

# Tillsonburg POST

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## Council aims for increase of 3%-plus in budget

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tillsonburg town council is aiming for a budget increase of three percent in 2025, plus an increase in OPP costs for a wage settlement that is outside the town's control.

Council started the budget session on Nov. 18 with a \$3.4 million increase in expenditures which would require a 13.69 per cent tax rate increase over 2024. This would equate to a \$332 tax hike for a home with an assessment value of \$242,000. Discretionary items included in the budget, which could be removed,

totalled \$592,000, bringing the tax rate increase down to 10.92 per cent, of a \$272 increase for an average home.

Breaking the increase down further, there is a 13.68 per cent increase in the operating budget and three per cent in the capital. Planned large capital items include

- Ice resurfacer - \$250,000
- Cranberry Line reconstruction - \$1.8 million
- Cranberry Line storm sewers - \$1.4 million
- Kinsmen pedestrian bridge - \$4.7 million
- Lake Lisgar water park liner - \$300,000

CONTINUED TO PAGE 2

## New food bank coordinator organizing Christmas food drive

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Trial by fire might be a good way to describe starting the position of food bank coordinator before Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Samantha Hamilton started as the coordinator of the Helping Hand Food Bank at the end of September. With Thanksgiving only days away, she didn't have much time to learn the ropes—not that there's really a time when the food bank isn't busy. With more time on the job, she is well prepared

for Christmas and has some new ideas and approaches.

Hamilton is from Hamilton originally and moved here 11 years ago after she visited Tillsonburg and "fell in love with it." She loved it so much that she also moved her parents to town. As a real estate agent, she was involved in Hockey Moms and several committees in town. Hamilton knew some of her volunteer opportunities were time limited and would not continue in the new year, so she started looking and came across the advertisement for Tillsonburg Helping Hand Food Bank coordinator.

CONTINUED TO PAGE 12



### SANTA CLAUS PARADE DRAWS HUGE CROWD

Tillsonburg's second night-time Santa Claus parade was a huge success, drawing massive crowds to the streets on Nov. 16. Organized by the Optimist Club, the parade was over one hour long. See Pages 8 and 9 for more photos.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)



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# Original Tillsonburg budget came in at 16% hike

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

• Shell - \$722,000 - Includes \$45,000 clock tower repairs, \$150,000 for waterpark roof replacement, \$50,000 for the Lions' Den canopy, and \$477,000 for the indoor pool roof replacement

On the operating side, revenues are projected to increase by \$1.1 million to \$12.6 million, but expenditures would increase by nearly \$4 million to \$33.2 million. The largest increase is in labour, nearly \$2 million. The second biggest increase is in contracted services, \$726,333.

The report identified several budgetary pressures, of which the largest was an increase of \$804,481 in policing costs. Inflationary costs for tenders are up 4.8 per cent, and inflation on wages is up three per cent. Employer payroll costs are up 16 per cent, or \$415,000, to cover increased pension, EI, CPP, and associated costs. Debt principal and interest are up \$255,000 or 16 per cent to total \$1.8 million. Rent revenue decreased by \$150,000 from Tillsonburg Hydro Inc. There is a proposed addition of 13 new full-time equivalent staff in 2025, projected at \$1.9 million in 2025. This would bring the staffing total to 168.9. IT costs are up \$150,000.

Discussing the policing increase further, it was revealed it was due to the provincial government's pay freeze, which the court later found was illegal. The increase is to pay retroactive pay back to 2022. Deputy Mayor Dave Beres said the issue is one all municipalities are facing and was discussed at a convention he attended. Mayor Deb Gilvesy also heard from other mayors they are facing varying significant increases.

Council spent a fair amount of time discussing the largest capital item in the budget—the Kinsmen bridge in Participark. When the bridge was last inspected in 2019, it was estimated to have one to five years of life left. The estimated \$4.69-million cost is for a pre-manufactured bridge that would be dropped on the site. Estimates are the bridge has 250

to 500 users per day.

Director of Finance/Treasurer Renato Pullia explained that the bridge could be paid as a large capital item through debt financing or a combination of both. The other option was to remove the bridge, which would cost \$1 to \$1.5 million.

Coun. Chris Parker said the bridge is well used and decommissioning it shouldn't be on the table.

"It's a key connecting link to the downtown," he added.

Gilvesy suggested new funding streams from other levels of government, mentioning that grants often come up before an election.

Pullia answered that grants have been applied twice for the project, and the problem is that it doesn't fit any funding model. Beres said bridges fall under the Ministry of Infrastructure and pedestrian bridges aren't high on their priority list.

"I think it would need a political push to your point there's an election around the corner," Pullia said.

Gilvesy noted that whenever a municipality tenders for a project, the price is inflated compared to the private sector. She suggested that the tendering process may be part of the issue.

"The Kinsmen from day one have been active on this project and feel they can do it more efficiently," she said, adding that money raised through lotteries has restrictions that wouldn't allow it to be used for the bridge.

Coun. Chris Parker said he understands that Tillsonburg Minor Ball wants to help with the future cost of diamond renovations.

When Gilvesy asked how the Kinsmen could take control of the project, Pullia said the bridge would need to become the club's. He explained the town has guiding principles for tenders and doesn't have the same latitude as a private entity.

Beres suggested a 'buy-a-brick' campaign but said it would likely raise less than \$200,000 and added that service

clubs can't raise \$4.6 million.

Gilvesy put forward a motion directing staff to prepare a report looking at funding partnerships with service clubs.

CAO Kyle Pratt informed the council that senior leadership had discussed this at a recent meeting and is working on a list of potential projects.

Council also dealt with several requests to increase staffing: a request to increase part-time staffing for the fire department for fire prevention, education, and maintenance, a part-time finance position, that a temporary full-time position in economic development be extended for three years, the addition of 3.7 full-time equivalents to public works and adding 2.8 full-time equivalents to aquatics to replace positions prior to the pool closing for construction. The council approved the positions to move to the budget but has not yet approved these.

Regarding operations positions, Gilvesy remarked that the town is assuming a lot of grass cutting with new subdivisions. She mentioned the possibility of requiring residents to cut the small section of grass between the sidewalk and the road. Director of operations Jonathan Graham said this would require looking at service levels. He said winter clearing of sidewalks is another area, noting it impacts fleet, staff, and equipment.

Parker questioned \$155,000 for a feasibility study for a new arena and multi-use facility. Saying town staff control arena bookings, he added, "Based on what I've seen, we should be able to see if we need an additional facility or not." That was eliminated from the budget, along with \$50,000 for a culture and heritage master plan.

Council also passed a motion directing staff to submit a report on reducing, suspending, or altering the asset management plan funding for 2025.

On the long term horizon, the big projects on the books are the town hall in 2026 (\$17 million), fire hall renovation

and expansion in 2027 (\$3 million), new public works yard in 2030 (\$14 million), gymnasium and multi-use space in 2030 (\$7.5 million) and a third ice pad in 2034 (\$28.9 million). Do note these projects still need to be finalized and council is still reviewing the amount it will spend on a town hall. The intent is for these projects to be paid by a combination of the proceeds of the sale of land, reserves, and debt.

Presenting a motion requesting staff to reduce the budget to align with the Consumer Price Index increase of 3.08 per cent, plus the increase in OPP costs that are out of the town's control, Parsons said, "This is a difficult budget for the people of Tillsonburg, and we need to do something." Coun. Pete Luciani seconded the motion, which also directed staff to look at services, conferences, discretionary items, staffing, salaries, capital levy, and any other potential area to be examined to provide efficiencies and cost savings to the ratepayer.

Parker, who repeated a message from Gilvesy earlier in the meeting about budget items approved during the year, said that with the previously approved expenditures, staff would have to go back on those decisions or cut services.

"I'm fully supportive of sending it back to get rid of the stuff that is discretionary but I also think we are also going to have to do some work around this council chamber to bring this budget down," he said.

Prior to closing the meeting, Gilvesy brought forward a motion, seconded by Parker, to review "urban design, disposing of lands adjacent to roadways, services, service levels and roadside forestry be reviewed with the goal of streamlining services, finding efficiencies and reducing pressure on labour and costs to our ratepayers." Admitting this was a big task, she didn't expect this to be completed for the budget but throughout the year.

The next budget meeting is Dec. 16.

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# EDITORIAL

## Tillsonburg's small-town vibe attracts energy healer



**EVERYONE  
HAS A  
STORY  
TO TELL**

ROBIN KRAFFT

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

Arriving from larger urban centres, some of the newer residents of Tillsonburg have unique skills and interests to share. Raised in Cambridge and later living in Brantford, Melissa Dos Santos settled here in 2022 with her partner Jeff Sousa. The rapid growth of Ontario's cities wasn't the environment they wanted for raising a family. Tillsonburg's history, quiet lifestyle and vivid night skies pulled Melissa in.

"There's a lot to do here," she said, "but it's small and there's a reassuring and comforting vibe." She trusted her intuition.

A trip to Banff in 2017 had inspired her to start Nova Stone, with a collection of rocks and crystals, but it led to intensive personal growth. Melissa is an intuitive chakra energy healer. She hosts events that include learning about chakras, reading tea leaves, working with crystals, lunar cycles, and setting intention. She aims to inspire transformation, healing and growth, regardless of religious affiliation or background.

"What I do is meant to augment your explorations and to help people open up that spiritual side of themselves," she explained.

Her interest in compassionate support and guidance doesn't stop there; Melissa worked in the invitro fertil-

ization (IVF) field for 12 years.

"Adoption is a really difficult and complicated process," she said, "and I worked closely with so many families who were yearning. Some had spent thousands of dollars to pay for expensive treatments and were still unsuccessful."

Currently expecting her second child, Melissa acknowledges with gratitude that "for some of us it just happens so easily." For others, it is a painful and difficult journey. Her desire to help has never wavered, and Melissa recently started a Facebook group in order to be a resource for people navigating infertility and the IVF world. She has maintained her connections with various agencies and discretely offers information about the process, but she's also completing her certification as a womb healing practitioner.

For now, her primary focus is on spending time with her young son before the family dynamic changes. He enjoys daily educational activities and children's yoga, but he's been quite an explorer too. In addition to familiar favorites like visiting the water park, the beach or a museum, the family has embarked on eco globe adventures in Northern Ontario, off grid. Other trips are on a larger scale, with extended family members all traveling together to spend time in Portugal.

"It's a different lifestyle," Melissa said, "with wood burning ovens, baking bread, and backyards that are like farmland, including vineyards and fruit trees."

There's no need to go to a grocery store when you can simply go into the backyard to collect collards, lemons and a chicken in order to prepare a family meal. There

is always a café within walking distance to meet up with friends on a daily basis.

"It's a very European lifestyle," Melissa said, "it's very social."

These trips represent an opportunity for the family to reconnect to their roots. Her grandfather came to Canada when her father was only 13. He met Melissa's mother at the Portuguese Club and won her over with his dance moves. Her family was part of a close-knit community, spending every weekend at the Portuguese Club for festivals, pageants, parades and important religious events. It was also where Melissa met Jeff, although they went in different directions for several years before reuniting.

Melissa's generation had become more mainstream, but her parents ensured that their children would be steeped in their culture. Melissa and her sister went to a regular school but also attended Portuguese school twice a week, and she took extra high school credits, learning to read and write in Portuguese, as well as studying Portugal's history.

For the young couple, (Jeff's family comes from the neighbouring Azores), it was a meaningful pilgrimage. Against the backdrop of the Atlantic Ocean and the natural beauty of rolling green landscapes, they explored markets, castles, and cobblestone pathways, enjoyed wholesome meals and making memories with family. Canada is home, but the rich legacy of their cultural heritage is an integral part of their identity. While Melissa continues to evolve on her spiritual path and share her journey with others, that solid foundation remains her touchstone.

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# Now is the time to act on climate change



**THE  
STAGE  
IS THE  
WORLD**

**LAUREL A. BEECHEY**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

A recent email started like this: Once upon a time, life almost ended on Earth. According to Britannica, “Unfortunately, it was not a fairy tale, it was fact about 251.9 million years ago and included the dinosaurs. It is known as the Permian–Triassic extinction. With 57 per cent of biological families, 83 per cent of species, 81 per cent of marine species and 70 per cent of terrestrial vertebrate species, including mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians and the largest known mass extinction of insects. It is also called The Great Dying.” <https://www.britannica.com/science/Permian-extinction>

David Suzuki recently wrote: “Scientists predict that this year we’ll exceed the 1.5° C limit for warming set by countries in the 2015 Paris climate agreement. Meanwhile, Canada and the U.S. are set-

ting records for oil and gas production, and industry would like to keep it that way. It is increasing levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide from burning gas, oil and coal. The ‘Great Dying’ was the largest mass-extinction in history -- caused by temperatures rising so fast, it killed 90 per cent of all life. <https://community.david-suzuki.org/index.php/email/emailWeb-view?ftf=true>

Today, even though the planet is heating even faster, and species are going extinct at a much higher rate, Canadians have become apathetic to the challenge of saving and repairing what we at least still have now for their children and grandchildren. This is something you can do! You may not like some of the changes, but you need to change. You need to teach your family and friends to stop or at least slow down the next Great Dying!

Scientists have warned that total ecosystem collapse is “inevitable.” We are no longer fighting climate change, we are now in climate crisis!

In the Yale Environment 360 magazine article from May 18, 2023 by Fed Pearce, he reaffirms that global climate change is due to humans. We know now that “upper layers of atmosphere have also been affected, have become colder over the arctic, cause; the loss of ozone which protects us.” So?

Human existence depends on a delicate

balance of ecosystems -- and they are now unbalanced a Yale article says: “The planet is warming 10 times faster than any point in the last 65 million years -- yet carbon emissions are still rising as governments permit deadly new fossil fuel projects. Our very survival is on the line, and the latest UN reports from climate scientists are clear: we are rapidly approaching the threshold of extreme climate disruption.” <https://e360.yale.edu/features/climate-change-upper-atmosphere-cooling>

On earth or in space, humans like to just throw garbage away. Now there is another problem with the cooling upper atmosphere, it will hit the point that the Space Garbage will come down. That is “More than 5000 active and defunct satellites, including the International Space Station, accompanied by more than 30,000 known items of debris more than four inches in diameter” <https://e360.yale.edu/features/climate-change-upper-atmosphere-cooling>

When your children/grandchildren and future generations are born, where can they grow up secure in having food, water and shelter? Who will teach them to grow, preserve and store food, when imported food from affected countries stops coming?

Think of this as a war, but the weapon of mass destruction is fossil fuels which are causing poisonous gasses that have

changed our atmosphere and causing the radical changes on earth. The changes are creating more weapons: tornados, hurricanes, volcanos, wildfires, droughts, and flooding from permafrost and ice sheets melting, all causing loss of jobs, homelessness, starvation, and human migration.

As it keeps getting hotter; people in equatorial areas like Panama, and even with subtropical and tropical climates like Florida, have to move towards the cooler poles. “Climate Migration 101: An Explainer feature, by Lawrence Huang explains how the climate is now increasing human migration. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/climate-migration-101-explainer#policies>

How do we get governments, especially our Canadian and the US, to look at the facts, to stop killing our world? Get the facts not someone’s opinions [even mine!]. Large petition groups like AVAAZ, which has 70,000,000 members have lawsuits to force governments into radical climate action. They are 100 percent funded by people, not corporations or governments. <https://secure.avaaz.org/victories>

The person I trust to learn about our climate crisis is David Suzuki, he even has a petition you can sign if you wish. <https://davidsuzuki.org/action/say-yes-to-affordable-secure-renewable-power/>

Now is the time to learn read the links I have used to understand more.



Two sure signs of fall are fog and Canada geese congregating on Lake Lisgar.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

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# OPP looking for witnesses in Cty. Rd. 13 collision

The Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) is looking for witnesses of a single-vehicle collision that occurred in Norwich Township.

On Nov. 9, at approximately 3:30 p.m., members from the Oxford detachment of the OPP responded to a single vehicle collision on Oxford Road 13 between Springford and Newark.

The passenger vehicle entered the ditch and

collided with a hydro pole. No injuries were reported at the time of the incident by the lone occupant.

If you have any information that may help with the investigation including dash cam footage, please contact the Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122. If you wish to remain anonymous you can call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.



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## Assault in Oxford County results in injuries and charges

The Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) responded to an assault in the Town of Tillsonburg that sent two individuals to hospital and led to multiple charges.

On Nov. 17, at approximately 1 a.m., members from the Oxford detachment of the OPP were called to an address on Dogwood Drive in the Town of Tillsonburg for the report of an assault. Two individuals were taken to the hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries.

As a result of the investigation, a 21-years-of-age resident of Tillsonburg was charged with the following offences:

- Assault with a Weapon (two counts)
- Aggravated Assault

- Pointing a Firearm
- Use Imitation Firearm While Committing an Offence
- Possession of Weapon for Dangerous Purpose
- Fail to Comply with Probation Order
- Fail to Comply with Release Order
- Possession of Firearm Ammunition Contrary to Prohibition Order

The accused has been held in custody awaiting a bail hearing.

If you have information related to this incident, please contact Oxford OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or \*677 from a cell phone. If you wish to remain anonymous you can call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

## Ontario building more electric vehicle chargers in Oxford County

Ontario is building 68 new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in Oxford. This marks a major milestone in the province's plan to increase access to EV chargers outside of large urban centres and support the electrification of transportation across the province. As the province continues to see substantial job creation and investment in the growing EV and EV battery manufacturing sector, these new charging stations will provide critical supporting infrastructure in communities across the province, including for EVs made right here in Ontario.

"For EV drivers finding a charging station that's close by and available can mean the difference between a quick stop and a time-consuming detour that takes time away from work, school or family," said Ernie Hardeman, MPP for Oxford. "I'm proud to be delivering 68 new EV charging stations in communities across Oxford to make life easier and more convenient for drivers."

These new chargers, part of the government's \$63 million EV ChargeON Program Community Sites Stream, will be located at:

- 4 new chargers at 680 Broadway in Tillsonburg

- 3 new chargers at Princeton hall
- 10 new chargers at Holiday Inn Express in Woodstock
- 3 new chargers at Bright Park
- 24 new chargers at Home2Suites by Hilton in Woodstock
- 3 new chargers at Drumbo Park
- 3 new chargers at Quality Hotel and Suites, Woodstock
- 3 new chargers at Plattsville Memorial Park
- 4 new chargers at Woodstock Medical Centre
- 8 new chargers at Woodstock Hospital
- 3 new chargers at Zorra Municipal and Child Care Centre

Each new EV charging site will include Level 2 charging stations, Level 3 charging stations, or a combination of the two. The government has also launched a new Ultra-Low Overnight Electricity Price Plan and is exploring options for an Electric Vehicle Charger Discount Electricity Rate to further support EV adoption and reduce emissions. The new Ultra-Low Overnight Electricity Price Plan is helping customers who use more electricity at night, including those who charge their electric vehicle, save up to \$90 per year.

## Tillsonburg unveils new downtown gift card, holiday catalogue



Naomi Dube, BIA digital marketing and activations coordinator, holds a mock-up of the new Downtown Tillsonburg Gift Card. The card replaces the prior downtown dollars paper cheque system run by the BIA. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Tillsonburg is making local shopping more convenient and exciting with the launch of the new Downtown Tillsonburg Gift Card, which can be used at participating restaurants, stores, and venues throughout the downtown area.

As part of an ongoing effort to encourage a shop local trend, the gift card replaces the previous Downtown Dollars paper cheque system, providing a modern and easy-to-use solution for both locals and visitors alike.

To help shoppers discover the many offerings in downtown Tillsonburg, the new Downtown Tillsonburg Gift Card is featured in the Tillsonburg Business Improvement Area's (BIA) newly released Hometown Holiday Catalogue. This catalogue, available for download digitally, highlights the variety of local businesses that accept the Gift Card and showcases the great gift-giving possibilities available in the downtown core. The Hometown Holiday Catalogue can be downloaded from the official website at [www.downtowntillsonburg.com](http://www.downtowntillsonburg.com).

"Downtown Dollars was successful at helping keep dollars local but the paper cheques were time consuming," Mark Renaud, Executive Director at Tillsonburg BIA, said. "Tillsonburg is a growing town with a proud history and our new gift card matches our aspirations for the future. With one Downtown Tillsonburg Gift Card, people can enjoy our family-owned businesses, unique shops and diverse range of downtown restaurants, as well as big box stores within the downtown core. There really is something for everyone."

The Downtown Tillsonburg Gift Card is also being supported by Tillsonburg Town Centre, with the Gift Card replacing their

existing program.

"Historically, Tillsonburg Town Centre offered a gift certificate program," said Roselyn D'Ascanio, Director, Brand Strategy & Marketing at Salthill Capital, owners and managers of Tillsonburg Town Centre. "However, with all the positive changes happening at the shopping centre and throughout Tillsonburg, we felt that it was time to modernize and improve this offering, while simultaneously partnering with the community to ensure our customers are getting the best value and experience."

Each business that accepts the gift card will have a sticker on their door saying the gift card is accepted there.

Along with the gift card, the BIA is launching its Hometown Holiday Catalogue. The catalogue is reminiscent of the old Sear's Christmas catalogue, and will have promotions, discounts and stories about businesses. The catalogue is available to the public online at [www.downtowntillsonburg.com](http://www.downtowntillsonburg.com). One copy will be available for browsing at downtown businesses, and will have QR codes for each business.

"As the team behind the Downtown Tillsonburg Gift Card and the Hometown Holiday Catalogue, we're proud to offer a tool that helps bring our community closer together," said Vanessa Fortner, BIA events and marketing coordinator. "The gift card makes it easy for locals and visitors alike to support the wonderful businesses in our downtown core, and we hope everyone in Tillsonburg enjoys a happy and prosperous holiday season. Whether you're shopping for gifts, dining out, or exploring our unique stores, we're excited to see the positive impact this initiative will have on our local economy."

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# SANTA CLAUS PARADE

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



Elves with Flooring Canada displayed the latest in light-up jewelry.



The design of many of the floats in the parade was quite impressive, including this train pulling the TD float.



Bird's golf provided an interesting and fun take on the Elf movie.



The real meaning of Christmas was not lost in the parade with several floats featuring nativity scenes.



Beyond the traditional bagpipe and brass bands, this trio provided a little rock, although they didn't rock around a Christmas tree.





Even the dogs had a good time during the parade. This dog was part of the Pet Valu float, promoting Helping Paws Pet Rescue.



This volunteer with the Tillsonburg Multi-Service Centre was having fun handing out candy during the parade.



Firefighter Bruce Hietkamp was one of the members of the fire department collecting food during the parade.



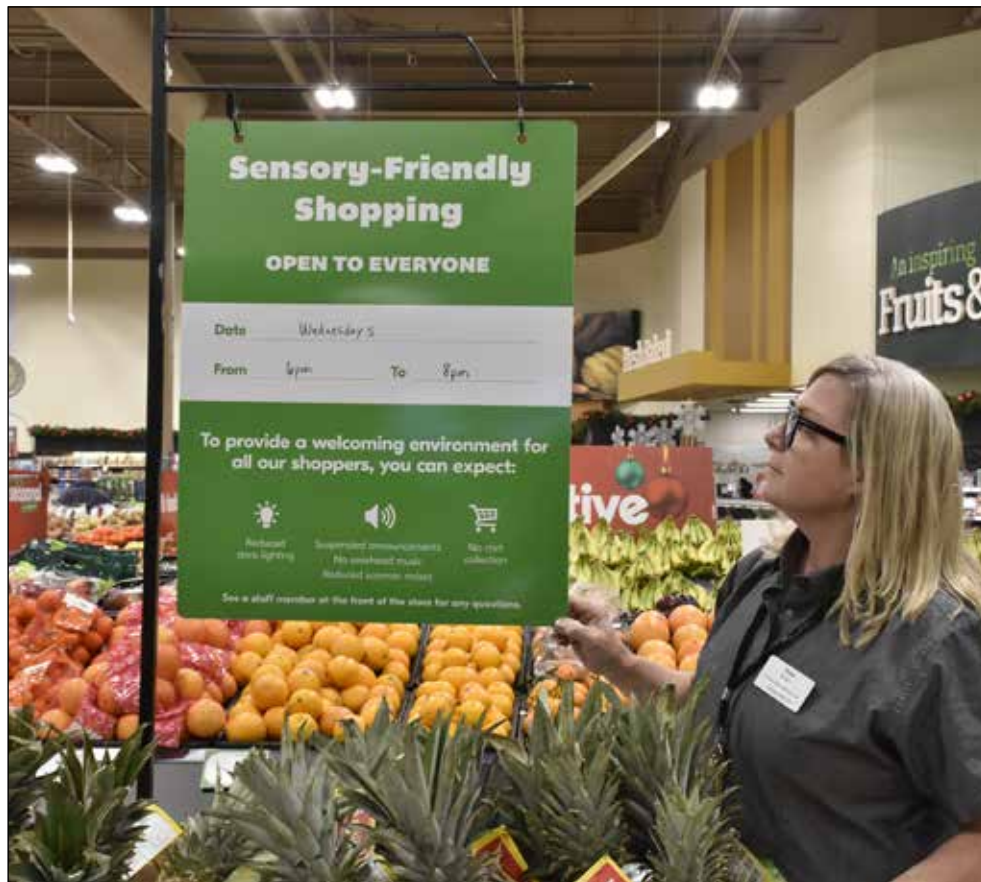
Town crier Brenda Boszo was in front of members of parade organizers with the Tillsonburg Optimist Club.



Doug the Great, an area still walker who has thrilled parade crowds for years, donned his lit costume for the Tillsonburg parade.



# Sensory shopping provides quiet time



Sobey's franchise operator Wendy Cameron hangs the sign letting customers know about the sensory shopping program where the store lights are dimmed and noise is minimized. The program has gone over well, and is appreciated during the holidays.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Shoppers looking for an escape from the hustle and bustle of Christmas can find it with sensory shopping at Sobey's.

Wednesday evenings from 6 to 8 p.m., the music is turned off in the store, the lights are dimmed and there is no cart collection or announcements.

"It's just quiet for two hours," said franchise operator Wendy Cameron.

This isn't a new program, but is one

that Cameron likes to highlight during Christmas.

"Anyone who doesn't like over-stimulation in their surroundings, anyone with autism and those with children with disabilities, they feel comfortable bringing their children in then," she said.

Since implementing sensory shopping on Wednesday nights, Cameron has had positive feedback from customers.

"To come in when it's quiet and not be overstimulated, I think it's a nice thing," she said.



## HOLIDAY HOME TOUR

The return of the Holiday Tour of Homes was a success, with more than 200 people visiting the homes on the tour. Organized by the Station Arts Centre, this long-standing event was cancelled during COVID and returned this year. Karen Horeth, left, and Kimberley Scott were awed by the display in one of the homes on the tour.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

# Salvation Army launches Christmas Appeal

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

If there's one program that highlights the spirit of giving at Christmas, it's The Salvation Army's Kettle Campaign.

The Salvation Army has been running its Kettle Campaign for more than a century, and the 2024 edition of the campaign started on Nov. 14. The group and its volunteers will be at locations throughout town until Dec. 24.

The goal for this year's campaign is \$185,000. Last year's goal was \$175,000, and Tillsonburg and area residents ] donated \$172,000. Lt. Drew Young, pastor at the Tillsonburg Salvation Army, is looking forward to a successful campaign.

"This year is going to help us maintain and grow our hub," he said.

This year's campaign started with Tillsonburg Mayor Deb Gilvesy making the first donation.

"I'm always honoured to kick off the Kettle Campaign," she said on Nov. 14. "I'd like to congratulate the Salvation Army for being entrenched in the community for 140 years. Ninety-six cents of every dollar raised stays in the community. What makes the Salvation Army so special is their volunteers."

In conjunction with the Kettle Campaign, the Salvation Army is also running a toy drive drop-off until Dec. 18. New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off in the bin in the Tillsonburg Town Centre outside Wal-Mart. These will be distributed to local children.

Kettles will be located outside Wal-Mart and the LCBO in the Tillsonburg Town Centre, in Sobey's, Canadian Tire,

Metro, Zehrs and at the Salvation Army Thrift Store on Broadway. There is also a location run in Port Rowan by the Tillsonburg Salvation Army. Besides the traditional kettle for cash donations, there are tip tap devices that will take electronic payments via credit card, debit or smart phones. Receipts can be issued for electronic donations that meet a minimum threshold.

The donations fund The Salvation Army's Christmas hamper campaign, which helped 283 households and 300 children last year.

"It's enough to celebrate Christmas Day and a few days after," Young said. "For those who are in need of toys for children, we provide toys as well."

The Christmas program is by application only. For more information on the application process, call 519-842-3231, extension 104.

The Kettle Campaign also helps fund The Salvation Army Hub Program. This includes a variety of Salvation Army programs, such as food programs through the year, providing assistance with LEAP, ODSP, hydro, and government forms and the children's back-to-school backpack program.

"The money raised this year goes into next year," Young said.

The Salvation Army is also looking for volunteers to work at the Kettle Campaign. Anyone wishing to volunteer, can phone 519-842-3231.

Outside of the Kettle Campaign, the Tillsonburg Ministerial Association and many local businesses and agencies are partners in collecting food for the hamper program.



The 2024 Salvation Army Kettle Campaign started with Mayor Deb Gilvesy, centre, making the first donation. Salvation Army pastor Lt. Drew Young, left, and long-time volunteer Doreen Gunkel were operating the location in the Tillsonburg Town Centre.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)



## Town requested to remove library lane walkway



The covered walkway at One Library Lane may not continue to be covered if business owners in the area are granted their wish. Tillsonburg council requested a report looking at possible improvements, safety issues and associated costs. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)



The unevenness between the bricks and sidewalk in front of One Library Lane is a hazard and creates an accessibility challenge, business owners allege. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The covered walkway between Scotiabank and the library may have its days numbered.

Tyler Coghill, appeared as a delegation before council representing business owners in the area of One Library Lane, and pointed out some of the issues with the covered sidewalk and the roof above it.

“There’s some safety issues related to uneven ground, some accessibility issues created by that as well as general public safety issues and the overall condition of the covered walkway,” he said, while showing slides that highlighted the uneven surfaces between the bricks and concrete.

Coghill said the OPP raised a safety concern due to the poor line of sight through the area. There were issues with the area when businesses were shut down during COVID, but Coghill said that has been resolved.

“The outstanding issue not addressed is the sightlines created by the pillars,” he said, adding a person can hide behind the pillars.

There is also deterioration of the sidewalk, bricks and pillars supporting the roof.

“It is impacting the businesses at 1 Library Lane and we don’t want to deter potential customers,” he said.

Coun. Kelly Spencer mentioned the possibility of using mirrors to see if there are people behind the pillars, which she was told hadn’t been looked at.

When Deputy Mayor Dave Beres asked Coghill what he would like the town to do, the business owner answered, “It’s town property. The ideal situation for us is removal of the covering. That’s how we create a safer space. Because it’s covered, people like to grab a coffee, stand in front of the library and block that space and it’s actually a walkway and it does get crowded. Removal would be ideal and it is the lowest capital cost.”

Beres suggested an engineering report to provide options. Mayor Deb Gilvesy agreed, saying she has had a vision for the area to remove the covering and make it brighter.

Council passed a motion asking that a report be brought to council through the budget in regards to walkway improvements, safety issues and associated costs.

## Tillsonburg council calls for increased representation at Oxford County council

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Tillsonburg is looking to increase its voice at Oxford County council.

Council members were presented with a report based on a request from the Economic Development Advisory Committee at the Nov. 14 meeting. The resolution from the committee requested that town council send a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the Premier of Ontario, requesting that Tillsonburg have equitable representation on county council based on the number of people in the town.

Tillsonburg, Ingersoll, and the rural communities currently have one representative on Oxford County Council, while Woodstock has three. Tillsonburg’s population has increased substantially since that formulation was put in place.

Coun. Kelly Spencer said she talked to MPP Ernie Hardeman at an event, and he advised her that the letter should go to Oxford County Council. Mayor Deb Gilvesy, the town’s representative on county council, said this issue was being examined in 2020 and then was sidetracked when COVID hit. She suggested the Tillsonburg representative having two votes is another possibility.

Deputy Mayor Dave Beres said if the MPP suggested sending it to the county, then that might be the preferred route. He remembered that in 2020, former Oxford County Warden Larry Martin said this wasn’t something the county was interested in.

“The missing piece is to take this to Oxford County for review and see what they feel, rather than to go beyond them to the ministry which this resolution implies,” he said. “What I would like to see as a resolution is it forwarded to Oxford County and Oxford County can carry it forward.”

Coun. Chris Parker said this has been a lingering issue for Tillsonburg and it’s a stalemate at the county. He said the province will need to step in at some point.

“We have five rural votes and we have five urban votes; you’re not going to get a two-third majority either way and at some point it will have to go to the province anyways,” he said. “We have grown so much either a second representative or a second vote is needed. We don’t have proper representation.”

Coun. Bob Parsons agreed with Parker, adding, “The Oxford County Act established an equal urban versus rural mix. Looking at the numbers, 80,000 people live in the three urban centers compared to 42,000 in rural areas. Those numbers are going to continue to grow by every projection in terms of the growing urban centres in Oxford County.”

Coun. Pete Luciani also agreed, saying it needs to go to the county first.

Council discussed the logistics of how to move forward with this, but in the end, it decided to receive the committee’s letter for recommendation and then start by sending a letter to Oxford County Council requesting equitable representation for the number of people in Tillsonburg.

## Installation art on display at Station Arts Centre

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Cascades of Pink and Papaya was a massive undertaking for Barb Scott, one almost as big as the end display.

The crochet installation brings shades of pink and papaya to a room, and is part of the latest exhibit at the Station Arts Centre until the end of the month. It took Scott 2.5 years to complete the project. The installation is floor to ceiling crocheted strips that add dimension to a room. The current display complements paintings by Tabatha Verbuyst.

“To me, when you look at it from a distance, it looks like a shadow playing with pink colour,” Scott said of her display.

Originally a London resident, she taught at Annandale when it was a middle school. During that time, she was

introduced to the Station Arts Centre.

Taking a step back, Scott attended the Nova Scotia College of Arts in Dalhousie. She taught art there, at Carleton University, Algonquin College and St. Clair College before moving back to London. Her major as a student was in weaving, as she liked the idea of a third dimension.

“I wanted to go into filling of space, and large space,” she said.

After a time staying at home with her children when she taught at the London Art Gallery, she started to teach developmental education in Tillsonburg.

“I didn’t do a lot of art for a long time, then when I returned, I started in art big time,” she said.

After moving to Tillsonburg more than 12 years ago, she joined the Station Arts Centre. Her first show was eight years ago, and was also a crochet installation.



# New food bank coordinator organizing Christmas food drive

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I think I could do that and do that well," she recounted of her emotions after reading the advertisement. "While it's not volunteer, it's a way to positively impact the community."

She has a business degree and went into the job hoping to feed as many people as she could.

"I just want to give back," she said. "The volunteers are amazing and hold this place together beautifully."

One of her focuses is on increasing the amount of fresh food such as meat, fresh fruit and vegetables. A couple of local farms provide apples, carrots and potatoes, plus there is support from the grocery stores.

"All of the grocery stores in town are amazing in helping wherever they can," Hamilton said.

In addition, the food bank receives fresh food from Feed Ontario, a central agency that supplies food banks across the province.

Hamilton is also organizing the Christmas food drive. The regular drop-offs of Tuesday or Wednesday mornings have been added to with evening drop-offs on Dec. 4 and 11 from 6 to 8. On Dec. 11, the U-15 Tornado LL 2 Intact hockey team will be accepting donations at the door. The food bank quit doing food drives since COVID, but the Salvation Army did revive these. The two groups have a good working relationship, with the Salvation Army providing food to the food bank.

She also has positive relationships with community partners who collect food. Sobeys and Zehrs have bins for the Helping Hand Food Bank, and Metro has a program where people can purchase food for the food bank. Many businesses have been collecting food and donating food as well.

"There are so many," Hamilton said of the business support. "I get three or four calls per day for businesses doing food drives. It's a good community."

The food bank supplies weekly service to those who have signed up, and people can come up to twice per month. The amount of food is based on the number of



Samantha Hamilton started as the new Helping Hand Food Bank coordinator at the end of September. She has started several new initiatives since taking over. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

people in the family. There are 728 individuals, or 359 households, registered with the Helping Hand Food Bank. This year, there are 287 new clients, and Hamilton said there are people who no longer need support.

She did point out a statistic she heard recently: one in five Canadians using a food bank has a job.

"It's just overall the prices are insane, especially grocery prices," she said.

## Oxford OPP launches festive RIDE campaign

Members from the Oxford detachment of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) kicked off the first day of the Festive Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere (RIDE) campaign in the Town of Tillsonburg on Nov. 21.

Festive RIDE is an annual police enforcement and education initiative aimed at taking impaired drivers off Ontario roads during the holiday season. This year's Ontario Association of Chiefs of Police Festive RIDE Campaign runs from Nov. 21, 2024, to Jan. 1, 2025.

Members of the public can expect to see RIDE spot checks throughout the county. These checks can be conducted anywhere and anytime.

Oxford OPP remains committed to ensuring Ontario roads are safe from drug-impaired and alcohol-impaired drivers. Please do your part by never driving after consuming alcohol or drugs.

Alcohol and drugs can stay in your system for a long period of time. Ensure that you are completely sober before getting behind the wheel. Drivers are reminded that no amount of alcohol or drugs in your system is safe when driving.

If you suspect an impaired driver, make that lifesaving call and dial 9-1-1.

"Impaired driving remains one of the leading causes of motor vehicle collisions in Ontario. During the Festive RIDE campaign, members of the Oxford OPP will



Oxford OPP started its festive RIDE program on Nov. 21 in Tillsonburg, with Const. Jordon Harrison, left, and Randi Crawford on the streets for a RIDE check. Police remind drivers that RIDE checks can appear anywhere at any time of day, and not to drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

be conducting RIDE checks across the county in an effort to keep our roads safe from impaired drivers." Inspector Anthony Hymers, Detachment Commander, Oxford OPP.

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## Envirohaul offers local waste bin solution



Josh Manary, left, and Tyler Hurren are the team behind Envirohaul, a Tillsonburg company that provides bin rental services. The company will deliver and haul away bins, with an option of providing labour for the job if needed. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Envirohaul was started to provide a local solution to people needing waste bins.

Co-owned by Josh Manary, the bin rental company was started in March 2023. The company was based in Coburg and came with 11 bins and a truck.

"I'm in the construction business and we use dumpsters," Manary said. "The majority of bins are com-

ing from out of town and, just being in the industry, I figured it would be useful."

The bins range from four yards to 30 yards. Envirohaul will then pick up the bins and take the contents to a landfill or recycling site.

Much of the business is with restoration companies that come in after a disaster, but there are a wide variety of purposes for a bin rental. These include

roofing, yard clean-up, renovation purging and estate clean-outs. Envirohaul can also provide the labour if needed.

Business has been good for Envirohaul, and the company has expanded, adding more bins for a total of 23, and a second truck. Tyler Hurren is a licensed DZ driver, moves the bins and helps with clean-up if needed for the job.

Manary said the market

is competitive, but he offers a couple of differences. Delivery of the bins is based on travel costs, and for jobs in Tillsonburg, delivery is shorter. He can also usually offer a quicker turnaround, with same-day service in most cases.


The company is located at 164103 Brownsville Road, and can be contacted at 519-544-4285 or through the web site at [www.envirohaul.ca](http://www.envirohaul.ca)

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# Free pizza a boost to Movember campaign

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Dr. Mark Dickson is hoping the community will again get on board with his campaign to reach \$25,000 raised as part of the Movember campaign.

The local chiropractor has been raising money for prostate cancer, testicular cancer and men's mental health since 2015. To date, he has collected \$23,876 towards the cause.

"One of the main reasons I support Movember is a lot of men are self-conscious about talking about health issues," he said. "They think they are tough and push health aside."

Dickson has had family members and friends who have had prostate cancer.

"It's given me a lot more motivation to do this each year," he said.

It especially hit home this year as he lost a close friend and mentor who lost his life when prostate cancer spread.

Dickson has fun with the campaign, posting photos of his latest mustache while dressed in costume to social media.

"It's quite amazing that through growing mustaches and having fun these kinds of funds can be raised," he said.

New for this year, supporters of the campaign will receive a certificate for a free large Dominos pizza. Dickson explained his neighbour owns Dominos and made the generous offer. Put another way, those who donate can receive a tax receipt and a gift certificate for a pizza.

Donations can be made through <https://ca.movember.com/mospace/12563117> or by dropping them off at Dickson at Library Lane Chiropractic at One Library Lane. Those making online donations can stop at Dickson's office to pick up pizza gift certificates.

Dickson is aware he has a way to go to meet his goal but said a lot of donations come in at the last minute. He

believes excitement builds around what costume he will wear in his final promotion photo of the year. While he wouldn't reveal details, he said it would be connected to a Simpsons character. In the past, he dressed up as Hulk Hogan and a cowboy, amongst others.

Outside of Movember, Dickson encourages men to talk about their prostate health, get a PSA blood test, and be more active in preventative health.



Dr. Mark Dickson, along with his support team of children, Josie and Thomas, will raise money for Movember to support men's health. Donors to the campaign will receive a large Domino's Pizza. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

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# Installation art on display at Station Arts Centre

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

That was followed three years later by a display she called Purple, which had steel supports for the crocheting.

"It was like walking through banyan trees," Scott said of the display. "It was kind of magical."

She is already working on her next project, which she estimates will take three years to finish.

"This is portable," she said. "I can sit in the car and work on it. It becomes part of my life."

Scott recently visited the McMichael Canadian Collection gallery in Kleinberg and realized that a facility like that with beams is ideal for her work. She plans on approaching them about that possibility.



Barb Scott stands amongst her display, Cascades of Pink and Papaya, which is currently on display at the Station Arts Centre (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

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## Tillsonburg woman finishes second at jujitsu worlds

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

Placing in the top three in the world in any sport is a rare and colossal achievement, but doing it after only competing for three years is almost unheard of.

Rebecca Dyck did just that, winning second in the no gi division at the Jujitsu International Federation World Championships, held in Crete, Greece from Oct. 28 to Nov. 5. She started in jujitsu only three years ago.

"I started mainly for self-defense reasons and I wanted to compete in the sport so I started training pretty hard," she said.

She trains at Brasa Bowen BJJ in London and St. Thomas. The 20-year-old Tillsonburg resident would like to work in law enforcement in the future and heard martial arts could help.

Dyck started by doing extensive research on martial arts. She tried kickboxing, but she didn't want to get "kicked in the head." Jujitsu is a form of grappling, like wrestling, and doesn't involve striking. The goal is to get the opponent to the ground and have them submit or put a joint lock on them.

"The challenge attracted me because it is a super difficult challenge to master," she said.

Training involves traveling four times per week, and up to six times leading up to the worlds. A training session is usually two to three hours long and involves a warm-up, drills, and live sparring. She also did strength training at Lightweight Gym in Tillsonburg before the world competition. Working at Courtland Bakery, she said her schedule works well with training.

When she entered her first tournament, she won silver. At that

time, someone raised the idea of her going to the worlds. She dismissed the concept for many years.

"It took it really seriously from the start, and I think that made a big difference," she said.

Canadian competitors need to place gold or silver at the Canadian Nationals to qualify for the worlds. She won silver in the under 70 kg U-21 class for the gi competition. Gi competition involves wearing a gi – the robe-style garment common to martial arts. No gi competition is in shorts and a t-shirt. By qualifying in gi, Dyck could compete in both divisions. She said some differences exist, such as using the collar on a gi to take down opponents.

"The concepts are the same for both," she said. "There are some things you can do in no gi and vice versa."

Although one would think that the government would support youth sports competitors, Dyck said the opposite is true with jujitsu, and there is no support for competitors on the international stage if under 21. That meant she had to raise funds for the \$6,000 cost of competing. Courtland Bakery held a fund raiser and collected donations. Lightweight Gym also supported her and she raised enough money to cover her expenses. Her parents and family have also been supportive, although they were initially skeptical and didn't want to see her injured. Along the way, she did have a few injuries, including her rotator cuff, tearing ankle ligaments and black eyes.

With a world championship behind her, Dyck wants to continue to compete. She has her sights on the IBJJF Worlds in the U.S., which don't require pre-qualifying, and other tournaments.



Tillsonburg resident Rebecca Dyck displays the jujitsu medals she won at the world championships held in Greece a few weeks ago. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

## Biloski goal beautiful in the eyes of Silver Stick-qualified beholders

JEFF TRIBE

Post Contributor

Ward's Automotive South Oxford U11 Storm Brody Biloski's International Silver Stick (ISS) A Qualifier game and tournament clincher was a thing of impactful if not aesthetic beauty.

"It wasn't a pretty goal, but I don't care how they go in," laughed coach Devin Homick. "They don't ask how - they only ask how many."

Regulation time was running out on the Sunday, November 17th ISS qualifier in Collingwood, a goal-less tie standing between South Oxford and the Woolwich

Wildcats. But with under two minutes remaining, the Storm took advantage of a faceoff in the Woolwich zone. Won back to the point, the defenceman put the puck on goal, from where Biloski alertly capitalized.

"Just a jam play at the net," said Homick. The one-goal South Oxford lead stood up

through the final 91 seconds, clinching both the tournament victory and a berth in the ISS A final, scheduled for January 17th to 19th in Sarnia.

"The kids played a heck of a team game, I would say," Homick summed up. "Ecstatic," he added. "It's a pretty big deal for them."

CONTINUED TO PAGE 19

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18

The Storm entered the qualifier with previous tournament victories in Bradford and at its own event, along with a 23-1-1 record in Shamrock League A Division regular-season play, attributable says their coach to ‘a team game.’

South Oxford (geographically centred near Salford and including players from Tillsonburg and Ingersoll) plays in a loop including Dorchester, Strathroy, St. Marys, Norfolk (jointly based out of Simcoe, Waterford and Six Nations), Brant (Paris), St. Thomas, Mt. Brydges and New Hamburg.

A Ward’s Automotive U11 coaching staff led by Homick features three former Tillsonburg Thunder senior hockey teammates (assistant coach Shane Balcomb, goalie coach Tommy Lee and trainer Cody Chute ) along with assistant coach Eric Bartram.

“A good bench staff and a great group of kids,” said Homick of an effort to produce both quality hockey players ‘and good little leaders in their communities.’

“Our message to the kids is to play a defensive game, take care of our end first,” said Homick. “And the kids completely bought in.”

The Storm opened ISS qualifier tournament play with a 5-0 shoutout of Brant, building on a 1-0 first-period lead with four goals in the third frame. Carter Balcomb finished with four and Biloski added a single.

South Oxford shut out the Woodstock Jr. Navy Vets in its second outing, leading 2-0 after the first period and 3-0 heading into the third. Emerson Adam had two goals for the winners and Carter Smith, Biloski and Tommy Thomson one each.

The Storm closed out round-robin play undefeated and unscored upon with a 3-0 shutout of Barrie, Adam opening scoring in the second and Biloski and Thomson



The Ward’s Automotive South Oxford U11 Storm qualified for the International Silver Stick (ISS) A tournament January 17-19th in Sarnia with a perfect 5-0 record at the ISS A qualifier in Collingwood November 15th to 17th. (JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

rounding the final with third-period markers.

South Oxford met the host Collingwood Jr. Blues in their semi-final, taking a 2-1 lead into the final minute before taking a late penalty giving up the tying goal with 19 seconds left in regulation, the Blues enjoying a six-on-four player advantage at the time.

“It’s a big momentum shift,” admitted Homick, whose message prior to overtime

was to stick to the gameplan. “And let’s go get the job done.”

Adam, who along with Balcomb had scored in regulation, added the three-on-three game-winner with 4:20 remaining in OT, controlling the puck along the boards before deking out in front of the net.

“And kind of threw it back short side to beat a good Collingwood goalie,” said Homick. “We struggled to put pucks past that kid.”

Heading into the season, the ISS A tournament was among the Storm’s ‘big three’ major goals, a list including a league championship, which would also lead into Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) playdowns.

“I think if we stick to our game, we’ll have a chance,” he said specifically of the upcoming ISS tournament in Sarnia. “But again, it’s sports, so anything can happen.”



The Tillsonburg Twisters annual ringette tournament was another success, drawing teams in from many centres across six divisions. The U14 team played a close game against the Mitchell Stingers on Saturday morning. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)



**GLENDALE WOMEN'S RUGBY BRONZE MEDAL MATCH**  
The Glendale High School women’s rugby team competed at a 7’s tournament on October 30 in London. The team made it to the bronze medal match but lost in overtime. The team would like to thank Tillson brands for supplying them with new jerseys. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)



# Club Oxford Men's Hockey League

JEFF GWYN

Post Contributor

November 10

## Fody's 8, Distinct 2

Fody's wanted to make a statement in this one. They came out flying and kept the pressure all night. Their lines were rolling and seemed to have a chance almost every shift. Distinct just couldn't catch a break tonight. They had trouble with their breakouts and rushes, which led to pressure the other way. A rare off night it seems.

Brandon Sawatzky and Chris Sanders had four points each for Fody's. Dave VanWyk had two points for Distinct.

## Agrospray 6, ReMax 3

Agrospray got into the win column tonight. They had Travis Horvath going and that seemed to spark the team. They were able to control a bunch of the game and had quick passes and rushes all night. ReMax wasn't able to get their normal rushes off their speed. They had some chances and scored, but they spent a lot of the game in the defensive zone against a hard pressing Agrospray. Travis Horvath had four points for Agrospray. Jordan Kobayashi had two goals for ReMax.

## Airmount 4, B-Line 2

Airmount had a near full squad and it showed. They were able to hold off a strong first period by B-Line to give them a chance. In the second, they had the pressure and broke through, coming up with some timely scoring to get the win. B-Line had some good pressure in the first, but couldn't get pucks to go in. They couldn't hold off a pressing Airmount late, but it was a close game and solid effort. Trevor Cowlan, Noah Mulholland, Trevor Bradfield and Tyson Simpson had goals for Airmount. Tyler Bain and Rob VanVelzer had goals for B-Line.

## RND 2, Royal LePage 1

RND has hit a groove lately. They are playing well in both ends and it showed tonight. They took advantage of their chances and they kept Royal LePage from getting much sustained pressure. Royal LePage played a good game. They had trouble getting those in-close rebounds and were forced to the outside most of the game. A good defensive effort, but couldn't squeeze out the

tie. Kyle Underhill and Andy Metselaar had goals for RND. Adam Jensen had a goal for Royal LePage.

## Glass 5, Precision 0

Glass continues their hot streak, 8-0. They used their speed to their advantage in this one, seemingly making things happen on broken plays. A tight defensive zone kept Precision from getting things going. Precision had a few chances, but they were chasing in this one. They did get a few rushes, but couldn't get any second chances in this one.

Source had a near full team and seemed to find some chemistry out there in this one. They had some solid breakouts and potted a couple. They did great to kill off some penalties which could have changed the game. Carquest seemed to have more pressure, but didn't have any puck luck in this game. They couldn't cash in on the powerplay and that could have made the difference.

Jeff Prouse had two goals and an assist for Glass.

November 13

## Distinct 5, Agrospray 4

Distinct had a bounce back game. They came out strong and had their top guys going. They focused on offence, but were able to weather the late pressure from Agrospray. Agrospray played a strong game, building off their first win. They found some secondary scoring which helped pressure Distinct. They just ran out of time in this one. Kyle Smith had four points and Brian Velthove had three points for Distinct. Ryan Bruckler had two goals for Agrospray.

## ReMax 2, Fody's 1

ReMax were able to get their rush game going in this one. They had plenty of chances offensively. They buckled down and kept a high powered Fody's off the scoresheet, which is a key to victory. Fody's had trouble getting close to the net and couldn't get any rebounds to bounce their way. They were able to back check on ReMax rushes, which kept the score close. Peyton VanBoekel and Jordan Kobayashi had goals for ReMax. Ryan DeVos had a goal for Fody's.

## Precision 3, Airmount 2

Precision played a simple game and it frustrated Airmount.

They took advantage of their breaks and created chaos in close all night. Airmount had a couple highlight goals, but couldn't get those secondary chances. They played a good game, but just seemed to be a step behind when it counted. Chris VanKasteren had two goals for Precision. Matthew Snow and Scott Mudford had goals for Airmount.

November 17

## Agrospray 3, Fody's 1

A solid game. Agrospray was able to get some solid chances as they had speedy breakouts. They killed off some penalties and scored shorthanded twice to secure the win. Fody's was playing with a short bench, they held off Agro for most of the game. They had trouble hitting the net in close and that would have helped them to win. Travis Horvath had a goal and assist for Agrospray. Jeremy had a goal for Fody's.

## Distinct 1, ReMax 0

Distinct played a strong defensive game while getting pressure of their own. A solid game in net by Tyler Gubesch helped them keep ReMax off the board. ReMax had some quality chances, but couldn't get the rebounds to bounce their way. A good game in net by Greg Buchner. Andrew VanWyk had the goal for Distinct.


## RND 6, Airmount 0

RND had five different goal scorers in this one. After a tightly checked first, RND controlled the second and didn't let Airmount get much going. A team effort in both zones led to the big win. Airmount had a good first period with some chances, but they couldn't get things started in the second. They had trouble stopping RND's speed, which made them play in their zone much of the game. Caleb Waycott and Jason Beard had goals for RND.


## Carquest 2, Precision 2

Carquest was looking to break through on the scoresheet, but had trouble sustaining pressure offensively. They had good chances but couldn't crack a tough defence in this one. Precision plays a similar game as Carquest and matched their energy. While they focused on defence, they also had limited chances in close. A hard fought point for each team. Brendan Ryksen

CONTINUED TO PAGE 21



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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20

had two goals for Carquest. Mike Haegens and Matt Vanbesien had goals for Precision.

**Royal LePage 4, Source 1**

After a quick start, Royal LePage was able to focus more on their neutral zone pressure, which led to some quick chances offensively. They did well to keep Source from any second chances on offence. Source started great, but seemed to fall off with the Royal LePage pressure. A good second period kept it closer than the scoreboard showed. Mitch Ryksen had a goal and two assists for Royal LePage. Chris VanKasteren had the Source goal.

**Glass 5, B-Line 3**

Glass continues to roll in B Division. They use their speed and chemistry to keep pressure throughout the game. Scoring from all over the zone made them dangerous in this one. B-Line did well to stick with the top team. They were able to cash in on their two powerplays, but couldn't hold off the deep pressure of Glass. Stephen Schafer and Parker Terryberry had two points each for Glass. Chris Wilson had two assists for B-Line.

**November 20**

**Airmount 5, Source 4**

Airmount worked hard in this one, getting some offensive zone time and chances. They

were able to get some scoring and had a hard forecheck to get those chances. Source was able to spread their scoring around and were in this game. Some good chances down low gave them a chance to win this one. Jaden Vansevenant had 4 goals and Zach Alton had two assists for Airmount. Nik Brotz and Nate Bisschop had goals for Source.

**B-Line 3, Precision 3**

B-Line looked to be in good position in the first half of the game. They were able to keep things in the Precision zone a lot and it gave them a shot at the win. Precision can never be counted out. They had a bit of trouble in the first, but they bounced back in the second. Some good rushes and neutral zone play earned them another tie. Kurtis Bull and Chris Wilson had 3 points each for B-Line. Jason Koteles had two points for Precision.

**Carquest 5, Royal LePage 3**

A chippy game. Carquest was able to get their top line going and they created a bunch of chances. They were able to push through at the end with some pressure and shots on net. Royal LePage was in the game all night. They had pressure in close and answered back all game until they ran out of time. Evan Prouse had four points, Ryan Crandall had three points for Carquest. Brendan Ryksen and Chris VanKasteren had two points each for Royal LePage.

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CLUB OXFORD B DIVISION	GP	W	L	T	PTS
TILLSONBURG GLASS	9	9	0	0	18
RND CONSTRUCTION	9	5	3	1	11
CARQUEST AUTO PARTS	10	4	3	3	11
CALIBRATED PRECISION	10	3	3	4	10
ROYAL LEPAGE REALTY	10	4	5	1	9
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## NOTICE OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION CENTRE

# Norwich Wastewater Treatment Plant capacity expansion

## Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Study

Oxford County has identified the need to increase capacity of the Norwich Wastewater Treatment Plant to service existing needs and future projected population and employment growth to 2046 in the Village of Norwich.

### About the study

In response to approved future growth in the Village of Norwich and associated projected increases in Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) flow rates, Oxford County is undertaking a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (Class EA) Study for capacity expansion of the Norwich WWTP. More specifically, the purpose of the study is to comprehensively develop, evaluate and select a preferred long-term wastewater servicing solution and design alternative to service existing needs and future projected population and employment growth to 2046.



The study is being carried out in accordance with the planning and design process for Schedule C projects as outlined in the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment (2023), approved under the Ontario *Environmental Assessment Act*.

### We want to hear from you

Consultation with stakeholders is a key component of the study process and input will be sought throughout the study. A virtual (online) Public Consultation Centre (PCC) is being held to provide a project update, present the evaluation criteria for selecting the preferred servicing solution, and present the preferred solution. This is the second PCC for the project, with the first held in June 2022.

📅 Thursday, December 12, 2024 | 🖥️ Online: 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

For login details to join the online PCC, please visit the project website on Speak Up, Oxford! at [www.speakup.oxfordcounty.ca/norwich-wwtp](http://www.speakup.oxfordcounty.ca/norwich-wwtp)

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*Information collected will be used in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. With the exception of personal information, all comments will become part of the public record.*



This notice first issued on  
November 21, 2024

## MIXED OPEN FALL CLASSIC BONSPIEL

The 7th Mixed Open Fall Classic Bonspiel was held at the Tillsonburg Curling Club on the weekend. The spiel was a great success with both out-of-town teams and in-town club teams participating. The overall winner was the team skipped by Yonna DiLella who were awarded the Zeplyn Enterprises Ltd as the two game high winner. The other two game winners were Team Bushell from Ingersoll who were awarded the E&E McLaughlin Inc. trophy. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)



Left to right are: Brian Jamieson, Lesley Statham, Gord Statham, Yonna DiLella winners of the Zeplyn Enterprises Ltd trophy, which was presented by Linda Durston.



Winners of the E&E McLaughlin trophy are left to right: Paul Buchner, Ruth Buchner, Ralph Flood, Mary Bushell, and presenter Tracy Beattie.



# Thunder drop two home games, ready for teddy toss

MICHAEL HOLLY

Post Contributor

It has been a tough couple of weeks for the 2023/2024 WOSHL Champions Tillsonburg Thunder.

The Orangeville Blitz rolled into town and took the game 5-3. It was a spirited game with Braden Roberts getting into a scrap with former NHL player Ben Thomson. The author does not remember Roberts ever getting into a fight in the years he has played for the Thunder. Thomson had a foot of height on Roberts but the Thunder player held his own. Both players were ejected from the game.

Goals were scored by Chris McGuffin, Freddie Teeple, and Sheldon Thompson.

Last Saturday, the Thunder hosted the Elora Rocks. Despite the Thunder being the dominate team on the ice, the puck gods were not smiling on the Thunder as they lost 7 - 4. Sometimes the puck simply does not bounce your way. Goals were scored by Brendan Barletta, Spencer Hutchinson, Andrew Waylan, and Freddie Teeple.

Saturday was also Hockey Fights Cancer night (HFC). The Thunder have been running this event for the last four years. Each Thunder player wore a special HFC jersey for the game. These jerseys were live auctioned off after the game. Some were a little aromatic. At the time of this

writing, the Thunder and their fans have raised around \$3,000. There is still money coming in to support Children Cancer research. If you would like to make a donation, you still can by contacting Michael Holly by (519) 983-0050.

The Thunder are on the road versus the Dunnville Aeros on Saturday, November 30 @ 8:00 pm. If you cannot make the game, watch for free on the OSHL website. <http://www.oshl.ca>. Go to OSHL Live and follow the prompts.

The Thunder then host the same Dunnville Aeros on Saturday, December 7 @ 7:30 pm. Home-at-home series always make for spirited contests.

Save the date of December 14 @ 7:30. The arch rival Petrolia Squires are coming to town. There is a long history between these teams and it looks to continue. As an added bonus, it is the annual Teddy Bear Toss. After the first Thunder goal, fans throw their teddy bears onto the ice. These teddy bears are all donated to the Salvation Army to be given to children through Tillsonburg and area for Christmas. The Thunder have run this event for the last 17 years with enormous success where hundreds of teddy bears are collected.

The Tillsonburg Tim Hortons will also be sending 10 tee shirts into the crowd in the first intermission. 9 will have \$5 Tim cards...one will have a \$100 Tim card. Don't leave your seat after period 1!!

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# Impact of war in Lebanon felt by Norwich Resident

JENNIFER WILD

Post Contributor

As a second-generation immigrant of Lebanese parents, Norwich resident, Nadia Kaddoura, has been following the news closely over the past few weeks. While she grew up here in Canada, her extended family still resides in Tripoli, Lebanon. Nadia moved to Norwich two years ago, with her two children who attend the local public school. She is a part-time real estate agent and entrepreneur. In 2013, she flew to Lebanon to be married in the country of her heart. After the busyness of the big city, Norwich is quiet and welcoming. Her parents arrived in Canada many years ago.

Beginning in October of last year, Israel and Hezbollah have been engaged in air strikes, artillery and missile shelling in the south of Lebanon. Attacks have intensified on Beirut, the capital, since September 2024, triggering evacuation orders. Nadia had hoped her father, who was visiting family in Tripoli, would be able to fly home to Canada on Oct 18th, before local airports were shut down. Unfortunately, her father suffered a fall and is not able to fly for at least another month. Airports are opening for occasional flights, enabling Nadia's paternal uncle to leave, a journey that took al-



Norwich resident Nadia Kaddoura still has family in Lebanon and is concerned for their safety when she sees news of escalating conflict there. (CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)

most three days to complete. Her grandmother, cousins and aunts chose to stay behind despite the danger.

As Nadia told her story, tears filled her eyes. Her communications with her family have been extremely limited, with phone calls being disconnected or

CONTINUED TO PAGE 31

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# Who's Who in the Region

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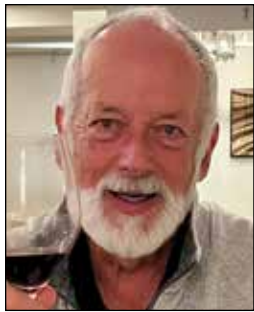
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# Alexandria, Virginia: a wonderful surprise!



**OH,  
THE  
PLACES  
WE'LL  
GO!**

**PAUL KNOWLES**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

Okay, I am going to be honest here. When a travel writer is invited to visit a new destination, it is incumbent upon him or her to do some research, and usually I do – really.

But our stop in Alexandria, Va. was near the end of a multi-destination US road trip that lasted more than a month. So, I had planned to do the advance research while en route, but I didn't,

which meant that Alexandria, the small city just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., was a surprise – a really, really great surprise because we quite fell in love with this historic community.

Alexandria is rich with history, but is also a neighbour to the space-age wonders of the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Air & Space Museum in Chantilly, Va.

Let's go back in time first. Alexandria is eminently walkable and your walking tour of Old Town Alexandria will include a stroll down cobblestone streets lined with houses built in the 1700s.

You'll also see the Spite House, described as "the skinniest historic house in America" at just seven feet wide with a tiny area of 325 square feet. It wasn't built, first of all, to be a residence – although it is still occupied today – but it was erected in 1830 to block an alley, in which loiterers were, well, loitering and bothering the neighbours.

The streets of Old Town Alexandria lead to the busy waterfront where there are terrific restaurants – we dined at Jula's on the Potomac with the wonderful view the name promises – and a unique art facility, the Torpedo Factory Art Center. The Torpedo Factory was just that, a munitions plant in World War II, and there is a disarmed torpedo just inside one entrance to underline this heritage. But today, the centre is home to 72 juried-artist studios and 10 galleries.



The fascinating Apothecary Museum – an unexpected delight. All photos by Paul Knowles

The artists are there creating their works and happy to stop and chat with interested potential patrons.

Perhaps our biggest pleasant surprise in Alexandria was the Stabler-Leadbeater Apothecary Museum. This very small museum, just one of the storefronts on Fairfax Street, didn't seem very promising when we entered but, as is often the case, I was dead wrong. It was a fascinating tour with an added level of delight for any fan of the Harry Potter stories, which I definitely am.

The apothecary, founded in 1792, was operated by the same family for 141 years and then became a museum in 1939. In something of a miracle when it comes to preserving the past, almost everything in the two-story museum is original to the pharmacy – even some of the ingredients are still in the bottles. One unique item is a handwritten request to pharmacist Edward Stabler from Martha Washington, wife of George.

"Mrs. Washington desires Mr. Stabler will send by the bearers a quart bottle of his best castor oil and the bill for it. Mount Vernon, April 22, 1802."

It didn't help much at all as Martha passed away exactly one month later.

On the second storey, in the area used for warehousing and preparation of ingredients, there are still storage boxes with their original labels, and here is where Harry Potter enters the picture because there are boxes bearing the names "Dragon's Blood," "Unicorn Root," "Mandrake Root" and other terms familiar to fans of the young wizard. For the pharmacists of the 19th century, these were the fanciful names of natural ingredients, which they used in their medicines with varying degrees of success.

But leaving the 18th and 19th centuries behind, let's travel ahead to the 20th and 21st centuries and venture off this planet entirely at the Steven F. Advar-Hazy Air & Space Museum.

This facility is home to about 200 aircraft from some of the earliest attempts at flight to



The Spite House, only seven feet wide.

thoroughly modern aircraft. Visitors can get up close to classic craft like a Sopwith Camel, a World War I British fighter biplane, or, on a much larger scale, to the Space Shuttle Discovery, which sits in the midst of a gigantic hangar filled with all manner of artifacts from space exploration, including the Canadarm.

I found it especially intriguing that the collection of aircraft here includes "enemy aircraft" such as World War II planes flown in battle against the Allies by Japan and Germany, some of the latter still bearing the swastika emblem. It ain't pretty, but it's authentic.

Visitors will spend several hours as they explore even a portion of the fascinating exhibits at the air and space museum which, by the way, is just one of two such facilities

under the umbrella of the Smithsonian. The sister museum is in Washington.

Alexandria has been honoured as one of the "best cities in the U.S." and as a "top-three best small city in the U.S." by leading travel media. Not having visited every small city in our neighbour to the south, I cannot be an accurate judge.

But I can say Alexandria quickly became one of our favourite destinations anywhere, and having read this article, you are now much more prepared for your visit than I was. You're welcome..

*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).*



Cobblestone streets and historic homes in Old Town Alexandria.



The Space Shuttle Discovery.



Some of the 200 aircraft at the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Air & Space Museum, including the mysterious, matte black reconnaissance aircraft, the Lockheed SR-71A Blackbird.



# Tillsonburg council briefs

## Water park hours return to normal

After operating with extended hours for 2023 and 2024 due to the closure of the indoor pool, the Lake Lisgar Water Park will return to normal hours in 2025.

The hours will be 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

## Funding for Founder's Day

Council approved reallocating some 2024 unspent funds to Founder's Day,

an event to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the town's founding.

The approved motion was to move any unused funds from the cultural grants and Twin City budgets to the 2025 Founder's Day event.

## Relief coming on fees at transfer station

There may be a fee reduction coming for tipping fees at the Tillsonburg

Transfer Station associated with an automatic charge for both items in a trailer and vehicle, even though the vehicle may be empty.

Noting there was a \$39,000 surplus in tipping fee revenue, Coun. Bob Parsons raised the possibility.

"If we have this fluctuation, we may be able reduce the cost to our citizens of having to take things to the transfer station. That would be a win," he said.

Director of Operations Jonathan Graham said this was a county fee, but Mayor Deb Gilvesy said a resolution to that effect was passed at county council.

## Town searching for new director of operations

Nov. 14 was Direct of Operations Jonathan Graham's last meeting with the town. He is moving to the city of London.

Tillsonburg appointed Chris Baird, who was the interim director of recreation, culture and parks and had experience in public works with Norfolk County, will fill the position until someone is hired.

## The cost of new bus shelters has increased.

Town council received a report that the cost of 12 bus shelters increased due to relocation of one shelter and a larger concrete base needed on each of the 12 stops where the shelters are to be installed. A grant will cover 90 per cent of the \$207,000 cost, but the additional cost would require submitting the grant application, which could jeopardize the

funding.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy suggested an easy solution is to install one less shelter, but that idea was shut down by staff as it would require an amendment to the application.

Council approved spending an additional \$32,000 for the shelters, and taking the money from the infrastructure reserve fund.

## Tillsonburg calls for rural road safety funding

Tillsonburg council endorsed a motion from the Ontario Good Roads Association calling on the province to invest in a rural road safety program.

The motion, put forward by Coun. Bob Parsons, points out that 55 per cent of fatalities occur on rural roads, despite only 17 per cent of the population living in rural municipalities. It also points to smaller municipalities limited tax base to fund road improvements and asks the province to fund a rural roads safety program.

## Town phone app to be promoted

The Tillsonburg phone app will receive a boost after Coun. Kelly Spencer brought forward a motion at the last council meeting.

Spencer's motion centred on using the app for awareness of people with dementia wandering, and using it to make people aware of any potential situations. The awareness initiative will also make citizens aware of the need to have push notifications enabled on their phones to be made aware of emergent situations.

## MUSEUM CORNER

### Buildings of Tillsonburg



#### TILLSONBURG HYDRO POWER STATION

was located at the northeast corner of Concession east and Park Street on Lake Lisgar. Using the Holly System (water-driven rotary pump that could supply water under pressure to fire hydrants) the Stoney Creek would drive over the rotary pumps and fall 28 feet into Lake Lisgar.

(PHOTO: ANNANDALE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE'S ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS.

Thank you to Laurel Beechey and Kathleen Watkin for delving into the archives to researching these images.)

## Weekend Quiz

- 1) What does Ariel give to Ursula in exchange for legs?
- 2) What do you call an animal that sleeps during the day and is awake at night?
- 3) Who was the Egyptian pharaoh known for building the Great Sphinx?
- 4) How long is a millennium?
- 5) What country has the most oil reserves?
- 6) How many dice are used in Yahtzee?
- 7) What year did Blockbuster close?
- 8) Who won the Jake Paul vs Mike Tyson fight?
- 9) What company is known for their Pumpkin Spice Latte?
- 10) What year did the US introduce two-letter state abbreviations?

This week's answers are found on pg. 35



#### BRIDGE CLUB DONATES TO LOCAL CHARITIES

The Tillsonburg Bridge Club donated \$500 each to the Helping Hands Food Bank and The Salvation Army at the club's weekly bridge game on Friday, Nov. 5. The club has made annual donations around Christmas time for many years. This year, with the demands on charitable organisations as high as they are, the club decided to pitch in a bit early.

(CONTRIBUTED PHOTO)



# Tillsonburg pool to open on January 31



Workers have been busy working to complete the tiling on the pool deck. Once the pool is open, programs will resume. Along with the pool, there is a new second floor meeting room, a barrier-free pool viewing area, a health club addition and a new customer service base.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

## JEFF HELSDON

Editor

An updated completion schedule for the addition and renovation at the Tillsonburg Community Centre has pushed the completion date back to open on Jan. 31.

An update report that was scheduled to be presented to council on Monday night, set the new date, citing delays in delivery of material and a revised exterior grading plan requiring modifications. The delays will bring an additional price tag of \$13,880 for another two months of oversight from project manager a+ Link. There will be a push to partially open the expanded health club prior to that date.

Interviewed prior to the completion of the report, Chris Baird, project manager for the addition and refurbishment of the Tillsonburg Community Centre, said drywalling is done, and tiling of the pool deck is the big task remaining.

"It's just really dependent on the tile work and how quickly that gets done," he said, adding the task is tiling what is equivalent to half a football field with two-inch-square tiles.

The project includes replacing the pool deck and coping. The pool basin tiles were cleaned and regouted. Outside of the pool area, other additions include a new second-floor meeting room, a barrier-free second-floor pool viewing area, an addition to the health club and a new customer service base.



An artist's rendering of the customer service entrance shows the new customer service area in the community centre. It will be AODA compliant and will be promoted as the main entrance.

(SUBMITTED PHOTO)

"We're going to push that as the new entrance," Baird said.

He was hired by the town as project manager to work two days a week after Director of Recreation, Culture and Parks Julie Columbus left earlier this year. Baird had worked in that position on an interim basis prior to Columbus' hire and was familiar with the project.

Since the construction started in spring 2023, there have been delays due to availability of structural steel and other building materials. The original opening date of May 2024, was pushed to September and now December. Baird acknowledged residents' frustrations, and he is pushing the contractor to stay on schedule. He is also sticking to the budget modification that was passed by council this summer, adding \$418,000 to the \$5.12 million original cost.

"We want this open as soon as possible," he said. "You can only push so hard because we don't want to compromise quality. We know it's been an inconvenience."

When the work is complete, cleaning needs to take place as well as instruction in how the new mechanical systems operate. Baird said exterior work may continue after the interior updates are done as there is a wait for a few pieces for the façade.

A video update for the project posted by the town provides visual insight into what has been completed to date.

# Tillsonburg council grapples with red tape of volunteer help

## JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

A discussion at Tillsonburg council on removing grape vines along the Trans-Canada Trail morphed into a larger debate on the red tape associated with volunteer assistance.

Council reviewed a recommendation from the Parks, Beautification and Cemeteries Committee at its Nov. 14 meeting to remove grape vines along the stretch of the trail between Quarter Line and Tillson Ave. The staff recommendation was to reject the request, saying the committee recommendation that a committee member with a pesticide license deal with the issue wasn't possible and it was at least \$200 an hour to pay a licensed operator to complete the work.

After Mayor Deb Gilvesy asked about committee member Paul DeCloet, who has a pesticide license, doing the work, Director of Recreation, Culture, and Parks Andrea Greenway said there is no insurance when a volunteer does the job and the town doesn't have anyone on staff with a pesticide license. Gilvesy questioned why there wasn't any staff with a pesticide license.

Coun. Pete Luciani, who is on the committee, said the grape vines must be removed to allow other native vegetation to take off.

"If we are going to clean up the trail at all, this has to go forward," he said.

Luciani pointed out DeCloet has done extensive work on the trail, including planting trees.

"If we aren't letting him do this, maybe we shouldn't let him plant trees," he said. "It doesn't make sense we have individuals in town willing to put their expertise forward and we shut them down."

Gilvesy asked what the difference is with the Tillsonburg Horticultural Society working on flower gardens in town, as they are not a paid contractor and don't have insurance. Greenway said the town has an agreement with them, and they aren't handling chemicals.

Coun. Chris Parker also said if a volunteer is willing to volunteer, council should find a way to let them. He suggested referring the motion back to staff to look at it further.

"I hate to see a volunteer willing to work in the community and improve the beautification of our trails not be able to do it," he said.

Gilvesy noted that service clubs also have issues when they are willing to provide volunteer labour or financial backing for an initiative.

"We need to find workarounds for this," she said.

Luciani suggested perhaps the solution is for DeCloet to join the horticulture society. Council referred the issue to the committee to secure a vendor with the necessary license and insurance.



## THE SADIES AT THE MILL

Juno-award winning band The Sadies played in Tillsonburg at the Mill on Nov. 16. The Canadian band won the 2023 Juno for Adult Alternative Album of the Year and the stop in Tillsonburg was part of a tour in Canada and Europe.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)



# Griff helps chuck pucks, donations toward United Way

JEFF TRIBE

Post Contributor

With 1,206 Oxford County students 'representing' in their school colours and enthusiastically cheering champions through a trio of challenges, there was a hint of Harry Potter Triwizard Tournament-like magic to the United Way Oxford (UWO) Stairclimb.

"In a way, I guess it's kind of similar," said Kherington Spanjers, one of two Glendale Gemini competitors.

The Triwizard Tournament brought together three magical educational institutions at Hogwarts, the UWO Stairclimb representatives from all seven high schools in Oxford congregating at Woodstock's Reeves complex the morning of Thursday, November 7th. Beyond the stairclimb component, an attendant UWO quest for glory was contested on the arena ice surface in front of loudly cheering, face-painted, school-by-school contingents.

"That was really like, motivating," said Spanjers.

She and Sophia Silliker faced considerably less danger of death by dragon, drowning or Voldemort than Harry Potter, but the opening 'magic carpet ride', a tandem seated slide on a mat up and down the arena's ice surface, did present a chilly muscle-straining marathon.

"It was pretty tough," admitted Silliker. "It was a good workout."

The pair also competed in a mascot-wrapping competition complicated by crepe paper's tendency to tear and fall to the ice. However, the Glendale trio:

Silliker, Spanjers and Griff the mascot, broke through in the chuck-a-puck competition. A puck originally thrown by Spanjers was knocked forward into the target cone after being struck by a puck thrown by Griff - whose human component, as per school tradition, shall remain anonymous.

The event victory was the first 'in a while' for Glendale, and part of an overall positive experience said Silliker.

"It was really fun."

Gemini pride, school spirit and enjoyment of a high-energy event aside, the Stairclimb represents deeper purpose. Student attendance comes via a suggested \$20 or higher fund-raised donation. The 2024 student-raised total hit \$37,805 said UWO Executive Director Kelly Gilson, bringing its 20-year running total to \$471,576.

Master of Ceremonies Eric Collins emphasized the school spirit and energy on display were both impressive, but students were also 'changing lives.'

"This really matters to our students and our schools and of course it matters to our community because we all benefit," said Gilson.

Money raised makes a 'big difference' she continued, helping fund programs for example, supporting school nutrition, mentoring and literacy.

"There are so many ways United Way funding impacts children of all ages. It gives them the tools and opportunities to thrive."

The event was a natural fit for Glendale's Mikaelee MacDouell, whose teaching repertoire includes community



Glendale champions Kherington Spanjers (foreground, left) and Sophia Silliker head out on the United Way Oxford Stairclimb magic carpet ride.

(JEFF TRIBE PHOTO)

engagement and civic action.

"The kids were so lovely about it and invested," she said, pleased with a positive educational opportunity around the importance of engaging with the broader community and UWO's motivation, focus and operational excellence throughout.

"They had it covered from the start." Not sure what to expect, MacDouell was also impressed with the students' positive attitude and engagement, demonstrating school spirit and willingness to step up and contribute out of the 'goodness of their hearts.'

"Just an example of excitement and anticipation and community support."

Everyone says 'donate, donate, donate,' said Silliker, knowing where that money is going is an important part of the equation, a base well covered by the United Way.

"And that it's going straight to the community."

In conclusion, Spanjers said everyone involved agreed the event was 'super fun', encouraging others to attend in the future to share both in that fun and its underlying purpose.

"Overall, yes, it is fun. But the money everyone raised to be here is going toward a good cause.

"And that's the most important part."

## Oxford county levy increase at 8.7 per cent

JEFF HELSDON

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

After the first budget session of Oxford County Council, the draft budget increase is sitting at 8.7 per cent.

Councillors were initially presented a budget with an increase of 12.6 per cent on Nov. 20. A motion passed to remove an exemption for development charges on industrial buildings was expected to raise more than \$3 million, which brought the increase down to 8.7 per cent.

Warden Marcus Ryan explained that a 12.6 per cent increase is not a great start as this works out to 13.6 per cent for municipalities outside of Woodstock. He has been on county council 11 years and said the decrease from the development charge motion made a big difference.

"In all those budgets, I've seen a change of 4.3 per cent in a single step," he said. "We'll keep looking and other councillors will too."

County council also passed a motion pushing back on the province against the rate of growth coming down from the upper tier. The motion spoke to the sustainability of ongoing, rapid growth and the impacts on homelessness, school spaces, primary medical care, and the pressure on green space and agricultural land.

Mayor Deb Gilvesy, who seconded the motion on development charges, said growth is responsible for a lot of the increases.

Providing an example, Ryan pointed to the \$400,000

in the budget to hire four paramedics. He said calls are up because people don't have a doctor, have a long wait to see their doctor or have mental health issues. The alternative to not hiring the paramedics is increased response times.

"That's backdoor downloading from the province," he said.

There is also increasing the budget to support green initiatives, rising court security costs, and rural library programs.

"We can't continue to accept the growth at the rate the province is asking us to because we are seeing the impact on residents," Marcus said.

He pointed to the 'new deals' that were given to Toronto and Ottawa, and said something was needed in Oxford as well.

While Ryan said an increase in the area of six per cent is responsible, Gilvesy agreed she would like to see the increase trimmed from the current 8.7. She suggested delaying the green initiatives, looking at discretionary items and looking for efficiencies.

"There's a few things from my standpoint I would need to enquire about before giving it the go-ahead," she said.

The challenge, the Tillsonburg mayor explained, is having the infrastructure to support growth.

"It's trying to find the right balance where we're not overburdening taxpayers of today to pay for the infrastructure of tomorrow," Gilvesy said.

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# COMING EVENTS

**PORT ROWAN HOMETOWN CHRISTMAS CRAFT SHOW**  
Saturday, December 7th, 9am-5pm &  
Sunday December 8th, 10am -4pm  
**PORT ROWAN COMMUNITY CENTER,**  
**14 COLLEGE AVENUE**  
Over 40 vendors, Non-Perishable Food Drop Off

**TALK TILLSONBURG'S 9TH CHILDREN SHOP FOR CHRISTMAS**  
Saturday December 7th, 2024; 9am to 1pm  
Upper Deck Youth Centre

**OTTERVILLE UNITED CHURCH PRESENTS PROCLAMATION QUARTTET**  
November 17; 2:00 p.m.  
231 Main St. E., Otterville  
Music to bless your heart!

**DANCE FEATURING KEN LIGHT-HEART & BAND**  
2 STEP – LINE – 50-60'S  
Dec. 20 & 27; 1-4 pm  
Tillsonburg Legion  
\$6.00 adm.

**THE LANGTON CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE PIE & EUROPEAN BAKE SALE**  
December 14th; 9am-1pm  
Pie pickup at the Langton Community Centre during the Santa Claus parade, location European Bake sale booth. Choice of apple, blueberry, cherry. Preorder by cut-off date December 6th. To order contact Jeannette Major at 519-875-4952 or jmamajor@hotmail.com

**THE SOUNDING JOY**  
Saturday, December 7th; 2 pm  
88 Bidwell Street, Tillsonburg  
Under the direction of Shelley Vermeersch, St. Paul's United Church choir and friends will perform a cantata "The Sounding Joy". Please use the ramp doors.

**THE FRIENDSHIP TABLE - FREE FRIENDSHIP DINNERS**  
Monday, Dec. 9, 2024,  
Monday, Jan. 13, Feb. 10, Mar. 10, Apr. 14,  
May 12, June 9, 2025;  
Doors open at 4:30.  
Dinner Served 5:00-6:30  
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HELPING THOSE IN NEED. GOOD NEWS!!  
FREE FRIENDSHIP DINNERS ARE BACK!  
Everyone Welcome

**GREATER THAN THE SUM II**  
Norwich United Church  
Tuesday December 10th at 7:30pm.  
The Norwich Musical Society Band will host a Christmas concert in combination with the Mitchell Legion Band. Admission is by donation.

**ST. PAUL'S UNITED CHURCH EVENTS:**  
88 Bidwell Street

**ST. PAUL'S MESSY CHURCH PRESENTS: "LET'S DECORATE DECEMBER" CRAFTS & GAMES**  
December 7th 10-12 noon

**88 Bidwell Street, Tillsonburg**  
A family oriented event with snacks, crafts (for kids & adults), music, games, story and lunch.

**COMMUNITY KITCHEN LUNCHEON**  
Every Saturday  
Doors open at 10:30 am

**TILLSONBURG AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY EVENTS:**  
Monday, December 9th; 5:30 pm  
Annandale House NHS  
December General Meeting. The meeting will our annual Christmas Dinner starting at 5:30 p.m. Bring your favorite main course or dessert as well as eating utensils and dishes. All are welcome!

Saturday, December 7th; 10:00 pm

**Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 153, 16 Durham Street, Tillsonburg**  
Annual Christmas Dance with the popular "Back to the 50's" Band. Advance Tickets are available for \$20 at Annandale NHS, The Royal Canadian Legion, Station Arts Centre and Sharon Brinn (519 842 6301). Tickets are \$25 at the door. There will be a cash bar and snacks provided. This is a fund raiser for the Society so invite your friends and family and be prepared to have a great evening of entertainment and socializing.

**CHRISTMAS BAZAAR:**  
December 7, 2024; 10 a.m. til 2 p.m.  
Delhi United Church, 105 Church St., W., Delhi, On.  
Featuring baking, attic treasures, gift table, frozen fruit and meat pies, a penny table and luncheon.

## CHRISTMAS TOY & DONATION DRIVES

**CHRISTMAS TOY DRIVE**  
Tillsonburg Chiropractic & Wellness  
10 Brock St. E., Tillsonburg  
Accepting toy donations for those under 18 and pets too! Will be distributed by Salvation Army. Drop off: Mon 9am-6pm, Tue 8am-1pm, Wed 8am-6pm, Thu 9am-6pm. Info: 226-641-5155

**CHRISTMAS GIFT DRIVE**  
Until Nov. 30  
Circle of Care Support Services  
Drop off at 19 Baldwin St, Suite 205, Tillsonburg  
Donations needed for seniors at local long term care and retirement facilities. Gifts will be paired with a handmade card from local elementary students. Donation ideas include: Hygeine/

self-care items, non-slip socks, throw blankets, puzzles/games, sugar-free candy. More info: 519-717-6579 / circleofcaretillsonburg.org.

**FILL THE TRUCK FOOD DRIVE**  
Drop off Dec. 1st  
Eichenberg Motors  
164 Simcoe St., Tillsonburg  
Donations going to the Tillsonburg Helping Hands Food Bank.

## Tillsonburg POST

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

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

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

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

## Greek restaurant opens in town

JEFF HELSDON

Editor

There's a new cuisine option in Tillsonburg.

The Olive Eatery opened on Nov. 12 at 518 Broadway and features homemade Greek and North American cuisine.

Valanti Vailiotou and her husband Tony own the new eatery. Vailiotou and her family are well known in the area for a long history of owning restaurants. Her family operated the Bunkhouse restaurant in Delhi for years after her father Vasso opened it in 1996. Prior to that, they operated Dorana's in Delhi, and her uncle is the proprietor of Mike's Delhi Subs.

Vailiotou purchased Delish, changed the name, food and the décor.

"We didn't want people to think it was Delish still, and we

changed the menu," she said.

The menu features many of the items that Delish was known for, but added several Greek specialties, fish and chips and Lake Erie perch.

Vailiotou was raised in the restaurant business. She worked her entire life in the Bunkhouse, starting as a waitress in her teenage years. Then she moved to the kitchen, and worked both parts of the restaurant. Her dad recently sold the Bunkhouse, and is still helping there as well as his daughter.

Speaking to why she opened up a new restaurant, Vailiotou answered, "I'd rather have something of my own and a little smaller," she said.

Going into a little more detail on the Greek items on the menu, she said there is souvlaki, moussaka, calamari and shawarma. Although the latter isn't

thought of as Greek fare, Vailiotou said her family is from Cyprus and food there is a combination of cuisine from Greece and the Middle East. There is also traditional North American fare such as roast beef, lasagna, salmon, salads, wraps and sandwiches. There is a difference, however, in the food is made from scratch. For example, the fish is freshly battered and lasagna is home-made. There are also gluten-free and vegetarian options.

"We thought we'd start with a little bit of everything and then in a couple of months see what goes," she said.

The goal is the business will appeal to families, business people, and construction workers.

"I wanted it to feel like a comfortable place, a casual and welcoming place," Vailiotou said.



Valanti Vailiotou is the proprietor of The Olive Eatery, a new restaurant in town featuring Greek and North American fare. Vailiotou purchased Delish and made several changes before reopening earlier this month.

(JEFF HELSDON PHOTO)

Those who dine in and were regulars of Delish will see many familiar faces as Vailiotou kept the staff. The Olive Eatery also offers catering.

The restaurant is open daily from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday to Saturday. It presently isn't licensed to serve liquor, but that process is underway.



# MUSIC CORNER

## Friday the 13th's Jason actor hitting the Tillsonburg stage



**BEN ADDRESS**

*Tillsonburg Post Columnist*

In the spring of 1980, most moviegoers were watching a film about hyperspace while horror fans were crowded in theaters cheering on camp counselors in Friday The 13th as they had the worst summer of their lives. At the time no one knew that Jason Voorhees would become a household name. Even actor Ari Lehman who portrayed Jason in the first film of the franchise never would have imagined the impact he

would make and the places that role would take him.

Friday The 13th grossed \$59.8 million worldwide and received praise for Harry Manfredini's film score and Tom Savini's innovative special effects while spawning an iconic franchise that includes film sequels, television series, video games and collectible merchandise. Some of the surprise success is attributed to Savini's suggestion to producer and director Sean S. Cunningham to bring back actor Ari Lehman and the character Jason Voorhees during script rewrites.

From his Chicago office, Ari Lehman recalls the phone call that was the catalyst for his film career and metal band First Jason. "Ari, can you swim?" Lehman's working relationship with Cunningham started in 1978 after Ari snuck into the casting auditions for the 1978 film Manny's Orphans landing the role of Roger and mak-

ing him top choice when it came time to cast young Jason.

"For months it was up in the air then we shot the final sequence. Paramount Pictures loved that final scene so much that they distributed Friday The 13th in 800 theaters across the country."

While recalling fond memories from the film set, Ari Lehman reflects on the impact that Friday The 13th made to the horror genre.

"Nobody expected that we would be standing here today talking about the legacy of Jason Voorhees and this character that people just embraced. I never take that for granted."

After the release of the film, Lehman studied classical music and jazz piano at New York University and recorded with Interscope Records artists including reggae Nigerian singer-songwriter Majek Fashek. "My life was very

much involved with world music." During this time Jason was not a big part of Ari Lehman's everyday life.

That changed in 2004 with an invitation from Tony Tipone to be a part of Fangoria's Weekend Of Horror convention in New Jersey. This was also the same year the punk metal band First Jason was formed by Lehman with song lyrics and themes based off of his role in the iconic film.

"It's horror and metal together forever. I saw a door opening which I went right through. I'm very fortunate because the metal and punk scenes are very open minded and give you a chance to express yourself and find your voice."

First Jason features Ari Lehman on vocals and keytar, Bass Amp on bass and vocals, Fabian Arroyo on drums and Eddie Machete on guitar. The band is currently touring to sup-

port a recently-released career spanning compilation album titled Killin' It, which features appearances from TWIZTID, Alex Vincent, Courtney Gains, Tim Cappello and Ice Nine Kills. First Jason ends the year in Canada with tour stops in Tillsonburg, Guelph and a sold-out show in Kitchener.

Once home, the band has plans to write a follow up to 2017's album To Be A Monster. Lehman explains the perfect formula when asked if elements of his reggae past would appear on the new album. "First Jason has to be heavy. It has got to be hardcore."

Tillsonburg's rural woods and quaint picturesque landscape are comparable to the environment that Jason Voorhees roamed in Friday The 13th's fictional Camp Crystal Lake and makes the perfect first stop when First Jason tours Canada next month.

You can meet the actor

that played Jason Voorhees on Friday, Dec. 6 during the Nightmare Before Xmas Halloween Party at Paddy's Underground located at 20 John Pound in Tillsonburg. The event features live music from First Jason and B.A. Johnston, local vendors and a costume contest. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. with an 8:30 p.m. showtime. Tickets are \$20 in advance by calling the Mill at 519-842-1878 or by visiting Eventbrite.ca. Tickets are available the night of the show for \$30 subject to availability. This is an all ages/licensed event. Meet & Greet packages are available to purchase at the First Jason merch booth. Bring cash to support local vendors and touring artists. There is no ATM on site. This is a wheelchair-accessible venue.

Anyone wanting more details can visit firstjason.com or Paddy's Underground Facebook page.

## UPCOMING SHOWS

**NOV. 28 - OPEN MIC WITH BILLY GIBBONS**  
Paddy's Underground;  
20 John Pound Rd,  
Tillsonburg  
Free - 7:30pm - all ages/  
licensed

**NOV. 29 - CHASE BERES, ELLE DECLARK & FAYTH YOUNG**  
The Copper Mug;  
79 Broadway, Tillsonburg  
Free - 8pm - all ages/  
licensed

**NOV. 29 - MUDMEN**  
Tillsonburg Legion

**Branch #153;**  
16 Durham St, Tillsonburg  
\$25 - 7:00pm - 19+

**NOV. 30 - KING CASHEW, ROTTING EPPLES & PRINCESS PEACE**  
The Copper Mug;  
79 Broadway, Tillsonburg  
Free - 9pm - all ages/  
licensed

**DEC. 1 - OLIVIA MAE GRAHAM**  
Carriage Hall;  
25 Brock St., Tillsonburg  
\$20 - 1pm - all ages/  
licensed

**DEC. 5 - OPEN MIC WITH BILLY GIBBONS**  
Paddy's Underground;  
20 John Pound Rd,  
Tillsonburg  
Free - 7:30pm - all ages/  
licensed

**DEC. 6 - DEL SCHOTT & JAY ROCK**  
The Copper Mug;  
79 Broadway, Tillsonburg  
Free - 9pm - all ages/  
licensed

**DEC. 6 - FIRST JASON W/ B.A. JOHNSTON**  
Paddy's Underground;  
20 John Pound Rd,

**Tillsonburg**  
\$20 - 7:30pm - all ages/  
licensed

**DEC. 7 - SYSTEM DAMAGE**  
The Copper Mug;  
79 Broadway, Tillsonburg  
Free - 8pm - all ages/  
licensed

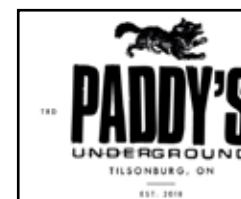
**DEC. 7 - BOBNOXIOUS**  
Paddy's Underground;  
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## Impact of war in Lebanon felt by Norwich Resident

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24

simply not getting through. As the conflict escalates, Nadia fears that she will never see her family again, her children will grow up without a grandfather. The conflict between Lebanon and Israel has been going on since 1948, though Nadia believes it to be earlier. She recalls her mother telling her of witnessing buildings collapsing after being hit by

a bomb, and explosions in residential neighbourhoods.

"They bring up their children and teach them one day we will be bombed, because they know we will be bombed, they are used to it ... I teach my children to expect an attack so they are prepared" Nadia said. "This big conflict, Israel, Iran, Palestine

it's like they are throwing a ball back and forth, they want to bomb each other."

Nadia has been leaning on her faith, finding comfort in prayer. She hopes people will pay attention to what is going on and listen to both sides of the story, and awareness of what is happening in the Middle East can bring change.



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# SWOX council enters into agreement for park development in Mt. Elgin

DEBBIE KASMAN

Tillsonburg Post Correspondent

At its regular council meeting on Nov. 5, South West Oxford Township (SWOX) council entered into an agreement with a local developer to exchange 2.9 acres of parkland adjacent to the Mount Elgin Community Centre for an equal amount of land along the south-west side of Mount Elgin Road to facilitate the development of a new, larger park on the southwest side of Mount Elgin.

This 2.9 acres, plus the purchase of the former Elgin Hall property, and approximately three-quarters of another acre of land for additional parking, will bring the new park's total area to approximately 3.6 acres.

The former parkland at the Mount Elgin Community Centre will be developed for residential housing. In the interim, the township will lease back the exchanged land at the Mount Elgin Community Centre

for five years to continue using the existing ball diamond and tennis court while planning the new park's development.

## Street Naming

Council voted to change the name of Highland Avenue to Cooper Drive to honour the Cooper family's farming contribution to the area. The street will be part of phase 6 development of the new subdivision.

## Council appoints Aird & Berlis LLP as its closed meeting investigator and new Integrity Commissioner

At the end of October, council appointed Aird & Berlis LLP as its closed meeting investigator and new integrity commissioner. The Municipal Act provides for the appointment of an integrity commissioner to oversee matters related to ethical conduct of members of council. The act also allows for the appointment of an individual or organization to investigate complaints regarding closed meetings.

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# RIDDLES

**If athletes get athletes foot then what do astronauts get?**

Missle-toe.

**Why was the clock in the cafeteria always slow?**

Because every lunch it went back four seconds.

**What is the hardest thing to hold that even the strongest person in the world has difficulty with?**

Your breath.

**What did the duck say to the waiter?**  
"Put it on my bill".

**Where does a 600 pound gorilla sit?**  
Anywhere he wants.

**What did the doctor say to the rocket ship?**

"Time to get your booster shot".

**What did the Nerds Candy want to be when it grew up?**

A Smartie.

**What did the bread say to the man?**  
Nothing, bread can't talk.

**What did the bee say to the naughty bee?**

"Bee-hive yourself".

# SUDOKU

by PeterS 2024

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

Solutions on page 35

Simple (0)

# PET OF THE WEEK



EACH PET OF THE WEEK WILL RECEIVE A FREE GOODIE BAG FROM RUFFIN'S TILLSONBURG!



## MERLIN

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NOMINATE YOUR PET TO BE PET OF THE WEEK BY EMAILING [INFO@TILLSONBURGPOST.COM](mailto:INFO@TILLSONBURGPOST.COM)

# WORD SEARCH

## 'TIS THE SEASON

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

- Decorating
- Shopping
- Gifts
- Food
- Traveling
- Lists
- Parties
- Sales
- Carols
- Wrapping
- Tree
- Lights
- Visiting
- Cards
- Movies



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**CHRISTMAS AT ANNANDALE HOUSE**  
Annandale House officially entered Christmas mode on Friday night when program assistant Kathleen Watkin (lower photo) plugged in the lights on the front lawn. The seven decorated trees in the photo represent the seven service clubs in town. Annandale House was part of the Holiday Tour of Homes on Saturday after several volunteer groups decorated rooms in festive splendour. In the upper photo, Mary Jane Keyes, left, and Vera Vilez were two of the 18 volunteers decorating the home. (JEFF HELSDON PHOTOS)

## **MEMORIES AND MILESTONES: Share them with your local community.**

Let us help you honour and celebrate every chapter of life — from anniversaries to obituaries, and everything in between. Commemorate the moments that matter in the

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TQSDT RUUD NEW

## OBITUARY

### LESA JORDAN SPELLER February 21, 1964 – November 23, 2024



This is to celebrate the life and legacy of a truly remarkable soul, Lesa Jordan Speller, who was called to the Lord's side on the 23rd of November, 2024. Born on the 21st of February, 1964, in the heart of Tillsonburg, Ontario, Lesa Jordan was a beacon of light and love in the community she cherished so dearly. It is in this same beloved town that she peacefully entered into eternal rest.

Lesla Jordan was the embodiment of faith and selflessness, a woman whose very essence was defined by her unwavering belief in the Lord. She was a testament to the power of living a life guided by thoughtfulness and a deep, abiding love for others. Her family was the cornerstone

of her life, and she leaves behind a legacy of love and devotion. Predeceased by her loving husband Randy (2022) and her mother Brenda (2017). Survived by her father, Hunter Floyd, her step-children Keeley Speller and Miranda Duffy, her brother-in-law, Rick Speller, with his wife Cathy, and her sister-in-law, Katherine McIntyre, along with her husband Brian, all bear witness to the profound impact she had on their lives. Lesa Jordan was also a loving aunt and great aunt, whose presence will be profoundly missed by her many nieces, nephews, and great-nieces and nephews.

Lesla Jordan's commitment to her calling was evident in her professional life as a dedicated nurse at Maple Manor Nursing Home in Tillsonburg. Her career was more than a job; it was a ministry of caring, where she touched the lives of countless individuals with her compassion and grace. She walked in the footsteps of the Great Healer, bringing comfort and solace to those in her care.

Her life was a symphony of joyous praise, and her love for singing was a reflection of her strong faith in the Lord. Lesa Jordan's voice, raised in songs of worship, was a source of inspiration and comfort to all who had the privilege to hear it. She lived the words of Psalm 104:33, "I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my God as long as I live." Her melodies were a testament to her devotion and a reminder of the beauty of a life lived in harmony with God's will.

Lesla Jordan was a woman of many virtues, but if one were to choose the words that best encapsulated her spirit, they would be faith-filled, selfless, and thoughtful. She navigated life's trials with grace and always placed the needs of others before her own. Her actions were a living sermon, preaching the gospel of love and service without ever needing to speak a word.

As we bid farewell to Lesa Jordan Speller, let us not dwell on the sorrow of her passing but rather celebrate the profound impact she had on each of us. Her spirit will continue to guide and inspire us, and her memory will be a blessing that enriches our lives. In the words of the great evangelist, Billy Graham, "My home is in Heaven. I'm just traveling through this world." Lesa Jordan has now reached her eternal home, and while we will miss her dearly, we rejoice in the knowledge that she is singing with the angels, forever praising the Lord she so dearly loved.

May her soul rest in the everlasting peace of Christ, and may her story continue to be a beacon of hope and love for all who remember her. Amen.

Please join the family for a visitation honoring Lesa Jordan at Ostrander's Funeral Home, 43 Bidwell St., Tillsonburg on Wednesday, December 4, 2024 from 5:00-8:00 pm. There will be a memorial service for Lesa Jordan on Thursday, December 5, 2024 at 1:00 pm at the Church of Living Water, 5 Rouse St., Tillsonburg. Memorial donations to the Church of Living Water can be made directly to the church or by contacting Ostrander's Funeral Home. Personal condolences and memories can be shared at [www.ostrandersonline.com](http://www.ostrandersonline.com)

## QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1) Her voice
- 2) Nocturnal
- 3) Pharaoh Khafre
- 4) 1,000 years
- 5) Venezuela
- 6) Five
- 7) 2014
- 8) Jake Paul
- 9) Starbucks
- 10) 1963

## SUDOKU

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

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MAURICE J. VERHOEVE FUNERAL HOMES

Burial and Cremation Services Inc.



The date of December 3rd, 2020 marks 5 years since our special father, grandfather, husband, sibling, mentor and friend, Hector Donald Verhoeve, passed away. I miss him every day, as each member of the family does as well. We remembered him as a man who made a difference in our lives and the lives of many others. As a father and grandfather, he cared about you as a person and from time-to-time gave you opportunities to grow, learn and play. As a young person, I got to follow my dad around to see how he talked to people, while learning his thoughts and opinions along the way. Literally following in my father's footsteps, led him to welcome me to participate; by answering the door, writing out memorial donation cards, answering the phone, watching him gently guide and talk with people... with so much care... to help meet the needs of each family that came into his (and eventually our) care. I appreciate Dad's efforts and hope to offer some memorable quotes and memories to honour him.

*"Hector has consistently been more than a community leader; he has been a community builder. His passion for family and his dedication to Tillsonburg has encompassed many volunteer responsibilities in a community where his actions have always been resolute and rewarding."*-Mayor Stephen Molnar



*"Hector Verhoeve was a remarkable man, his caring and devotion to all who came into his life, whether professionally or personally, have been blessed by his untiring work for the community at large."*-Ramsay Cairns

*"The day I moved to Tillsonburg, in 1979, Hector came over and introduced himself to me. He and his wife welcomed me to town with a plant. Our town has had many benefits, because of him and his approach to things..."*- John Lessif



*"There could not have been a better choice for citizen of the year. Through your efforts, so many good things have happened in our community. You have put smiles on the faces of those less fortunate and have eased the sorrow of those faced with the burden of death. We are proud to have shared with you in some of the successful community projects, and grateful to you for the many personal acts of friendship that have come our way over the years. Our sincere congratulations!"*-Marion & Bill Pratt



Hector grew up on a tobacco farm near Mabee's Corners. At the age of 16, he left home to pursue his hockey aspirations as a goaltender for the "Seaforth Jr. B Baldwins" and "Stratford Indians" Hockey Teams (both affiliates of the Montreal Canadiens). At the time he was playing hockey, he became involved with assisting at a Seaforth area funeral home. This inspired him to seek a career in this bereavement industry, which led to the establishment of the Langton Funeral Home at the age of 19 or 20. His concentration for public service began at the young age of 22, with the Tillsonburg High School Board; he later became the youngest chairman of any school board at the time, at the age of 26. In 1968, he established Verhoeve Ambulance, Langton - proud member of the Ontario Ambulance Operators Association. In 1974, he purchased the former Armstrong Funeral Home, in Tillsonburg and renovated it shortly thereafter. At 28, he was elected councillor of North Walsingham Township Council (1968-1974); elected to Norfolk Town Council (1974-1982) and Regional Haldimand-Norfolk Councillor (until 1990), he then served 10 years as Mayor (1990-2000). Forever devoted to public service, he served for approximately 40 years, before retiring from politics in 2001. As Mayor, Dad and the Norfolk Council left an incredible legacy. People today are benefitting from decisions made back then. For example, Dave Overbaugh devised a 'chip and tar' method, that got several roads paved that probably would not be otherwise. They were responsible with spending. Along with Delhi Township, Norfolk Township entered the Region of Haldimand-Norfolk debt-free. Other notable contributions by the council were organizing the building the Courtland Community Centre, adding the Port Rowan Library, upgrading Port Rowan Medical Centre, adding the Port Rowan Seniors Centre, welcoming Titan Trailers and Carpani Industries to Courtland.



Dad wore a lot of hats in the community: In the 1970's, he was a driving force behind raising money for the Tillsonburg District Memorial Hospital expansion (as co-chairman of the "My Hospital - I Care" building renovation fund and was personally responsible for organizing 360 volunteer fundraisers who became known as "Hectors Angels"). Strong supporter for the creation of the Ed DeSutter Dialysis Unit (member of the Ed DeSutter Tri-County Dialysis Committee). Served on the TDMH board from 1978-1981 and 1991-1995. He also made sincere contributions in support of the Terry Fox Run, Jesse's Journey, the Annandale House, the Tillsonburg and District Multi-Service Centre, Easter Seals and to so many more essential charities. Former Director of Tillsonburg "Jr. C" Mavericks, Tillsonburg "Jr. B" Titans, Langton "Jr. D" Thunderbirds Hockey Clubs. He was committed to the principles of 'Lionism' and along with fellow Langton Lions Club members, they worked together to establish the Langton Arena, Langton Community Centre and made significant physical and financial contributions to Camp Trillium- Rainbow Lake, Waterford. A past president of the Langton Lions Club, he was graciously awarded with the Lions International Melvin Jones Fellowship. Later, he was named honorary member of the Long Point, Courtland, and Port Rowan Lions Clubs. Honoured recipient of the James Keating Humanitarian Award (1982), the Province of Ontario Bi-Centennial Medal of Outstanding Service (1984), the Ontario Medal for Good Citizenship, Commemorate Medal of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Ontario Funeral Services Humanitarian Award (to recognize 57 years of professional and community service as a Funeral Director, 2005), Queens Jubilee Medal (2002) and Lifetime of Community Service Award (2012).



In co-ordination with the Tillsonburg and District Chamber of Commerce, he was the founder and co-chairman (with John Lessif) of the "Tillsonburg Blue Jay Day", with over 1500 participants and 36 busses traveling to the Sky Dome at its peak. In conjunction with the Bobby Orr Skate for Crippled Children, he helped to raise over \$4 Million, over 15 years. Organizer of the local portion of the 1988 Olympic Torch Relay Celebration, the Terry Fox Marathon of Hope, Rick Hansen- Man in Motion Tours. In recognition for projects that have positively changed the community by helping and supporting others, he was awarded in 1982 with "Citizen of the Year" honours, Tillsonburg.



---  
Dad, I appreciate the opportunity to serve people as you did- as a caring funeral director. I appreciate helping people and hope that our family efforts: Robert, Krystyna, Margaret and myself make you proud, now and always.

By Maurice J. Verhoeve



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