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(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Rik Louwagie, Wellesley Township CAO (left), and Joe Nowak, Wellesley Township Mayor (right), joined Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis for the tourism funding announcement. The \$180,000 will pay for a new bridge going over the Conestogo River.

Township of Wellesley gets \$180,000 in federal funding to extend and enhance trails

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A \$180,000 federal government grant will give the Township of Wellesley a tourism boost.

A funding announcement was made recently at the historic West Montrose

Covered Bridge, commonly known as the Kissing Bridge. Kitchener-Conestoga MP Tim Louis was on hand and said the investment will help the township make capital improvements to connect Wellesley's trails system with those in the larger Waterloo Region.

This funding, provided through the

government's Tourism Growth Program, will allow the township to improve its trails and infrastructure. It will result in planning, designing and constructing a walking/cycling bridge over the Conestoga River to link the township's local trails, enhance the ability for active, outdoor

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WRPS uses April Fool's Day to raise awareness about animal adoption

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

"The Waterloo Region Police Service (WRPS) is rebranding the K-9 Unit to the Animal Support Unit (ASU) and adding new members. Working alongside our officers, each new Animal Support Unit member brings unique skills to our frontline."

That is a portion of the script from a social-media video released on April Fool's Day by the police force to not only draw some laughs, but also bring attention to the need to find good homes for animals currently up for adoption.

Cherri Greeno leads the corporate affairs department at WRPS and said coming up with engaging social-media posts is part of the organization's communications strategy.

"As a police service, we are always looking for opportunities to connect and engage in a fun way with the community. We do quite a few videos every year like at Christmas, and April Fool's is always a great time to have some fun."

She added the communications team threw around some ideas on what they

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Township of Wellesley gets \$180,000 in federal funding to extend and enhance trails

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tourists to connect and pass through the township, and encourage offseason activities for residents and tourists alike, including snowmobiling, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.

The announcement was made by Louis on behalf of Anita Anand, federal minister of innovation, science and industry.

“We are investing \$180,000 in federal funding for a new pedestrian bridge over the Conestogo River near Wallenstein in Wellesley Township,” said Louis. “This bridge will connect a gap along the Goderich to Guelph (G2G) Rail Trail, linking our local trails to larger networks

in the region. This investment will make it easier for residents and visitors to enjoy our beautiful landscapes and heritage, explore our community, and support local businesses.”

He added the trail is a former rail corridor and the funding will lead to a better experience for users.

“When people got to the Conestogo River, they had to turn back or take a bypass on the road, which is dangerous. It’s well-used and people have been looking forward to being able to cross the river at that point. It was a beautiful day to make that announcement and I was glad to be part of it.”

Louis explained the trail isn’t just

available for recreation; there is also a tourism aspect.

“It passes through West Montrose, Elmira, Wallenstein and Linwood. In those communities, they have bed and breakfasts. Some volunteers maintain the trails and even a website with more information. There are also guest books to sign and we know people come from all over the place. It represents the region in a beautiful way.”

In a release, the Government of Canada said it is investing in the future of Wellesley and the Waterloo Region’s tourism sector.

“These enhancements not only bolster an iconic community landmark but also ensure that Wellesley remains a must-visit destination for years to come, driving

economic growth and strengthening communities,” it said.

The federal government announced that it will continue investing in tourism projects in the Township of Wellesley and across Waterloo Region to support the development of new products and experiences that will sustain the local tourism economy for generations to come.

“Tourism is a pillar of local economies across southern Ontario, creating jobs and contributing significantly to the region’s prosperity. Our government will always support the businesses and organizations showcasing all that southern Ontario has to offer,” said Anand in the press release.

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WRPS uses April Fool's Day to raise awareness about animal adoption

Continued from page 1

could do for April 1 and decided to connect with the Humane Society of Kitchener-Waterloo and Stratford-Perth.

"We asked them if they would like to partner with us and the idea just came from there. What I love most about this is it's a fun, uplifting video with a serious message. A lot of the animals at the Humane Society need good homes and we were happy to put that message out to the public."

Greeno couldn't take credit for the video itself as it was shot and edited by Mark Araujo, a talented videographer on the WRPS team.

"A lot of it was done using a green screen that was put up at the Humane Society. They let us use some of their animals, some of which were owned by the staff, including Garrett the ferret, who has a tragic story.

"He was hit by a vehicle and lost an eye but was taken to the Humane Society and quickly adopted by a staffer. He's very happy and loved now, and was the star of our video."

Greeno assured the Gazette the dog in a motorcycle sidecar pictured in the video was added using the green screen. The same goes for Garrett, seen being lowered on a rope to help solve a crime in addition to a turtle and snake, each a part of the new ASU.

Greeno said in addition to building a

rapport with the community, the force is hoping to get more young people interested in a policing career.

"The data behind these videos shows a lot of our new recruits are attracted to our service through our social media. They view them and then go to our website if they are interested in policing, and we see our numbers rising."

Despite the far-fetched nature of the video, Greeno said many who watched fell for the premise at first.

"It's quite funny. We have been getting a lot of messages sent to us. I think when we wake up, we forget it's April Fool's. People saw the video and had to think for a minute to figure out it wasn't real. It's getting a lot of laughs."

The best part of the video may have been when an officer barged into a classroom where several young members of the force were seated.

"Hey! Has anyone seen David Hisselhoff? Eh, Lost him again!"

The officer was referring to the newly badged snake on the ASU as the other police services members jumped on their chairs. The video eventually cleared the air, ending the April Fool's Day gaff.

"This video may be fake, but the animals in it are real and need a loving home. Visit kwsphumane.ca to learn about adopting today."

To view the video, visit any Waterloo Region Police Service social media page.



(WRPS VIDEO SCREENSHOTS)

The Waterloo Region Police Service found a fun way to raise awareness on the issue of pet adoption with an April Fool's Day video. The force explained it was renaming its K-9 unit to an Animal Support Unit with animals such as a ferret and a snake

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Louis seeking re-election in Kitchener-Conestoga

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tim Louis is seeking his third term as member of parliament for Kitchener-Conestoga.

“As your Liberal Member of Parliament for Kitchener-Conestoga since 2019, I am proud to be our community’s voice in Ottawa,” Louis said. “As your representative, I’ve served on numerous parliamentary committees, including the Agriculture Committee and Canadian Heritage Committee. I am also honoured to have been the parliamentary secretary to the minister of Canadian heritage.”

Louis was an award-winning musician before entering politics and performed for the Canadian Forces overseas in addition to touring Canada.

“This experience deepened my appreciation for the freedoms and values that make us proud to be Canadian. Kitchener-Conestoga has been my home for over 30 years, it’s where my wife Brenda and I have raised our family, including several rescue dogs we’ve fostered.”

He said he decided to get into politics when the Harper government was in power.

“I worried about the cuts to social services. I felt a strong urge to make sure Canada kept its support intact. My wife said if I felt so strongly, why didn’t I run? So, I did.”

If Louis is elected to his third straight term, he will continue to focus on securing investment that directly benefits the

community.

“I have secured over \$200 million in investment specifically for Kitchener-Conestoga. Whether they’re investments in infrastructure and housing, supporting local businesses, or advocating for vital services like dental care, I am committed to continuing to listen and responding to make sure our area’s needs are recognized and acted on.”

Louis explained affordability and the threat of tariffs to the cost of living and jobs will be a continued focus of a Liberal government.

“Affordability issues are affecting families across Canada and around the world. We are feeling pressure from the cost of living, including the costs of groceries and housing. Our government continues to address affordability, and I have continued to fight for people here in Kitchener-Conestoga. Locally, I have secured over \$50 million for housing, fast-tracking over 4,400 new housing units.”

He added the Canadian Dental Care Plan has helped over 2,600 people in Kitchener-Conestoga and will be expanded to all ages in May. He referred to the success of the Canada Child Benefit and national daycare program.

Louis said this election is all about standing up for Canada and making sure the country stays strong and resilient.

“We need to support our workers and businesses against unfair tariffs and invest in our local economy while breaking down trade barriers between provinces. At the same time, we’re building stronger ties with countries around the world to

enhance our trade relationships.”

He added food sovereignty is a growing concern, especially given trade relations with the United States.

“By focusing on local food production and reducing dependency on imports, we can ensure that our community remains strong and self-sufficient, even in the face of external pressures.”

Louis pointed to a pair of bills he has drafted, including the Canada Farmland Protection Act, which he said would establish a national framework to conserve farmland, support farmland trusts, harmonize conservation practices, create conservation incentives and secure the succession of farmland to the next generation. The Affordable Local Food Act would create a national strategy to promote locally grown Canadian food.

“The act will encourage more local processing of food, creating jobs and affordable food options. It includes sourcing local food procurement from organizations and from our national school food program to boost local economies by supporting our farmers and keeping money within the community.”

When it comes to Wilmot specifically, Louis said growth needs to happen transparently and responsibly.

“We can continue to recognize and preserve our heritage while embracing change and fostering unity. Each event I host or attend in Wilmot strengthens my dedication to our community. The relationships I’ve built with people and local organizations help me understand their needs and have driven me to work hard to support them.



(W-T GAZETTE FILE PHOTO)

Tim Louis seeks a third term as MP for Kitchener-Conestoga, emphasizing investment, affordability, and local food security.

Smaller communities like Wilmot face the same challenges as larger cities but require different solutions.”

Louis added he is proud of the work he does, is humbled to be able to serve the community and is inspired by the people he meets each day.

“I believe that, as Canadians, we have more in common than what divides us. This belief guides my approach as your member of parliament. I know that listening and collaborating are essential. I remain dedicated to working together across party lines, levels of government and communities to build a stronger, united Canada.”

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Liberals hoping Hilderley can win Oxford on second try

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Well-known public figure David Hilderley finished second in the 2023 Oxford by-election by about 2,500 votes. He's running again for the federal Liberals on April 28.

A longtime resident of Oxford County, Hilderley is well known for his community involvement and engagement. He spent 34 years as a teacher, consultant, vice-principal and principal in the Oxford County and Thames Valley district school boards, supporting children and families in his home community.

Since retiring from education, his passion to serve families has not disappeared. As chair of the Golden Gala, co-chair of the South Gate Centre and previous board member of the Woodstock Art Gallery, he has played a role in many local initiatives that benefit the residents of Oxford.

"I have always been involved in my community, providing leadership and commitment to several charities and initiatives," said Hilderley. "I was encouraged by friends and community leaders to let my name stand as the Liberal candidate. This election is the most important one in recent years, as

U.S tariffs and Mr. Trump have created great uncertainty that needs to be properly addressed by a government that is strong in its tariff response and capable of uniting Canadians."

Hilderley said the number one issue in the campaign is the chaos coming from south of the border.

"These actions have the potential to have a significant and serious impact on the jobs and lives of people in Oxford. From agriculture and food production to automotive parts and assembly, our residents deserve a calm and disciplined member of parliament who will stand up for Oxford. Protecting our robust economy is a top priority for me as a candidate, as it is for Prime Minister Carney."

He added the protection of the natural environment and prime agricultural land in Oxford is something he is passionate about.

"Climate change is real and the Liberal Party is committed to a cleaner, greener future. I also stand fully behind our supply management sector which supports family farms in Oxford. Protecting the prime land they cultivate is essential to ensuring we remain food secure."

Hilderley said his third top issue is housing, specifically density and

intensification within urban centres, which will reduce the need to sprawl out into agricultural land.

"Housing starts need to be accelerated to balance out the supply of homes to meet the pressing needs in Oxford."

He added Canadians cherish the universal, publicly funded health-care system we have and instead of allowing wealthy people to cut the line, he is committed to improving and expanding the system in Oxford. He is also encouraged by the Homelessness Response Strategy that has just been approved by Oxford County.

"This robust plan is a multifaceted approach among numerous community groups. If we are going to address encampments in our community, we will need a coordinated approach. I am excited about the opportunity to work at the federal level to support this housing policy."

Hilderley added elections are divisive by nature but is encouraging people in Oxford to focus on the collective goals of protecting the economy, protecting jobs and supporting local businesses.

"Division won't win a trade war. Division won't pay the mortgage. Division won't make Canada strong."



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

David Hilderley is running under the Liberal banner in Oxford County in the April 28 federal election.



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Farm owner and software guru hoping to turn Kitchener-Conestoga blue

LEE GRIFFI

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Doug Treleaven was born and raised in a loving, middle-class home in Fergus and, as the Conservative candidate in the April 28 federal election, is looking to unseat the Liberal incumbent in the Kitchener-Conestoga riding.

Treleaven's dad was a mechanic, his mom was a church secretary, and both his parents instilled in him strong values of faith, family, freedom and hard work from a young age. After attending the University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University, paying for school by working co-op jobs, he led the Waterloo based audit technology team of a global risk consulting firm. He moved to St. Jacobs in 2009 and completed his master's degree in business administration in 2011.

In 2013, Treleaven founded a local fraud-prevention software company and received multiple awards, including being named one of Canada's Fastest Growing Companies.

"I chose the difficult path of bootstrapping the company, and instead of accepting external investment, I chose to invest and risk my own savings to pursue entrepreneurial success."

He served as founder and CEO for a decade, leading rapid global growth while

serving some of the world's most recognized companies, and led a successful exit in early 2023.

"I understand hard work, dedication, leadership, teamwork, job creation and what it takes to win on the national and global stage. I have successfully created great-paying Canadian jobs while growing the economy by exporting Canadian-developed technology to the rest of the world," he added.

Treleaven said he decided to enter politics because he loves people and has a strong sense of duty to the country.

"Over the last decade, Canada has had the second-worst economic growth rate of any (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) country. After researching candidates across the country, to my knowledge, I am the only candidate from any party anywhere in Canada with a fraud-prevention background. I believe we need at least one member of parliament with a fraud-prevention background."

He added the fact he owns a farm in the riding means he truly understands rural issues and will advocate for the needs of the local farming community. Treleaven said the number one issue facing voters in his mind is affordability followed by the lack of economic growth and then nation building.

"After the last decade, Canadians have never been more divided. We need community leaders to step up, unite people and bring practical solutions to complex problems."

He added the water cooler issue he is hearing during door knocking rounds is that people want a change in government.

"After the last decade that has dramatically increased the cost of living, ballooned home prices, created \$700 billion in new debt and the worst economic growth in the G7, people are feeling squeezed and like they can't get ahead. I will work to bring back the promise of Canada so the average person can prosper in Canada again. Canada First measures include reducing income taxes by 15 per cent so those who work hard can take home more of what they earn, removing the GST on new homes under \$1.3 million so our young people can afford to buy a home and start a family, and reducing taxes and claw-backs for seniors."

Treleaven explained that as a fraud-prevention expert, he wants to bring transparency and accountability to the government.

"Over the last few weeks, we have continued to hear about Mark Carney's business dealings. If I am elected, I will work to bring two personal priority initiatives to the national stage – a national



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

Doug Treleaven is the Conservative candidate in Kitchener-Conestoga for the upcoming federal election April 28.

fraud-prevention program and a national entrepreneurship strategy.

He added he has what it takes to represent the riding.

"It's time to start building the future. It takes a specific set of skills to create one of Canada's fastest growing companies, and I'm asking the people of Kitchener-Conestoga to send me to Ottawa to put these skills to use serving them."

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Perth County Federation of Agriculture hosts annual MP and MPP meeting to discuss farming future

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Before tractors hit the fields for spring planting, the Perth County Federation of Agriculture (PCFA) brought together local farmers and elected officials for its annual MP and MPP meeting.

The event, held last week at the Mitchell Golf and Country Club, offered a platform for commodity groups across Perth County to share their concerns and priorities with political representatives.

Invited to the meeting were

Perth-Wellington MPP Matthew Rae and Perth-Wellington MP John Nater. They listened to briefings from representatives of the beef, pork, dairy, egg, chicken and grain sectors, all operating under the umbrella of the PCFA.

The Perth County Federation of Agriculture represents the interests of Ontario's nearly 50,000 farms, which grow more than 200 varieties of fruits, vegetables, grains and livestock. Agriculture in Ontario adds billions of dollars to the province's economy and supports more than 11 per cent of Ontario's workforce,

making it one of the province's most vital industries.

Trade challenges and policy solutions

One of the central topics at this year's meeting was the urgent need to reduce interprovincial trade barriers, especially as Canada's trade relationship with the United States faces new challenges.

The PCFA is calling on the Ontario government to lead efforts in collaboration with other provinces and the federal government to establish a unified Canadian trade agreement.

"A harmonized set of interprovincial

regulations," the PCFA brief stated, "would streamline commerce and enable farmers across the country to maintain operations and deliver food to Canadians nationwide."

The organization emphasized that Canada's growing difficulty in importing goods from the U.S. presents a unique opportunity to strengthen domestic self-sufficiency. By taking decisive action, PCFA said Canada can turn these trade challenges into a long-term success story for the agricultural sector.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

South Easthope dairy farmer Julie Danen, past president of the Perth County Federation of Agriculture, chairs the annual spring meeting as Perth-Wellington MP John Nater and MPP Matthew Rae listen to briefings from pork, beef, dairy, egg, chicken and grain producers.



Directors of the Perth County Federation of Agriculture pose with their elected officials. From left: MPP Matthew Rae, Tim Halliday (director), Sara Wood (director and OFA vice president), Julie Danen (director), Laura Good (recording secretary and director), Laura Barker (director), Pete Nyenhuis (director), Eric McLagan (director) and MP John Nater.

Township of Wellesley to grant gym memberships to active township firefighters

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Active firefighters working for the Township of Wellesley will soon have access to free gym memberships at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre.

At the township's committee of the whole meeting March 25, members of council approved the recommendation brought forward by Wellesley Fire Chief Paul Redman after he received numerous inquiries about gym memberships from firefighters throughout the township following the township's decision to extend the same benefit to full-time staff.

"In a survey sent out to all Township of Wellesley firefighters, 72 per cent of our current members responded. Of the responses, 98 per cent answered yes to being offered a gym membership," Redman said

in his report to council. "The question of whether the firefighters believe this would help improve our retention rates received a 98 per-cent response of yes.

"Providing gym memberships to our firefighters is a significant benefit to the township. ... With the number one cause of death and injury to firefighters being cardiac related, the justification for above-average physical fitness among firefighters has a direct impact on our employee/community health and WSIB claims."

Redman said full-time fire departments provide gym equipment to firefighters to meet mandatory minimum fitness standard. In volunteer fire departments, minimum fitness standards are rarely required because recruiting volunteers is difficult and such requirements would make recruiting more challenging.

While the township does not have

minimum fitness standards, firefighters are encouraged to maintain good physical fitness to effectively deliver fire services.

"With the opening of the Bill Gies Recreation Centre, the township has a unique opportunity to offer a benefit many rural areas don't have," Redman said in his report. "This would keep our firefighters in the township more often instead of having to keep gym memberships in neighbouring cities and will make a significant impact on helping the township retain firefighters."

While the township will not lose any revenue from this decision, Redman reported that four firefighters had already purchased gym memberships at the recreation centre for a total cost of \$1,660. The memberships will be cancelled and those firefighters will be reimbursed from the start date of their employee memberships.

Should a firefighter leave their position

with the township, their gym membership will be cancelled as of the date of their departure.

During council's brief discussion on the matter, Coun. Shelley Wagner asked whether staff had given thought to extending this benefit to part-time employees like those in the township's recreation department.

"Currently, that's not in the recommendation," CAO Rik Louwagie said. "This one is specific to firefighters, but that is potentially something council could consider in the future."

"It's pretty widely known this option is available to full-time staff," added Wellesley director of recreation Danny Roth. "With the turnover in part-time staff, it might be something that is difficult to monitor. That's not saying that we couldn't do it, but that is something to consider."

Wilmot council deems New Hamburg Arena reconstruction project too costly to proceed at this time

GALEN SIMMONS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

With an estimated price tag of \$16.1 million plus an additional \$500,000 per year in operational costs, Wilmot council has decided a planned reconstruction of the New Hamburg Arena to address a list of issues at the aging facility is too expensive to proceed at this time.

At Wilmot council's March 24 meeting, councillors voted to pause the project with hopes additional grant funding might become available at some point in the future. Currently, just over \$4.2 million in federal and provincial grant funding has been approved for the project aimed at reconstructing the New Hamburg Arena into a multi-use facility. However, with no promise for additional funds from the province, Wilmot Township would be left to fund the remaining nearly \$11.9 million on its own.

"I wouldn't say the door is closed," said Wilmot director of community services Chris Catania. "We do have a schematic design that's in place and we've proven to our partners, whether it's the federal government or provincial government, that we're ready to look at some reinvestment in our infrastructure. So, we do have plans

we can show them; we do have needs that are there for the community. If there's any grants that come open, we will be aggressive on those."

"Just on that note of hope, with just coming out of an election and heading into a new one, usually we do see grants that pop up around that time, so I know that staff will continue to keep an eye out should any opportunities arise," added Mayor Natasha Salonen.

The New Hamburg Arena reconstruction project was intended to transform the aging arena, built in 1948, into a versatile, year-round recreational space. This initiative was guided by recommendations from the 2019 New Hamburg Arena Recommissioning Report, which highlights the facility's outdated and inaccessible design and limitations that prevent it from being fully utilized to its intended capacity. The project was meant to modernize the space, ensuring it meets current community needs, aligns with regulatory standards and satisfies grant requirements.

The New Hamburg Arena served as a vibrant community hub for ice sports and events until its decommissioning in 2008. While the facility continues to host community events, the original natural-ice

design severely limits program expansion. Natural-ice design intentionally omits fundamental building-envelope features such as wall and roof insulation, air and vapor barriers, weatherproofing sealants and window glazing to help with the formation and maintenance of ice surfaces during winter months.

Though ideal at its conception, these design choices have significantly constrained the building's potential to be used for recreation beyond ice sports, as fluctuating ambient temperatures make the building unsuitable for use during the extreme temperatures of both winter and summer.

The construction of the arena's bowl seating presents several safety concerns, including steep and uneven risers, inadequate railings and gapped, uneven floorboards that pose tripping and fall hazards. Beneath the seating, user groups continue to face challenges with insufficient and undesirable storage spaces. The absence of climate control combined with a poorly sealed building envelope allows for moisture infiltration, pest infestations and other environmental challenges such as insects, dust and dirt. These conditions frequently result in stored items becoming mouldy and unusable, further reducing the arena's functionality and appeal.

In response to these challenges, Invizij Architects Inc. conducted comprehensive site inspections to observe existing conditions, assess the building envelope, review infrastructure systems, evaluate accessibility, analyze the surrounding grounds and assess utilities, which informed the initial concept designs distributed to stakeholders for review. Feedback and comments were considered and integrated into the schematic designs where feasible, which were also shared for further review and input.

The designs accommodate the immediate demand for additional ice-sport overflow space and provide climatized exhibition and performance space, and conditioned storage space tailored to the needs of current arena users. Incorporating enhancements to the building envelope and HVAC

systems, the proposed designs promote year-round usability, enabling program expansion and greater community engagement, including during winter and summer months.

The designs also collocate mechanical and electrical services, optimize panel locations and include the addition of a universal washroom, private multi-purpose spaces and an open, naturally lit and welcoming ambiance. Additional features include necessary structural repairs on the west wall, designated warm and cold spectator-viewing areas, a centrally located passenger elevator and convenience stairway, enhanced WiFi capabilities, demountable dasher boards, a retrofitted refrigeration plant, a new ice-resurfacers room, intermission/crush space and other infrastructure upgrades.

While township staff have considered alternatives to the Arena's reconstruction, it's redevelopment or expansion by either the township or a private purchaser would be limited by the adjacent floodplain.

For now, the township will continue in its current role supporting the delivery of recreation, culture and events for the community with no impact to existing users. Staff will explore additional partnerships to enhance participation and increase revenue.

Staff will also continue to pursue grant opportunities scoped appropriately to make the New Hamburg Arena a viable space for year-round, warm-floor space. This option would address space needs for indoor, dry-floor activities like pickleball, baseball training and lacrosse, and as a performing-arts facility as required, but does not alleviate the township's immediate need for additional ice. Township staff will look to neighbouring municipalities to explore the possibilities of shared-ice agreements to help alleviate that demand for ice time in Wilmot.

Under the township's current grant-funding agreement for this project, it must be completed by March 31, 2027, to receive reimbursement of up to roughly \$4.2 million in project costs.



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Tanda Farms feeling pressure from U.S. tariffs on pork exports

Perth County producer pays \$35,000 weekly in extra costs, still committed to supplying local butchers like Walnut Hill Meats

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

Tanda Farms, one of Perth County's largest pork producers, is feeling the sting of a new 25 per-cent tariff on hogs exported to the United States.

Owned and operated by Tanya and Darryl Terpstra, the family-run farm near Monkton is being forced to absorb tens of thousands of dollars in extra costs each week – costs that are threatening the long-term sustainability of their business and others like it.

The Terpstras run a 3,000-sow, farrow-to-finish operation, producing high-quality pork that ends up on both local tables and in U.S. markets. In addition to shipping four weekly loads of finished hogs to Coldwater, Michigan and one to Domingo's in Ontario, Tanda Farms also supplies pork to Walnut Hill Meats, a butcher shop in North Easthope that serves customers across Perth County and in the nearby Waterloo Region.

"From March 4-6 alone, we shipped two loads of finished hogs and paid \$53 per head in tariffs — that's \$8,692 per load," Tanya Terpstra said. "With four loads heading south each week, we're looking at roughly \$35,000 in added costs weekly — and that's just the tariffs, not including the regular expenses of raising and managing hogs."

Terpstra explained that because they

own the hogs from farm to processor, Tanda Farms is the exporter and importer of record, meaning they're responsible for paying the tariffs directly.

And it's not just one farm feeling the squeeze. From March 4-6, more than 19,500 Ontario hogs crossed the border into the U.S., resulting in \$965,269 in tariffs in just three days. According to Ontario Pork, that figure jumps to an estimated \$1.8 million in a full week.

On top of that, farmers like the Terpstras are dealing with additional costs such as carbon taxes and fuel surcharges, further tightening already slim margins.

In a statement, the Perth County Pork Producers emphasized the vital role the pork industry plays in the province's agriculture and food sector, contributing to the economy, creating jobs and supporting sustainable practices.

However, they warned the industry's future depends on factors largely beyond their control — from trade disputes and labour shortages to processing bottlenecks and foreign animal disease threats. Tariffs are just the latest hurdle.

Ontario pork producers remain committed to supplying top-quality pork to both domestic and international markets, but they say that goal depends on continued government support and partnership to help them stay competitive and sustainable for generations to come.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Tanya and Darryl Terpstra are hoping the current tariff situation is resolved sooner rather than later so their Perth County family farm can continue producing quality pork well into the future.



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Stratford-Perth Heritage Foundation elects new executive at annual meeting in Shakespeare

Fryfogel Tavern prepares for summer season and 2026 Huron Tract bicentennial

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Stratford-Perth Heritage Foundation recently held its annual general meeting at the Shakespeare Optimist Hall, electing its executive for the coming year and sharing updates on projects underway at Fryfogel Tavern and Arboretum.

Barry Nowack was elected as the new chair of the board with Denise Keelan as vice-chair, Jim McKenzie as treasurer and Rachel Bedic continuing in her role as secretary.

Fryfogel Tavern and Arboretum operates under the umbrella of the heritage foundation and work continues on interior refurbishments at the historic site. Thanks to a donation from the Shakespeare Optimist Club and provincial student employment grants, the foundation hopes to hire two summer students to welcome visitors between the Victoria Day long weekend and the end of August.

Looking ahead, the foundation is also preparing to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Huron Tract, on which Fryfogel Tavern sits, along Highway 7/8. The anniversary is part of the broader Huron Tract Commemorative Project and will be marked in 2026.

Future plans for the site include showcasing agricultural tools and artifacts from the past to the present, aimed at attracting more visitors and engaging the public through hands-on workshops.

Bedic also announced the return of the Fryfogel summer youth camp, scheduled for July 7-11, running daily from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. for youth ages 12-20.

Volunteers are also being sought to help maintain the Heritage Gardens at the Tavern. Anyone interested is encouraged to contact the foundation at fryfogeltavern@gmail.com.

The next evening meeting of the Stratford-Perth Heritage Foundation will take place on May 7 at Fryfogel Tavern.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Attendees at the Stratford-Perth Heritage Foundation's annual meeting included, from left, Pat Eidt, Ruth Hart (from Brocksden School Museum), Jim Hazelwood, Richard Smelski, Jean Smelski, Barry Nowack (president), Sabrina Kraemer (Huron County Museum), Jim McKenzie (treasurer) and Rachel Bedic (secretary).

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Wellesley Fair Ambassadors get a taste of maple syrup season in Waterloo Region

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The 2025 Wellesley Fall Fair ambassadors kicked off their year with a visit to one of the Region of Waterloo’s sweetest seasonal traditions – maple syrup production.

This past Saturday, Katie Musselman, 2025 Wellesley Fall Fair Ambassador, and Manni Hayer, 2025 Junior Fair Ambassador, were invited by a few

directors of the Wellesley Agricultural Society to experience the first agricultural harvest of the season: fresh, warm maple syrup.

The two ambassadors were hosted by Joe and Willie Wagler at Sand Hills Maple Products, located on Manser Road west of Wellesley. With sap running fast through a network of pipelines across the bush, Musselman and Hayer joined other visitors for a tour of the sugar bush and a

hearty pancake breakfast.

The group enjoyed a spring-themed menu of pancakes, sausage, orange slices and a choice of smoked beans or yogurt with granola. The Waglers, known for their warm hospitality, welcomed the ambassadors and shared insights into the syrup-making process.

The young ambassadors had the chance to walk the trails through the bush – thankfully without needing snowshoes this year

– and even tried their hands at traditional maple syrup tasks including crosscut sawing and manually drilling tap holes in trees.

Both Musselman and Hayer said it was a fun and educational experience, and they thanked the Wagler family for the opportunity to take part in a springtime tradition cherished by so many in the community.



(WENDY RICHARDSON PHOTOS)

Pictured from left are Joe Wagler, 2025 Wellesley Fair Ambassador Katie Musselman, 2025 Junior Fair Ambassador Manni Hayer and Willie Wagler at Sand Hills Maple Products near Wellesley. The Waglers host the public each year for maple syrup season, complete with a scrumptious pancake breakfast.



Manni Hayer and Katie Musselman take a turn at crosscut sawing in the sugar bush at the Wagler family farm.



Wellesley Fair ambassadors demonstrate their skills the old-fashioned way – drilling tap holes manually before inserting spiles to collect sap for syrup making.

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Wilmot Heritage Fire Brigades celebrates another 50/50 winner

Funds raised support historic fire equipment preservation in Baden

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The Wilmot Heritage Fire Brigades (WHFB) has another reason to celebrate. New Hamburg resident Arlene McBride was all smiles after winning the most recent 50/50 draw hosted by the local heritage group.

McBride said she was thrilled not only to win, but also to support a cause close to the community.

“The money collected stays with the fire brigades and will be put to good use,” she said. “It’s great knowing it supports a future permanent home for historic fire equipment that everyone in Baden and beyond will be able to enjoy.”

The WHFB maintains a growing collection of historic firefighting gear, including six antique fire trucks, two horse-drawn fire pumps, six hand-pulled pumps and carts, as well as chemical extinguishers.

Their collection also features thousands of fire service artifacts from tools and turnout gear to helmets, uniforms, books, photographs and news clippings.

President Peter Gingerich said fundraising efforts like the monthly 50/50 online raffle, can and bottle drives, and scrap metal and electronics recycling help keep the project moving forward.

“These efforts are crucial to our mission,” Gingerich said. “New members are always welcome, and membership is open to everyone, men and women alike.”

As the WHFB continues to raise funds for a permanent museum space, the group is also preparing to mark a major milestone. On Saturday, June 14, the Wilmot Heritage Fire Brigades will celebrate 30 years with an open house, featuring special displays and live entertainment at their site behind the Baden Fire Station at 10 Bell Dr.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS)

Pictured last week is Arlene McBride with Wilmot Heritage Fire Brigades president Peter Gingerich, who hopes everyone in the area will try to be next month’s winner by having some fun entering the 50/50 draw. Tickets can be purchased at wilmotfiremuseum.com or by visiting the group on Facebook.

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Sprucedale students to showcase creativity at second-annual Young Entrepreneurs Sale

Students from grades one to seven prepare handmade products for April 10 event

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The gymnasium at Sprucedale Public School in Shakespeare will be buzzing with creativity and commerce on Wednesday, April 10 as students host the school's second-annual Young Entrepreneurs Sale from 3:30-5 p.m.

The event gives students from grades one through seven the opportunity to become business owners for a day, showcasing and selling products they've made themselves, from sweet treats to crafts and more.

Ahead of the sale, we sat down with a few of the young entrepreneurs to hear about their creations.

Grade 6 and 7 students Lainey Kittmer and Natalie Helson are preparing bags of cotton candy for those with a sweet tooth.

"We're really excited to see people try it," said Kittmer.

Classmates Henry Ledlow and

Zack Hughes are putting their crafting skills to work, selling handmade bracelets featuring charms with logos from popular professional sports teams.

Meanwhile, Grade 3 students Hadley Fuhr and Acadia Hobson are making what they call "glitter bombs" – small jars filled with swirling colours of peach, blue, green and orange.

"We've made 43 so far and can't wait to sell them," said Fuhr.

Grade 1 students Randy Berger and Grayson Fuhr are baking chocolate chip cookies and colourful dessert squares, complete with Smarties and rainbow sprinkles.

This event, now in its second year, encourages creativity, teamwork and entrepreneurial thinking in a fun and engaging way. Sprucedale staff and students are inviting the entire community to come out and support their efforts.



(GARY WEST PHOTO)

Pictured in front, holding the sign, are Randy Berger and Grayson Fuhr. In the back, from left, are Hadley Fuhr, Acadia Hobson, Zack Hughes, Henry Ledlow, Natalie Helson and Lainey Kittmer, with Sprucedale principal Mrs. Cairncross.

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Intergenerational program enjoyed by all at Shakespeare Presbyterian Church

DIANE DANEN

Gazette Contributor

Saturday, March 8 marked the very first Intergenerational Program held at Shakespeare Presbyterian Church.

Around 40 people of all ages were in attendance. The group included toddlers, children, young adults and seniors, with several families having three generations in attendance. Members from Shakespeare and Knox North Easthope Presbyterian churches, as well as some Sprucedale Public School families, joined the program, which was held from 4-6 p.m. in the

hall of the church.

Organizers shared that the goal of hosting a program like this is to bring people of all ages together from various communities and churches to share faith, fellowship, fun and, of course, food.

The theme for the get together was Miraculous March. Storyteller Gail Fricker shared the miraculous story of Loaves and Fishes. She captivated her audience by taking on the character of a young boy, sharing the story through his eyes. After the storytime, everyone joined in singing familiar Bible songs led by Shirley Kraus

on the keyboard.

Following the sing-along, children and adults participated in activities and crafts that related to the story. The afternoon wrapped up with a miraculous mystery meal prepared by Rev. Rob Congram with assistance from Eddie Kraus. Congram

prepared his specialty, hotdogs, which were enjoyed by all.

The next intergenerational program is planned for Saturday, April 12 from 4-6 p.m. All are welcome. Anyone interested in attending or want more information on the event can call 519-625-8317.



(DIANE DANEN PHOTOS)

Shirley and Eddie Kraus prepare coffee for the very first Intergenerational Program at Shakespeare Presbyterian Church March 8.



Aubree Hart, 21 months of age, helps her mom, Dawn, colour a wooden necklace of loaves and fishes.

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The family of Darryl would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all of the Emergency personnel for their kind and compassionate care of Darryl on the night of his passing.

We are very grateful for the loving care and attention of Pastor Bryan Ferguson and the Base Church family (f. Koinonia Christian Fellowship), where Darryl was a proud member for over 20 years. The worship team's heartfelt music, luncheon volunteers, and the beautiful service will be something we will remember and treasure forever.

A special thank you to the compassionate team at Mark Jutzi Funeral Home for so beautifully attending to the many details of the funeral, so wonderfully caring for Darryl, and the comfort of the family. You really do such meaningful service in our community.

We would also like to add a special thank you to all the family, friends, country music industry people, and Lou Divita (What's Up Wilmot) for the beautiful tributes that have been posted or sent, to honour Darryl. Darryl's legacy will continue on in his nature photography posts, and in the kindness that he gave to each and every person he came into contact with. His love knew no bounds and he always made sure that everyone knew their value in his life. Darryl would want us to: "Find the JOY. Spread KINDNESS. Have FAITH."

Always and Forever.

The Old Gazettes

By Sydney Grant

Slowly but surely, I'm reading through the past pages of the Tavistock Gazette (est. 1895). Within this weekly column I'd like to share with you some of my findings.

April 1 - 8, 2020, Edition (5 years ago)

On March 17, 2020, in an effort to help prevent or lessen the impact of the community spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19), the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock decided to close all facilities until further notice. With the closing of the Tavistock and District Recreation Centre, all staff were laid off. Based on last year's booking schedule, taking into account the two months from the start of the COVID-19 restrictions, the facilities board has lost approximately \$65,000 in revenue.

The World Crokinole Championship committee has made the very difficult decision to cancel the 2020 World Crokinole Championship, Saturday, June 6, 2020, due to the serious public health threat of COVID-19. For decades, the game of crokinole has wonderfully bonded communities and individuals from all walks of life. "We take pleasure in hosting the largest crokinole tournament in the world, annually, in Tavistock. We look forward to doing so again on June 5, 2021," the committee said.

The residents on Centennial Drive in Tavistock are asking all Tavistock families to join them every night at 7:30 p.m. to clang pots and pans in support of our frontline workers. Kathy Gill is a former health-care worker and her daughter, Rachel Smelski, is currently the operating room charge nurse at Woodstock General Hospital. "We're living in unknown times," Kathy said, "and I want everyone to follow the rules and be safe until this COVID-19 disease has gone."

March 31 - April 7, 2010, Edition (15 years ago)

Tuesday, March 23 brought the Wilmot Wildcats to Tavistock for the do-or-die semi-final game. The Tavistock PeeWee Junior Jets got off to business in the first with Brooklyn McNab's goal from Kayla Brown. Tavistock's defense foiled a number of attempts by Wilmot. With 1:02 left in the third,

the Wildcats squeaked past Gillian Chesney, putting the game into overtime. Overtime ended with the 1-1 tie remaining. Both teams lined up their first five shooters. Alyssa Habel and Anna Mohr hit the mark but were balanced out by two Wilmot shooters. Tavistock's fifth shot by Kayla Brown secured the win.

Each year since 2002, the Plattsville Figure Skating Club has presented the "Kathie & Scott Ward Spirit of Skating Award" to a deserving skater. This year, Nicole Stewart of Tavistock was honoured as co-recipient of this award with fellow skater Marie-Claire Barnett of Stratford. Nicole was extremely honoured to receive this award and is so thankful for all the training she receives from her coach. Previous skaters from Tavistock who have received this award are Stephanie Lupton, Emma Bender and Mackenzie Kaufman.

March 29 - April 5, 1995, Edition (30 years ago)

A capacity crowd of area Optimists and their spouses gathered at the Shakespeare Optimist Hall on Saturday evening to welcome their international president, Jean Mercier, and his wife, Ginette, from Chambly, Que. Governor Lyle Bender and Lt. Governor Cephas Roth were among the head table dignitaries along with master of ceremonies, past governor Warren Bechthold. Mr. Mercier said Optimism has affected every part of his life and it "helps us grow as individuals and parents." He said he feels fortunate to have been able to "share it with others, and lucky enough to find people along the way to support" him.

The Rotary Club of Tavistock is the most recent service club to announce its intention to donate to the Tavistock Arena Fund through a three-year pledge. President Nick Aroutzidis said at their meeting on March 20 the 19 members voted to donate \$20,000 to the arena fund over the next three years. The club raised funds through the sale of poinsettias and summer sausage as well as looking after Nevada tickets being sold at the Tavistock Gas & Variety. Other events are being planned in cooperation with the Rotary's arena fundraising representative, Steve Albasel.



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The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

By Jake Grant

1. What is the birthstone for April?
2. Where did the SS Edmund Fitzgerald sink?
3. What does CNN stand for?
4. What U.S president served 4 terms?
5. What was Blackbeard's real name?
6. How many continents are there?
7. Peabody Museum of Natural History is located at what University?
8. What is the only country lemurs are native to?
9. A perfect game of bowling consists of how many points?
10. Star Wars "Revenge of the Sith" celebrates 20 years on what day?

Answers found on the classified page

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette **SPORTS**

Tavistock Minor Hockey celebrates the 2024-2025 season

MICHELLE SHARTUN

Gazette Contributor

The Tavistock Titans season came to an end on Saturday as all age groups celebrated their seasons on and off the ice.

Teams had an hour of ice time to play some shinny and afterwards were treated to food and fellowship at the arena's upper hall. Minor hockey would like to thank the day's sponsors – Eddycrest, Saputo, Bickle's Orchard Park Farms, Sam's Independent Grocer and New Orleans Pizza.

U9 Local League team wins C division gold

The U9 LL team ended an incredible season March 31 by securing a division championship victory with a thrilling 2-1 comeback over Woolwich, all in the final two minutes of play.

The Woolwich Arena was loud and powerful with cheers from Titans players, coaches and fans that left the home venue stunned. It was a well-deserved championship title, which shows the level of dedication from everyone involved and the passion that was instilled into this team. They were surrounded by family and friends as they celebrated the win, a memory that will last a lifetime for these young players.

This team showed tremendous improvements throughout the year, individually and as a team. The coaching staff did an incredible job all season using their technical skills, knowledge and passion for the sport to develop and enrich the abilities of every Tavi Titan.

The lessons learned and moments of experience will remain as a fundamental stepping stone and foundation for a path and recipe to success for this group.

With files from Lee Griffi.



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

The U9 Titans LL team won the Grand River League's C division title with a 2-1 win in Woolwich.



(PHOTO COURTESY OF TAVISTOCK MINOR HOCKEY)

The Tavistock U13 Rep team came within two points of a Southern Counties title but came up a bit short against New Hamburg. The Titans took Game 1 by a 7-2 count, but the Huskies battled back with 2-1 and 4-2 victories to take the series.



(LEE GRIFFI PHOTOS)

Members of the Tavistock Titans U7 team 2 gathered in the arena after their ice time and enjoyed a meal served by Tavistock Minor Hockey Volunteers.

PJHL Playoffs Roundup: Firebirds crowned division champs; will face Peach Kings in PJHL quarter-final

LEE GRIFFI

Gazette Correspondent

New Hamburg has defended its Provincial Junior Hockey League (PJHL) Doherty Division title with a 3-2 win over Wellesley March 28 in front of over 1,000 fans at the Wilmot Recreation Centre.

The Firebirds edged Wellesley 3-2 Friday night to take the Doherty Division title in five games. Owen Fischer opened the scoring three minutes into the game, but the Applejacks tied it up two and a half minutes later thanks to Brannan Kennedy's first of the playoffs. After a scoreless second frame, Antonio Pasqualino scored two third-period goals to put the game out of reach. Luke Schofield also scored for Wellesley in the third period, his sixth of the playoffs.

The Firebirds will face Grimsby in a PJHL quarter-final series in a rematch from last season that saw the Firebirds dispose of the Peach Kings in five games to move on to the semi-finals, where they lost to Essex in six games. Head coach Shane Gerber said he doesn't know much about the team they are facing in a series starting April 4 in New Hamburg.

"I actually know less (than last season)," said Gerber. "They swept Dundas and it didn't work for us to get to any of those games. Probably zero is the best answer."

He added he knows Grimsby has a solid group of overage players who were all on the team last season.

"I would expect them to be similar to last year but I don't know about them to know for sure what we're up against until we step on the ice with them Friday night."

What we do know about Grimsby is they are stingy. Goalies Tucker Adams and Nolan Verardo are a combined 12 and 2 with a goals-against average of 1.59 and a save percentage of .946. Three players are averaging a point per game or better, including Hunter Zoccoli, who has scored nine times to lead the team. Zoccoli has scored over 160 points with the Peach Kings in three seasons after a stint with the Fort Erie Meteors of the Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League (GOJHL).

The Peach Kings have won four PJHL titles, most recently in 2011 and 2012. Gerber said they are well-coached and consistently produce quality hockey teams.

"There is definitely some familiarity with the organization in the way they do things. It's not an accident they are so successful and the respect level is very high," he said.

Gerber added he can't ask for much more than what his team is giving him right now.

"We are getting contributions from everyone and it's where we want to be with the depth we have. To be able to use all four lines and all our (defense), that plays to our strength. I am happy where we are at."

Every PJHL team is allowed five overage players, meaning this is their last

kick at the can to earn a Schmaltz Cup title. Gerber said Jake Thompson, Owen Fischer, Antonio Pasqualino, Matt Domm and Josh Jacklin are ready for the next round.

"There is a group of guys in that room who have the feeling of what it was like last year to lose last season. I am hoping some of that carries forward and rubs off so we can find even another gear. The guys who were here last year need to remember those feelings to grow on them."

New Hamburg lost in six games to Lakeshore, the eventual league champs, in a six-game series last April. The Firebirds also have home-ice advantage in the next round, something not lost on Gerber.

"I find (the home crowd) keeps getting better every year. The attendance seems to go to another level. And of course, the players love playing in front of that."

The Applejacks brass released a statement on social media thanking everyone involved in the organization.

"A huge thank you to our players for your unwavering dedication and effort this season. From start to finish, you gave everything you had, and your hard work truly showed. Stand tall and be proud of all you've accomplished! We are incredibly proud of the commitment you've demonstrated both on and off the ice. You serve as an inspiration to everyone in our community, and we know that the same drive will carry you into next year."

The team went on to thank the hockey operations and coaching staff for their guidance, dedication and leadership throughout the season.

"Your commitment to developing our players, both on and off the ice, has made a lasting impact. We truly appreciate the time, effort and passion you've put into helping our team grow. Your hard work does not go unnoticed and we are grateful for everything you've done to shape this team."

The executive team was also praised for its hard work behind the scenes along with the team's many volunteers.

"Your dedication and efforts keep everything running smoothly, and we truly appreciate all you do to support the team. Your contributions make a huge difference. A big thank you to our dedicated volunteers. You are the backbone of this hockey club and without your support, we couldn't operate. Whether assisting at games or behind the scenes, we truly appreciate the time you give, despite your busy schedules."

The team also thanked its sponsors for their ongoing support and, of course, the fans.

"Your support for the Applejacks is what keeps this team going. Packing the Orchard is the best type of support for our organization, and your passion for hockey is what living in a small town is all about!"



(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

New Hamburg forward Antonio Pasqualino celebrates one of his two goals in the series-clinching game against Wellesley on March 28. The Firebirds now face Grimsby in a PJHL quarter-final matchup.

Series Schedule

Game 1 – Friday, April 4 in New Hamburg @ 7:30 p.m.

Game 2 – Saturday, April 5 in Grimsby @ 7:30 p.m.

Game 3 – Monday, April 7 in New Hamburg @ 7:30 p.m.

Game 4 – Thursday, April 10 in Grimsby

@ 7:30 p.m.

Game 5 – Saturday, April 12 in New Hamburg @ 7:30 p.m. (if necessary)

Game 6 – Sunday, April 13 in Grimsby @ 5:30 p.m. (if necessary)

Game 7 – Tuesday, April 15 in New Hamburg @ 7:30 p.m. (if necessary)

Notice of Statutory Public Meeting: Township of Wellesley Community Improvement Plan Update

Posted on APRIL 3, 2025

TAKE NOTICE THAT the Township of Wellesley is proposing updates to its Community Improvement Plan, which will expand opportunities across the Township and provide new incentive programs.

This project is funded in part by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness. For further project information, please visit: <https://www.engagewr.ca/community-improvement-plan>

A PUBLIC MEETING will be held on **APRIL 22, 2025 at 5:45PM at the Township of Wellesley Council Chambers located at 4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill ON.** You are invited to attend and provide your feedback on the proposed Plan. Any comments received will be used to inform the final draft of the Plan, which will be presented for Council consideration at a future date.

If you have questions or to submit feedback, please contact Tim Van Hinte, Director of Development Services at (519) 699-3952 or tvanhinte@wellesley.ca prior to **APRIL 22, 2025.** Please be advised that any comments received will be on public record.



Tavistock Community Health Inc. keeps medical clinic running with critical upgrades

New rooftop HVAC unit and standby generator installed at Maria Street clinic

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

There's plenty of behind-the-scenes work happening at the Tavistock Medical Centre, and thanks to the efforts of Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI), it's all in support of keeping health care local.

On March 28, a crane carefully lifted a new HVAC unit onto the roof of the medical building on Maria Street, replacing a system that had been in service for more than 30 years – longer than anyone had

expected it to last.

“With the kind of weather we get here – hot, humid summers and frigid winters – it's critical that our medical building stays temperature controlled year-round,” said TCHI board member Russ Huber, who was on site for the installation along with fellow board member Keith Wagler.

The new rooftop unit was installed by Regional Mechanical, with crews getting the system up and running before noon.

The HVAC replacement is just one of several major infrastructure upgrades undertaken by TCHI in recent weeks. Just

over a month ago, the board also had to install a new standby generator – an unexpected but necessary expense after the previous generator failed.

“In the event of a power outage, that generator is essential,” said board chair Frank Meconi. “It ensures that the building remains operational and that medicines and vaccines requiring refrigeration are kept at safe temperatures.”

With back-to-back major upgrades now complete, TCHI board members are turning their attention to fundraising efforts to help cover the cost of the new equipment

and support ongoing operations at the clinic.

“All board members are reaching out to individuals and businesses in the area,” Meconi said. “If you haven't been contacted and would like to contribute, you can reach me directly at 519-655-2178 or by email at femeconi@rogers.com.”

The TCHI board continues to encourage community support to ensure the clinic can keep serving Tavistock residents well into the future.



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

A large crane lifts the old HVAC unit off the roof of the Tavistock medical building on Maria Street March 28.



TCHI board members Keith Wagler (left) and Russ Huber (right) watch as the new rooftop HVAC unit is hoisted into position to restore heating and cooling to the building.



A newly installed standby generator sits at the back of the medical building, ensuring critical systems remain powered during hydro outages.

Meet the team behind Tavistock's frontline health care

Medical staff at Tavistock clinic recognized for their year-round service ahead of renovations

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The team at the Tavistock Medical Centre is getting some well-earned recognition for their dedication to local health care.

Martha Murray, office manager for the clinic, says that while patients usually only interact with a few team members at a time, there's a full roster of doctors, nurses, administrative and support staff working behind the scenes every day to keep the community healthy.

Working under the umbrella of the Star Family Health Team and supported by Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI), the

clinic staff provides year-round care to residents in Tavistock and the surrounding area.

“We wanted to let patients know that everyone here works together to bring the best possible care to our community when it's needed most,” Murray said. “This is a great opportunity for Gazette readers to meet the entire team.”

The clinic is also preparing for a round of renovations, led by the TCHI board of directors, aimed at upgrading the facility to better serve the community. Construction will be underway over the next several weeks, and patients are asked to be patient during the transition.



(MARTHA MURRAY PHOTO)

Medical staff at the Tavistock clinic are pictured recently as they await renovations to update their facilities, a project being overseen by the TCHI board of directors. Patients' patience is appreciated during the construction period.

TCHI signs contract to begin medical clinic renovations

Jon Witzel Contracting to lead interior upgrades to improve care and comfort

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

The interior of the Tavistock Medical Centre is about to get a long-awaited facelift as Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI) signed a contract last week with Jon Witzel Contracting and Construction to begin renovations.

Available board members met with representatives from the local firm on site to finalize the agreement, which will see major upgrades to the clinic's reception area, waiting room and examination rooms.

TCHI board chair Frank Meconi said the board felt confident moving forward with Witzel Contracting, a well-known name in the Tavistock and New Hamburg areas.

"We were very comfortable hiring a local contractor with the reputation, experience

and knowledge that Jon Witzel brings to the table," Meconi said.

Witzel Contracting has been completing both large and small construction projects in the region for decades, and the TCHI board expressed enthusiasm for getting the long-planned work underway.

Once complete, the renovated space will feature a modernized reception area, refreshed waiting room and updated exam rooms designed to meet the current and future needs of health-care providers and patients alike.

"The makeover begins immediately," said office manager Martha Murray. "There will be disruptions during renovations, and we appreciate everyone's patience and understanding as we work to improve the clinic."



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

TCHI board chair Frank Meconi is flanked by project supervisor Ian McLaren (left) and Jon Witzel (right), owner of Witzel Contracting, as they sign the renovation contract for interior work at the Tavistock Medical Centre. Pictured in the back, from left, are office manager Martha Murray, board vice-chair Russ Huber, and board members Bruce Swartzentruber and Dennis Kuepfer.



A rendering of the future reception area at the Tavistock Medical Centre shows a refreshed and modern design. Renovations will also include updates to the waiting room and examination rooms.

Gazette Puzzles

MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

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Arrival of Spring
 Blue Jays
 Boycotting USA
 Election Called
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Hudsons Bay
 Ice Storm
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 New PM Carney
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 Signal Fiasco
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Pet of the Week

SOPHIE

Meet Sophie! This high-energy sweetheart came to the Humane Society as a stray, quite thin, and is currently working on gaining weight. She absolutely loves people and has shown interest in playing with other dogs. Sophie is looking for an active home that will help her work on her separation anxiety, impulse control when taking food from hands, and minor resource guarding-she tends to gulp her food quickly. She can be mouthy and jumpy when excited, so ongoing training will be important. Sophie adores walks and would thrive in a home that keeps her both mentally and physically engaged. Could you be her perfect match? Visit www.kwsphumane.ca to learn more about Sophie!



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Ravishing red onions

HEAPS OF HEALTHY TIPS

By Mercedes Kay Gold



Springtime welcomes seasonal, fresh, garden goodness but, to be fair, Mother Nature plays a part in the availability date. With that being said, this certified holistic nutritionist is eagerly anticipating the arrival of local fresh and fabulous red onions.

The ravishing red onion, also known as a purple or blue onion, has a purplish-red skin and white flesh with hints of red, ranging in size from medium to large. They are known for their sweet flavour, making them an all-star addition in an array of culinary creations.

Their vibrant colour stands out against a sea of gorgeous greens, a perfect powerhouse diced and tossed raw into garden-fresh kale, romaine and spinach salads. Add pizzazz to parsnips, potatoes and

carrots by roasting with slews of sliced red onions for a taste sensation. Guacamole, Greek salads and egg salad sandwiches would not be the same without the slightly spicy yet magically mild flavour of the bulbous beauty.

Red onions pair perfectly with sliced oranges for a springtime salad. Serve as a tangy and sweet side to sensational porkchops from Shakespeare's very own The Best Little Pork Shoppe. Red onions are a flavour booster in omelets, stews, soups, skewers, salsa and fabulous for focaccia-bread art. Jarred red onions were a staple in my grandma's pantry, and the next generation has embraced the tradition. Local markets sell preserved red onions in mason jars alongside pickled

beets, carrots, pickles and other produce promoting gut-goodness.

Red onions are a flavour phenomenon but also highly nutritious vegetables. For thousands of years, their holistic happiness value has been linked to their mega-medicinal properties. As legend has it, athletes in Greece used onions to cleanse their blood and traditional doctors used red onions as a remedy for heart disease, headaches and mouth sores.

Onions are nutrient dense, containing immune-boosting vitamin C, the link to collagen production and iron absorption. Vitamin C combats free radicals throughout the body. Red onions are low in calories, containing approximately 44 in a medium-sized onion. They are a sensational swap for spicy, sugary sauces spiking blood sugar and sabotaging diets.

Onions contain at least 17 types of flavonoids and renowned quercetin; a flavonoid that may lower blood pressure. A small study in 2015 found females consuming 80-100 grams of raw red onions for eight weeks had lowered their LDL or bad



(VECTEEZY PHOTO)

Ravishing and nutritious, red onions add a pop of colour and a burst of flavour to seasonal spring dishes. From fresh salads to roasted veggies, this versatile allium is a true kitchen essential!

cholesterol levels.

Onions as well as garlic are allium vegetables and linked to a lowered risk of developing stomach and colorectal cancers. More research is needed, but eating red onions may help regulate blood-sugar levels and boost bone density.

Onions are fiber dense and rich in inulin, a prebiotic known to increase the friendly or good bacteria in the gut.

Onions are dinner-plate standouts and extremely eye-catching in all meals, so for

younger, picky palates, the blender is my best friend. One quick whirl and they are quickly hidden in soups and stews.

Springtime calls for lighter food fare and red onions fuel flavour inexpensively. With summertime grilling season just around the corner, slice and serve on burgers and hot dogs. Tap into your home-chef vibes and pickle red onion or jar homemade relish for the backyard barbecue season.

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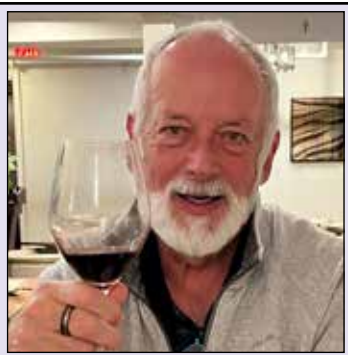
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Highlights of visiting small but mighty Gibraltar

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO

By Paul Knowles



You might think that a highlight of visiting the unique destination that is Gibraltar would be your first sighting of “The Rock,” or glimpsing Africa only about 15 kilometres away across the straits, or meeting the famous Gibraltar monkeys that inhabit the nature preserve that covers two-thirds of the peninsula.

And yes, all of the above, but the most entertaining experience for me may have been a ridiculous game of musical chairs carried out by a local resident named Michael.

Let me explain. We were nearing the end of a wonderful, three-week stay in Spain’s Costa del Sol. More of this in coming weeks, but for one day, we left Spain and found ourselves instantly in Great Britain.

Everything on Gibraltar is British except, of course, for the 15,000 Spaniards who clear customs twice a day to work on The Rock. As a long-time Anglophile, it was a treat to be in a community with red telephone booths and postboxes, a well-stocked Marks and Spencer, and British pubs galore.

We strolled up a side street and found a tiny pub named The Aragon Bar, named for one of Henry VIII’s wives. The pub seated no more than a dozen people max, plus four or five at the bar. When we walked in, there was no obvious place for us, but the barmaid immediately pointed to a guy sitting on the bench and said, “Michael, please move,” directing him to a table set for one.

Michael moved, our table was cleaned and we were nestled into the corner. I ordered a pint and steak-and-onion pie. It was probably the only day in three weeks when I did not eat paella.

Soon after our arrival, another couple popped their heads in. The scene was repeated.

“Michael, please move.”

As the servers added a chair to that vacated table, Michael moved to a stool at the bar, being careful to take his pint with him.

Someone else approached the bar. Michael, by now having figured out his fate, moved toward the tiny kitchen and sat down at

the back table already occupied by a woman who appeared to be the owner. And eventually, he sidled out of the bar completely, probably returning an hour or two later when these darned interlopers had cleared out and he could reclaim his usual perch. Meanwhile, it being St. Patrick’s Day, I had my picture taken with the Irish barmaid.

For me, these are the quirky moments that make travel memorable.

Of course, there is a lot more to Gibraltar than a tiny British pub. Gibraltar is officially a “British Overseas Territory,” and it feels like one of the last remnants of the British Empire. It has been ruled by various conquerors over the centuries – the Moors in the Middle Ages, then Spain (which still wants it back) and finally, since 1713, the British. Tangible evidence of all those eras is still found on The Rock.

One of the highlights of the visit is indeed simply seeing The Rock. For visitors who have travelled near sea level along the coast of Spain, the soaring, 426-metre limestone outcropping is an impressive sight.

And then, venturing at least half-way up The Rock into the Gibraltar Nature Reserve adds to the adventure. That’s where you encounter the monkeys – more properly, Barbary macaques – who occupy the reserve. Our guide pointed out the monkeys own two square kilometres of Gibraltar; humans claim only one square kilometre.

There is no doubt the monkeys are wild animals, though our

guide admitted they are fed by park staff, not because they need supplements to their natural diet in the reserve, but to attract them to areas visited by the paying tourists, which explains why we spotted two of the animals visiting the gift shop!

That shop is at the entrance to one of the other highlights on Gibraltar – St. Michael’s Cave, an impressive limestone cavern where your visit will include a rather spectacular light show.

Gibraltar is not big; its permanent population is somewhere around 35,000. But it has grown in size when it comes to land area because much of the city, including multiple high-rises, is now built on land reclaimed from the sea. And that trend is highly unpopular with the Spanish, who have watched what they see as British “squatters” move ever closer.

The Rock is much more important than its population or land mass might suggest, because it controls the link between the Mediterranean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, the route for about 130,000 ships annually, the majority, merchant vessels. From high on The Rock, you can see many ships at anchor waiting to enter the harbour for refuelling.

So important, yes. Disputed, yes. Famous, yes – including as the location for the weddings of John and Yoko, Rod Stewart, Sean Connery and others – but still a smallish town and, therefore, safe for visitors. There are currently about eight million of us each year, down from 15 million before the COVID-19 pandemic.

As our driver told us, “Crime is low here. It’s the kind of place where, if you rob a bank, the teller will pick up the phone and call your mother.”

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.



(PAUL KNOWLES PHOTOS)

Gibraltar on a moody day.



The lower land masses behind The Rock are Morocco.



The author with an Irish barmaid in a British pub, just a stroll through customs from Spain.



A Barbary macaque drops in at the gift shop in the Gibraltar Nature Reserve.



A Gibraltar monkey keeping watch on the busy harbour.



The light show in St. Michael’s Cave.



A very British symbol on Gibraltar’s high street.

Turkey reintroduction a conservation success story

SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO OUTDOORS

By Jeff Helsdon



The silence of the spring pre-dawn darkness was disrupted by a distant turkey gobbling.

“There’s another,” said Dr. Dave Ankney, who was sitting beside me for that morning hunt south of Langton, when a different, more distant tom turkey sounded off further south.

Taking place in 2011, the significance of turkey hunting with Ankney was akin to hunting with Aldo Leopold. While Leopold is revered as the father of conservation, Ankney was one of two people who were the driving force behind bringing turkeys back to Ontario and could be considered the father of the wild turkey reintroduction. Ontario’s turkey population went from zero to tens of thousands in a few short decades, providing opportunities for hunting, bird watching and bringing back a bird that was part of the province’s biodiversity.

Historically, wild turkeys were found in southern Ontario and Quebec. In Ontario, records show the original range was north to Lake Simcoe, east be-

tween Toronto and Trenton, and southwestern Ontario.

The large birds were a food source for First Nations, who used both snares and bows and arrows to harvest the birds. European settlers also saw the food potential with wild turkeys. Unfortunately, habitat loss from deforestation and unregulated hunting for food and market hunting led to the demise of the wild turkey in Ontario and Quebec. The situation was similar across North America, though pockets of birds remained in some American states.

With a dwindling population, Ontario’s wild turkey season closed in 1905. The last recorded sighting of a wild turkey in Ontario was in 1909.

There were several attempts in the ensuing decades to bring wild turkeys back to Ontario using pen-raised birds. Information about the pen-raised wild turkeys is scarce, but the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) was involved in raising turkeys at the Normandale Fish Culture

Station in Norfolk County. Being raised in a pen, the birds in these early attempts couldn’t survive in the wild and the reintroduction failed.

Ankney, a University of Western Ontario zoology professor, his spouse, Sandi Johnson, and friends Joel Hopkins and Ann Marie Green went on annual hunting trips. Turkey populations were taking off again in the U.S. due to restoration efforts and Hopkins heard about turkey hunting. The foursome, who have all since passed to the hunting grounds in the sky, made plans for a turkey hunt in Virginia in 1979.

When I hunted with Ankney – on a farm that was one of the original release sites – he recounted the story. When he, Hopkins and their spouses went to Virginia, they didn’t have high hopes of success and just wanted to see or hear a turkey. The success they had, taking three toms, hooked them on turkey hunting and was the start to Ontario’s reintroduction. Their conversation on the way home was why a reintroduction shouldn’t occur in Ontario.

Ankney’s uncle assisted with the reintroduction of the birds in Michigan and he primed him with background information. Ankney then approached MNR regional ecologist Paul Prevet regarding bringing turkeys back to Ontario.

The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) was

given credit for moving the reintroduction forward by Ankney. He brought them on board in 1982 and OFAH executive director Rick Morgan and Lance Males joined the reintroduction steering committee. Ankney later became president of the OFAH.

The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), which was behind the tremendous resurgence in the United States, came on board as a partner. NWTF provided the format for the first fundraising dinner for the OFAH-administered Wild Turkey Trust Fund, which provided funding for trap and transfer programs. With its experience south of the border, NWTF also assisted in finding sources of turkeys to bring to Canada and provided expertise on trapping and transferring live birds.

The team working on the reintroduction had a first release in sight by 1982, but Ankney said there was still some reluctance due to the past failures with game farm birds. Then, they heard a provincial budget freeze could derail the turkey program.

Hopkins went in to see Owen Williams, the regional MNR biologist, and asked what it would cost to move it forward, thinking it would be \$50,000 or \$100,000. He was surprised to hear it was only \$5,000.

“I pulled out my cheque book and asked who I made the cheque out to,” he told me more than a decade ago. The cheque was made out to the OFAH, since it

administered the trust fund. It was never cashed but was used as leverage to make the wild turkey reintroduction happen.

Through some wildlife trading with American states for moose and river otters, a source of wild birds was found. The first genuinely wild turkeys Ontario had seen in nearly eight decades arrived in specialized shipping crates from Missouri on March 6, 1984. They were released near Port Rowan in southern Ontario. More releases followed.

“You couldn’t have done that today,” said retired MNR biologist Dave Reid, who was one of the ministry staff who worked on the program. “It was just coincidence we had the right people in the right place at the right time. As turkey hunters, we reaped the benefits.”

After a population was established, trap and transfer programs within the province and natural expansion saw the range of wild turkeys grow across southern Ontario and expand northwards. When numbers reached the necessary thresholds, the first turkey hunt was in 1987.

The reintroduction of the wild turkey has become the most successful wildlife management story in the province’s history.

Jeff Helsdon is an award-winning outdoor writer, a columnist for Ontario Out of Doors and writes for several other outdoor publications.

That thing that influenced the rest of your life

INTERFAITH COUNSELLING CENTRE

By John Dinner

Recently, I was invited to present to a small but highly engaged group of seniors who gather regularly at the New Dundee Community Centre. During our time together, we focused on the topic of living life like we mean it. We all shared two important things: each of us has fewer days ahead of us than we’ve lived to date and it’s never too late to live our remaining days with greater purpose and meaning.

What impressed me were the close relationships that participants pointed to as being key to navigating lives that are both wonderful and hard.

In keeping with this reality, I invited group members to consider their lives thus far and to identify what event has informed or influenced much of what has defined their lives to this day. Even though there was no expectation the answers to this question would be shared, I was struck by the responses in that gymnasium on a cold, bright winter morning and the ease with which participants could point to a defining event in their life, as well as the readiness with which they were willing to share that experience with others present.

What was true to a person is the defining moment was nothing akin to a lottery win, their latest purchase, a winter vacation or some other positive life experience. Instead, each person who shared focused on a disappointment, a betrayal, or some

other adverse but profound life event.

I invite you to ask yourself the same question and to invite members of your family or others close to you to consider the same question. Beyond identifying that event, you might also consider what you learned that has served you well and whether you would change anything in retrospect. Often (but not always), it’s these challenges that form an essential chapter in our life’s story.

I often suggest that what is important is not the avoidance of misfortune or mistakes. Since these are largely unavoidable while living a life of meaning, it’s how one responds and recovers that really counts. The individuals sitting in that circle in the middle of a basketball court had, for the most part, figured out how to heal and to incorporate something from their adversity that has made them stronger and more able to navigate a life that, no doubt, continues to bring with it more challenges

than we would wish.

Why is this? I would point to the fact that, regardless of one’s circumstances, we all share the unavoidable reality that life is going to bring difficulties our way. While our culture suggests life is about our accomplishments and our possessions, it’s our relationships with others that are key to a life of meaning and purpose. It’s these relationships that we turn to when we encounter hardships and with whom we share the joy this same life can also bring our way.

John Dinner is a registered psychotherapist who works as a counsellor at Interfaith Counselling Centre in New Hamburg. The relative good fortune he has enjoyed in life did not exempt him from the unavoidable challenges we all must face. He’s thankful for them, but wouldn’t be quick to recommend them to others.

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CONTACT SHARON LEIS AT 519-580-5418 OR SHARONBLEIS@GMAIL.COM**

Fake forest – but why?

VINTAGE VIEWS

By Tim Mosher

Tavistock and District Historical Society

I introduced this series in last week's edition, so now we continue with this very different subject: children posing in an unusual photo-studio setting.

This picture very likely pre-dates the most well-known Tavistock & district photographer, pharmacist John Lemp, who started his business in 1905 and later added a photo studio to the back of his drug store. The children's clothing styles hint at circa 1890. Between 1878 and 1905, five different itinerant photographers advertised their services locally, setting up shop in Tavistock about once a week, so it's very likely that this photo was taken by one of them.

Either the photographer or the parents of the children had the idea to set up this scene. It's an unusual combination of Sunday-go-to-meetin' clothes in a forest-like setting. There was clearly a purpose in going to the trouble, but it's not known why or what the photographer is trying to say with his elaborate preparation.

Why such frilly outfits, especially for the boy? During the Victorian era (1837-1901), children were more gender neutral than today, so they were often dressed alike. The girl is wearing multiple petticoats and they're both wearing hats, which differentiates them from the lower economic classes who were dressed more

plainly and often lacked shoes. The boy's knickerbockers (short pants and very long, tight socks) are typical for males up to 1930 but sometimes boys under age eight wore skirts. The frills and lace emphasized wealth and the parents' ability to purchase the finer things.

If a copy of this photo – or any in this series – has been handed down through generations to you and you know more about it than what's published here, please email me with the information and it'll be recorded at the Tavistock and District Historical Society, owner of the images in this series.

This week's History Mystery: what is the connection between the mason's trade and what's in this photo? This question is for readers up to age 16. Email your answers along with your first and last names, age and community or rural route number to tim_mosher@hotmail.com. The first person to answer the question correctly will have this information published in the next edition of the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette.

The question in last week's History Mystery was: what was the reference to death in the Pretty Parlor photo? No one forwarded the correct answer. The answer is: a mourning wreath is hanging on the wall to the left of the oil lamp. Hanging a mourning or death wreath in the home was a custom of this period when a grieving family would assemble leaves, grasses, grains, pine needles and human hair – sometimes of the deceased – into an intricate horseshoe shape always pointing up and frame it to hang in the home to pay homage to the departed. Why pointing up? Horseshoes are a common, Victorian-era symbol often nailed above doors pointing heavenward to catch luck.



(LEMP STUDIO COLLECTION IMAGE #2196)

Mysteriously, these two unnamed children are posing in a photo studio among cedar boughs and logs set up for the picture. The date, location and children's names were not recorded.

The power of pricing

EXPERT REAL ESTATE ADVICE

By Isabel Livingston



Having the privilege of working on an award-winning team, I have learned a lot about the power of price. It is one of the most important elements when selling your home. It's easy to say, "I want the most money for my home," and so do we as agents. We want to see you get the best deal on your home. When a

home is priced fairly at market value, the results will speak for themselves.

The power of pricing is the ability to set a price that attracts buyers and maximizes profit seamlessly. How do we achieve these results? As a realtor, a large part of our job is something that happens behind the scenes

– studying the market to see what homes are listed for, what they sell for and how long they are sitting on the market. We watch and track these stats because they are what help us determine the value of a property. The longer a house sits on the market, the more likely it will sell for less. Why? Well because it has gone stale; sellers are more likely to accept a lower offer because it is likely the only offer.

The best ways to avoid this happening to your home are firstly nailing the pricing from the start. The first week on the market is the most important. Your home is the newest and the freshest inventory, and that is when it will have the most eyes on it. If you are seeing frequent showings in the first week, then you have

nailed the price. If you see one or two, then you might need to think about making an adjustment.

A property's value is affected by location, features, updates and size to name a few. Using recent comparables alongside the "value-add" method, we are able to determine a value and a price for your home. The "value-add" method will compare your homes to those that have recently listed or sold and either add or subtract based on the different features in each home. A pool, garage and updates can all be value adds.

Another trick when pricing your home is to avoid round numbers. Instead of \$700,000 try \$699,900. Why? Because home-searching sites set numerical search fields using round numbers. To find buyers with a

budget of \$700,000 you want to be below that number.

The power of price will help you optimize your time on the market and ultimately get you the best value. When priced right with maximum interest, you allow better odds of receiving an offer or maybe even multiple offers. Set yourself up for success in the market. Learn about what is selling in your neighbourhood and get advice from a trusted real estate agent to help guide you towards success.

For questions or article inquiries, reach out – ilivingstonsells@gmail.com or 226-232-4236.

Isabel Livingston is a sales representative with Gale Group Realty Brokerage Ltd. and the Jennifer Gale Real Estate Team.

**FOR STORY IDEAS IN The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette
CONTACT EDITOR GALEN SIMMONS AT GALEN@GRANTHAVEN.COM**

Road grader Ron Pfeifer closing in on 50 years of service

Longtime Perth East operator keeps roads smooth and doesn't plan on slowing down

GARY WEST

Gazette Correspondent

If you're looking for someone who's seen it all when it comes to road work in Perth County, look no further than Ron Pfeifer.

At 69, the longtime road-grader operator from Rostock is closing in on 50 years of service maintaining rural roads in Ellice Township and now the Township of Perth East. And he's not showing any signs of stopping.

We caught up with Pfeifer on Tuesday along Perth Road 106 in South Easthope. Between passes with his grader, he took a moment to reflect on his long career.

He began in Ellice Township, where he worked for 22 years before municipal amalgamation in 1998 brought Ellice together with North and South Easthope, Milverton and Mornington to form the Township of Perth East.

Since then, Pfeifer has continued to work across the expanded region, grading in the spring, summer and fall – and plowing snow in the winter.

“If you said he's graded and plowed over millions of miles, you probably wouldn't be too far off,” a colleague remarked.

Pfeifer's enthusiasm for the job is just as strong as it was decades ago. He said he still enjoys running heavy equipment and working with fellow staff, and he doesn't have plans to retire anytime soon.

Perth East Mayor Rhonda Ehgoetz praised Pfeifer's work ethic and dedication.

“Perth East and the former Ellice Township have been very happy with how Ron has worked so hard all his working life – and continues to do so,” she said. “He has set an example for everyone who's worked at Perth East, and we are so lucky to have someone like Ron still with us after all these years, with more to come.”



(GARY WEST PHOTOS)

Ron Pfeifer continues to grade township roads in spring-like weather, helping keep routes smooth across Perth East. In the winter months, he's up before sunrise pushing snow, just as he has for nearly 50 years with Ellice Township and, now, Perth East.

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Police arrest and charge driver for impaired operation following Wilmot collision

WILMOT-TAVISTOCK GAZETTE STAFF

thewtgazette@gmail.com

Police arrested and charged a driver with impaired driving after responding to a collision in Wilmot Township this week.

On March 28 at approximately 11:30 p.m., emergency services responded to reports of a single motor-vehicle collision in

the area of Snyders Road East and Foundry Street.

Through investigation, police say the driver of the vehicle left the roadway and struck a tree. A passenger was transported to an out-of-region hospital with serious injuries. The driver sustained minor injuries.

Officers arrived and arrested the driver

for impaired driving.

The driver, an 18-year-old Wilmot man, was arrested and charged with:

- Operation While Impaired - Alcohol and Drugs
- Operation While Impaired - Blood Alcohol Concentration
- Dangerous Operation Causing Bodily Harm.

Anyone who witnessed the collision or has dashcam footage is encouraged to call police at 519-570-9777 ext. 6399.

To provide anonymous information, call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or submit online at www.waterloocrimestoppers.com.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 8	MONDAY, APRIL 14	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23	FREE SENIORS ACTIVITIES
<p>Wellesley Council meeting 6:45 p.m. Council chambers 4805 William Hastings Line, Crosshill</p> <p style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px;">WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9</p> <p>Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships 12:00 p.m. Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by April 4 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900. Wellesley Recreation Complex, 1401 Queen's Bush Rd., Wellesley</p> <p>Tavistock Community Health Inc. (TCHI) Annual Meeting 7:00 pm For more info contact chairman Frank Meconi; fameconi@rogers.com Tavistock Men's Club Hall 78 Woodstock St N, Tavistock</p>	<p>Garden Wilmot Garden Talk 7:00 p.m. Planting and Starting Plants with Pat Tucker from Sheridan Nurseries. Free event Wilmot Rec Complex 1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden</p> <p style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px;">WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16</p> <p>Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships 12:00 p.m. Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by April 11 by calling 519-664-1900 or Toll Free: 1-855-664-1900. Wilmot Rec Complex 1291 Nafziger Rd, Baden</p> <p>East Zorra-Tavistock Council meeting 7:00 p.m. Council chambers 89 Loveys Street East, Hickson</p>	<p>Community Dining for Seniors in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships 12:00 p.m. Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Please register by April 18 by calling 519-664-1900 or toll Free: 1-855-664-1900. Linwood Community Centre, 5279 Ament Line, Linwood</p> <p style="background-color: #4a4a8a; color: white; padding: 2px;">MONDAY, APRIL 28</p> <p>Wilmot Council meeting 7-11 p.m. Council chambers 60 Snyder's Road West Baden</p>	<p>Tavistock Seniors Activities Pickleball Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoon, 12-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052 Cards Monday, Wednesday afternoon 1-4, euchre, crib (bring board), etc. Just drop in to play, good to bring someone. Contact: Bob Routly 519-301-2118 Shuffleboard @ arena, Wednesday 12:30-4 and Thursday 10-4. Contact: Don Junker 519-535-7052. VON Smart Seniors Exercise, Tuesday and Thursday morning 9 - 10; Village Manor 10:25 - 11:25. Contact: 519-539-1231 x 6285 Tavistock Memorial Hall 1 Adam St. Tavistock ON</p>

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

Deadline: Tuesday prior at 3 p.m.
Contact: thewtgazette@gmail.com

PROMOTE YOUR EVENTS WITH US! HERE'S HOW:

- The Community Calendar allows non-profit organizations to promote their free admission community events at no charge. Event listings can include your event name, date, time and location as well as contact information (ie phone number, email address or website).
- If your event is not free admission or you would like to include more details than stated above, The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette offers the following options for promoting your community events:
 - Coming Events Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$10 + hst
 - Coming Events Boxed Word Ad in Classified section (50 word max.) - \$15 + hst
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| 3. Cable News Network | 7. Yale |
| 4. Franklin D. Roosevelt | 8. Madagascar |
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