

# St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1206

Thursday, April 11, 2024

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## St. Marys library board refuses Perth South request to reduce budgetary ask for 2024



By Galen Simmons

A Perth South request for a significant reduction to what it will pay St. Marys this year for the town's library to provide free access to library services for residents of the township has been shot down by the local library board.

At the April 4 library board meeting, board members discussed a March 20 letter sent by Perth South CAO Fred Tranquilli informing the board the township council had reduced its budgetary allocation for library services from both Stratford and St. Marys to just \$53,734 combined.

Meanwhile, as part of a service agreement between the two libraries, as well as the Huron County Library in Central Huron, the St. Marys Public Library had requested Perth South contribute \$74,363 – an increase by five per cent over what the township paid last year – to allow Perth South residents to access free library services from St. Marys. The Stratford Public Library also requested \$45,480 from Perth South to allow its residents to access services provided by the Stratford Public Library.

In his letter, Tranquilli said Perth South council already approved a request from the Huron County Library for \$11,266 in funding this year. While Tranquilli said the budget for Stratford library services can be accommodated in this reduced budget allocation for library services, he asked the St. Marys library board to consider submitting a revised budget request that fits within Perth South's allocation.

"For years, we have provided library services to residents in the Township of Perth South at a subsidized rate to ensure free access for all," St. Marys library board chair Cole Atlin said in a public statement following the recent board meeting. "This means the board has asked the township to pay less than it costs for us to deliver library services to its residents."

A disagreement over library services funding this year could leave Perth South residents having to pay for access to libraries in both St. Marys and Stratford. Photo by Wendy Lamond

## Walsh to retire as AMDSB director of education April 19

By Galen Simmons

After seven years leading the Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB), Dr. Lisa Walsh is stepping down as director of education as of April 19.

Speaking with Grant Haven Media just before she was set to leave her

role, Walsh said she's excited to move into a new chapter in her life, and she's proud of what she and the board team have accomplished since she's been director.

"I passed my time when I could retire, but actually spent a few extra years

Continued on page 9

Continued on page 8

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COMMUNITY

# Perth County council approves additional \$150,000 contingency allowance for land-registry building renovation and connecting-link addition

By Galen Simmons

Perth County council has approved an additional \$150,000 in contingency funds for the ongoing renovations to the Perth County land-registry office in Stratford that will connect it to the neighbouring Perth County Courthouse to create one county headquarters.

Demolition and construction at 5 Huron St., located on the Perth County Courthouse campus, began in July 2023 and is expected to wrap up in October 2024. The project, which was awarded to Dakon Construction Ltd. at a cost of just over \$5 million, included a \$200,000 contingency allowance to cover any unexpected costs.

"Currently, approved change orders totalled \$165,000 or approximately 83 per cent of the contingency allowance," county public works director John McClelland said at council's April 4 meeting. "There are pending change orders to be dealt with along with retaining-wall excavations and the parking-lot reconstruction. Given the contingency allowance will be over the \$200,000 allotted, we will

require an increase to complete the project."

According to McClelland's report to council, change orders funded through the contingency allowance are grouped into three categories: unforeseen site conditions, changes or additions to the project scope, or changes to the structure or design of the project.

McClelland said more than half of the change-order costs are attributed to unforeseen site conditions underneath the 1887 county courthouse and surrounding buildings including the need for additional underpinning of courthouse foundation, unsuitable soil conditions, deteriorated sanitary and storm pipes, the need for additional asbestos removal and the removal of an old foundation or retaining wall.

"One of the pending change orders that we're currently dealing with is the replacement of deficient sanitary and storm infrastructure," McClelland said. "This has recently been priced by the contractor's sub(contractor) and is significantly higher than expected. The project team is

working with the contractor to find other options and a more reasonable cost."

Meanwhile, changes to the structure or design of the project account for 38 per cent of the additional costs so far. They include the need to construct an emergency exit on the lower level of the courthouse, achieving fire rating in certain walls, duct-lay-out revisions, revisions to air diffuser and transfer grilles, the relocation of the Bell feed pathway and pedestal, the addition of sumps, lighting changes, and revisions to the snow-melt system for the front entrance, ramp and stairs.

The final 10 per cent of the additional costs so far are attributable to changes or additions to the project scope including the addition of an electric-vehicle-charging station, additional outlets or data boxes, and revisions to the building layout to improve functionality and security.

"There's (also) a \$28,000 overage in the fire-alarm allowance and that's due to an unforeseen upgrade to the courthouse fire system so it coordinates and communicates with the new system in the reno. The extra \$28,000 is intended to be covered

under the contingency allowance but has not been accounted for to date," McClelland said.

"... Accounting for the overage in the fire-alarm allowance and estimating the pending change orders, staff anticipate \$285,000 to be (needed) from the contingency allowance. At this stage in the project, the majority of the scope and (structure-and-design) changes have been addressed and change orders of this nature should be minimal moving forward, however pending excavation work and parking-lot reconstruction could encounter further unforeseen conditions."

Those potential unforeseen conditions, McClelland explained, is why staff recommended topping up the contingency allowance to a total of \$350,000.

This project is intended to establish a single headquarters for county staff through renovations to the building that houses the land-registry office – and once housed Service Ontario – while creating a central, public-facing reception area within a connecting-link addition with the county courthouse.

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Mainly sunny	Rain	Light rain	Cloudy showers	Showers	Mainly sunny	Mainly sunny
<b>16</b> °C	<b>15</b> °C	<b>7</b> °C	<b>9</b> °C	<b>16</b> °C	<b>15</b> °C	<b>18</b> °C
Feels Like <b>16</b>	Feels Like <b>13</b>	Feels Like <b>2</b>	Feels Like <b>5</b>	Feels Like <b>15</b>	Feels Like <b>14</b>	Feels Like <b>18</b>

# COMMUNITY

## Basking in the afternoon darkness



St. Marys resident Bruce Andrews shot this photo of Monday's total eclipse from Port Talbot on Lake Erie. Photo by Bruce Andrews



Veteran Affairs Canada defines a veteran as “any former member of the Canadian Armed Forces who successfully underwent basic training and is honorably released”. This includes personnel who served as reservists. There is no minimum time required in service, and no need to have seen military action.

It is possible that service men and women who served for even short periods of time may be eligible for monetary awards in compensation for injuries that can be related to their time in uniform.

The Royal Canadian Legion is ready and willing to help all veterans, whether they are Legion members or not. If you believe there is even a small chance that you may be entitled to this assistance, please don't hesitate to give us a call.

The Provincial Service Officer, Britany Campbell, will be visiting the Perth Regiment Veterans Branch 236 St Marys during the week of May 15-17. Her job is to use a variety of resources to assist veterans in obtaining all awards they are eligible for. Anyone who would like to discuss a possible claim with her is urged to call the Branch Service Officer, Reg Rumble 519-661-7446 no later than April 15th to set up an appointment.

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## EDITORIAL

# Planning to plant in hopes of harvesting a cheaper grocery bill

By Galen Simmons

For the first time in my adult life, I have a big backyard.

That's kind of a weird thing to brag about, but after living in small apartments with little to no outdoor space of my own for the past 15 years, I'm pretty jazzed about it.

Specifically, I'm excited about the opportunities my girlfriend and I now have to grow our own fruit, vegetables and herbs. Lately, we've been doing everything we can to reduce our monthly food bill. We cook everything from scratch, we buy meat and fish when it's on sale and we make everything in big batches so we have leftovers for lunch the next day.

While we have seen some savings, our efforts aren't yielding the extra leeway in our wallets we initially hoped. So, in an attempt to save even more money by reducing our dependency on the grocery store giants and their increasing prices, we're going to try our hands at sustainable, urban agriculture.

While my girlfriend's thumbs are already pretty green, I'm more ambitious than knowledgeable when it comes to planting seeds and caring for plants until they bear fruit.

Recently, we joined the urban farmers group at the Local Community Food Centre in Stratford. Led by garden educator Lucas Tingle, the intent of the program is to teach gardening skills

to members who, in turn, provide the volunteer labour Tingle and his team at the Local need to prepare, plant and harvest the community garden in Dufferin Park.

Last week, we helped Tingle pack seed-starter trays with soil and we planted both cilantro and green-onion seeds. It definitely wasn't a huge operation, but already we learned so much about how to pack soil and keep it hydrated so the seeds can sprout and grow up through the soil.

This week, we'll work with the group to plant seedlings grown in the Local's greenhouse at the community garden. While I don't know exactly what's in store for us, I imagine we'll learn how to space out the plants, which plants should be planted now which should be planted later in the season, and what types of plants grow better together.

We plan to use every little bit of knowledge we gain with the urban farmers in our own backyard garden. Ideally, by the end of the season, we'll have harvested a wide range of produce, and whatever we don't eat fresh, we'll learn to can, jar, ferment or pickle to preserve it through the winter.

While I foresee quite a bit of work ahead of us this summer, we're both more than willing to put in the time and energy to save whatever we can on our grocery bill.

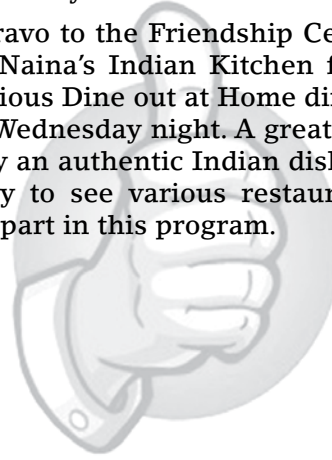
In times like these – and with a backyard like ours – we kind of need to.

## Bravo

We have 2 Bravos this week.

1) Bravo to the gentleman who took time out of his day (on Southvale Rd.) to stop in and let me know he noticed the car in my driveway had a flat tire. Appreciated the good deed and am thankful there is people like you in our community.

2) Bravo to the Friendship Centre and Naina's Indian Kitchen for a delicious Dine out at Home dinner last Wednesday night. A great way to try an authentic Indian dish. So lovely to see various restaurants take part in this program.



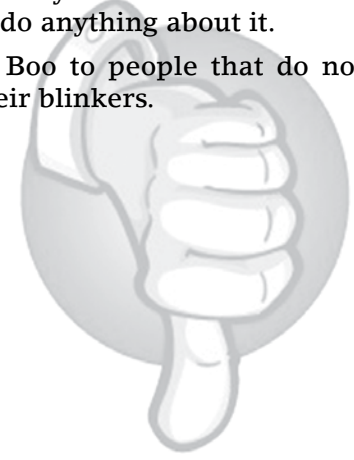
\*Please note all Bravos and Boos must be signed in order to be considered.

## Boo

We have 2 Boos this week.

1) Boo to the lack of supervision at the PRC while hockey and ringette games are going on. Kids in the middle of the lobby playing ball hockey, carrying each other around on their shoulders, and spectators swearing at officials happens frequently but no one cares enough to do anything about it.

2) Boo to people that do not use their blinkers.



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

## Quote of the Week

*"We are not really sure what to prepare for. We've got plan A,B,C,D and E. So whether the crowds are massive or not as big, road closures and all other plans depend on how the crowds are when they get here."*

**Niagara Falls mayor Jim Diodati is expecting the largest crowd in history when upwards of a million people are to show up to watch the eclipse.**

## Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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Did anyone go to Niagara Falls to see the eclipse with a million of their closest friends?

It would be nice to see a hometown win for the Lincolns on Friday

Have you heard something humorous around town that you think might be of interest to others? Either email them to us at [info@stmarys-independent.com](mailto:info@stmarys-independent.com) with the title "Overheard at The Coffee Shop", call 519-284-0041 or drop by the office to let us know!

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## The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS  
OF THE WEEK

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# COMMUNITY

## Kinsmen celebrate improved Grand Trunk Trail



Some of the members of the St. Marys Kinsmen Club pose for a photo on the Grand Trunk Trail. The proud volunteers have completed their contributions to the beautification of the trail that includes paving and lighting. From left to right, Cliff Sterritt, Christopher Swarhout, Chris Smith, Sean Connolly, Lorne Culbert, Ryan Leaman. Contributed photo



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## STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



### MUSEUM CLOSURE

March 27 to April 22

The exhibit spaces are getting a makeover! Staff will be on-site during the closure to accommodate research appointments in the archives and answer phone inquiries.

[townofstmarys.com/museum](http://townofstmarys.com/museum) or 519-284-3556

### EARTH WEEK 2024

April 15 - 20

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

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### SPORTS WALL OF FAME

Nominations open until April 30

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### Seniors of the Week



Our Seniors of the Week are Jackie and Larry DeNeve who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on April 4. Jackie and Larry were married in Sudbury and shortly thereafter moved to London where Larry was employed at 3M for 32 years. They moved to St. Marys in 1991. They have three children, 12 grandchildren and one great grandchild. Happy Anniversary, Jackie and Larry.

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

## COMMUNITY

# Mackenzie Forman named firefighter of the month for April

By St. Marys Independent staff

The St. Marys Fire Department is pleased to announce Mackenzie Forman as its Firefighter of the Month for April.

Forman was born in Hamilton and moved to St. Marys at the age of seven. He joined the department as a firefighter in October 2023.

Forman is a graduate of Lambton College's pre-service fire program, where he obtained firefighter level I and II, hazmat awareness and operation, technical rescue, and confined space rescue certificates.

When asked why he wanted to become a firefighter, Forman noted his desire to help his community. He also remarked on the opportunities for ongoing education.

"I continuously learn valuable skills from the other members of the fire department. There are so many ways to complete a task, and each person has a unique approach.

"What I enjoy most is working with this great group of guys who always have each other's backs. They are eager to pass along their knowledge and learn new techniques to become more proficient at the job."

Off duty, Forman dedicates his time to pursuing a carpentry apprenticeship as well as working on his own woodworking business, Forman Timberworks.

"Mackenzie was selected as Firefighter of the Month for his thirst for knowledge," said Fire Chief Richard "Andy" Anderson. "The primary responsibility of a probationary firefighter is to learn how



Mackenzie Forman is firefighter of the month in St. Marys. Contributed photo

to be a firefighter, and they are closely mentored by senior firefighters and officers. Mackenzie is progressing very well with his training."

"Mackenzie has shown a keen interest in technical rescue operations," said deputy fire chief Phil West. "He is a member of our swift-water/ice-rescue go team. Being on the team really appealed to Mackenzie and he was eager to participate in the extensive training and courses that are required."

## Weekend Quiz

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1. When was the American Civil War fought?
2. In "Back to the Future part 2" who won the world series in 2015?
3. What is April's birthstone?
4. What is the currency of Poland?
5. When was the last time the St. Marys Lincolns won the Sutherland Cup?
6. Whose nose grew longer every time he lied?
7. What is a baby porcupine called?
8. What show is Elmo from?
9. What is the tallest type of grass?
10. Who died on the cross for our sins?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

# Perth County OPP releases Easter weekend traffic campaign results

By St. Marys Independent staff

All available members of Perth County OPP took to roads as part of an Easter long weekend traffic safety campaign.

From 12:01 a.m. on Friday, March 29 to 11:59 p.m. on Monday, April 1, Perth County OPP officers were highly visible on area roads watching for traffic-safety violations, specifically seatbelt infractions.

During the long weekend, Perth County officers laid 92 charges. Of those 92 charges, five drivers were charged for seatbelt infractions. Other charges laid this past weekend include:

- 56 charges for speeding
- Two charges for impaired driving
- Two charges for stunt driving
- Two charges for distracted driving

Officers also responded to motor-vehicle collisions over the holiday weekend. Unfortunately, there was one fatality in Perth County as a result of a collision.

The long weekend traffic-safety campaign has ended, but Perth County OPP remains committed to road safety and officers will continue with traffic education and enforcement.



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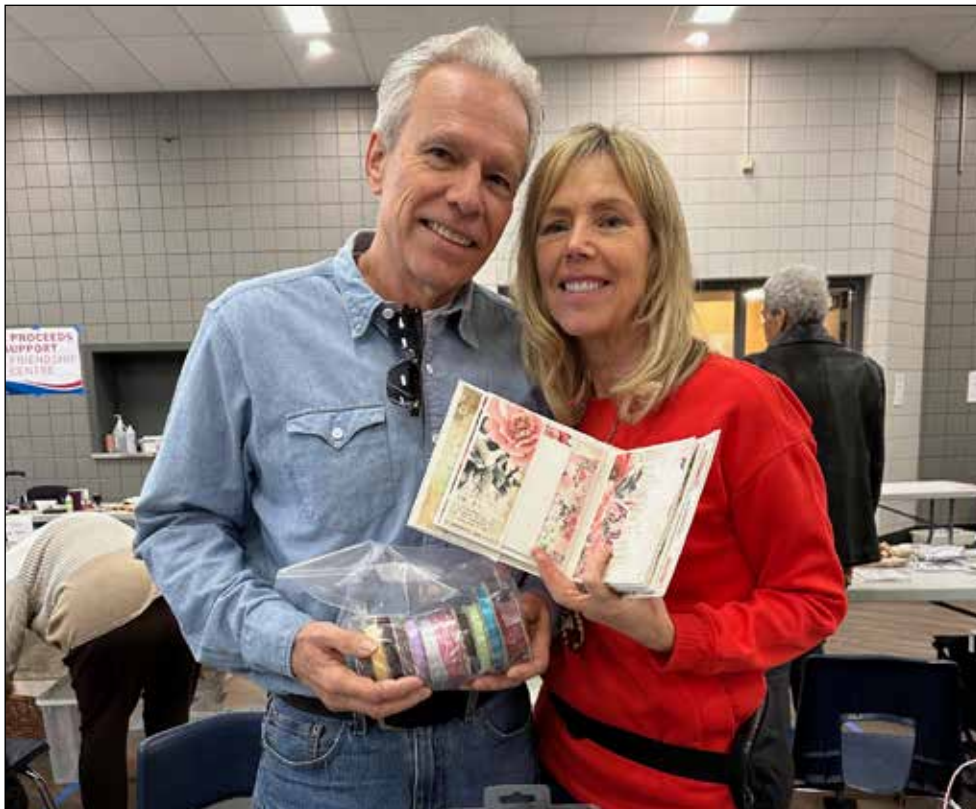
# COMMUNITY

## Donation from community dinners to the Salvation Army



Shirley Porter was very pleased to present a cheque from the proceeds of the community dinners to Jen Morris. The meals are put on by different service clubs, churches and businesses in the community. They are held at the St. Marys United Church every other Monday at 5 p.m. Pictured, from left, Jen Morris, Community and Family Services Manager for the Salvation Army; Shirley Porter and Rev. Robert Lawson representing the St. Marys United Church. Photo by Nancy Bickell

## Scrapbooking garage sale



The St. Marys Friendship Centre held their Spring scrapbooking garage sale on Saturday, April 6. Over 2,000 people attended this event and were able to take advantage of the excellent selection of products offered by the 43 vendors. Pictured are Mike & Anita Landon of St. Marys who had some interesting items for sale. Photo by Nancy Bickell

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## COMMUNITY

# St. Marys library board refuses Perth South request to reduce budgetary ask for 2024

Continued from page 1

"... Reducing the request would require St. Marys residents to pay even more to ensure Perth South residents can continue to use the library for free. We feel that this would be a fiscally irresponsible decision and an unfair ask of St. Marys residents. We encourage the township to reconsider its funding decision so we can continue to provide quality library services at no cost. While libraries are free to access, they are not free to operate, and we believe costs should be shared by all parties in a fair and reasonable way."

During the recent St. Marys library board meeting, both Atlin and library CEO Sarah Andrews noted, with their budget request from Perth South this year, Perth South residents would already pay just 48 per cent of what St. Marys residents would pay for the library. The \$74,363 requested by St. Marys does not account for the library's building costs or the costs of administration services from other town departments like finance, human resources, clerks and the CAO's office.

The current library services agreement between Perth South and each of its partners in St. Marys, Stratford and Huron County sees the township pay for library services based on a proportional division of Perth South's total population in accordance with provincial legislation. Broken down, the St. Marys library funding from Perth South accounts for the largest piece of the township's population, 1,883 people, while the Stratford library receives funding based on 1,322 Perth South residents and the Huron County Library receives funding based on 572 Perth South residents.

While St. Marys' budget request is significantly higher than Stratford's or Huron County's, the St. Marys library serves a total of 274 Perth South cardholders, while the Stratford library serves 185 and the Central Huron library serves 42.

In an email to the Independent, Tranquilli said Perth South council budgeted a total of \$65,000 for library services from all three libraries in 2024.

"In 2008, Perth South purchased library services from Stratford and St. Marys for a total of \$53,000.00. The budget proposed by St. Marys and Stratford for 2024 is \$120,000.00," Tranquilli wrote. "In performing its due diligence, with the cost of library services more than doubling in such a short time, Perth South council felt it appropriate to evaluate further

the cost of library services."

One major point of contention from Tranquilli's letter among St. Marys library board members is the notion that Perth South is asking the St. Marys library to compete with the library in Stratford over the remaining \$53,734 for library services in the township's 2024 budget.

"We work in partnership with Stratford," Atlin said. "The value of our relationship with Stratford is worth much more than \$40,000. ... Anything that we would do to put a divide between Stratford and our working relationship is untenable, and I think the position we've been put in is somewhat untenable."

Atlin also noted Perth South residents account for the largest per-capita users of e-books offered through the St. Marys library, a service the library has worked to expand and improve on in recent years.

St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee, however, voiced his thoughts on the matter a little differently, expressing frustration with both Tranquilli's letter and Perth South council's decision to request St. Marys submit a revised budget request seemingly without any kind of explanation.

"It would be a whole different scenario if they'd had a conversation with the whole board. ... I'm not even sure why this request has been made. I followed all the public sessions for the (Perth South library services budget), and I'm not really certain (how) they picked a number. ... I don't think our costs of operating the library are unrealistic or excessive. In fact, I've been pushing to expand the library services in some respect - this whole board has. ... I thought we had a partner, but this (letter) doesn't spell partnership. It spells dictation. In fact, this spells playing one library service off another. It's a very disappointing tactic. It's one thing to have a negotiation and an amicable relationship. Is our service level bad? I don't know. The letter doesn't say that. Is it because they made expenditures in Perth South they can't manage and they just want to cut the library to make up for that? I don't know. I'm not sure.

"The reality is it's a poor way to do business and it's a horrible step. I'm very disappointed with Mr. Tranquilli and really the council of Perth South. It's a terrible way of doing business and it's a terrible way to treat your neighbour."

While Strathdee said he's committed to seeing library services continue for residents of St. Marys despite a potential budget shortfall should Perth South council choose to end its library services agreement with St. Marys, the board chair and Andrews said they were uncertain at this point what the end to that agreement would look like.

Would Perth South residents need to begin paying for library services in St. Marys, or would they be able to get a library card for free in Stratford and use that card to access services in St. Marys? How much more would St. Marys residents need to pay for library services if the agreement with Perth South ends?

The board may soon need to come up with answers to those questions depending on how Perth South council and staff respond to the St. Marys library board's refusal to submit a lower budget request.

As for Perth South, Tranquilli told the Independent the township council has yet to make a decision with respect to library services contracts with St. Marys or Stratford.

"Perth South was prepared to consider renewing its contract with Stratford Public Library, which last January proposed a budget within the Perth South allocation, but last Friday Stratford advised that it would refuse to renew its contract with Perth South unless Perth South's contract with St. Marys is also renewed," Tranquilli told the Independent. "Further, Stratford has threatened to suspend the cards of all Perth South users on April 22."

At least partially confirming Tranquilli's comments, Stratford Public Library CEO Krista Robinson told the Independent she is hopeful Perth South will reconsider its funding decision so it can provide library services to township residents free of charge.

"Should Perth South decide not to renew its contract with Stratford and St. Marys, we will need to suspend library service for its residents. Residents will need to purchase a non-resident library card in order to continue to borrow library materials, but no date has been set as to when this might happen," Robinson said.

"This is not an easy decision to make as we value our relationship with our Perth South library members, however residents of Stratford currently pay significantly more for the same library service and reducing the contract further would widen that gap."



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COMMUNITY

# Walsh to retire as AMDSB director of education April 19

Continued from page 1

(here) because I have so enjoyed this job and it's hard to leave," Walsh said. "It's actually a bitter-sweet thing, but I'm really looking forward to the next chapter and doing some different things. ... It's time for a change.

" ... Establishing a strong team and continuing to build upon the culture of a well-run organization that strives for positive change has been a real focus for me. I don't believe that any of us do this alone in our job, so I'm really proud of a few things based on the teamwork we have shown."

While it wasn't something she expected for her time as director of education, Walsh says she's proud of how she and her team provided leadership during a particularly difficult period amid the COVID-19 pandemic. At a time of extreme uncertainty and disruption for students, families and staff, Walsh said she focused on improving communication and maintaining those all-important human connections as board staff tried to offer stability and clarity through shifting provincial health-and-safety rules and restrictions.

Though Walsh said many of the accomplishments she's proudest of were in the works prior to 2020, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic expedited and solidified them as board



Avon Maitland District School Board director of education Dr. Lisa Walsh is retiring from her position as of April 19. Contributed photo

policies that will live on in perpetuity. During her tenure, Walsh said she pushed for an expanded communications team that now works to regularly promote student, staff and school accomplishments in the wider community, and the board has adopted a much-simpler strategic plan that focuses in on wholistically preparing students for success through many different career pathways in a way

that accounts for mental health and wellbeing and equips them with the skills they'll need for opportunities well into the future.

"We're working on soft skills – those people skills, those connection skills – and understanding what every child needs to be successful and what their interests are," Walsh said. "It's the soft skills around resilience and coping strategies and all of those kinds of

skills as well as literacy, numeracy and the hard skills, the different pathways and building skills that take students into the future. I feel very proud that we have consolidated a great strategic plan."

Walsh said the board is now also using data from all levels to measure the success of its strategic goals and initiatives on an ongoing and regular basis to determine what's working and what isn't, and be more flexible when it comes to adapting to changes in student needs.

Walsh said she's excited to spend more time with friends and family and become a more active member of the Stratford community after she retires from the job that has kept her busy over the past seven years. She's looking forward to getting back into some of her favourite hobbies like gardening, Scottish country dancing, pottery and sewing, and she'll also work part-time as an executive-coaching consultant, helping to train leaders across all kinds of organizations.

Overall, Walsh says she's proud of her time leading the school board and she's confident it will be in good hands after she retires. As for who will be taking over as director of education, Walsh said an announcement will be made by the board in the coming weeks.



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# COMMUNITY

## Perth County's Steve Dolson and Karen Galbraith inducted onto Stratford-Perth Museum's Agriculture Wall of Fame



Newly inducted onto the Stratford-Perth Museum's Agriculture Wall of Fame, dairy farming couple, Karen Galbraith and Steve Dolson from Elma Township in Perth County are pictured with their award-winning purebred Holstein dairy herd.

Karen Galbraith and Steve Dolson say they feel very blessed to be living in Perth County, as opposed to areas of the world they have volunteered in for many years in the past. Photos by Gary West

By Gary West

The Stratford-Perth Museum is honouring and inducting an Atwood Dairy farming couple onto the 2024 Agriculture Wall of Fame.

Dr. Karen Galbraith and husband Steve Dolson's Master Breeder registered Holstein herd, known as Legacy Holsteins, has been one of the top-production and highly classified herds in Perth County for many years.

Both have helped lead a number of community organizations over many decades in their young careers.

Galbraith was a founding board member and past president of Perth Care for Kids. She has been a board member of Elma Mutual Insurance, which later became Trillium Mutual Insurance in Listowel.

Through the Big Brothers and Big Sisters organization, Karen has been an active big sister and active 4-H leader, and also a leader on their local church board.

In 2013, when the international plowing match came to Perth County, she helped organize the dairy portion of the match and has spent many years organizing the ice cream booth at the Listowel Fall Fair.

Earning a Masters in Science from the University of Guelph in capacity and rural development involved periods of time when Galbraith lived and worked in inner Mongolia where she helped small landholders improve their milk quality.

In 2014, she became an inaugural director and is still active on the Kenyan Kids Foundation Canada which,

among other things, is spearheading cooperative projects to improve milk production and quality on small farms in Kenya.

Her husband has not had much grass growing under his feet either.

He has been an active and valued member of the Perth County Holstein Club, past 4-H leader and is currently an Ontario 4-H foundation trustee.

Dolson is a past president of the board of United Breeders in Guelph, and he played a pivotal role in the amalgamation of United Breeders and Western Ontario Breeders based near Woodstock.

He was also involved in the early process of forming the Semex Alliance, and also a past member and chairman of the board of Gay Lea Foods, a dairy farmer owned co-operative that produces award-winning dairy products

and high-quality dairy components in several different provinces.

In the past, Dolson was awarded the distinguished certificate of recognition from Holstein Canada for his valuable contribution to the Canadian dairy industry.

Locally he has been involved in the Listowel Agriculture Society for many years, including in many leadership roles.

Dolson is also involved with the Kenyan Kids Foundation and has also been an active participant in dairy extension work in Kenya along with Galbraith.

They are an Elma township dairy farming couple, very deserving to be recognized in 2024 on the Agriculture Wall of Fame at the Stratford-Perth Museum.

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# COMMUNITY

## Staffa-area sheep farmer inducted onto the Stratford-Perth Museum Agriculture Wall of Fame



Staffa-area sheep farmer Sandi Brock loves her barn full of ewes and baby lambs. Lambing occurs three times a year in April, August and December. Photo by Gary West



Sandi Brock, inside her modern, clean and healthy sheep barns, holds one of her newborn black lambs, which she says is one of her favourites, as other newborns look on. Photo by Gary West

By Gary West

Perth County is inducting two new members onto the Stratford Perth Museum "Agriculture Wall of Fame.

Sandi Brock, who is a sheep farmer

from southwest Perth County near Staffa, says she is extremely humbled by the recognition, but smiles with surprise at the news.

Brock has been an agricultural influencer on the YouTube channel,

Sheepishly Me, for more than 10 years with 1.1 million followers around the world.

She has held countless tours of her barns for farm and non-farm organizations and has also been involved with numerous speaking engagements.

Her nominators felt she has made a significant contribution to agriculture in Perth county by sharing real, on-farm experiences, from rewards to challenges as a farmer, while promoting the importance of animal husbandry.

Brock is also a champion of food safety and environmental management. In addition to her leadership in consumer education, Brock has been a strong advocate for farmer mental health and is a tireless volunteer for the sheep industry. She has represented Ontario Sheep Farmers in District 3 as a direc-

tor on the board in the past, and has given her time to support her local sheep community for many years.

When I visited her, Brock was just completing two weeks of managing 400 ewes at lambing, which can be stressful with little sleep, but at the same time she says it's very rewarding.

Brock and her husband Mark, and children Jack, 23, and Jess, 21, also farm 1,700 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat and, at times, winter canola and winter barley along with alfalfa grown for feed for her sheep.

She will be honoured at the Stratford Rotary Club's Rural-Urban night Thursday April 18 at the Stratford Rotary Complex. Tickets are available at the museum by calling Kelly McIntosh at 519-393-5312, visiting the museum at 4275 Huron Rd., Stratford, or visiting the museum website at [www.stratfordperthmuseum.ca](http://www.stratfordperthmuseum.ca).

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# COMMUNITY

## Kirkton-Woodham's Tim Shute elected chair of Perth County dairy producers committee

By Gary West

Recently, the Perth County dairy producers committee elected Tim Shute from the Kirkton-Woodham area as its chair for 2024.

The Shute family includes Brendan, Brock, Brett and Bevan and milk registered Holsteins in a new free stall barn constructed in 2016, where cows are milked in a robotic milking system.

The family not only manages its dairy herd and crop 600 acres, but the sons also operate their own custom-farming business, Baseline Agri Services, for farmers in the Kirkton-Woodham and southern Perth County areas.

Tim and his wife, Ellen, who operates a sewing-services business, Ellen and Co., purchased their farm from Ellen's parents in 1989. After milking for decades in a tie-stall barn, the family decided to build a new, modern dairy facility.

Tim has served on the Perth County dairy producers committee for five years and feels that the 10-member



Son Brendan with father Tim Shute and their herd of registered milking Holsteins in the background waiting for their turn to get milked in the Kirkton-Woodham area farm's robotic milking system. Contributed photo

committee is a very important link between local dairy producers and their customers in conjunction with

the Dairy Farmers Of Ontario board and staff.

"At the local level, the milk committee endeavours to support and participate in numerous community events with the focus on promoting many of the wholesome dairy products that is produced in the county," he said.

Travis Riddell from the Atwood area of North Perth was named vice chair of the committee.

Perth County's Roger Boersen is also the new vice chair of the provincial Dairy Farmers of Ontario board of directors.

The Ontario dairy industry continues to be the largest agricultural sector in the province.

According to Dairy Farmers Of Ontario, 86,000 jobs are supported by the Ontario dairy industry; 10,000 Ontario farmers and their families are supported by dairy farming on 3,213 farms; and nearly 3.2 billion litres of fresh milk are produced by these farms with a farmgate value of more than \$2.9 billion, contributing \$8.1 billion to Ontario's GDP every year.



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## SPORTS

# West Final tied through four games

By Spencer Seymour

The St. Marys Lincolns won both games on the road against the London Nationals over the first four games of the Western Conference Final and, going into game five on Wednesday night, the series was tied at two wins apiece.

The series began last Wednesday when the Lincs walked into the Western Fair Sports Centre and left with a 5-3 victory. Head coach Jeff Bradley admitted his team didn't have its best performance but still found a way to take a 1-0 series lead.

"I thought we controlled the game, but I didn't feel the greatest leaving the rink," Bradley told the Independent. "I thought there were things that we did that we don't normally do that gave them opportunities which is not our M.O., so I know we can play better and I expect us to be better."

But, at this time of the year, it's about results and we got game one on the road which is big for us."

Bradley detailed several areas in which the Lincs weren't executing as well as they strive to.

"We got caught with guys behind us, which we don't normally do. Usually, we're pretty disciplined in the neutral zone but guys were sneaking in behind us. You can maybe attribute some of that to the bigger ice, but you still have to overcome it. Faceoff responsibilities were also giving us trouble and then we were giving up some turnovers on the rush which we try to stay away from."

Just three minutes and nine seconds into the game, Ryan Hodkinson drove through the Nationals' defence and tucked home a breakaway backhand goal to put the Lincolns ahead 1-0. Hodkinson, along with his linemates Ryan Cornfield and Matt Prendergast, were a bright spot in the eyes of the head coach.

"The Hodkinson, Cornfield and Prendergast line I thought was outstanding," said Bradley. "They just play responsible hockey. They work hard, they play good, two-way games and they all are skilled players. And then obviously Brandon Abbott was also great."

Maddox Callens potted his third of the playoffs just under 13 minutes into the first to put St. Marys ahead by two goals. In the second, Riley Wood cut the lead in half with a powerplay goal but, with just 16 seconds remaining in the period, Chase MacQueen-Spence fired his ninth of the post-season to restore a two-goal lead for the Lincolns heading into the third.

In the final 20 minutes, Jaden Lee and Billy Van-Sumeren each netted a powerplay goal for St. Marys while the Nationals got goals from Brandon Scott and Jeremy Hirsh, the latter of which came with just one second left in regulation.

Coach Bradley said the team's structures and systems bailed them out in their less-than-stellar mo-



Ethan Weir celebrates a goal during last Friday's St. Marys Lincolns game. Photo by McGinny Photography

ments.

"They've worked so hard to have a certain style of play, and when you're not at your best, those things can really save you. Near the end, you could see London just throwing pucks up the ice and we were there to take them off them. That stuff that's ingrained in our guys that they worked hard on and making sure they execute night in, night out, it's nice to know that all of those systems and concepts can get us through games when we're not at our best."

## Lincs come to life too late in game two

Strangely, despite coming up short and dropping the second game of the series by a score of 3-2, Bradley had a better overall feeling about his team's performance.

"I thought we played really well. We played better (in game two) than we did in game one, that's for sure. Defensively, we were solid. We didn't give up many scoring chances five-on-five. I think we gave up one two-on-one and one odd-man rush at even strength, so I was happy with that. We were really solid in the neutral zone."

"Offensively, for the first half of the game, we had a tough time. We weren't winning too many battles down low to have sustained pressure in their zone and we got a lot of one-and-done chances. Not scoring on that five-minute powerplay hurt us momentum-wise, but I thought in the second period, we started to slowly take over. Obviously, we got into some penalty trouble at the beginning of the third, but then we had three grade-A scoring chances with the six-on-five. There wasn't a lack of effort, more

so a lack of execution."

London jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the opening period with a goal by Hirsh at the 13:11 mark of the first. After Talan Palmer received a five-minute major in game one, London was assessed a five-minute major for the second straight game when Blake Arrowsmith was given a major for head contact.

In the middle stanza, despite the Lincolns narrowly leading on the shot clock, the Nationals got the only goal of the period thanks to Quinn McNamara's third of the playoffs. Meanwhile, the Lincs were struggling to penetrate the Nats' defensive scheme.

"For the first portion of the game, London was doing a good job of getting five guys tight and we just couldn't get through that," said Bradley. "It got us a little bit desperate, making some bad plays and trying to throw the puck into their crowded area which would result in turnovers and let them go the other way. It just took us a long time to get some sustained pressure."

After a missed shorthanded opportunity early in the third, the Nationals got a goal at the other end of the ice with Colton Chipman extending London's lead to three goals. However, just over midway through the third, the Lincolns finally came to life with two powerplay goals 47 seconds apart, first by Ethan Weir and then by Cohen Bidgood. However, that was as close as the Lincs

got to completing the comeback with goaltender Hayden Sabourin holding on to the 3-2 win in London's crease.

Bradley felt his squad found their groove when they engaged in the harder aspects of the game.

"When our guys start battling and pushing a little bit more, we put them on their heels a little bit. I thought in the third period we pushed as much as we could and fortunately our powerplay was there for us with a couple of goals, but we just didn't get that third one to tie it up."

## Four-goal third lifts Lincs to game three win

Despite the problematic trend of lacklustre starts followed by resurgent second halves continuing, the Lincolns left game three with a 7-4 win thanks in no small part to a four-goal third period.

During the first two periods, St. Marys squandered four powerplays, one of which was yet another five-minute major. According to Bradley, part of the frustration with the powerplays' lack of scoring in the first two periods of game three was the fact that they were actually executing on their gameplan better than in previous outings.

"It's funny because I thought our powerplay was better (in game three) than it had been in the first two games. Our entries, our breakouts, our possession in-zone, all those elements I thought were a lot better than what it was the previous two games."

*Continued on page 15*

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## SPORTS

# U15 C Girls win league title

By Spencer Seymour

The Home Hardware Building Centre U15 C Girls St. Marys Rock won their league championship this past Sunday with a 3-2 win over the Ayr Rockets.

Head coach Kelly Linton noted the team's aspirations for this season were set high and even though it wasn't the prize they initially had been shooting for, winning the league title was still a great accomplishment.

"It feels very deserving because we missed out on going to provincials," Linton told the Independent. "From the start of the year, they had their sights set on going to provincials. A little while back, we had to win two of three games to get to provincials and we came up short. I think they felt a bit defeated toward the end of the season but once we got into the playoffs, they got refocused."

Linton added their work ethic was a big factor in getting back on track and changing their goal to claiming the league championship.

"Working hard at practice and knowing that we had a shot to win the league title helped them get refocused," said Linton. "They knew they had a strong chance at winning the league if they kept working hard."

Ayr took a 1-0 lead with an early



The Home Hardware Building Centre U15 C Girls St. Marys Rock won their league championship this past Sunday when they defeated the Ayr Rockets 3-2. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Georgia Agar, Silver Breckon, Ramona Graham, and Brooklynn Roth. In the middle row, from left, are manager Jenny Roth, Mira Broughton, Ellie MacArthur, Kayla Visneskie, Emma Carradine, and assistant coach Janet Edye. In the back row, from left, are assistant coach Bob Wheeler, Lena Thompson, Abby Russell, Marci Linton, Maeve Wheeler, Ella Frayne, Lu Zulu, Kacey Storey, Georgia Edwards, and head coach Kelly Linton. Contributed photo

first-period goal but Kayla Visneskie brought the game back to even with a goal in the final minute of the opening frame. Ellie MacArthur picked up the lone assist.

After a scoreless second period, the Rockets retook the one-goal lead midway through the third, but the Rock got a game-tying goal from Mira Broughton. St. Marys continued

pushing and got a goal from Maeve Wheeler which ultimately went down as the game-winner. Ramona Graham held down the fort in goal to earn the win.

Linton credited the players and their biggest fans for cultivating a very positive atmosphere both on and off the ice.

"They all fit in in the dressing room

and they always had fun. They have fun in the dressing room which translates onto the ice. With the parent group that we had; they were phenomenal. We have had an awesome bench staff. Everybody got along well in the dressing room. It's nice to see the off-the-ice friendships and bonds in addition to the on-ice success."

The bench boss also had high praise for the team's leadership group, who he said set a strong example for the rest of the team to pattern themselves after.

"Kayla (Visneskie), who scored our first goal of the game, which was assisted by Ellie (MacArthur), they're the ones that get points every game. Right from the start of the year, those two have worked their tails off. Emma Carradine as well has become a good leader for us. They are day-in, day-out grinders. Kayla has fancy hands. Ellie plays every game like she's going for a gold medal, and Emma, who's probably the smallest player on the team, plays like she's six-foot-five, 240 pounds.

"But it's nice to see the rest of them come up and contribute as well," Linton. At the start of the season, the second half of our team seemed to play a bit shy, but by the end of the season they were all contributing."

## West Final tied through four games

Continued from page 14

But London's penalty kill is certainly unpredictable. It doesn't seem like there's too much of a plan and they're using chaos to disrupt us a little bit. So that's been a bit of a difficulty for us trying to adjust to that, not really knowing what they're doing. That's frustrating for sure because we know we have a really good powerplay."

After being outscored 2-1 in the opening period, the Lincs scored two in a row in the second to take a 3-2 lead. However, London tied things up before the end of the middle frame. Weir, Luca Spagnolo and Billy VanSumeren had goals in the first two periods for St. Marys.

"We started to win puck battles in the offensive zone," Bradley said of his team getting back on track. "In the defensive zone, on their first goal, they beat us to every puck and then we left the slot wide open. But the first part of that is getting beat to every puck and in the second period, we started winning most of the battles down low, getting possession and then setting up in the offensive zone where in the first

period we weren't really doing that."

Though they wanted a better start, Bradley was pleased his team was able to get back in control of the game, which he believed is because of the team's breadth of experience.

"There is a lot of maturity on our team. Every returning player on our team. They've been there. They've been in this situation before. Half the team played against Leamington last year. Noah (VandenBrink) played in the Sutherland Cup. Billy (VanSumeren) and James (Sigmon) won the Sutherland Cup. This is nothing new to them and they don't panic."

**'Pitiful' performance sinks Lincs in game four**

Coach Bradley didn't mince words following Monday's disappointing 4-2 loss in game four, which saw the Lincs once again come out flat and only find their footing in the third period.

"I thought it was pitiful, to be honest. We normally have a more in-depth pregame meeting and tonight it was about rectifying our slow starts or wanting to. We've got a team that plays

one line for half the game that is playing a third game in four nights. So now is the time to push and we decided we did not want to play in the first period, and it cost us the game once again."

The Nationals jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first period, capitalizing on the Lincs' poor start. Palmer, playing in his first game back from a two-game suspension, opened the scoring for London just one minute and 56 seconds into the game, assisted by Joshua Lepain and Ethan Mitchell. Just under eight minutes later, Lepain batted home a rebound to make it 2-0 Nationals with Palmer and Mitchell taking the helpers.

According to Bradley, virtually anything that could have been an issue, was an issue.

"We didn't come to play. We turned away from hits. We didn't finish hits. We turned pucks over. It seemed like we were frightened. Honestly, it was pitiful. The only thing that was good was our penalty kill."

Lepain tallied his second of the night just 68 seconds into the third period after a scoreless second. Four min-

utes and 41 seconds later, Nationals' star Lucas Chard scored his first goal of the series on a shorthanded breakaway. Less than three minutes later, MacQueen-Spence scored a power-play marker to cut the lead to three. Almost exactly four minutes later, MacQueen-Spence struck again with his second of the game and 12th of the playoffs, but it was far too little and far too late.

Bradley felt the Lincs fans deserved a better showing than what was presented by his group.

"Once again, it was the same story as the last two games," Bradley explained. "A terrible first period, an improved second and then in the third, we decided we wanted to play hockey. We're letting down our fans. We've got momentum, we've got home ice advantage in the game and we've got great support from our fans, and we let them down."

Game five took place on Wednesday in London before the series returns to St. Marys for game six this Friday. If necessary, game seven is scheduled for this Sunday in London.

**SPORTS**

# U12 Snipers take Bronze at Provincials

By Spencer Seymour

The U12 St. Marys Snipers brought home the bronze medal from the Ringette Ontario U12 Championships on Easter weekend.

Head coach Evan Habermehl told the Independent his team found its top gear at the provincial championship.

"It was some of the best ringette I have seen these girls play all year," said Habermehl. "I am so proud of the fight they put up. In the round-robin, they won four of five games and beat really good teams from Hamilton, Kitchener, Metcalfe and Muskoka. The only loss in the round-robin was to Elora-Fergus in a very hard-fought game, but even in that one, they played hard right to the finish.

Habermehl further explained why he felt the team's play was the best of the year.

"All of our players showed up to play. After the slow start to the season in the C division, we were getting a bit complacent playing teams new to U12. In the second half, when we were playing against teams closer to our skill level, it was a big adjustment to have all 17 players show up to play. At provincials, they all did that.

"We started having our two goalies split each game, which they did amazing with. Our defence was really strong and jumped into the play quite a bit. The forwards also did



The U12 St. Marys Snipers won the Bronze Medal at the Ringette Ontario U12 Championships on Mar. 31 with a 6-4 victory. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Meredith Stokes, Adrianna McCutchen, Olivia Hendricks, Amara Grant, Lilly Garniss, Georgia Hunter, Ava Bastien, Kenzie Shackleton, Madi McCutcheon, Liv McCutcheon, Brenna Bearss, Kyla Graham, and Maelle Hachler. In the back row, from left, are assistant coach Kari Stokes, Lyla Habermehl, trainer Lori Bearss, Lily Johnston, Mary McCutcheon, assistant coach Christen Graham, and head coach Evan Habermehl. Contributed photo

some hard digging to get the goals we did. The girls found their groove in the tournament and came out flying. They managed to keep bringing hard work, determination and teamwork to every game they played."

As noted, the only team to beat St. Marys in the round-robin was Elora-Fergus, which the Snipers then faced again in the semi-finals. De-

spite a solid effort, St. Marys fell by a score of 5-2. According to Habermehl, the defeat was not due to a lack of effort or execution.

"In the semi-finals, we had tons of shots but the Elora-Fergus goalie made some very impressive saves. We were working hard and creating some good opportunities, but we just couldn't buy a goal to get us to the

gold-medal game."

The loss resulted in the Snipers taking a spot in the bronze-medal game against Forest, the first-place team in the round-robin. It was a game that got off to a high-octane start with the two teams trading goals in the first period, ultimately ending in a 4-3 St. Marys lead at the end of the first.

In the second, the Snipers outscored Forest two goals to one en route to a 6-4 victory to capture the bronze. Madison McCutcheon and Kyla Graham led the charge offensively with three-point games including a pair of goals for each. Meredith Stokes and Ava Bastien also found the back of the net for the Snipers while Lillian Garniss and Mary McCutcheon each had two assists.

In addition to Habermehl, the team's assistant coaches Kari Stokes and Christen Graham had high praise for the team's play.

"Every player brought their play to the next level in the games at provincials," Stokes said. "That was a big factor that led to the team playing the best ringette they have all season and left the bench staff in awe."

"Overall, I think the girls came together as a team over the weekend to end a very successful season," added Graham. "The growth these young ladies had was awesome and rewarding to watch."

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Laura Parkinson positions herself for a pass during a Harris-Greig Automotive U9 HL Girls St. Marys Rock game earlier this season



Cameryn Stokes reaches out to corral a loose puck during a Dunny's Source For Sports U10 A Boys St. Marys Rock game earlier this year.



Molly Haight skates towards the net with the puck during a St. Marys Landscaping U11 B Girls St. Marys Rock game earlier this season.



Angus Queen patrols the blueline while tracking the puck during a U11 C Boys St. Marys Rock game earlier this year.



Tys Dewitt flies into the offensive zone with the puck during an Ashton Tire Service U15 LL Boys St. Marys Rock game earlier this season.



Finn Wright backhands a shot on goal during a St. Marys Legion U16 A Boys St. Marys Rock game earlier this year. Photos by Spencer Seymour

# SPORTS

## St. Marys bowlers take Bronze in Family Twosome



Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Melissa Kittmer, Ivy Kittmer, and Aaron Fisher. In the back row, from left, are Jesse Brockman, Aisla Fisher, Rory Brockman, Gerry Brockman, Nathan McKeen, Jeff Cubberley, and Jaxon Cubberley. Contributed photo

Submitted by St. Marys Bowling Lanes

On April 7, six teams from the St. Marys Bowling Lanes travelled to Port Elgin to participate in the YBO Ontario Family Twosome Tournament at Sunset Family Fun Centre.

The tournament had two classes with class one consisting of a YBC bowler and a non-bowler relative. Class two was made up of a YBC bowler and a bowling relative who is in a bowling league. The class one junior duo of Jeff and Jaxon Cubberley placed third and brought home the Bronze Medals. Gerry Brockman and Nathan McKeen also took the Bronze in the junior class two division. The class one bantam team of Melissa and Ivy Kittmer placed seventh. Aaron and

Aisla Fisher placed fifth in the class two bantam division.

In senior action, Nathan and Garrett Steffler finished in the fourth spot in the class one category while Jesse and Rory Brockman rolled their way to a Bronze in class two.

Nathan McKeen was supposed to bowl with his grandfather Kelvin Chambers but Chambers passed away suddenly two days before the tournament. McKeen decided to continue and go to the tournament. He asked Gerry Brockman to partner with him as Brockman and Chambers bowled together. McKeen used his grandfather's bowling balls in the tournament.

## St. Marys Bowling Lanes remembers Kelvin Chambers



Beloved St. Marys Bowling Lanes coach Kelvin Chambers passed away April 5. Contributed photo

Submitted by St. Marys Bowling Lanes

It was a sombre mood laced with tears at the St. Marys Bowling Lanes on April 6 when YBC coach Helen Brockman informed the youth bowling league that their beloved coach Kelvin Chambers had passed away on April 5.

Chambers was a regular feature at the lanes. He started the Sunday Legion League and was captain of the Men's Power House Team. Five years ago when his grandchildren started bowling, Chambers came to watch. Since he was coming every week, Brockman asked him if he would help her coach on Saturdays and there was no looking back.

Chambers shared his love of bowling with so many children. The bowlers loved "I Beat My Coach" week when they could choose how the coach-

es bowl. Chambers would be on one knee, sitting on the floor, bowling backward, and anything else the children would dream up. He was quick to spot areas for improvement and offered assistance and encouragement.

He could often be seen standing on the lanes being a bridge for a four-year-old to throw the ball through his legs or high-fiving a bowler when they had a great frame. He had a great sense of humour and the young bowlers loved him. Chambers loved to coach groups who went on to zone and provincial tournaments. He would trade a shift to ensure he could be at the competition with his bowlers.

At Sunday Funday bowling, he would share his knowledge and help others improve. He loved the competition and the sport. Coach Kelvin, you will be missed.

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# SPORTS

## Western Mustangs host pitching clinic at DCVI



St. Marys fastball got off to an early start this season by welcoming the Western Mustangs to town to host a pitching clinic. The Western Mustangs brought coaches and players representing women in sport to mentor the next generation. It was a great opportunity for our young athletes to learn skills from such great local talent. The players showed great improvement and we can't wait to watch our fastball teams on the field this season. Contributed photo



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The Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance (HPHA) Board of Directors is recruiting community members for the following positions:

- Two (2) individuals from the catchment area of the HPHA to join the Board of Directors, and
- Three (3) individuals from each of the four hospital catchment areas - Clinton, St. Marys, Seaforth and Stratford - to join our Board Committees (Governance & Stakeholder Relations, Quality, Resources & Audit).

Prospective candidates will bring their skills, expertise and experience to the HPHA's Board of Directors/Board Committees, and demonstrate a strong commitment to our communities and the organization, aligned with the HPHA's Values, Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles.

Individuals interested in making a positive, sustained impact on our local health system and on the health and wellness of those we represent are encouraged to join the upcoming Virtual Information Session to find out more about our organization and the positions advertised.

*The HPHA is committed to equity, inclusion, diversity and anti-racism.*



www.hpha.ca

### Virtual Information Session

Wednesday, April 17, 2024 at 7 p.m.

Via Zoom

**RSVP** to Sue Davey, Executive Assistant (519-272-8205 or susan.davey@hpha.ca)

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COMMUNITY

# St. Marys Community Players finds new home for spring productions

By Emily Stewart

As the main venue for St. Marys Community Players (SMCP) remains closed, the community theatre group found a new venue.

SMCP announced on Facebook in an April 5 post they will host their spring productions at the Riverwalk Commons under the theme, "One door shuts and another one opens down by the river." Four one-act plays will be featured starting with Norm Foster's My Narrator and The Death of Me on April 24 and 25 and then Colleen Neumann's Riverview Tape #23 on May 22 and 23.

The spring productions are usually held at the St. Marys Town Hall Theatre, but the SMCP had to find a new venue as town hall undergoes renovations to be completed later in the spring. Marie Stevens, a member of the SMCP board of directors, said board members considered scrapping

a spring production altogether to take a break, but others wanted to still have something for the spring to kick off the 50th anniversary ahead of the fall musical production.

The community players onstage and behind the scenes for the upcoming SMCP productions will be new to the community theatre group and will be mentored by other stage players with previous experience.

"We decided to try something different," Stevens said. "We wanted and we're trying to encourage new members and bring people out to enjoy theatre. If people auditioned for our four one-act plays that we're doing this spring and they'd never been part of SMCP, we gave them a part."

Riverwalk Commons at 84 Water St. S. is a new-to-town venue that seats 40 people.

"It's a much smaller theatre, but

that's kind of one of the things that we wanted to do with this production," said Liane Gregory-Sterritt, vice-president of SMCP. "We wanted to welcome new people and we wanted to take away any kind of obstacles that maybe would be keeping somebody from not having participated in theatre before, or with us for that matter. (We told people) they would automatically get casted (if) they came to an audition (and) it would be a smaller house size."

The one-act plays will be staged readings where performers can access their scripts if needed. The smaller-productions for the spring remove concerns about having to memorize lines for the first time and also come with simpler setup.

"We don't have to have a set built," Stevens said. "There's not that much work to be done. There's minimal props. There have been rehearsals

because there will be some blocking and movement, but they will have their scripts and they don't have to memorize things. It's a nice introduction for someone who has never been in the theatre before."

SMCP will also start the plays at 7 p.m., an hour earlier than the usual 8 p.m. start time. Gregory-Sterritt explained there will be time for a Q&A with the cast and directors as well as a social with some refreshments.

"We want to encourage people to talk to existing members of SMCP, the directors, the actors and the producers that will be there about opportunities to join us. It's kind of like a bit of an outreach to bring people in to experience what it's like."

Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased at Troyer's Spices at 110 Queen St. or by calling 226-661-8777. If the shows do not sell out, there will be some tickets available at the door.



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# COMMUNITY

## Springtime in St. Marys



It is that time of year when the male turkeys strut their stuff for courtship displays to attract the females. They start this ritual in early spring. Very often you see them in groups of two. The one turkey will serve as a "wingman" for his male counterpart in the hopes of attracting a hen. On average a dominant male will produce seven offspring. Photo by Wendy Lamond

## Baseball hall of fame board takes in Jays home opener



The Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame board was fortunate to take in the Toronto Blue Jays home opener Monday April 8. The board spent the afternoon in a boardroom in Toronto's financial district discussing strategies for the hall before walking a few blocks to the Rogers Centre to see the game, in which the Jays handily disposed of the Mariners. Pictured above in the back row from left are Scott Crawford, Scott Smith and Jay Chaney. In the front row from left are Mayor Al Strathdee, board chair Jeremy Diamond, coun. Rob Edney, Candy McEwen and hall curator Lindsay Earle. Contributed photo

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STRATFORD NISSAN



## HISTORY

## HISTORIC ST. MARYS: Charlotte Rogers' Memory Book

By Mary Smith

Last Saturday, there was a big sale of scrapbooking materials at the Community Centre, with a portion of the proceeds from this event going towards senior services in St. Marys. It is easy to imagine how early creators of scrapbooks and memory albums would have loved to have had this wonderful array of scrapping supplies to choose from. But although their original owners were limited in the material available to them, the St. Marys Museum has several lovely examples of 19th century memory albums in the archives. One of them belonged to Lottie Rogers.

For Christmas 1879, 23-year-old Charlotte Cecilia (Lottie) Rogers was given a handsome new album with a dark green cloth cover with gold lettering and decorative scrolling. Most of the pages inside were blank – these were for Lottie to fill. Interspersed throughout the book were full-page steel engravings of scenes from nature and idyllic rural life, produced by the Illman Brothers of Philadelphia, the publishers of the album. It was a special gift for a special year ahead. During 1880, Lottie became engaged to marry a young St. Marys man, John Reid, and would spend considerable time finishing her trousseau and preparing for her December wedding.

The photograph with this week's column is a formal portrait of John and Lottie at the time of their marriage. John looks like a prosperous young gentleman, quite satisfied with life. It is not a particularly flattering picture of Lottie. She is wearing a beautiful dress, its long train draped on the floor to the side. But to modern eyes, she is so tightly corseted that that she looks stiff and uncomfortable, as if she's just waiting for the photography session to be finished so that she can loosen her stays a bit. Still, they are a handsome young couple, ready to start their life together.

Charlotte was the daughter of Nicholas and Annie Rogers, two of the earliest residents of St. Marys. They had been married in Devonshire, England, and immigrated to Canada with their oldest child, Nicholas Junior, in the early 1840s. Their other children were all born here. By the time of Lottie's marriage, her father was the owner of considerable acreage inside the municipal boundaries east of James Street South. When this property was developed into town lots in the mid-20th century, Rogers Avenue was named to commemorate the original owner. Lottie was the youngest of the five Rogers children. Nicholas Junior died in 1878, at the age of 36 but her brother, Thomas, and sisters Ann and Lucinda would all have been interested in seeing their sister happily married.

In comparison, John Reid was the oldest in his family. His parents, Robert and Margaret Reid, were born in Scotland and married there. When they immigrated to North America in the 1850s, they first settled in the United States where John was born in 1854. They then moved to Canada and their other five children were born in Ontario. In the 1871 census, they were living in Waterloo and



John and Charlotte Reid 1880, from the collection of the St. Marys Museum

their children were still of school age. By 1880, when John was courting Lottie, his family was well-established in St. Marys and living in the west ward of the town. John was working as a machinist. His father was a foundryman – both highly valued trades at that time. John had a sister, Euphemia, two years younger, who had already married and left home. But another sister, Margaret, and three brothers: James, Robert and Andrew, still lived with their parents.

Throughout 1880, Lottie seems to have spent many social hours both in St. Marys and also visiting friends and relatives in nearby communities, particularly Mitchell. She collected autographs during these visits, making memories to ponder after her status changed from single to married woman. The first message in her album is from John Reid himself, written in April 1879. It is a light, little rhyme, not in any way original, but one used in autograph books for decades: "In sailing down the stream of life / In your little bark canoe / I hope you'll have a pleasant time / And room enough for two." This seems to suggest an early stage of courtship rather than actual engagement. A few months later, on a page farther into the album, two lines from John to Lottie are more affectionate as he draws on a quotation from Samuel Taylor Coleridge: "That bright and blue-eyed floweret of the brook / Hope's gentle gem, the sweet forget-me-not."

Lottie's older sister, Lucinda, had married John Whyte of Mitchell in May 1879. Lottie spent some time staying with her sister during the summer of

1880 and several autographs in her album were written by friends she made there. One young man from Mitchell, George Roy, was an artist. He was a few years younger than Lottie but apparently admired her and enjoyed her friendship. For one of his messages in the album, he took great care to write it within an ornate scroll, embellished with birds and trailing feathers – all done with pen and ink. Lottie seems to have become good friends with John's sister, Margaret Reid, who was 19 in 1880, and engaged to marry Gilbert Dusty, a member of another prosperous, long-time St. Marys family. Both Maggie and Gib wrote affectionate messages in Lottie's album.

Several pages suggest a group activity: a number of signatures, each in a calling-card size rectangle, fanned out artistically on the page. These were friends of both John and Lottie – they and their families can be found on census records from that time. On pages she particularly liked, Lottie added extra decorations, "paper fancies" – stickers of colourful flowers that she would have bought at a stationery store. Roses and lilies were favourite choices. Lottie collected names and messages from about 50 people – men and women – during the year before her wedding. Her autograph book stands as a record of a very happy time in her young life. John Wood Reid and Charlotte Cecilia Rogers were married in the Rogers home on James Street South on Wednesday, December 1, 1880. The Reverend James Hannon, St. Marys Methodist Church, officiated. The young couple made their home in the west ward, not far from John's parents.

But their life together came to an abrupt end. This brief notice appeared in the St. Marys Argus, September 22, 1881 – ten months after John and Lottie's wedding. "The people of the town were astonished to learn of the very unexpected death from heart disease of Mrs. John Reid on Thursday forenoon last. Mrs. Reid, who had been confined just ten days previously, was in the act of dressing, and was sitting on the side of the bed when she evidently felt something wrong and said to Mrs. Allen, the nurse who had been attending her, that it was getting dark. Mrs. Allen at once sent for Mr. Reid and a neighbour, and laid her head back upon a pillow. But before any person had arrived, although only a minute or two elapsed, Death had done its work. Mrs. Reid was a young woman, well known in this town where she had resided all her life, being the youngest daughter of Mr. Nicholas Rogers. She was only married on the first day of last December, and her young husband has the heartfelt sympathy of this entire community."

Lottie had been confined – that is, given birth – just ten days before she died. Many women of that era did not survive childbirth because infection frequently set in. However, Lottie had died of heart failure, something no one could have predicted. Her little daughter did survive and was also given the name "Charlotte." What happened to her and how her mother's beautiful album came to the St. Marys Museum is a story for next week's column.

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## Foodgrains Bank information meeting hosted in Thorndale

By Nancy Abra

Since 1983, the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, with a network of Christian base agencies and 30 Christian denominations across Canada, have been working together to end hunger for families around the world.

The local connection in the Thorndale area is The Good Neighbour Project, which has been part of the Foodgrains Bank network since 1994.

The Good Neighbour Project committee hosted a Foodgrains Bank information meeting recently at Thorndale United Church. Henry Reinders, a farmer from Meaford and the Ontario regional representative for Foodgrains, shared a presentation with the gathering of approximately 30 people from across the region.

Reinders stated there are two types of Foodgrains Bank projects that focus on providing emergency food assistance and facilitating long-term response work. In his presentation, Reinders said in 2023 the Foodgrains project provided \$80 million of assistance



Pictured from left are John Elliott of the local Good Neighbour Project, digital media officer Maya Van der Woerd of the Foodgrains Bank, and Henry Reinders, Ontario representative for Foodgrains Bank, at a recent Foodgrains Bank information meeting in Thorndale. Photo by Nancy Abra

for 1.1 million people in 36 countries. The goal by 2026 is to reach 1.5 million people who need food assistance in their time of crisis, and assist in the long-term response in educating farmers in certain regions of the world to help them improve their growing practices for food-production success. Reinders also gave an update on the volatile situation in Gaza as

they are working with a couple of partners to get food to people in that country.

Foodgrains Bank digital media officer Maya Van der Woerd also shared a couple of success stories featuring farmers in Kenya and Burundi who were part of the education program to help build better agricultural practices to grow food in Africa.

While the Foodgrains Bank collects donations from individuals and corporations, farmers in nine provinces support this charity in a unique way through their growing projects. These projects see farmers plant, grow, harvest and then sell a crop, usually locally, with the proceeds sent to the Foodgrains Bank head office in Winnipeg. These donated funds are then matched 4:1 by the Canadian government.

John Elliott of the local Good Neighbour Project shared their success story for the Foodgrains Bank as did others at this meeting. They shared what they grew and the funds raised for this very important Foodgrains program to end world hunger.

## Thorndale Optimist 'Catch the Ace' draw



Last Tuesday evening, the Thorndale Optimist members gathered to pull the Catch the Ace winner. After clearing almost half of the board of enclosed cards, Micaela Meadows of Thorndale was the winner when her number was the Ace of Clubs, winning the share-the-wealth prize money. This draw was also livestreamed on the Thorndale Optimist Facebook page so ticket holders could watch the proceedings. In attendance at the Catch the Ace draw last week are Thorndale Optimist members Michael Fernando, Bill Tipping, Melanie Sorensen, Greg Morris, Don Phillips, Bob Graham and Bob Sorensen. Photo by Nancy Abra

## Happy April from the Thorndale Library!

By Thorndale Library staff

We had a fantastic March. Thorndale resident and trans author Loghan Paylor joined us for an author talk in celebration of their debut novel, *The Cure for Drowning*. Thank you, Loghan! Thank you, also, to George and Carol for enthusiastically hosting the very popular Solar Eclipse Information Drop-In program. March break was a blast, too!

This month, on April 24 at 4:30 p.m., we'll be making our own recycled paper that can be planted at our Earth Day Paper Making program. Registration required.

Gather and Quilt meets on Friday, April 26 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Bring your supplies and work on your quilting projects with friends old and new.

To register, please visit us online at

[www.library.middlesex.ca/events](http://www.library.middlesex.ca/events) or contact library staff at 519-461-1150.

Please join us at our weekly drop-in programs, too. Storytime is the place to be for little ones and their caregivers on Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. School-aged children are invited to Afterschool Hangout on Thursdays from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Also, every Saturday we'll have a craft available for children to come in and try at our new Art Attack drop-in program.

Need a little bit of reading inspiration? Middlesex County Library has provided suggestions for each month. For April, learn some new facts or a new skill by reading a non-fiction title.

As always, feel free to drop in, call us at 519-461-1150, or email us at [thorndale\\_staff@middlesex.ca](mailto:thorndale_staff@middlesex.ca) with any questions or to register for upcoming programs. We hope to see you at the library!

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# COLUMN

## HOSTING UKRAINE: Canadians Care

By VJ Knutson

The message I received Easter weekend was regarding a couple in their 60's. Vitali is 67 and his wife, Oksana, 65. They have accommodation until May 5th and need help finding employment and long term housing. The volunteer who wrote to me expressed her doubts that a couple at this age can survive without support. She suggested that maybe they can be live in caregivers for a family needing such services. Vitali, she says, wants to work anywhere, his wife would like to be a caretaker for children or the elderly. Their documentation is complete and they are ready to work.

Finding work, it turns out, is not the issue. With help from my fellow volunteers, we have found them an opportunity for employment. Now we need help with housing/hosting. It takes a lot to give up one's life, especially for those normally reaching retirement. I can't imagine that they

are going to be too selective about where they land. They are just seeking the peace that Canadian life offers. A peace that is becoming more and more rare in Ukraine.

The family I wrote about last week are settling in with their new host at Spring Farm. This is the third family that Mary Ann and John Brown have hosted and we are all very grateful. The challenge for the Browns, however, is that they are located midway between St Marys and London, without public transportation. Doug Betteridge is supplying a bike for the young man, but Mom needs volunteers to drive her to English classes in St Marys, particularly on Monday evenings and Saturday mornings, as she is a beginner. They will also need occasional rides into town or London for job interviews, or other appointments.

If you can help either family, please send me a message.

Alona Orekhivska messaged me this week to ask if I could include a special thank you to Heidi and Harold Van Galen in my article:

"They navigate Ukrainian girls how to pass road test and get a driver's license in Canada. Their help is priceless. I admire their patience and endurance. I just got my licence yesterday. I'm so happy Heidi and Harold were a part of my journey. And as far as I know there is a line of ladies who want to be next student.

I really appreciate their contribution. Sometimes it takes a while to become a confident driver, especially for women. I've been thinking and waiting for a sign how to prepare myself for exam. Than my friend Tanya Yanchuck who had already successfully passed her exam told about her driving experience with Heidi and Harold. And I thought...this is my sign.

I know that for most people in Cana-

da, driving isn't a big deal or accomplishment. Nevertheless, we shouldn't take for granted these little achievements when we settle down in a new country."

Well said, Alona. I agree that the Van Galens have amazing patience and commitment to helping newcomers.

One last note to hopefully make you smile. In our Stratford English support class, we have newcomers from more than just the Ukrainian community. This Saturday, I was tasked with covering the class as our Ukrainian teacher is currently away. I asked the question: "What is strange about Canadian life?" One participant answered: "That Canadians care and as a society help others."

Hooray for us!

Until next time.

(Reach me at english.knutson@gmail.com.)

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COLUMN

# FROM THE GARDEN: Is that native?



**By Nancy Abra**

Since 1959, the United Nations designates a specific topic to promote, through awareness and action objectives of the organization. Over the years, topic themes have covered areas in nature, peoples, food crops, and sustainability to mention a few. For 2024, the United Nations chose 'Camelids' and their importance to livelihoods of millions of households across 90 countries. (<https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-years>)

How are camelids related to the garden, you may ask? Well, they aren't really. But I thought it was quite ironic that after attending a webinar recently, it was suggested we read the book, *Where do camels belong?* by Ken Thompson.

Where do camels belong? delves into the intriguing

world of 'native' and 'alien' species. Thompson, a biologist from England, challenges our assumptions where certain species of both animal and plant originate and their spread across the globe. While many may think that camels originated in the Middle East Arab world, they are relatively newcomers. Camels evolved in North America, more particularly, in the southern United States millions of years ago. From there they spread and their descendants, llamas and alpacas, have the greatest diversity in South America. Currently the only remaining wild dromedaries are found in Australia.

Thompson explores the challenges between what we deem 'native' and 'alien' invasive species. This topic is particularly relevant today for gardeners as we wrestle with biodiversity and ecological balance in our gardens. We often assume that certain plants are native to specific regions, but this can be more complex than it seems. Thompson delves into animal and plant species as to where they have originated and their distribution that has evolved over thousands of years. Also, genetic diversity allows species to respond and

survive in changing environments while some species die out and become extinct.

It is easy to understand how some birds or flying insects have migrated over time to other regions. But on the other hand, species of all kinds are capable of migrations that are not always easily explained, and some of these take place quite routinely. For instance, plants with small, light seeds can be dispersed long distances by the wind and water and some seeds hitch-hike on animals. Human activities, such as our early settlers bringing seeds from their homes in Europe or Asia to plant here. For example, the dandelion, which was introduced by early settlers as a food crop, is deemed now by many as an invasive weed. Also, during the 19th and 20th century, the introduction of exotic plant species from faraway countries became sought-after elements for gardens and parks. As these 'alien' plants set down roots and adapted to this region, they have now spread beyond our gardens. Thompson discusses how plants become invasive when introduced to new ecosystems. These invasive plants can out compete native species, can affect soil



composition, water availability and even the behavior of other organisms. As we rely on global trade and transportation, that too has contributed to the introduction of some species that pose significant threats to plant health and local ecosystems here.

Thompson does state that not all non-native species deserve the bad press they receive. The black-and-white view of 'natives' - good, 'aliens' - bad is only justified on a few species that cause undoubted economic or environmental harm when they move to new areas. The vast majority does no harm or are positively useful, including practically all the crop plants and animals on which human civilization depends. Our

honeybee is an alien species introduced to North America a few centuries ago that we rely on for food and pollination. Wheat is a good example of an 'alien' plant which originated from the fertile region of the Middle East thousands of years ago which is an important food crop grown here and in other regions in the world.

As gardeners we should be encouraged to have a better understanding of plant species, recognizing the role of 'alien' plants in our gardens, and the consequences they may play in landscapes, in the environment and their interactions with native plants.

Source: *Where Do Camels Belong?* by Ken Thompson; Greystone Books



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						9	

Solutions on page 31

# Riddles

What do the Montreal Canadiens and the Titanic have in common?

They both look good until they hit the ice.

How do you get 50 Canadians out of a swimming pool?

You say, "please get out of the swimming pool."

What does Canada produce that no other country in the world produces?

Canadians.

What did the snow say to the Rocky Mountains?

I've got your covered.

What was the skeleton doing at the hockey game?

Driving the zam-

boney.

Why shouldn't curlers tell jokes on the ice?

Because it might crack up

What has antlers and sucks blood?

A moose-quito

Why is maple syrup always so sad?

Because it's sappy.

How do you get a Canadian to apologize?

Step on their foot.

Why are Canadian students so smart?

They get lots of ehs.

Why do hockey players like baking cakes?

Because they're great at icing.

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### Word List

- Scottie Scheffler
- Jon Rahm
- Rory McIlroy
- Viktor Hovland
- Brooks Koepka
- Wyndham Clark
- Xander Schauffele
- Matt Fitzpatrick
- Hideki Matsuyama
- Jordan Spieth
- Joaquin Niemann
- Ludvig Aberg
- Will Zalatoris



## The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

Why did an old man fall into a well?



Because he couldn't see that well.

Danika Terpstra (11)

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

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Our Pet of the Week is Ashdon, a Golden Retriever, who will be 10 years old in June. He enjoys his two daily walks around town and then relaxes, laying at our feet. He loves playing hide and seek and likes cats. Ashdon is a member of the Fletcher family.



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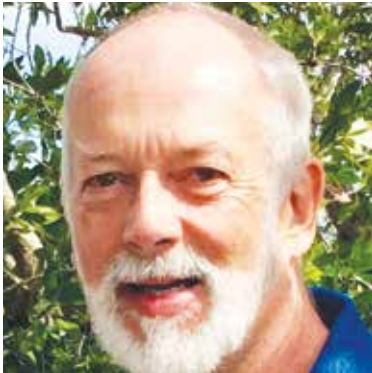
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## COLUMN

## OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Bootlegging, moonshine, and other liquid reasons to enjoy New Brunswick



By Paul Knowles

We were standing in a tumble-down shack in Saint-Hilaire, N.B., a two-minute walk from the Saint John River that is the border between Canada and the United States. The most prominent thing in the room was an ancient wooden still. As I examined this artifact of days gone by, my host, Réginald Nadeau, asked if I would like to sample the "bagosse" – moonshine in English – made recently in that still.

"Is that legal?" I asked.

Reg smiled and explained that this very primitive distillery – one of two buildings that make up the Bootlegger Museum – is licensed to make moonshine on one day of the year, for the St. Hilaire Moonshine Festival in August.

"We have a permit to brew bagosse the artisanal way," he says.

They happened to have some left over, so of course I sampled the bagosse. And when I got my breath back, I admitted that it was very tasty, if a tad powerful.

Reg tells me that the details of the local bagosse recipe are kept secret, but then reveals that the moonshine begins

with potatoes, raisins, sugar, yeast and apples, and that it takes seven to eight days to ferment. This produces a hefty hooch – 75 per cent alcohol – but they cut it to 55 per cent for public consumption, still packing quite a wallop.

It's no coincidence that the Bootlegger Museum is located in Saint-Hilaire. The house beside the moonshine shed, which now houses artifacts related to bootlegging, moonshining and smuggling, was once the home of Maxime Albert, who Reg describes as "one of the three biggest bootleggers in Northern New Brunswick and Riviere-du-Loup." This is saying a lot because it seems that, during American prohibition, bootlegging was the number-one industry in western New Brunswick.

"He was the Al Capone of the North," Reg said.

In fact, Albert's daughter served as secretary to the notorious American gangster.

This story is told in the simple displays at the Bootlegger Museum. To get the real story, you should arrange a tour with Reg Nadeau, something he is more than happy to provide. This experience is off the beaten track but will be a highlight of any visit to this underappreciated part of New Brunswick. If you can be one of several thousand to visit the village for the Moonshine Festival, so much the better.

It's no exaggeration to say that moonshining and smuggling were huge business all along the Saint John River. At St. Hilaire, Maine is less than a Vladimir Guerrero home run away, so access to a thirsty

market was readily available. In the hungry 1920s, says Reg, "Bootlegging was an opportunity to make money and help the district."

Whatever the reality, the legend of Maxime Albert has taken on Robin Hood qualities. Reg talked of a time when Albert knew that an important churchman was to visit, so he dressed as a Roman Catholic cardinal, assembled an entourage of 10 automobiles, and was welcomed as a VIP into the US. Each car, of course, was carrying all the illegal booze it could hold.

"The day after," says Reg, "the real monsignor came to customs and had a problem."

Reg Nadeau has a personal connection to Albert.

"He helped my grandparents save their land," says Reg.

Albert passed away in 1953. The simple home and distillery shack that house the small museum are owned by the local municipality. Reg is clearly the spark behind the museum, which houses a good selection of artifacts from bootlegging days, as well as, ironically, the desk, phone and typewriter from the prohibition-era police station.

The art of the still is alive and well all down the western side of New Brunswick. About an hour and a half south of Maxime Albert's one-time residence is the blatantly named "Moonshine Creek Distillery" where they make – among other delectable beverages – a variety of legal moonshines, including Apple Crumble Moonshine.

Owner Jeremiah Clark told me his grandfather had been "a



Reg Nadeau, with the ancient still that still produces bagosse one day a year. The chap in the background is actually a life-sized photo of famed local bootlegger, Maxime Albert, a crony of Al Capone. All photos by Paul Knowles

barber and local bootlegger." He's proud to carry on the family tradition, albeit legally. Justin Marcoux, who was offering samples from behind the bar, states, "New Brunswick became the number-one bootlegging province."

Another hour southeast will take you to the Big Fiddle Still, owned and operated by Trent Jewett. Trent's a larger-than-life, convivial chap who has never met a customer he didn't like or a story he didn't love to tell. The Big Fiddle is so named because the distillery is in Harvey, hometown of Canadian fiddling icon Don Messer.

Trent not only tells stories, he creates them. Atop his bar is a stuffed beaver, and he's invented the New Brunswick equivalent to Newfoundland's kiss-the-cod. At the Big Fiddle,

you kiss the beaver (yes, that sparks innumerable comments) and down a shot of New Brunswick Scream, one of the delicious, flavour-infused vodkas Trent produces. My favourite is salted caramel.

I suspect that when you think about New Brunswick, bootlegging, stills and moonshine aren't top of mind. Given their place in the history of the province, and the modern moonshiners ready to welcome visitors, perhaps it should be.

I'd go back in a minute, but I wouldn't kiss that beaver again.

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



Big Fiddle owner and resident raconteur Trent Jewett.



Moonshine Creek Distillery owner Jeremiah Clark, whose grandfather had been a local bootlegger.

## OBITUARY

### Ryan



Marcia "Marti" Grace Ryan (nee Middleton) passed away with family at her side at the Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth on March 30, 2024 at the age of 78.

Predeceased by her beloved husband Joseph "Ronald" Ryan (2021). Mother of Kelly Ryan (Randy Mogk) and Dan

Ryan (Pam). Grandma of Taylor Baker (Steve), Mason Vernoo (Lauren) and Felicity Vernoo (Julien). Great-grandma of Blakelyn and Braxton Baker. Sister of Dan Middleton (Sharon), Brian Middleton (Tessa) and sister-in-law of Grant Barton. Predeceased by her parents Bertram and Mildred Middleton (nee MacKay) and siblings Susan Barton, and Jenny Henderson (Don).

Marcia's life was defined by her unwavering dedication to her family and friends. Her legacy is one of love, kindness, and generosity. Marcia touched the lives of countless people during her lifetime, through her career in nursing, and also in her teachings, her impact will continue to be felt for many years to come. Marcia's family and friends will take comfort in knowing that her memory will live on through the countless lives she impacted and examples of strength, courage, and kindness she set for us all.

Cremation to take place with a private family interment in St. Marys Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, donations of sympathy can be made to Rotary Hospice Stratford Perth or the St. Marys Healthcare Foundation. Online condolences at [www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca](http://www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca).

## OBITUARY

### Chambers



In Memory of

Kelvin Chambers

April 8, 1958 – April 5, 2024

It is with heavy hearts to announce that Kelvin passed away with family by his side at the University Hospital, London on April 5, 2024. Survived by his wife Brenda (nee Ballantyne) his daughter Michelle

McKeen (Matt), and his son Kevin. Special Papa to Nathan and Natalie McKeen. Also surviving, his mother Thelma Chambers, brothers Norm, Ed (Lynda), sister Diane Youngson (Dave) his mother-in-law Mabel Ballantyne, brothers-in-law Barry Ballantyne (Sandy) and Dale Ballantyne. Fondly remembered by many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by his father George Chambers (2005) and father-in-law Grant Ballantyne (1981). Kelvin was an employee at Vet Purchasing. He enjoyed bowling, volunteering at the Youth Bowling Programs, playing in the Men's League and Sunday Fun Day. The biggest joy in his life was spending time with his grandchildren and his pets.

The family would like to thank the doctors and nurses at Stratford General Hospital and University Hospital for their exceptional care and compassion. Cremation has taken place. Visitation will be held at the Andrew L. Hodges Funeral Home, 47 Wellington St. S. St. Marys, on Thursday, April 11, from 2 – 4 & 7 – 9 pm. A private family funeral will take place. In his memory, donations may be made to the Ontario Heart & Stroke Foundation, St. Marys Healthcare Foundation, or the Stratford Perth Humane Society. Online condolences at [www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca](http://www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca).

## OBITUARY

### Kelly

KELLY, Gary Stephen

November 13, 1955-February 24, 2024

KELLY, Gary Stephen, aged 68, of Stratford, Ontario, passed away in Kissimmee, Florida after a short, intense battle with pneumonia and influenza. This occurred near the end of a vacation with family and friends.

Gary was son of the late John Vernon Kelly and the late Margaret Lillian Barclay (Martin).

Gary is survived by his beloved wife Ann (DeLarge) and sons, Nathan, John and Matthew.

He is also survived by his siblings, Sharon Kelly, Edward Kelly, and Brenda (Karl) Douglas and was predeceased by his stepfather Wilfred Barclay, his sister Peggy Lou Ballantyne and his brother Brian Kelly.

Family and friends are invited to his Celebration of Life on Saturday, April 20, 2024 from 2pm-4pm at Bethel Pentecostal Church located at 2988 Highway 7 & 8, Stratford, ON.

## IN MEMORIAM

### Inch

William Inch

July 28, 1954- April 10, 2017

In Memory of my Dad



Something will remind me I never know just when, It might be something someone says

And it all comes back again.

The times we spent together

The happiness, the fun,

Once again I feel the pain

Of life without my Dad.

It's said that times a healer

I'm not sure this is true,

There's not a day goes by Dad

That I don't cry for you.

We miss you so much

Love Bryan, Angela, Jeff, Jenn, Melissa, Chris, Delaney, Aspen and Emmett

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South Nissouri Presbyterian Church, Thorndale, Ontario

Admission: \$10.00 per person; Children Under 10: Free



Pancakes & Maple Syrup, Sausages, Eggs, Toast, Muffins & Jam, Juice, Coffee, Tea. Nancy Fedyk 519-453-5236 Scott McKay 519-614-2268 South Nissouri Presbyterian Church located at the corner of Heritage Road and Oliver Road, Thorndale

## CELEBRATION



### Open House Birthday Celebration

for Carol Herbert's 85th birthday

St. Marys Anglican Church

April 13, 2024 from 1-4 pm

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1 pm – 3 pm

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Letter to the editor: A constructive call for clarity in carbon-pricing reporting

As a supporter of the St. Marys Independent, I've always believed in the indispensable role of local journalism to inform and empower our community. Yet, upon reading last week's issue, particularly the article titled "Carbon tax increase comes into effect this month despite controversy," I felt compelled to express my concerns regarding the statements attributed to Perth-Wellington MP John Nater, along with the broader implications of these viewpoints.

The piece, while informative, predominantly echoed political talking points without offering the rigorous analysis or diverse perspectives necessary for well-rounded discourse. The quotes from MP Nater were misleading at best and demonstrably false at worst. Presenting such claims without scrutiny missed a crucial opportunity to explore the complex issue of carbon pricing in a comprehensive manner. This approach does a disservice to the St. Marys community, as it deprives readers of the opportunity to form their own opinions based on a full spectrum of information. In the spirit of constructive criticism, I offer some suggestions to enhance the quality of reporting on complex issues like carbon pricing.

Firstly, a critical evaluation of the claims made by MP John Nater is essential. Nater is quoted as stating that carbon pricing "significantly harms rural communities, including farmers, agribusinesses and local small businesses because other alternatives are not available in communities like ours. Drying grain, heating barns and running farm equipment all use fuel and, unfortunately, there are no other alternatives in rural areas." This perspective, while tapping into real fears of economic hardship, overlooks a crucial aspect of the policy's design. Our farmers' fuel costs are exempt from the carbon pricing policy, effectively eliminating the financial impact of the policy on agricultural operations.

Additionally, the narrative that carbon pricing indiscriminately burdens rural households doesn't withstand scrutiny. Data from the Parliamentary Budget Officer, an independent, non-partisan agent, reveals that more than 80 per cent of Canadian households receive more in rebates than they pay in "carbon taxes," with 94 per cent of low-in-

come families benefiting even more. This evidence refutes the claim of "significant harm," presenting carbon pricing as a policy that encourages environmental stewardship without unduly penalizing rural communities.

Moreover, MP Nater's critique of the carbon pricing model as a politically motivated policy that lacks real environmental benefits overlooks the widespread international consensus on the efficacy of carbon pricing. Its adoption by more than 40 countries across the political spectrum, and endorsement by esteemed bodies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, affirm its capability to markedly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The policy's scientific underpinning and effectiveness are further validated by the Nobel Prize awarded to economist William Nordhaus for his pioneering work in developing the carbon-pricing model. These points challenge the notion that it's merely a political strategy without substantive environmental impact.

Finally, a comprehensive exploration of carbon pricing would greatly benefit from detailed analyses and context regarding both its economic and environmental impacts, thus moving beyond the reductive view of referring to it as merely a "tax." Carbon pricing is currently the most effective economic policy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions because it directly applies a cost to emitting carbon dioxide, incentivizing businesses and individuals alike to reduce their carbon footprint by adopting cleaner, more efficient practices and technologies. This approach ensures that those who produce greenhouse gas emissions are financially responsible for the costs they impose on society and the environment.

The path toward understanding complex policy issues like carbon pricing is paved with facts, analysis, and a diversity of viewpoints. By adhering to these journalistic principles, the St. Marys Independent can continue to be a trusted source of local news and a vital resource for an engaged and informed community.

Callum Hughson

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## LOOKING BACK



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

### Poop and scoop

25 years ago (1999)

It's a simple premise: if you're out walking your dog and it poops, you must scoop. Mayor Jamie Hahn says he's getting three or four complaints each week lately about the lack of compliance by pet owners, especially along the Riverview Walkway.

Residents at Wildwood Care Centre participated in this month's theme "Babies" with related programs such as remembering their childhood, giving advice to new mothers, guessing who's who from baby pictures of residents and staff displayed in the activity room, and a baby show.

A former St. Marys girl, now living in the Gravenhurst area, recently had a hockey experience she won't soon forget. Allison Cubberley, a 12-year-old goaltender, faced a barrage of shots from members of the Beatrice Aeros of Toronto, one of the top women's hockey teams in Ontario. Four Canadian Olympic team members who play for the Aeros were on the ice. Allison was invited to the practice by Aero's head coach.

50 years ago (1974)

The Rabies Clinic held at the Town Garage on Widder Street last Wednesday kept veterinarians and clerks busy as 409 dogs, 275 cats, 5 ponies and 5 rabbits received their shot.

Cook's, a farm supply firm with plants in Hensall and Centralia, are presently building a branch on the County Road just west of Kirkton.

Krista and Jamie Riordan are quite sad these days as the result of the loss of their family pet, Patches, who is a friendly hound. Patches wandered away last week and has not returned.

75 years ago (1949)

Observers of nature noticed that the snakes were out from their winter hibernation on Monday.

No trace has yet been found of a meteorite which was believed headed for this part of Ontario Sunday night. Observers saw a brilliant light in the sky as the meteorite dashed towards the earth.

The Model T. Ford still has quite an appeal for youth around these parts. John Glover has a 1916 model he has been putting in shape all winter, and John Wilson, another Collegiate student, has recently acquired an ancient model T with plenty of chug left in it.

100 years ago (1924)

St. Marys Muskraters are creating havoc among the furry citizens of the Thames. One trapper caught six in one night.

Henry Ford is going to spend a million dollars for advertising this year. After all that publicity, everybody should recognize a Ford car when they see one.

Two motorists from Stratford had some difficulty in getting through to St. Marys on Friday. It took them four hours to make the trip, after being stuck in the mud and snow several times.

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## QUIZ ANSWERS

- |                     |                  |
|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. 1861-1865        | 6. Pinocchio     |
| 2. The Chicago Cubs | 7. Porcupette    |
| 3. Diamond          | 8. Sesame Street |
| 4. Polish zloty     | 9. Bamboo        |
| 5. 1976             | 10. Jesus Christ |

## SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

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

Thorndale Library April events - See Page 23

St. Marys Library events - See Page 29

#### Friday, April 12

- Royal Canadian Legion hot dog/sausage lunch at Noon
- Ontario Nurses' Association information picket at 100 Ann St - 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 p.m.
- Game Six - St. Marys Lincolns vs London Nationals at the PRC - 7:30 p.m.

#### Saturday, April 13

- South Nissouri Presbyterian Church (Thorndale) pancake breakfast - 7:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
- Hazardous & special products disposal at the MOC - 8 a.m. - Noon
- Stratford Home & Leisure Show, Rotary Complex, Stratford - 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
- Queensview Retirement open house, 70 King Edward St, Paris - 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 p.m.

#### Sunday, April 14

- Stratford Home & Leisure Show, Rotary Complex, Stratford - 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Game Seven - St. Marys Lincolns vs London Nationals at Western Fair Sports Centre - 7 p.m.

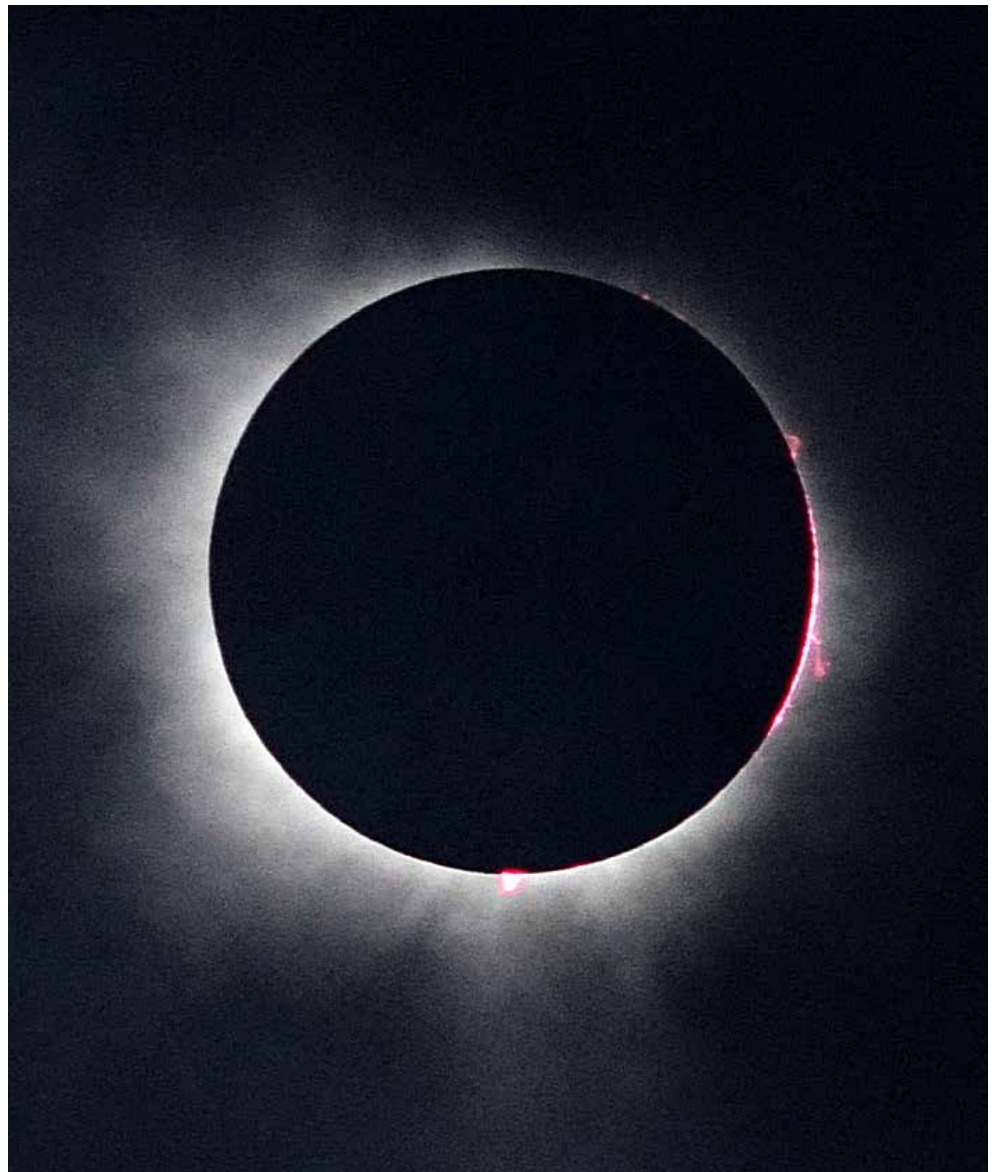
#### Wednesday, April 17

- Betty's Bookshop cookbook book club meal at the Flour Mill - See [www.bettysbookshelf.com](http://www.bettysbookshelf.com) for info
- St. Marys Poetry Circle "Dinner Poetry" at Tutt Co. bistro - 7 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- Huron Perth Healthcare virtual info session via Zoom - RSVP 519-272-8205 or [susan.davey@hpha.ca](mailto:susan.davey@hpha.ca)

## St. Marys Independent

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St. Marys resident Gord Barnett shot these photos of the total solar eclipse Monday afternoon from Caledonia. In Caledonia, the eclipse began around 2:03 p.m. and reached totality around 3:17 p.m. with peak darkness lasting roughly two and a half minutes. Photos by Gord Barnett