of the Great War. Within a year of his arrival on the frontlines he had suffered a gunshot wound to the forehead. His 5-foot 8-inch frame was not that lofty, but apparently tall enough to be wounded! Perhaps he had yet to master the sounds of different artillery shells and whizbangs flying overhead, knowing which ones to ignore, and which ones meant DUCK!!

While facing the onslaught of these enemy attacks, John Joseph also had to face withering depression in the opening months of 1917. He would have received word from his wife that their infant daughter Ethel Agnes May had passed away at the age of 4 months in January of that year.

In November of 1917, Rowlinson was struck again, this time by a bullet to his right hand. This wound was significant enough to earn his "Blighty" – a serious but non-life-threatening injury which resulted in him being sent back to England to recover. His war records show that he convalesced at hospitals in Birmingham and Epsom before returning to active duty on February 1, 1918.

In the fall of 1918, during the last 100

days of the War, Canadian troops had the Hun on the run. Advances of the frontlines were made almost daily, and along the way, Canadian troops earned the reputation of being the best in the Allied forces; the stormtroopers who struck fear in the hearts and minds of the enemy.

By November 10, 1918, the 18th Battalion was actively engaging German troops south of Mons Belgium. They had taken several German prisoners in the drive to capture the city of Mons. In retaliation the Huns were trying to do the same while attempting to hold their ground.

Newspaper accounts published later in the month reported that J.J. Rowlinson was on the forward lines along with other members of the 18th Battalion when they were cut off by an overwhelming number of German troops and taken prisoners of war.

The London Free Press reported that our hero "was not one to lay down when adversity strikes". When the opportunity presented itself, he took a long chance to rejoin his battalion but during this attempt to escape he was shot in the right leg and fell to the ground.

As the battle waged on, Rowlinson bided his time, waiting for the right moment to move. He slowly began to drag himself across No-Man's Land back to safety among his fellow Canadians. However, he was spotted by the Boche, who did not take kindly to his leaving.

When the fighting was finally over, Canadian stretcher bearers recovered the dead and the wounded. Much to their shock and horror, they discovered the body of John Joseph Rowlinson, the last man from Ingersoll, the last member of the London-based 18th Battalion to be killed in action. He lay on the ground with his throat cut. As the Free Press reported, this was an act of brutality inflicted by the last vestiges of the German empire.

Following the war's end, JJ's widow remarried James Candlish, a machinist and member of the Ingersoll Pipe Band. He had served with the 21st Battalion. This native of Maxwelltown Scotland had also been living on Charles Street East before enlisting with the 168th Battalion. It seems however that grief was to remain in Lily's life. She gave birth to another daughter after marrying Candlish. Their child was named Agnes Lillian Rose, perhaps after James' mother. Tragically, this second child of Lily to be named Agnes, was only 4 months old when she too died. Another daughter, Jean Doreen lived to marry John Arthur Steele from Woodstock, but she died in her 20th year. A third daughter, Lovina was living in Calgary at the time of her father's death in London in 1957.

Such was the life and times of our Canadian troops and their families during the First World War. Lest we forget.

*Route2thepast@gmail.com*

# Zorra Township News

## Fifth annual Thamesford food drive hopes to raise 2,500 food items for region

CONNOR LUCZKA

Echo Correspondent

The fifth annual food drive in Thamesford and region has officially kicked-offed.

This year, organizer Kate Lockhart said that she is mindful of the cost of living, so isn't looking to break any personal bests. If she and the community can raise the same number of items as there are members in this community, 2,500, then she will be happy.

"I just can't get over people's generosity," Lockhart told the Echo. "It blows me away every year."

Originally run by Westminster United Church, the food drive has been organized by Lockhart (in partnership with the church) in her home since the COVID-19 pandemic restricted how institutions like the church could operate, according to her.

Unable to use that space as a central drop zone and given people couldn't be there to accept donations, Lockhart elected to use her new home as a drop point.

Lockhart estimates that they garnered 3,500 items in the first year. In the four years they



Kate Lockhart stands in front of baked goods she sells to raise money for the Zorra Multi-Courts project. Apart from that project, she also spearheads the annual holiday food drive in the region, in partnership with Westminster United Church.

(CONNOR LUCZKA PHOTO)

have been running the holiday drive they have raised more than 12,000 items and \$6,000.

If they raise what they hope to this year, the community will have raised a total of 15,000 items for the community.

That first year they were donating money to the Woodstock Salvation Army but discovered donations were being shipped outside of the county. They subsequently began giving to the Ingersoll branch instead, having been reassured that the donations stay within the commu-

**Thamesford Community 2024  
Annual Food Drive**  
*in partnership with Westminster United Church*

<p><b>What to Collect</b></p> <p>Consider collecting one item per day for the month or choose some from the list below</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nov 1 – Box of cereal</li> <li>Nov 2 – Peanut butter</li> <li>Nov 3 – Stuffing mix</li> <li>Nov 4 – Boxed mashed potatoes</li> <li>Nov 5 – Macaroni &amp; Cheese</li> <li>Nov 6 – Canned fruit</li> <li>Nov 7 – Canned tomatoes</li> <li>Nov 8 – Canned tuna</li> <li>Nov 9 – Instant pudding mix</li> <li>Nov 10 – Jar of applesauce</li> <li>Nov 11 – Canned salmon</li> <li>Nov 12 – Canned brown beans</li> <li>Nov 13 – Box of crackers</li> <li>Nov 14 – Package of rice</li> <li>Nov 15 – Package of oatmeal</li> <li>Nov 16 – Package of pasta</li> <li>Nov 17 – Spaghetti sauce</li> <li>Nov 18 – Jam or honey</li> <li>Nov 19 – Can of tomato soup</li> <li>Nov 20 – Can of chicken soup</li> <li>Nov 21 – Hamburger helper mix</li> <li>Nov 22 – Canned potatoes</li> <li>Nov 23 – Canned vegetables</li> <li>Nov 24 – Can of mushroom soup</li> <li>Nov 25 – Pancake mix</li> <li>Nov 26 – Syrup</li> <li>Nov 27 – Box of facial tissues</li> <li>Nov 28 – Package of juice boxes</li> <li>Nov 29 – Instant coffee</li> <li>Nov 30 – Box of cookies</li> </ul> <p><small>Please ensure all items are within the expiration dates</small></p>	<p><b>The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Food Drive will be starting again this month!</b></p> <p>Let's come together to support those in need both here in the village and in our surrounding community.</p> <p>All donations will go to ensure local families and individuals have their needs met with any additional going to the Ingersoll Salvation Army Food Bank servicing Oxford County.</p> <hr/> <p><b>Where and When to Bring Donations</b></p> <p><b>When:</b> The Food Drive runs Nov 25<sup>th</sup> through December 14<sup>th</sup></p> <p><b>Where:</b> Drop off items at the following address:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Kate Lockhart's House</b> 215030 21<sup>st</sup> Line, Thamesford Tel: 226-448-3656</p> <hr/> <p><b>Making a Difference</b></p> <p>Over the last 4 years, the community food drive has contributed more than 12,000 items and \$6,000! Thank you!</p>
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The annual food drive is encouraging residents to collect one item of food per day in the month of November, in what organizers are calling a "reverse advent calendar."

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

nity that raised them. Additionally, last year Lockhart and her team put boxes together for certain families directly. She explained that people in the community reached out to her about families that they knew.

Lockhart was quick to thank various community institutions. In particular, she said that the local firefighters and Thamesford Public School, where her sister teaches, have been instrumental in the drive's continued success. She also explained that the team is happy with any donation they get.

"If it makes \$50, it's \$50 we didn't have," Lockhart explained. "If somebody's able to bring me two canned goods, great. I will happily say as good of a thank you to them as the person who brings me the big box

of 40. It makes no difference to me. It's what can you do, if anything? And what if you can't do something, what can we do to help you?"

Lockhart said that the drive cut off is usually mid-December, but she always accepts donations year-round, promising to find a good home for food items.

This year, her team is asking the community to consider collecting one item per day during the month of November, in what they are calling a "reverse advent calendar."

Some of the items in that advent calendar are cereal, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese, and canned goods like tomatoes, tuna, and vegetables.

Donations can be dropped off at 215030 21st Line, Thamesford.

**GRANT  
HAVEN  
MEDIA**

*Residents in our communities trust our newspapers to provide local news and information, let me help you connect to our readers with your local business.*

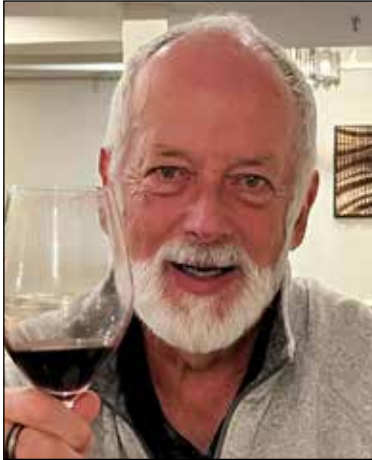
**heather@granthaven.com**    **226.261.1837**

St. Marys Independent
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Goderich Sun
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STRATFORDTIMES
NORFOLK FARMS
BRANT FARMS
stmarys radio

Woodstock Ingersoll Echo
SIMCOEADVOCATE
Tilsonburg POST

# OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: The quest for the holy puffin



**PAUL KNOWLES**

*Echo Contributor*

I will admit, it's not up there with Indiana Jones' quest for the Holy Grail, or even Monty Python's hilarious attempt at the same feat, but it was truly a quest, nonetheless, and it did take years, and I finally realized my goal, which King Arthur never actually managed to do.

The object of my search was not a sacred vessel; it was a small, multi-coloured bird. To be specific, a puffin.

I have long wanted to see a puffin in its natural setting. It became something of an obsession. Over the years, I have visited a number of places that promised puffin sightings. I visited my sister who lives in St. Anthony, on the northern tip of Newfoundland. I saw whales and icebergs and guillemots. I even patted a beluga whale that had come into a small outport and was hanging around the docks (until a whale scientist

told us to leave the whale alone), but no puffins.

I travelled to Ireland three times and hung out on the Atlantic coast at astonishing places like the Giant's Causeway and the Cliffs of Moher. I saw plenty of posters advertising the availability of puffins, but no puffins.

I visited Yarmouth and the Acadian Shores region of Nova Scotia and fell madly in love with the whole area. It quickly became one of my favourite destinations in the world, except no puffins.

I have spent a lot of time in much-loved Cornwall, England, exploring coastal towns like Fowey, Marazion and Mousehole (pronounced Mawzel), travelling by boat along the shore, enjoying amazing destinations like Saint Michael's Mount and Tintagel, but no puffins.

So, when I started to plan my trip to St. John's, Nfld., earlier this year, I was determined not to get my hopes up. After all, every one of those places I have visited boast about their population of puffins. Every one of them post pictures of these cute, little birds. Every one offered nothing but disappointment to me.

So, I was not optimistic.

What took me to St. John's was the annual conference of the Travel Media Association of Canada. At these events, we work hard – really – but our hosts also treat us like royalty. One of the features of the conference was an afternoon whale-watching trip with O'Brien's Boat Tours.

I was pleased about this be-

cause, first, who doesn't want to see whales and second, one of the O'Briens who own the boats is Con O'Brien, also lead singer of the Irish Descendants, a wonderful Newfoundland band that I brought to this area twice when I was executive director of a local arts festival.

So, it would be fun. But I did not get my puffin-oriented hopes up.

We headed out on the sea, bound for Witless Bay – an interesting name for a destination for writers, bloggers and public-relations professionals.

Perhaps an hour into the voyage, I spotted a couple of small birds floating on the waves. Could they be? Yes! I was actually seeing my first two puffins. I was very excited and then I realized I was actually seeing my first 200,000 puffins or so. The air was filled with oddly shaped, brightly coloured little birds. They were fishing, they were flying, they were floating, they were pooping on or near us; they were making an aged and jaded travel writer very, very happy.

The O'Brien trip was terrific. In addition to literally thousands of puffins, we saw lots of other sea birds – guillemots (old hat to me, of course), terns, kittiwakes, murrelets. They were interesting, of course, but they meant little to me because I was watching puffins.

On the trip back, we also saw whales. I enjoyed that too, but I have to confess I was still savouring the puffin sightings. After



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

## A puffin in flight.

all, I had been years on the quest!

A few days later, I was part of a small group of travel journalists who got to tour the Irish Loop – the part of Newfoundland nearest St. John's. We stayed in terrific accommodations at Cliff's Edge Retreat, overlooking Witless Bay.

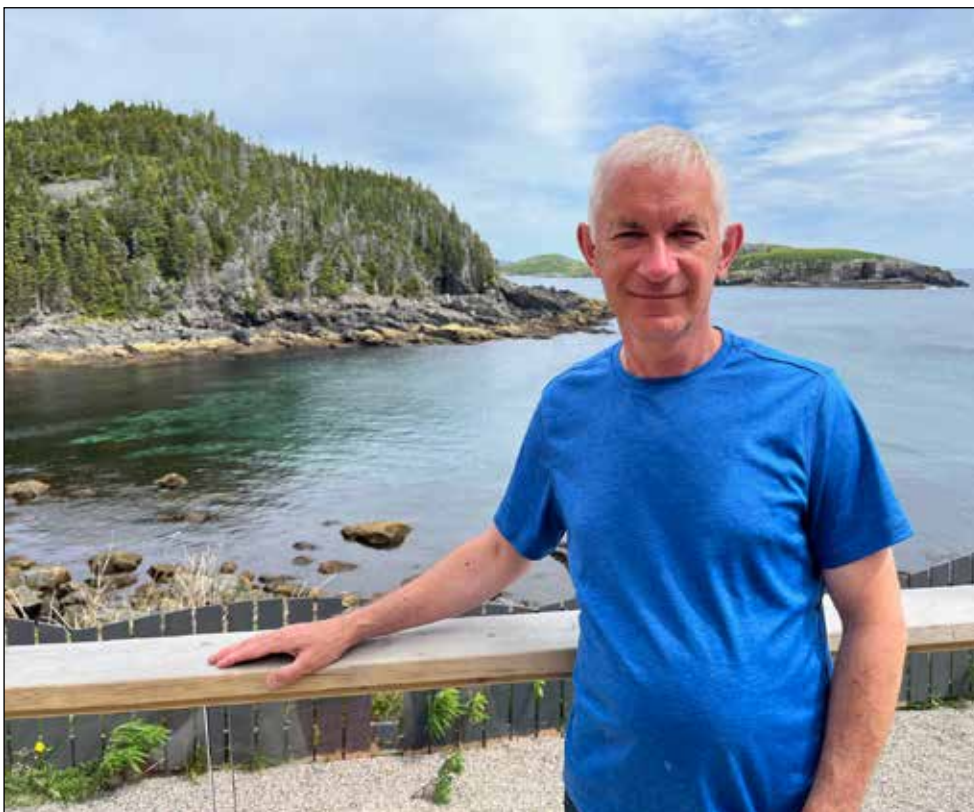
As I stood on my balcony taking in the amazing view, I realized I was yet again spotting puffins swimming near the shore and darting through the air. This time, it felt like they had come to me. Clearly, the puffins understood how hard I had worked to establish first contact and they were now feeling a bond with me.

Or maybe the attraction was the fish they were feeding on in Witless Bay.

Witless Bay, by the way, is a well-protected ecological preserve, so it is guaranteed that if you go there at the right time (I was there in June), there will be all manner of seabirds, as well as whales and perhaps icebergs.

I have found that Newfoundland and Labrador is high on many travellers' bucket list, and Canada's newest province deserves to be. So, do go, and if you go, be sure to say hi to the puffins for me.

*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](mailto:pknowles@golden.net).*



Cliff's Edge Retreat owner Craig March.



O'Brien's Boat Tours: a great way to encounter the elusive puffin (or thousands of them)

# Salvation Army offering a new way to provide food assistance in Woodstock

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The Salvation Army has announced the opening of the HOPE Market at 769 Juliana Drive in Woodstock.

The organization said the transformative approach to food assistance empowers individuals with choice and dignity. Modeled after a grocery store, HOPE Market allows customers to ‘shop’ for their preferred food items at no cost, accommodating dietary needs and cultural diversity.

“HOPE Market represents a significant shift in community support, offering a personalized shopping experience that provides greater independence and reimagines how we deliver food assistance,” said Captain Kristen Gray, corps and community ministries officer at The Salvation Army Woodstock Community Church.

Captain Kristen Gray said it gives their clients a more respectable way to receive help.

“That’s exactly what it is. We were looking for ways to improve the dignity of those we serve, to offer more choice and selection as well as healthier and culturally diverse food options. Having different food also helps us deal with food allergies as well.”

Part of the goal to provide more nutritional goods means asking the public for monetary donations along with donations of actual food.

“It would allow us to purchase food that doesn’t have a long shelf life but provides healthier options. We want to provide more fresh produce as well as a broader selection,” she explained.

The Salvation Army has seen a 20 per cent increase in the number of households they are serving compared to one year ago.

“With the price of groceries continuing to go up, people who are working but don’t have a significant income are still around that poverty line

and they just aren’t able to provide the quality of groceries they used to even at that same income.”

Gray added they saw a jump in clients during COVID and initially thought a reduction might come as the pandemic ended, but that didn’t happen, even as inflation has dropped back down to the two per cent range.

“That’s when we saw significant increases in food prices as the economy struggled. We really haven’t seen a decrease at all.”

Gray added the open house is a way for people to see how they have changed the way people in need are able to get help.

“We want the public to see how we are serving and help them understand how they donate and what they donate can make an impact.”

The market officially opened in mid-September and when it comes to the organization’s clients, Gray said the feedback has been very positive to date.

“Folks really appreciate they are able to look at what is in their pantry at home and supplement it. Before, we had a lot of the same food but it was limited as to how it was provided to them. Going to this shopping method really allows people to get what they need.”

Between 250 and 350 Woodstock residents benefit monthly from HOPE Market’s innovative choice-based model, enhancing food security for individuals, seniors, and families by enabling them to select items that best suit their needs.

Community members, donors, and mission partners were invited to a public open house on Thursday and Friday of this week to take a tour to learn more about the HOPE Market, its positive impact on people’s lives, and how community support can make a difference.

The Salvation Army welcomes the support of local food drives but is asking anyone interested



The organization said it has transformed the way food assistance is delivered with a fresher and more culturally diverse selection of food. (LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)



A Salvation Army staff member guides a client through the new Food Market. (LEE GRIFFI PHOTO)

to contact them in advance as their storage space is limited.

For more information about the HOPE Market and how the public can

help, visit [www.woodstocksalvationarmy.ca/hope-market](http://www.woodstocksalvationarmy.ca/hope-market). Access to

the HOPE Market is by appointment only by calling 519-539-9345.

# COMING EVENTS

Email to inquire [info@theecho.ca](mailto:info@theecho.ca)

## 5TH ANNUAL LIGHTS OF LOVE

**November 29th, 2024; 6 pm to 8 pm**  
**VON Sakura House – back garden**  
 Please RSVP to [oxfordgiving@von.ca](mailto:oxfordgiving@von.ca) or 519-709-8332 (Chelsea) with any questions or visit [vonsakurahouse.com](http://vonsakurahouse.com) for more details!

## REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

**Monday Nov. 11th**  
**Service begins at 10:45 am**  
**Innerkip Cemetery**  
 Please bring your own lawn chair.

## LIL RED TRUCK BAZAAR & CAFE

**On Wed Nov 20 – 1 pm to 5 pm – come and join us at Dundas Street United Church, Woodstock.**

Admission is \$2 (includes refreshments) and we are wheelchair accessible. We will have many booths, such as Deli, Sweet Shop, Knitting & Sewing, Bows & Boughs and a Silent Auction. For more information please call 519-537-7935.

## ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

**Saturday, December 7th; 1:00 p.m - 4:00 p.m.**  
**Cedarview Retirement Home,**  
**511 Finkle Street, Woodstock**

## CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

**Saturday, November 16th;**  
**Doors Open 10:00 am**  
**Draws at 2:00 pm**  
**Holy Trinity Church, 1420 Devonshire Ave, Woodstock**  
 Penny Sale, Raffle, Baking, Crafts, Gift Baskets, Yesterday's Treasures, Religious Goods and Tea Room.

## THIRD ANNUAL QUILT AND CRAFT ONLINE AUCTION

**November 13th - 17th**  
[www.32auctions.com/vqc2024](http://www.32auctions.com/vqc2024)  
 Victoria's Quilts Canada (VQC) is a Canada-wide nonprofit organization that provides handmade quilts to people living with cancer in Canada. The Woodstock/Oxford Branch has volunteers all over Oxford County. Volunteers gather monthly in Woodstock and Tillsonburg to create beautiful quilts that we provide free of charge to people dealing with cancer. Our branch has been delivering quilts in Oxford County since 2015. To date, we have delivered over 1700 quilts to recipients in our area. Funds raised in the online auction will be entirely allocated to the purchase of materials used to make our quilts. For more information regarding VQC - [victoriasquiltscanada.com](http://victoriasquiltscanada.com)

## THE OLD ST PAUL'S CHURCH CHRISTMAS ONLINE SILENT AUCTION IS BACK!

**Old St Paul's Church,**  
**723 Dundas St. Woodstock.**  
 With 300 quality items to select from, you are sure to find a great deal for Christmas giving and decorating. It's easy! Visit our website [www.oldstpauls.com](http://www.oldstpauls.com) from November 5 to 11 and click the Auction link. Two convenient pick-up times at Old St Paul's Church, 723 Dundas St. Woodstock.

## SIR FREDERICK BANTING: THE MAN YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW

**Virtual Meeting -**  
**Monday, November 18; 7:00 p.m.**

## Oxford County Branch of Ontario Ancestors

Historians and scientists have deemed the discovery of insulin to be "the most significant event in the history of Canadian medical science". Historians and authors have well documented the difference Sir Frederick Banting made with his involvement in the discovery of insulin. What has not been as effectively communicated are his many other contributions throughout the course of his lifetime. There was far more to this distinguished Canadian's career than the often-simplified events of the insulin period. Banting's interest in art, his military service in both world wars, and support for medical research in Canada will be discussed.

Visit our website at <https://oxford.ogs.on.ca> to register for this free presentation on Zoom.

## J. S. BACH'S LONG WALK IN THE SNOW

**Saturday, November 23rd; 7:00 p.m.**

**St. Paul's Presbyterian Church,**  
**56 Thames St. S., Ingersoll**

St. Paul's Church would like to invite you to a very special evening. St. Paul's has been sponsoring a Syrian Refugee family, and this evening will be a fundraiser in support of the family. This special performance is called "J.S. Bach's Long Walk in the Snow". Johann Sebastian Bach is usually seen as the wise, old man of Western Music, but he didn't begin his working life that way. At 18, and in his first job as an organist, still barely beginning life as a composer, the young genius got into such trouble that the only thing he could do was to walk away. "JS Bach's Long Walk in the Snow" takes you along on that trip: a 400 km odyssey to a glittering northern port city with street fights, big business, insight, fulfillment, the father figure he didn't know he needed and, quite possibly, love. The story is narrated by the inimitable CBC personality, Tom Allen. Tom is a storyteller, concert host, author, musician and broadcaster. With glorious music, both familiar and gripping, Tom, along with his wife, Lori, and a cast of brilliant musical friends, bring the story of J.S. Bach's Long Walk in the Snow to life, and that troubled young man in from the cold. This promises to be an amazing evening, in support of a wonderful family. We'd love you to join us on a journey where we discover that such an extraordinary artist was an ordinary man who faced those same struggles that so many of us face today. Tickets are \$35. They can be purchased through the church office at (519) 485-3390 or via email at [stpauls@execulink.com](mailto:stpauls@execulink.com) or on <https://www.eventbrite.ca/>. (\$38.61)

## THE OPTIMIST CLUB OF OXFORD COUNTY

The Optimists bring out the best in Youth, Community, and Themselves. If anyone is interested in coming out to meet us and learn more about us please email [brenda7621@outlook.com](mailto:brenda7621@outlook.com)

## LIVING WITH LOSS:

**A SIX-WEEK GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP**  
**Caring Hearts Support Network: St. David's United Church, 190 Springbank Ave., Woodstock ON**

A safe and supportive space to explore your grief, with the guidance of trained facilitators. Please contact for upcoming dates. No cost to attend. To register or for more information call or text 519-536-3370.

[www.caringheartssupportnetwork.com](http://www.caringheartssupportnetwork.com).  
 One-on-one grief support is also available.

## GRIEF SUPPORT FOR MAID RELATED LOSS

**4th Wednesday of the month; 1 - 2:30 p.m.**  
**Thamesford Library, 165 Dundas St., Thamesford**

This monthly in-person grief support group for loss related to Medical Assistance in Dying (MAiD) offers a compassionate, safe space to explore this unique loss. The group will meet the 4th Wednesday of the month from 1 – 2:30 p.m. at the Thamesford Library, 165 Dundas St., Thamesford. The group is free of charge and pre-registration is requested. To register or inquire about an evening group, contact Faye Brekelmans at 519-866-3016 or email [faye@compassionategriefsupport.ca](mailto:faye@compassionategriefsupport.ca).

## REPAIR CAFÉ

**4th Saturday of each month; 10:00 a.m. - Noon**  
**Hosted by East Oxford 403 Anglican Churches**  
**St. John's Church, 685860 Oxford Rd. 2, Woodstock**

Repairs to clothing, textiles and minor non-electrical household items by donation. Also offered: learn how to make your own repairs.

## ARE YOU IN A JAM?

Ingersoll's Country Music Jamboree Club is celebrating 40 years. New members wanted. Qualifications - love 50-70's country music. Listen, dance, enjoy! **Every other Friday afternoon from 1-4p.m. Masonic Hall, 190 Thames St S, Ingersoll.** The club welcomes walk-ins at the door.

## PEER SUPPORT GROUP FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

**Third Wednesday of each month; 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.**  
**21 Wellington St., Woodstock**  
**(Virtual options available)**

PCMH is a peer support program providing support to parents and caregivers across Ontario with lived experience raising children and youth with mental health challenges. For more information, please visit [family.cmho.org](http://family.cmho.org) or [oxfordcounty@pmh.ca](mailto:oxfordcounty@pmh.ca). We are also on Facebook: Parents for Children's Mental Health ~ Oxford County

## WOODSTOCK MOOSE LODGE

**EVENTS:**

**690 Sutherland Drive, Woodstock**

**ALL ENTERTAINMENT IN NOVEMBER WILL BE ON SUNDAYS, HOURS FROM 1-4 P.M.**

**November 10** – Les Homes \$10 per person  
**November 17** – Ronnie West \$10 per person  
**November 24** – Jim Otterbein \$10 per person  
**Dec 8** – Mike Thrope \$10 per person

**NEW YEARS EVE - RONNIE WEST**  
 \$25 per couple, lunch included, 8pm-1am

## HURON PARK BAPTIST CHURCH

**EVENTS:**

**199 Berwick Street, Woodstock**

**YOUNG AT HEART LUNCHEON**

## PRESENTS

**November 28; Noon**  
 A Christmas theme with music from Bryan Mallot. Please call the church office 519-421-4722 for more details.

**ROYAL CANADIAN LEGION EVENTS:**  
**642 Dundas Street, Woodstock**

## SATURDAY NIGHT EVENING ENTERTAINMENT

**7 - 11 p.m.**  
**November 2nd;** Randy Thomas  
**November 9th;** DJ Kelly Maherveious  
**November 16th;** East Hill  
**November 23rd;** Back to Back  
**November 30th;** Steve Beach & Larry Fuedo

## ANNUAL ARMISTICE DINNER COCKTAILS

**4:30pm and Dinner at 5:30pm**  
 Must have tickets to attend. Tickets are \$25.00 each

## REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE AT THE CENOTAPH

**11:00 a.m.**  
 Join us after at the Branch (642 Dundas Street) for Chili and a bun.

## EVERY MONDAY IS CADETS

**BRANCH EXECUTIVE MEETING**  
 November 5th; 7pm

**BRANCH GENERAL MEETING**  
 November 12th; 7:30pm

**MEAT DRAW**  
 November 16th; 3pm

**SHUFFLEBOARD**  
 Every Thursday; 1:30 p.m.

**DART LEAGUE**  
 Every Tuesday 7:30pm, Wednesday 7:15pm, Thursday 7:30pm, Friday 8:00pm.

Chicken Wing & Fries or Onion Ring Dinner comes with coleslaw on November 29th, \$18.00 Each  
 Between 5-6pm. Please Pre-Order your Dinner by November 22nd.

**BEACHVILLE LEGION EVENTS:**  
**434852 Zorra Line, Beachville**

**REMEMBRANCE DAY CENOTAPH SERVICE**  
**November 11; 12:00 p.m.**  
 Light Lunch to follow.

**HAM AND SCALLOPED POTATO DINNER**  
**November 15; \$15**  
 Serving begins at 5:30  
 Call 519-423-6363 to order.

**KARAOKE - November 23; 7-11 p.m.**  
**EUCHRE - Thursdays; 7 p.m.**  
**DARTS - Fridays; 8 p.m.**  
**FREE POOL**

## PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW

**Deadline: Tuesday prior at 3 p.m. • Contact: [info@theecho.ca](mailto:info@theecho.ca)**

Coming Events are for non-profit organizations to promote their free admission events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as a phone number, email address or website. If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, you have the following options:

Coming Events Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst

Coming Events Boxed Word Ad (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst

Display Ad - Sizes begin at a business card size for \$35 + hst



# Riddles

Have you heard the joke about the butter?

Better not tell you, it might spread.

What do ghosts say to one another to show that they care?

"I love Boo"

What has a lot of keys but can't open doors?

A piano.

What did the spider do when he went on his computer?

He went on his web site.

Who in the solar system has the most loose change?

The moon, it keeps changing quarters.

Why did the dinosaur wear a bandage?

Because he had a dino-sore.

Why didn't the class clown use hair oil the day before the big test?

Because he didn't want anything to slip his mind.

Where does a penguin go to visit his aunt?

Aunt-arctica.

How do you communicate with a fish?

Drop it a line.

# Sudoku

by PeterS 2024

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

Solutions on page 35

Basic (5)

## Featured Pet



**KOA AND KAI**  
 Koa and Kai are great buddies with Hawaiian names and are one and two years old. They are loving life and everyone they meet! Tonight it was a beautiful sunset!

Nominate your pet to be a Featured Pet by emailing [info@theecho.ca](mailto:info@theecho.ca)

# Word Search

## REMEMBRANCE DAY



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

- Battle
- Troops
- Bravery
- Courage
- November
- Veteran
- Flanders
- Victory
- Freedom
- Poppy
- Hero
- Remember
- Wreath
- Honour
- Sacrifice



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The Woodstock Firefighters Station 2 hosted a thrilling haunted house at the former Lions Pool site on Halloween. The event provided an evening of fright and fun, featuring spooky surprises that delighted attendees of all ages. Families and friends gathered to experience the eerie atmosphere created by local firefighters, who transformed the pool area into a haunting spectacle. Guests navigated through chilling scenes and encountered costumed characters, ensuring a memorable Halloween experience. The Woodstock Firefighters would like to thank everyone who joined the festivities and contributed to the success of this community event.

(RON YUZARK PHOTOS)



Looking scary were Skylett and Chris Best with Amora and William.



Sparky and the Firefighters knew attendees were in for a scare when they entered.



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#### Silent Auction

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-12 baskets to win (\$66 value)

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#### Vendor Sales

-variety of items from local vendors

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- 1) Topaz and Citrine
- 2) 2019
- 3) Nov. 11
- 4) Velma
- 5) Michael C. Hall
- 6) India
- 7) Aphrodite (Venus)
- 8) Mind & Behaviour
- 9) John Lennon
- 10) Western Pacific Ocean

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



The family of  
**ALEC RODAK**

are excited to announce his completion of the Ironworkers Apprenticeship Program and the further accomplishment of his Red Seal designation, where he graduated both with honours on October 16, 2024.

**Congratulations** on all your hard work and wishing you much happiness and success in your future as an Ironworker.

*With love, your Mother, Craig, Kyle, Sofia, Kelsey, and grandparents Sue & Bill Shaw and Rose & Steve Nadalin.*

## OBITUARY

### Leonard Charles FALLOWFIELD



It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Leonard Charles Fallowfield, more affectionately known to those around him as Len. Len quietly slipped away, at PeopleCare, Tavistock, on Saturday, November 2, 2024 at the age of 90. A devoted family man, passionate aviator, and cherished member of his community. Leonard's journey came to an end, leaving behind a legacy of love, faith, and inspiration. He leaves behind the love of his life, and best friend Ila Fallowfield (nee Roberts) whom he married, June 6, 1953; marking 71 years of marriage. Loving father of Susan (William) Shaw, Michael (Lorraine) Fallowfield, and Shelleigh (Bradley) Garner. Dear grandfather of Angela, Cassandra, Matthew, Drew, Olivia, Cody, Dylan, Mark, Hannah, Jaycee and Marlee. Cherished great-grand father to Alec, Kyle, Sofia, Hunter, Caydence, Calvin, Grace, Kiara, Kendra, and Wesley. Survived by his brother Wes Fallowfield. Predeceased by his parents Jack and Isabel Fallowfield, and brothers Donald Fallowfield, and Douglas Fallowfield. Fondly remembered by Adam, Angila, Ethan, Lauren, and Aiden, as well as many nieces, nephews, and extended family and friends. Born to be a man of faith, Len and his beloved wife Ila were regular attendees at the Church of the Epiphany, where they found strength and support in their faith community. Len's dedication extended beyond the church; he worked tirelessly at Standard Tube for 37 years, where his commitment and work ethic earned him the respect of colleagues and friends alike.

In 1976, Len fulfilled a lifelong dream by earning his pilot's license. He took great pride in his part-ownership of a Harvard aircraft and he later purchased an Aeronca Champ, which became a beloved symbol of his passion for flying. Len was a long-time member of the Canadian Harvard Association and an active participant in the Tillsonburg and Woodstock Flying Clubs. Len loved to share the joy of flight, taking many friends and family members on unforgettable journeys through the skies.

Len's greatest pride, however, lay in his family. He inspired two of his grandsons to follow in his footsteps and become pilots themselves, a testament to his enduring influence and love for aviation. He often spoke with pride about the accomplishments of his family, cherishing the moments they shared together.

Len's spirit will live on in the hearts of those who knew and loved him. Len's legacy is one of kindness; he brought joy to all who knew him.

The family would like to thank, staff at PeopleCare, Tavistock for the exceptional care given to Len.

**Guests will be received at Church of the Epiphany, 560 Dundas St, Woodstock, ON, on Saturday, November 30th, 2024, between 10 - 11 a.m. A memorial service will take place at 11:00 a.m. Reception to follow.**

**Donations in Len's memory can be made to the Canadian Harvard Aircraft Association, or to the Canadian Cancer Society. Personal condolences may be shared at [www.smithleroy.com](http://www.smithleroy.com)**

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