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Tavistock K9 handler and police community say goodbye to Taz



Nearly 100 K9s and their handlers traveled to Woodstock from across the province to support Taz as he was laid to rest this week.

By Lee Griffi, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Hundreds of police officers along with over 100 K9s and their handlers converged on Woodstock Tuesday to say goodbye to Police Service Dog (PSD) Taz, who died in the line of duty.

The dog, a K9 with the Woodstock Police Service, responded to a call to help the Stratford Police with a drug-related investigation on July 3. While conducting a search, Taz and another dog, PSD Striker, both ingested drugs. Narcan was

administered, and they were rushed to a veterinarian clinic. Taz did not survive while Striker was released and went home shortly after.

Police and dogs from across Ontario, including York Regional, Halton, Saugeen Shores, Waterloo Regional, Brantford, Toronto, Sault Ste. Marie, London, OPP, and others, along with local emergency services, all took part in a procession and full police funeral at the Reeves Community Complex to pay tribute to their fallen comrade. A private police

funeral took place inside the facility on the arena floor.

Grant Rieder is an Innerkip resident and volunteer firefighter in the East Zorra-Tavistock community who attended Tuesday's funeral. In his previous life, he was a K9 officer and sergeant with the Waterloo Regional Police Service. Rieder had extensive experience as both a handler and trainer for other officers, including Taz's handler Dan Skillings, a Tavistock resident. "I trained seven police

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Cloverleaf Farms deli shutting down August 12

By Veronica Reiner

Cloverleaf Farms Food Outlet, based on Bleams Road in New Hamburg, will be officially closing the deli on Saturday, August 12. Now, the business will be restructuring, focusing on expanding the frozen food store and fresh meat.

Owner Angie Scheid said that the decision was difficult. "It wasn't really a choice," she said. "It was a financial thing - it's very, very bittersweet, I'm very much attached to my deli. It's like a bad breakup, I've been at this for 26 years."

Cloverleaf Farms opened their first store on Peel Street in New Hamburg in November 1997. Their second store opened in July 2000 (Highway 7&8) and the two stores were merged in January 2008.

The frozen food of the business includes chicken, pork, beef, turkey, fruits, veggies, desserts, fish, fries, soups, finger foods, and lasagna. Fresh items include smoked chops, local cheese, local baked goods, gluten free items, fresh meats and more to come.

"I'll never jeopardize what I do - I've done it so long, I'll never jeopardize quality, I would never jeopardize my service. In order to make the numbers work, I would have had to jeopardize both of those things - and I just won't do it," said Angie.

"We're being upfront and honest with people. No one's going to miss the deli more than me. It's a matter of moving forward and making it better."

All items on the menu are currently on feature, which includes sandwiches, paninis, subs, salads and a soup and sandwich combination. Cloverleaf Farms holds a local feature Friday gig, where a local business is featured each week by naming a sandwich after them. The team enjoys 10 per cent off their lunch for the Friday and Saturday that week. Angie confirmed this will continue, but is

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COMMUNITY —

Cloverleaf Farms deli shutting down August 12



Owner Angie Scheid, showing the upcoming business days for Cloverleaf Farms. They will officially begin Sunday, September 10.

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unsure whether it will be held on Fridays.

"I'll be working really hard at bringing really good deals through the backdoor so I can pass them on to the customer out the front," said Angie. "Which is what I think people really need right now."

Some recent deals include four one pound lean ground beef packages for \$20, as well as four bags of cheese pops for \$20.

She added that customers have, for the most part, seemed upset when they find out that the deli is closing down.

"They ask me to reconsider. And that just makes me feel good, because it makes me realize how much people really did love it," said Angie. "I never actually doubted

that. We had what I thought was a really busy year, but unfortunately, numbers don't lie - it just didn't work."

No employees will lose their jobs, added Angie.

The whole store, frozen and fresh foods, will open seven days a week, including Sundays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The new hours will begin Sunday, September 10. The deli will close as of Saturday, August 12, and that will mark the last day to get sandwiches.

"I want the community to know how much I thank them for their support for almost 30 years, and I just want to remind them that it's going to be awesome, and it's still going to be great," said Angie.



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COMMUNITY —

Wilmot township applies for federal housing funding grant

By Veronica Reiner

The Township of Wilmot council agreed to submit an application to receive funding from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF).

The decision was made during a hybrid council meeting on Monday, July 24. The total potential grant amount is about \$3,210,000.

"It's not an infrastructure grant program, rather it's a grant program designed to create systemic changes to the way that we approve housing - to speed up the delivery of housing," explained Director of Development Services Harold O'Krafka.

Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen thanked staff members for the report, and said, "Very exciting to get to see the potential of income coming in that won't be coming from our levy to support initiatives that are really important, including attainable and affordable housing through the long run."

The CMHC HAF is a \$4-billion program announced in the 2022-2023 federal budget, launched on March 17. It is a financial

incentive program from local governments to remove barriers and support the development of affordable, inclusive, equitable and climate resilient communities.

The only planned intake period for HAF applications opened on July 5 and will close on August 18.

The key component of a successful HAF application is the creation of an action plan of initiatives which must set and commit to a housing growth target. Wilmot township staff worked with regional staff, as well as other municipal staff to prepare for HAF grant submissions. There was a minimum of seven initiatives required for the application, and O'Krafka listed 10 initiatives in his report.

"[It was suggested] we should put in additional initiatives, so that if one of our initiatives is deemed to not fully comply with the intent of the program, that we would have another one in front of them that would ensure our application is complete," said O'Krafka.

"The last thing we would want is to submit seven, have one initiative rejected, resulting in six and not being eligible for the funding."

A brief summary of these initiatives include: updated official plan policies and a way to streamline housing approvals; establish an expedited or concierge service for building permits; incentive packages that could include permit and approval fee reductions; an intensification plan and infrastructure assessment for New Hamburg and Baden; a parking strategy; investments in upgraded building and planning software programs; a zoning amendment; a development permit system; and a region-wide initiative to create long-term and affordable housing.

Councillor Stewart Cressman asked for more clarification on one of the initiatives, which was described as a formal incentive package and reserve fund. The fund is described as building upon regional incentives, and could include permit and approval fee reductions, as well as voluntary funding from traditional single family dwelling projects to de-incent low density development.

"The voluntary contribution ties to new developments. Certainly we work obviously closely with the development industry and the proposals. The City of Cambridge has a unique fund and affordable housing

reserve that receives a fair bit of funding from developments," explained O'Krafka.

"What Cambridge does, from my understanding, is essentially developers contribute a fee per single family dwelling towards an affordable housing reserve to provide monies to the city so that they can apply those monies in appropriate locations for affordable housing - close to transit, close to shopping, walkable neighbourhoods - in locations that make sense for affordable housing to minimize the cost of living there."

He added that the development industry has approached Wilmot township in creating a similar fund.

Successful applicants to the HAF program will receive funding based on the amount of new units generated above and beyond the average annual growth. The housing supply target for Wilmot projects will increase supply by an additional 38 units per year for a total of 114 units over the three year term of the program.

Funding would be used to fund proposed initiatives, as well as the cost of staff, and the housing and community supportive infrastructure works.

Attempted abduction in Perth East

By Veronica Reiner

The Perth County Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) are asking for the public's help regarding an attempted abduction on Perth Road 131, just south of Line 86 in Perth East Township.

On July 26, at about 11:10 a.m., a youth was riding their bike on a rural portion of Perth Road 131 when they were stopped by a man standing outside of his vehicle.

Throughout the course of the investigation, it was determined that the suspect gestured for the youth to stop. The

suspect began to ask multiple questions, made some inappropriate comments and then grabbed the youth. The youth was able to get free after a short struggle. OPP spokesperson, Kimberly Lyon, clarified that no one was injured in the struggle.

The suspect immediately left the area in his vehicle, and was last seen travelling northbound on Perth Road 131.

The suspect is described as: white, 30s to 40s, about 5'6, heavier build, short to medium dark hair, stubble, with a slight accent, and wearing a white button up short

sleeve shirt with a black vest.

The vehicle is described as an older turquoise car, possibly a hatchback. The rims on the driver's side are rusted.

The OPP reminds all members of the public to always be aware of their personal safety and to be extremely vigilant when approached by unknown individuals.

"Always travel with a buddy if possible," said OPP Constable Kimberly Lyon. "Always keep distance from unknown individuals."

The Perth County OPP is continuing to investigate the incident and is asking for the public's help. Anyone who may have been in the area of Perth Road 131 between Line 83 and Line 86 that has dash-cam footage, or anyone in the area who has home surveillance is being asked to contact police.

Anyone with information about this or any incident is asked to call the OPP at 1-888-310-1122. Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

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Owner/Publisher: Grant Haven Management Inc. /Stewart Grant

Editor: Veronica Reiner

Graphic Designer: Tyler Carruthers

Office Administrator/Billing: Wendy Lamond, Cindy Boakes

Sales Representative: Sharon Leis

Contributing writers: Lee Griffi, Nancy Silcox, Gary West, Paul Knowles

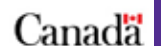
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COMMUNITY —

Wilmot Township updates noise bylaw

By Veronica Reiner

The Township of Wilmot council agreed to update its noise bylaw during a hybrid council meeting on Monday, July 24.

"I believe the bylaw before you provides clearer guidelines for residents to follow when it comes to noise within the township," said Supervisor of Municipal Law Enforcement, Erin Merritt.

"The old noise bylaw did not list any times and was also very vague in the language used, where the proposed bylaw lists times where noise can be made, and where it cannot be made, which makes it a lot clearer for residents, and it also makes it a lot easier for enforcement purposes as it eliminates a gray area."

Under the new bylaw, the following activities are not allowed from 11 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily (or 9 a.m. on Sundays or holidays): the operation of a radio, television, stereo or another electronic device; persistent yelling, shouting, hooting, etc., the loading and unloading of containers, products and materials; and auditory signaling devices such as horns, sirens or whistles.

The following activities are not allowed from 7 p.m. to 8 a.m. daily (or 9 a.m. on Sundays or holidays): the operation of certain combustion engines, all selling or advertising by shouting, and the operation

of a motorized conveyance other than on a highway.

These activities are prohibited from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. (8 a.m. on Saturdays or to 9 a.m. on Sundays or holidays): the operation of a commercial car wash, the operation of equipment connected to construction, the operation of any tool or equipment for domestic purposes and the operation of solid waste bulk lift or refuse compacting equipment.

These statistics highlight the number of noise complaints/inquiries received by the township over the past five years: in 2018, there were 58; in 2019, there were 60; in 2020, there were 77; in 2021, there were 55. This year, as of July 24, there were 40.

During the meeting, Councillor Kris Wilkinson asked about the threshold for determining what a nuisance is.

Supervisor Merritt responded, "It becomes a nuisance when it's continuous, or it's every, say, Friday or something like that. I don't have an exact definition for that. We would take those on a case by case basis, but if it continues to be a problem all the time, then that's where a nuisance would come into play."

Further, any Wilmot resident can apply for an exemption from the bylaw by completing the application form, fulfilling all

requirements, as well as paying the required fees. That fee was lowered from \$100 down to \$50 on council request, with that idea brought up by Councillor Wilkinson.

Further, permanent noise bylaw exemptions have been granted for the following events: Official Canada Day event celebrations, Mennonite Relief Sale, Moparfest, New Hamburg Fall Fair, Official Victoria Day celebrations, Castle Kilbride Summer Concert Series, Baden Corn Festival, Baden Firefighters Association Co-ed Slo-Pitch Baseball Tournament and Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School Relay for Life event.

Township staff conducted a public engagement campaign from May 1 to June 9. It consisted of an online survey, social media advertisements, a press release, in person session at the Wilmot Recreation Centre, a presentation and discussion at the Active LivingCentre, and distributed information at some crossing guard locations across Wilmot.

There were 748 responses, which was commended by council members and the mayor.

"Well done on this. I was so excited to hear that you guys got 748 responses. That is phenomenal. That's more than I've seen in

any public engagement that we've done," commented Mayor Natasha Salonen during the meeting.

Key takeaways included:

- 50.27% of respondents were in favour of 8 a.m. as an acceptable time for noise related to construction projects to start. However, many respondents noted in the comment section they were supportive of weekday noise starting at 7 a.m.

- 90.46% of respondents believe construction noise should stop at 9 p.m.

- 66.67% of respondents believe construction noise should be allowed on Sunday for things like home renovations or property improvements.

- 44.52% of respondents suggest noise from radios, outdoor events and sports activities should stop by 11 p.m.

- 52.42% of respondents believe noise from a lawnmower, landscaping equipment or motorized equipment should begin at 8 a.m.

- 60.73% of respondents do not believe noise should be limited on Sunday or holidays.

- 39.89% of respondents believe that property owners within a 200 metre or 656 feet buffer should be notified when an applicant is seeking a noise exemption.

COMMUNITY —

Tavistock K9 handler and police community say goodbye to Taz

Continued from page 1

services, including a few from Woodstock, and trained Dan with his first dog, Striker. When I retired, I went to the Ministry of Natural Resources for six years, where I was in charge of their K9 program."

Rieder, who has lived most of his life in Oxford County, said he feels for what Skillings is going through. "It's a terrible thing to lose your dog in the line of duty. We have brought a number of dogs into the vets over the years, and I know what they did to try and save Taz. His work ethic really cost him his life. Like what was said at the funeral, the dog was a phenomenal tracker, which means he has a really deep nose. He just inhaled enough of it that he couldn't be brought back." Rieder has had seven service dogs over his thirty-plus-year career and said handlers get to know and trust their partner intimately. "It's just incredible the bond that is developed. I have had so many dogs, and I know Dan has too with his. You're looking for somebody in the dark, and you can't see him, but you know he's there because your dog is telling you."

It is difficult to understand what Skillings has been going through since early July when he and his dogs were called to Stratford, but Rieder said he has been in regular contact with his comrade. "We talk almost daily, and I have been out to see him several times over the last few weeks. He's pretty broken up about it. He tries to



Police dressed in their formal uniforms march as part of the funeral procession.

put on a brave front, but I know how it affects him and lots of other cops. Whether it's losing a dog in the line of duty or because of age or illness, it's a tough thing to go through." One aspect of the tragedy is that Skillings plays out the incident to see if something could have been done differently. "Dan and I have gone over everything back and forth several times, and he did everything right. The dog did everything right. Sometimes things happen."

What is next for Skillings is left up to the policing powers that be, but if Rieder had a say, he would be a handler again as soon as possible. "Dan is a phenomenal dog handler. If you asked him how his dog is doing, he would say he's just okay, we need to work on this and that. His dogs are always as good or better than all the dogs around him. And for him, good is never

good enough. He is so good at what he does, and I know he wants another dog, and not knowing is weighing on him. I really hope the service stands behind him and recognizes the role he has taken on." He added the general public really doesn't understand what K9 units do to help keep the peace. "K9s are one of the most prevalent units when it comes to doing demonstrations and contact with the public that put the police in a positive perspective. They always steal the show, so from the police perspective, the dogs help the relationship between the public and the police."

Rieder said what people don't see is the positives these animals can do for mankind in the interest of public safety. "We can search for sick, injured, and missing people with a dog in a couple of hours,

something that couldn't be done with 20 people in six hours. I personally have found so many Alzheimer's patients and people with mental health issues. On the other hand, a lot of the criminal elements are not afraid of the police, but they are afraid of a dog." When K9 units are called out, it is often a case where culprits are fleeing the police, and many suspects are armed. "We are dealing with drugs and weapons, so they are trying to get away from us. So many times, we would have never found them, known who they were, recovered the weapons, if it wasn't for the police dog," he added.

The support from officers and K9s from across Ontario was heartwarming, something Rieder said helps with the healing process. "The family within the police service and the dog community showed up from all over the province. Hamilton sent their K9 and mounted unit. The horses are also service animals, and it feels reassuring to know you have the support of all these people behind you." Both of Rieder's sons are police officers in Hamilton, Ryan being with the mounted unit who attended Tuesday's service. "It was a proud moment for me. I trained the Hamilton K9 unit for many years, and now I have two boys working there."

Tuesday's service was a private affair for police, first responders, and family members. Many members of the public, along with their dogs, crowded the procession in support of Taz.

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COMMUNITY —

Tavistock Fall Fair brings back Airband competition and baby show

Ag Society looking for volunteers

By Lee Griffi, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

The 2023 edition of the Tavistock Fall Fair will be held from September 8 to 10 and as always is organized by the Tavistock Agricultural Society. President Kaitlin Keller says they are looking for some help this year. "We always need volunteers and are always looking for new members to join. Even to come down and help out for the weekend if that was all you would like to commit to." She added the board would really like to hear from the public to see what changes could be made going forward. "Some of us have been going to the fair for a long time, some all of our lives, and we keep our community favourite events each year that built our fair, and we love that tradition, but we also try to bring in new and exciting ideas and events to add to the fun of the fair each year that would appeal to the new generations. We love to hear what fairgoers would like to bring in as well. It's our community's fair and we welcome their suggestions and ideas."

She would also like to remind area residents to take an active role in being a part of the fair on a personal level. "We are hoping to see more people get involved in the exhibits. Making some crafts, bringing in some quilts, baking, flowers, vegetables, whatever they have. A lot of people love coming in and seeing all the displays." Keller is hopeful that new residents in the area residents will take an interest and check out their website www.tavistockfallfair.com to see all the competitions that are available. A petting zoo will be set



up on Sunday afternoon and Keller said it will be a great opportunity for kids to interact and see some animals they might not see on a regular basis.

The Airband competition may not be new, but it is returning after a few years on a hiatus. Tavistock resident Jess Harvey said she approached the Ag Society to bring back the popular event and wound up being in charge of it. "I made the pitch to them that they should bring the Airband back and I got reeled into organizing it," she laughed. Keller said she hopes this time around the event will again be as popular as it was years ago. "We tried to bring it back one other time and it didn't pick up speed like we hoped so we put it to rest for a bit. I put up a Facebook post about it and there was a lot of traction, so it looks like people are excited to have it back."

Harvey and her husband Mike went

attended a neighbouring fair last year which got the juices flowing for ideas here. "We went last year to the Mitchell Fall Fair's tractor pull and then the smash-up derby and it was packed. You couldn't find a spot to stand. Right away we thought why don't we do this in Tavi? There are obviously some concerns about insurance and the things that come with it but let's look into it." The last derby held in Tavistock was about two decades ago at Optimist Park, an event that was a huge success.

Harvey said while the interest seems to be growing it hasn't yet translated into registrations. "I promoted it a couple of times on social media last weekend, and I think someone from the fair put it on their Facebook page and so many people shared and commented on it. But I have only had one entry so far." She added there is still time since the deadline isn't until the end of August. "I am really hoping that

with some more promotion throughout the month of August, we will get enough to make a run of it. It was so much fun back in the day to do it. I was in it every year when I was a kid."

Harvey added they are looking at keeping things simple for the event at Queen's Park for the return of the competition. In past years acts competed in a donated trailer along with a sound system. "We are looking at a wooden stage and hopefully use a sound system already onsite. We will be bringing bleachers in at the ball diamond surrounding the infield and people can still bring lawn chairs and use the lights from the ball diamond." She does hope more people sign up to make the Saturday night at the fair special.

"I think about the years when Tina Wolfe and those ladies got up and did these amazing performances. The one entry I have is going to be a reunion act from prior years, so I am excited about that. Harvey can be reached at jessicaharvey3@gmail.com to register.

The Baby Show is also making its return this year and will take place Sunday, September 10 at 1 p.m. at the Memorial Hall. To register people can call Elaine at 519-655-1114, or Gloria at 519-655-2478.

The theme for this year is Autumn Treasures to highlight what makes fall a special time of year for people. "Everyone who comes to our meetings is welcome to bring ideas forward for a theme and we pick the one that will best showcase the community as well as agriculture because it is such a big part of our way of life."

 <p>Sandra Eby Sales Representative Cell 519-272-7676 mseby@rogers.com RE/MAX a-b REALTY LTD. BROKERAGE 88 Wellington St., Stratford 519-273-4400</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE: SAT. AUG. 5TH - 10:30-12:00 NOON</p>  <p>52 DIETRICH ROAD, TAVISTOCK</p> <p>Welcome to 52 Dietrich Road in the lovely town Tavistock. Have you outgrown your current home and need more space, then be sure to call to view this 3 bedroom brick raised bungalow located in a desirable neighbourhood backing onto farmland. This one owner custom built home located on a 72.18 X 120 lot offers so much for your growing family. Features of this great home include on the main floor, 3 bedrooms, cheater ensuite, kitchen, living and dining area. The basement offers an unbelievable 10 foot high ceiling, a spacious family room with a gas fireplace and built ins, work shop area or could be used for an office etc, laundry and utility room, 3 pc bath and so much more. Also being offered in an attached double car garage, good size rear deck, partially fenced rear yard, and if you are looking for a yard large enough for an inground pool, this might be just what you have been looking for. Be sure to call to view this family home today, this is one home you do not want to miss viewing. MLS#40460330 \$749,900</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE: SAT. AUG. 5TH - 1:30 - 3:00 P.M.</p>  <p>328 FORMAN AVENUE, STRATFORD</p> <p>This is one home that you must view from the inside to see for your self just how much this home is offering. Located with in a few minute walk to the Stratford high schools, this 4 level back split semi-detached home offers, 4 bedrooms, 2 full baths, finished family room, fenced rear yard, 5 appliances, a quick possession and so much more. Whether you are a first time home buyer or a family looking for a home with more bedrooms, this might be just what you have been looking for. This home is much larger then it appears from the street, so do not just drive by, come in and have a look. It might be just what you have been looking for. Or if the open house does not work, call to make arrangements to view this lovely home. MLS#40451168 \$549,900</p>	<p>OPEN HOUSE: SUN. AUG. 6TH - 2:00 - 4:00 P.M.</p>  <p>117 HOPE STREET EAST, TAVISTOCK</p> <p>Welcome to 117 Hope Street East in the lovely town of Tavistock- If you like the character of old homes, this is one home you do not want to miss viewing. Located within walking distance to town, the school, park and arena, this home is ideal for your growing family. With approximately 2943 Square feet of living space, this lovely home offers, 3 or 4 bedrooms, 2 full baths, 4 season sun room to enjoy your morning coffee, games room/ family room, a spacious kitchen with an island with a breakfast bar, living and dining room area with a gas fireplace. Another added bonus for this great home, the triple car driveway is on Elizabeth Street. Call today this great home today, it might be just what you have been looking for. Within commuting distance to Kitchener Waterloo area, Stratford, Woodstock and London. MLS#40446572 \$699,900</p>
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COMMUNITY —

Residents and staff embracing lifted mandates at Tri-County Mennonite Homes

By Veronica Reiner

Residents and staff alike at Tri-County Mennonite Homes (TCMH) have been embracing the end of mandatory masking and COVID-19 testing.

"I think this is probably the happiest I've seen the campus since I started here back in 2019," said Steve Harrison, Chief Executive Officer at TCMH. "People are just feeling like life is coming back around to what they experienced as the normal for most of their lives."

TCMH is a long term care facility, with one location in New Hamburg on Boullee Street called Nithview Community, and the other based in Stratford.

Staff members are no longer required to wear masks as of July 1st, unless asked to do so by a resident or resident family member. In addition, caregivers and visitors are recommended, but no longer required, to wear masks in all areas of a

home.

As of late June, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and the Retirement Homes Regulatory Authority both rolled back masking mandates, which had been in effect for more than three years. In addition to masking mandates, visitors

"Family members are quite excited by the opportunity to see people as a whole now, so you get to see the whole face, which is lovely," said Harrison. "Our residents were a little apprehensive at first because it seemed quite abrupt, and there was a lot of change at once. But they've really embraced coming back to seeing the whole person again."

"The apprehensions that existed on July 1st were gone by July 2nd."

Masks are still provided at long term care homes, and those who wish to wear a mask are able to do so.

In addition to mask protocols throughout

the pandemic, long term care homes followed strict protocols set out by the provincial government, such as a visitor limit, restrictions on visitors, physical distancing, enhanced cleaning, consistent COVID-19 testing of staff, residents and visitors, and more.

This was in an effort to prevent the spread of COVID-19, as older adults (50 and older) are particularly vulnerable to the disease.

"It was new at the time, we didn't really know what we were dealing with, and we are much better informed now," said Harrison. "We are much better informed now. Should there be a COVID outbreak, or a flu outbreak, our team here - and I would say broadly across the seniors care sector - we've learned so much over the last couple years. We will approach things very differently."

"I think we're better prepared for what we don't know about or what could be coming

in the future as well. We'll just make the best of the situation we can when we're faced with it."

Plenty of the supplies purchased during the pandemic (such as cleaning supplies, plexiglass, etc.) are still being kept in storage at TCMH.

"Our community really got behind us - both our immediate community here in New Hamburg and across the township, and in the seniors care sector, we found that our communities got right behind us," said Harrison.

"Despite frustration, and fears, and everything that happened, I can honestly say we could not have done this without our community support. As up and down as it may have been, we look forward to continuing that engagement with our communities. And prepping together for whatever the next thing is going to be - because that is the only way we're going to do this one, is we'll do it together."

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COMMUNITY —

Wellesley public washrooms reopened



(Photo credit: Veronica Reiner)

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

The outdoor washrooms at the Wellesley Community Centre are now officially open once again, as of Wednesday, July 26. "Thank you for your patience while they were being restored," said the Township of Wellesley in an online post.

These washrooms were closed after a fire, later deemed to be arson, was started on

Sunday night, June 4. There were no injuries and damages were estimated at the time to be about \$70,000. The incident was under investigation by the Waterloo Regional Police Service (WRPS).

"We have not received the final dollar amount for the damage," commented Wellesley Recreation Director Danny Roth. "I have not received an update from WRPS on this case."

Moo's Ice Cream Shop, a must stop for summertime travellers through Shakespeare



A mother with her son from British Columbia stop by Moo's ice cream on the weekend. They were deciding what flavour from the 38 varieties offered they would like to try.

By Gary West

If ice cream is one of your favourite treats in the heat of the summer, then the village of Shakespeare is the place to be.

Moo's Ice Cream Shop, in the heart of the village, is now entering its second summer serving up hard and soft ice cream cones along with sundaes of every shape and size.

Owners Rhonda Grubb with brother Kevin Strauss, and their families, say they couldn't be happier with their shop. Dessert eaters from near and far come to taste their 38 varieties of Kwartha ice

cream.

To celebrate their second year in business, they have decided to host a customer appreciation celebration on the August long weekend to include August 4 to August 7.

They will be offering Moo's specialty made sundaes of hot fudge, caramel, and fresh strawberry for \$5 plus tax, to all those ice cream lovers who come out to celebrate with them and their families on this special anniversary occasion.

They are open seven days a week from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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COMMUNITY —

Beer and Bouquets open house raised nearly 4,000



Kyle Wynette served up craft beer over the weekend to those attending the fundraiser at the Tavistock Hop Company.



A look at the hops crop at the farm.



Those attending went home with a bouquet of sunflowers.

By Lee Griffi, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

"This was definitely our most successful and highly attended open house. Saturday morning's rain made for a delayed start but it gave the sunflowers one last polish

and shine so they could really show off their happy faces for the rest of the weekend. Thanks to our business partners Jeremy and Donna Bartlett and friends, we were able to serve up over seven kegs of our favourite beers and make hundreds

of bouquets for attendees to take home," said Julie Wynette. "We hosted old friends and made lots of new ones who were interested in sunflowers, craft beer, or had a story to share about how cancer has impacted their life so it was a heartwarming

and special weekend once again. We are humbled to say that we will be donating \$3900 to Make-A-Wish Canada thanks to the generous donations that were made to our wishing well. Thank you so much," she added.

Environmental assessment to be conducted in Wilmot Township

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

The Region of Waterloo is undertaking an environmental assessment for improvements to the Trussler Road corridor, from Bleams Road to Yellow Birch Drive, which includes Wilmot Township and the City of Kitchener.

The study aims to identify the preferred solution for upgrading this section of Trussler Road, to address long-term needs for improved traffic operations, underground infrastructure and new pedestrian and cycling facilities. Regional staff wrote it will consider "potential social, economic and environmental impacts, and appropriate measures to prevent or mitigate these impacts."

The Region, along with its consultant for this study, Associated Engineering (Ont.) Ltd., will be seeking public input on known issues, opportunities for improvements, and the study findings. More information and opportunities for public input and engagement will be announced at a

later date.

Those interested in participating or learning more can be added to the study mailing list to receive updates. Alternatively any comments or questions can be submitted to either:

- Andrew Doman, Senior Project Manager at the region. He can be reached at 519-575-4400 extension 3183 or via email at ADoman@regionofwaterloo.ca.

- Matt Vinski, C.E.T Manager at Associated Engineering (Ont.). He can be reached at 226-214-3243 or through email at vinskim@ae.ca.

All comments and information about this project are being collected to help the region make a decision. Under the Municipal Act, personal information such as names, addresses, telephone numbers and property locations that may be included in a submission become part of the public record.

Questions about this information collection should be directed to Andrew Doman.

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Family Fun Day

Saturday, August 12, 2023

The Optimist Club of Shakespeare is embarking on their 50th Anniversary of Service to the Youth and Community of Shakespeare.

To commemorate this milestone we are planning a **Family Fun Day and Open House** at their Hall in Shakespeare together with the **Ribbon Cutting and Grand Opening** of its most recent fundraising project for a **Walking Path and Exercise Pad** around the perimeter of the property!

Join us from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm

1:00 to 6:00: Activities & Open House

1:00 – 1:45: Elvis Tribute Artist

2:00 – 2:45: Ribbon Cutting ceremony

3:00 – 5:00: Magic Act for Kids

Jumpy Castle & Craft Activities All Afternoon
Food Truck & Scoopers Ice Cream

This is a day with lots to be enjoyed by young & old. We are looking forward for everyone to come out and enjoy yourself and help the Optimist Club of Shakespeare celebrate their 50 years of service to the Youth and Community.



Presented by the Optimist Club of Shakespeare

COMMUNITY —

Tall corn crops sprayed with fungicides by area helicopters

By Gary West

If Tavistock and Shakespeare area residents are seeing helicopters flying overhead, and they aren't the orange colour kind, they could be the black helicopters of Great Lakes Helicopters Inc. based in Waterloo Ontario.

The company has 13 helicopters in their fleet, and are spraying fungicides on corn crops in Perth and Oxford counties, as well as the Waterloo Region.

Crop farmers in the area have had to resort to spraying with a helicopter since the corn has had such ideal growing conditions that in some areas, it's gotten too tall, in some farmers opinions, to spray on the ground with "high boy" sprayers.

The company says they "will be spraying

3,000 acres in the surrounding county areas, in the next couple weeks."

With one helicopter pilot and two licensed crop technicians on the ground, they are able to cover hundreds of acres every day, weather permitting.

Fungicides are applied to control weeds and diseases and keep the overall corn plant healthy. It does prevent the growth of fungal spores according to the company's technicians.

When not spraying field crops, their helicopters are used for charter tours, such as a Cowbell brewery tour south of Blythe, and even tours of the Grand Bend area.

For more info go to www.greatlakeshelicopters.ca.



This crop spraying helicopter was spotted south of Shakespeare on Tuesday, August 1, applying fungicide to area corn crops on a perfect, clear sunny afternoon.

Perth County joins CAMSafe program to improve public safety

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

The Perth County Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) has officially implemented the CAMSafe program, which aims to create a database of residential and commercial security cameras within a community. This registry can act as a resource for police when investigating crimes.

When a police officer accesses the CAMSafe database, they will see a map of the local area. Officers can click on registered addresses for more details, such as property owner contact information. Officers cannot access security cameras

or cloud based accounts. If police would like to examine camera footage, they can make a request to the property owner using contact information from the database.

Interested community members are required only to provide basic contact information and camera location but can add more details if they want, such as the direction the camera faces, footage retention, details or screenshots of the camera view. Registrants can view only their own information, and can delete their account or change their information at any time.

"Video surveillance plays an integral role

to emergency response and disaster management, surveillance can help mitigate incidents and help solve crimes," said the OPP in a release. "Police officers can resolve incidents far more seamlessly and quick, with more offenders/suspects being identified and charged with visual evidence."

Video surveillance was recently used to identify four youth suspects in multiple mischief and break and enter cases in North Perth Township, which resulted in more than \$100,000 in damages.

The program is an important tool to help

officers identify offenders in the community and improve public safety. Living in rural areas, which include many areas in Perth County, is less populated and often situated on large lots of land.

"Having a home surveillance system can increase visibility around your property and detect activity on your land; it also helps as an additional investigative resource for law enforcement," said the OPP.

More information, and the ability to register security cameras, is available at www.camsafe.ca.

176th Decoration Service
 Trinity Anglican Church
 August 13, 2023
 2:00 p.m.
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St James Chapel of Ease
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sgacnewhamburg@gmail.com
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St Agatha Mennonite Church
 1967 Erb's Road St Agatha 519-634-8212
 Pastor Nancy Mann
 Worship service 10am followed by coffee hour and sermon discussion.
 All are welcome

COMMUNITY —

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

- 1) What is the study or collection of postage stamps called?
- 2) What is the street address of the White House?
- 3) What is a group of frogs called?
- 4) What do you call a tailless cat?
- 5) Whose nose grows when he told a lie?
- 6) What type of creature is a painted lady?
- 7) What is a baby kangaroo called?
- 8) What is the first letter of the Greek alphabet?
- 9) What is the first book of the Bible?
- 10) In which country will you find a city called Adelaide?

Answers found on page 22

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

August 3: Happy Birthday to Nicole Albrecht (22) and Jacob Kurzat, and anniversary for Jeff and Kim Vanderhyden (21st), Benjamin and Chantalle Johnson (15th), and Sandy and Shari Schultz (4th).

August 4: Happy Birthday to Tanner Yantzi (9) and anniversaries for Tim and Tina Trachsel (33rd), and Keith and Christy Townsend (16th), and Dan and Ashley Kalbfleisch (6th).

August 5: Happy Birthday to Laina Berendsen (16), Erinn Spicer (21), and Pam Seyler.

August 6: Happy birthday to Jacob Fuller (10), Claire Hazeleger (30), and anniversary for Carl and Connie Zehr (57th), Greg and Tammy Kaufman (29th), Chris and Janna Lynn Cressman (18th), and Darryl and Amanda Zehr (13th).

August 7: Happy Birthday to Cameron Hergel (7), Harper Witzel (10) and Colten Berger and anniversaries for Justin and Inge Berger (13th), Justyn and Stefanie Roy (13th), Scott and Meagan Lichti (13th).

August 8: Happy Birthday to Braydon Raymer (17) and Sarah Danen (23).

August 9: Happy Birthday to Luke and Elizabeth Hartfiel (5), Mackenzie Wurdell (20), Alicia Meconi, Nancy Hotson, and Julianna Suderman, and anniversary for Jason and Kendra Lange (15th).

Does someone in your family have a special day coming up? Let us know at thewtgazette@gmail.com to appear in our Birthdays and Anniversaries listing or to arrange for a special announcement ad.

The Old Gazettes

By Stewart Grant

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

July 31-August 7, 2013 Edition (10 years ago)

More than twenty-five years ago, Tavistock firefighters were excited to get their new yellow pumper truck, a sign of the changing times. Last Wednesday, the department took delivery of a brand new pumper and the same excitement swept through the hall as firefighters got their first glimpse of the rig. The new Freightliner M2 106 2013 Model diesel is a tandem chassis with quad cab which allows four firefighters to ride in full gear along with the driver. The bed of the truck features a 2,500 imperial gallon plastic tank which is more than double the previous tanker's capacity.

Dennis Holst wasn't the oldest or the youngest member of the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock road crew, but last Wednesday marked his retirement after 32 years of service.

August 3, 2003 Edition (20 years ago)

The Tavistock and District Museum and Archives Committee (MAC) now has a place to begin sorting and displaying artifacts and assorted documents thanks to the Council

of the Township of East Zorra-Tavistock and Mayor Dave Oliphant. At the July 16 meeting, Council authorized staff to prepare a rental agreement with MAC to lease a portion of the former Tavistock Public Utility Commission office at 37 Maria Street in Tavistock.

Tavistock's first blood donor clinic in years was held at the Tavistock Memorial Hall on Thursday evening, July 31, under sponsorship from the Optimist Club of Tavistock. Sixty-three local residents made appointments for the event that was promoted by the family of Joanne Seyler of Bayfield who is presently undergoing treatment in London for lung cancer. Her daughter, Donna Winhold of Tavistock said, "When Mom needed blood - it was there for her."

August 10, 1983 Edition (40 years ago)

After nearly a month without a postmaster, Tavistock is pleased to welcome Mr. Paul Clarke to the local position with Canada Post. Mr. Clarke, 28, is a native of Mitchell where he got his start in the post office ten years ago.

The government in West Germany has tightened regulations on the program that provides benefits to the unemployed. So has the socialist government in France that has nationalized most of the country's banks. In the United States, the national average of benefits to the unemployed has been held to about \$125 per week. Many countries, it

seems, are either tightening up on unemployment payouts, or at least holding the line. But that's not so in Canada. Here's the maximum weekly payout under Unemployment Insurance rules is \$231 per week, and the average payment is \$145 per week, about \$20 higher than that in the U.S. The point, of course, is that with weakened economies and the number of jobless at high levels (in Canada the unemployment rate is more than 12 percent of the work force), other countries are tightening the rules to ensure that only those who really need support get it. In Canada, on the other hand, life at the Unemployment Insurance Commission seems to go on much as before, even though payments are phenomenally higher.

July 24-31, 1963 Edition (60 years ago)

Tavistock's clerk-treasurer since January of 1961, Ernest Conrad Seltzer, died at the wheel of his car late Friday morning. Mr. Seltzer had driven to the office of Reeve Robert Rudy, and was apparently just stopping his car when he suffered a heart attack, expiring almost immediately.

Valued at about \$650, three Holstein cows were killed Sunday, July 28, when lightning struck the tree they were huddled under for shelter. Several other cows on the farm of George McArdle, RR 2, Tavistock, ran into the bush after the bolt struck, and six standardbred horses some 50 feet from the tree were not hurt.

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COMMUNITY —

The Stratford and District Saddle Club Riders and Horses compete at the Schlotzhauer riding facility



Saddle club president and Stratford Mayor, Martin Ritsma (centre), are riders and horses who competed while showing their true Canadian colours at the equestrian show in late July at the Schlotzhauer riding facility on Line 37, near Shakespeare.



Barrel racer Phoebe Cowan on her horse named B.B. Gun, clocks in a fast time while competing at the Stratford and District Saddle club competition in late July.

By Gary West

There were many horses and riders from across Perth County at the Stratford and District Saddle Club show in late July. Both young and not so young, competed with their mounts in excellent weather at

the Schlotzhauer riding facility in North Easthope township on Line 37, near Shakespeare.

There were numerous classes for all age groups. Saddle Club President, Martin Ritsma, was happy with the turnout of rid-

ers and spectators.

Organizers said the weather was in their favour for the first time in many weekends, when rain forced the cancellation of the two previous shows.

Show judge Christine McMullen from the Aylmer area, was helpful in advising and explaining to the younger riders how they could improve in the future with their horses, in some of the areas and classes of the competition that they were entered in.

Stunning scenes from Wilmot Township



A misty morning in New Hamburg. (Photo credit: Mike Grummett)



Mike Schout Wetlands Preserve in New Hamburg. (Photo credit: Donna Fortuna)

COMMUNITY —

Show Us Your Wilmot



Each week, the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette will publish interesting photos from around the community. The inspiration for this came from the Show Us Your Wilmot Facebook group. This photo was taken by Jennifer Lee Black during a foggy walk in Wilmot on Friday morning, July 14. (Photo credit: Jennifer Lee Black)

Morningside community summer games



The 19th annual senior summer games kicked off at Morningside Retirement Community with an opening ceremony and a parade. There were about 11 days of different games for everyone to compete in, and hundreds of residents participated. (Photo credit: Tim Louis)

Gazette Puzzles

Golf Jargon

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Pet of the Week



STELLA

Our Pet of the Week is Stella, a corgi known to frequent Wellesley Township. Stella is a puppy who loves diving in water and exploring new territories. She is a snuggly sweetheart.

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COMMUNITY —

Oxford County's Darcroft Family Farm, southwest of Tavistock, setting records



The MacLeod family in their modern free stall-parlour barn. Left to right, Paul, Ellen, Rebecca, Abigail and Kyle.

By Gary West

Oxford County has been known as the Dairy Capital of Canada for many years, and it doesn't get that reputation by standing still.

Darcroft Holsteins is a three-time Master Breeder Herd, with 26 classified Excellent, 72 Very Good and 33 Good Plus cows on the 41st Line of Zorra township.

Their family farm has worked through many ups and downs (like most farms) to get to where they are today.

The Darcroft Farm and the MacLeod family have become known as one of the top Holstein breeders in the country for breeding, and selling some of the highest priced purebred holsteins in the business today. Their farm is southwest of Tavistock.

The farm's history started on a farm near Niagara Falls in the late 40's and early 50's, when Keith and Hilda MacLeod milked Holsteins and eventually relocated their farm with their four sons, to Stephenville in the municipality of Niagara South.

The family farmed there till 1983, and

then sons Paul and Ron, made a big decision, after much thought, to leave Stephenville and relocate to Oxford County, north of Woodstock on Highway #59, where they eventually purchased 179 acres. Their other two brothers continued to farm in Stephenville.

They knew if they were going to continue dairy farming, it might as well be on class 1 fertile land that Oxford County could provide.

They also felt the close proximity to Highway 401 and 403 would be to their advantage in selling breeding stock to markets in the future.

Paul states "that if the Government of Ontario wants to expand and build houses outside of Toronto and Niagara, in his opinion, a great place would be in the Stephenville area where the land is hard, dry clay and can't grow much in the way of crops anyway, instead of their decision to build on land in the green belt."

As time went by and their families grew, Ron and his wife Sherry moved to Renfrew County in 2003, and continued to dairy farm with their family members



The MacLeod family at the entrance to their new dairy facility on the 41st Line of Zorra Township.

near Cobden.

Over the years, the city of Woodstock has grown, and with housing encroachment, the MacLeods decided it was time to move to a farm northwest from where they were, and purchased 387 acres in November 2016.

Their plan included building a new dairy facility that would house their 110 milking dairy cows, along with dry cows and young stock, and plans also included remodeling the existing bank barn to house newborn calves and small heifers.

The farm now includes Paul and Ellen along with son and daughter-in-law, Kyle and Rebecca, and now two-year-old Abigail.

With the advent of sexed semen and an overabundance of heifers, the farm sold off some of their excess breeding stock.

One such sale was Darcroft S.C. Ransom, who was sold to Blondin farms in Quebec along with five other breeding age heifers. She eventually became a show winner and was sold by the Jacob's family in one of their production sales for \$80,000. The MacLeods still have many family

members in their herd to breed from.

A second headliner from the farm was Darcroft J.C. Unstop Alabama, a red heifer, who was shown at many shows in Quebec. After two years, the cow eventually sold at the top selling price of \$140,000 in the Blondin Elite sale in Quebec.

Paul and Kyle are happy with the results that their Darcroft breeding program has brought to other Holstein Breeders in the country and always wish the buyers of their genetics the best of luck with their purchases.

Paul led Holstein Canada as its president in 2009-2010. His son, Kyle, is now Vice President of the Ontario Holstein branch.

Ellen has worked with McIntosh Embryo Transfer for the last 31 years, maintaining embryo recovery and export records for the company.

Rebecca continues to work as a therapist while raising their young family.

With very little outside hired help, the Darcroft Family Farm will be one dairy in the future that will, no doubt, keep Oxford County in the lead as the Dairy Capital of Canada for many years to come.

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OPINION —

EXPERT ADVICE: *The effect the current economic market and future forecasts are having on the real estate market*



By Alison Willsey

If you have been following what the Central Banks of Canada's views on the economy, you know they continue to fight against inflation. There is still a risk of a recession looming. Some of Europe will experience this sooner than North America as they currently have a much higher inflation rate; however, the risk here in Canada is real and imminent.

We just experienced a second rise in interest rates since June. This not only has a negative impact on those looking to borrow to purchase a home but also on

those whose mortgage terms are up for renewal. Many Canadians have renewals looming at higher rates. This could mean less money available in Canadian pockets. There is talk and fear of possibly one to two more interest rate increases this year. My hope, along with many Canadians, is that this cycle is nearing the end. It is difficult for analysts/forecasters to know the eventual impact as there are many factors that could positively and negatively impact the housing market. One of the positives is the Canadian Immigration Policy. It currently has played a part in supporting the economy due to higher immigration. There continues to be a shortage in inventory levels of housing, thus increasing demand, and this could continue to cause prices to rise higher in our area than forecasted. There has been a healthy job market, and the lengthening of amortization/mortgage terms has limited those who may have been forced to sell. We could see a stronger economic recovery.

There are a few causes for con-

cern, though. Again, the higher interest rates seem to have slowed buyers down again since April of 2023. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association, the National Homes Sales saw its biggest month-to-month increase in sales activity in April of 2023. They felt that buyers thought it was time to buy as interest rates were at the top end, but property values were starting to the near the bottom. Once the June and July Interest rate increase took effect, there is now uncertainty again. According to CREA, there was an increase in sales of about only 1/2 as big in May when compared to April and only a 1.5% gain nationally on average in June of 2023. I am already seeing the shift in the marketplace and that some buyers are being forced back to waiting again to purchase, like in 2022 after the February 2022 peak, as rates could remain higher for longer into 2024 than initially forecasted. We could see more stabilization or sales rising at a slower pace and cooler price growth into the fall and through

to the end of 2023.

Other factors that could negatively impact the housing market are the possible changes to mortgage stress test rules that could make it even more difficult for buyers to get approvals in place as they have to qualify currently for a higher interest rate than the current posted rate. Other factors to read up on are The Vacancy Tax, Foreign Speculation Tax, Foreign Buyers Ban, zoning changes and increased supply of housing and rent controls. These factors could be limiting for some potential Buyers.

So, again for clarification, the lack of supply, recent increases in borrowing costs and uncertainty of the future rate hikes, along with talk of tighter mortgage lending rules can all affect a buyer's psychology and also make it more difficult to purchase. Our weaker than expected economic growth is the culprit (high inflation levels still). So, although CREA forecasts home prices to decline about 0.2% on an annual basis, they predict that

national home sales will rebound by 11.2% the following year. This is positive. We just don't know when in 2024 to expect changes for sure. What quarter this will happen in, is unknown.

There are many people who will want and/or perhaps need to buy and/or sell in this existing market. It will be very valuable to find the right team of professionals who are currently in the market to guide and assist through the process and who can implement strategies that work for current Buyers and Sellers to optimize their potential to purchase a home and/or sell a home successfully in the current market. Again, do your research beforehand. Make sure you are prepared and have a good handle on your financial ability to move forward, as things can change quickly.

Alison Willsey is a realtor with Peak Realty Ltd. She has more than a decade of experience, grew up in Tavistock, and attended WODSS.

EXPERT ADVICE: *To pack or not to pack - that is a question*



By Scott Dunstall

This trip will be two weeks old by the time you read, but I thought I would walk you through the agony I go through for a road trip. First of all, the destination is Niagara Falls. This was originally a sister's overnight scheduled blitz, but Lil's kid sister has come down with creeping blue goofus (as my dad would call it). It was a house booked on Air BnB, and it was too late to get the money back, so my brother-in-law, Murray and I were recruited as the back up crew. So, it was Lil, my sister-in-law Lee, Murray and myself.

I don't do too many overnights anymore, but I do try to think of the occasions that will take place while I am away. When I say occa-

sion, most people think of something like a wedding reception. For me, an occasion is anytime I will be in public. As my loyal readers will attest (hi mom!) this is not a behaviour of conceit. This is me wanting to be the best me that I can be in any situation. I draw confidence from it. Confidence brings clarity of thought and conversation. I consider it a "situation" to check into a hotel. Going for a walk. Driving to Niagara Falls... or singing karaoke at the Beer Garden on Clifton Hill. Yes, that's right, folks, I like to stand up in front of strangers and humiliate myself. So why not look good doing it? I digress.

Where am I going with this? I have no idea, so let's see what happens next.

The point is this, I defy all conventional travelling wisdom and over pack. "What are you doing, we are only staying one night?" "Do you really need a whole bag for your shoes?" "Are you really going to wear 12 pairs of shorts?" Silly questions, really. I don't pack for the duration, I pack for the potential occasions. I pack for the options that inspire me when I get to the destination. For example, when we got to the Falls

yesterday, we decided to take a walk on Clifton Hill wearing the clothes we were wearing in the car. The room wasn't ready, and I wanted to go check out the karaoke stage. When I saw the vibe on the street and the karaoke stage area AND knowing that we were in the middle of summer in one of the sleaziest places on earth, I decided what flash (outfit) I was going to wear. Nothing "buttoned down" that's matchy-matchy. I needed something that looked a little more casually put together - kind of like I grabbed the first shirt and shorts I saw.

So, we got back to the house that the girls rented and realized that they only booked the second floor. Most homes don't have elevators, and I packed a full 28" spinner full of clothes and a 24" spinner full of shoes. And this was a 110 year old home. With stairs that were built for people that never grew more than 5 feet 2 inches from what I can tell. Suffice to say that I pulled something that rhymes with hut going up those stairs, and it still hasn't unpulled itself. But this is the sacrifice a follower of fashion must abide. But that is me, not you. You don't have to be this nutty when trav-

elling. The lesson here is to not only think about the event you will attend when travelling but also the environment. A wedding reception is still a wedding reception, whether it's at Buckingham Palace or the back room of Millies Dinner. It's just that you may wear different clothes for each one. Regardless, weather will also play a factor. I check it every day, if I'm travelling I will check the weather at the destination I'm going to.

Sounds simple and obvious, but many times even I forget.

P.S. I did Born to be Wild and Wonderwall. It was great.

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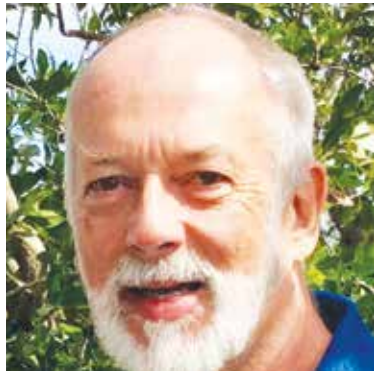
Scott Dunstall is a local writer who has been on a stylistic journey for more than 10 years. His belief is that every guy has a style of their own.

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TRAVEL —

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Kermit the king of Key Lime Pie



By Paul Knowles

Some people think he's a statue. Others, that he is a cartoon character brought to life. Me? I think he's a genius. And a terrific chef.

I'm talking about Kermit Carpenter, owner and founder of Kermit's Key West Key Lime Pie Shoppe.

If you have been to Key West, odds are good that you've seen Kermit decked out in what he calls Key Lime yellow, posing with a pie in front of his main Key Lime Pie shop. I got the chance to photograph him and then spend some quality time with Kermit in the crowded office next door to his shop and restaurant.

And he gave me the recipe for success in the Key Lime Pie business.

Actually, he gave me two recipes – one, the story of how he became the leading figure in the Key Lime Pie world; the second, the actual recipe for his pie. Because it isn't a secret. It's right on any bottle of Kermit's Key Lime

juice you might wish to purchase. But that doesn't mean his pies aren't special. They are. In fact, when the bicentennial of the Florida Keys was celebrated last month, the centerpiece was a 4-meter in diameter Key Lime pie created by Kermit and a colleague.

He says that the open secret is, "My juice is double strength... it adds a little firmness to the pie".

Kermit came to Key West 31 years ago after living in West Virginia and then in Maryland. Why? One word – "cold". His grandmother lived in the Keys and visits to her inspired Kermit to move as far south as you can in the United States. They also inspired something that would establish his career for the next decades. "My grandmother taught me how to make Key Lime pie" he told me.

He found an available location in Key West at the corner of Greene and Elizabeth and opened a store. To which nobody came. The first months were a challenge.

But then two things changed. First, Key West built the boardwalk that is now crowded with visitors and locals strolling along the waterfront, visiting the shops and restaurants. And second, Kermit threatened a trolley driver.

Well, that's sort of true. Kermit had decided to be his own trademark so he had taken to standing in front of his store, decked out in his colourful chef's costume, pie in hand.

The tourist trolleys and Conch Train routes run right past his shop but the drivers were always pointing out the music studio then owned by Jimmy Buffett on the other side of the street. Passengers were always looking the other way! Until one day when Kermit caught the eye of a trolley driver and pretended to throw his Key Lime pie at the chap.

The driver loved it and directed his passengers' attention to the crazy pie-throwing chef. It caught on with other drivers and Kermit's marketing problem was solved.

To this day, you can usually spot Kermit in front of the store. "In season, I try to get out there," he says. "It's fun".

But he also has a big business to run. There are now two Kermit Key Lime Pie Shoppes in Key West, the second on iconic Duval Street. And Kermit ships thousands of Key Lime pies throughout the US from a 30,000 square foot warehouse farther north located elsewhere in Florida. He has a total staff of 35.

And the guy will turn 80 years of age in October. So I asked about his succession plan. He gave me a quizzical look. There is no succession plan because there is no plan for Kermit to stop working!

Besides, in addition to making a living for himself and his staff, Kermit makes a huge difference in his community. He donates to dozens, perhaps hundreds, of charities.

When Kermit came to Key West and started making his pies from his grandmother's recipe, there



Kermit, the king of Key Lime Pies. (Photos by Paul Knowles)

was only one other Key Lime pie business in the city. Today, every restaurant worth its salt has Key Lime pie on the menu including a breakfast joint called Blue Heaven where you can top off an excellent breakfast with a unique slice of their pie.

Does the competition bother Kermit? He laughs. "Try 'em all," he says. "It makes for a fun thing to do".

Kermit gives this suggestion with the confidence that, when all is ordered and eaten, folks will return to Kermit's shop – including celebrities who drop by from time to time. He laughs that country-rock star Zac Brown ordered a blueberry Key Lime pie and "he ate the whole thing".

I didn't eat a whole pie but I

scarfed down a nice slice of Kermit's original Key Lime pie – yum! And I then shared a slice of Coconut Key Lime pie with Kermit – also yum!. Kermit admits that he eats at least a few bites of his pie "almost every day".

He claims that he is trying to adjust his working schedule a bit to allow him to travel farther afield than the sidewalk in front of his shop. But it's hard to believe he'll ever leave for very long because, as Kermit told me, "It's fun. It's been fun from day one".

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.



Blue Heaven, which serves Key Lime pie for breakfast.



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SPORTS —

Merchants ready for nationals in Saskatchewan

By Lee Griffi

The Tavistock Merchants U23 team is in Saskatoon this week to defend their Ontario Amateur Softball Association Canadian title.

The team had already qualified as defending champions but accentuated their bid by recently winning the Ontario title and the gold medal at the 51st annual Brussels Men's Fastpitch Tournament last weekend. The Merchants outscored their opposition 39 to 15. The team also won their last two league games, 11-0 over Tavistock Hops and 7-6 over the Hickson Astros on the Thursday night before Tavistock's Cephas Roth Tournament.

In an interview from Saskatoon, manager Kevin Zehr said the team is ready to defend. "I'm optimistic. The boys are confident. It's one thing to win, but it's a whole other ball game to defend. Everybody is going to be gunning for us. Usually, you get to tournaments like this, and you have

the chance to get guys in and give guys a rest and save for the big games. But every game is a big game for us." He added the guys are confident in their ability to win, but they all know last year is over and this is a new tournament.

Zehr may be the team's bench boss, but admitted he had nothing to do with how the team came together. That, he added, was all them. "These kids formed the team and then asked me to coach. They all started the team and are all in it together. They play for each other, and if you make a mistake, they let you hear about it but in a good-hearted way. They'll joke about it. No one is worried to make an error because of it. When you have chemistry like that, you aren't walking on eggshells. You can be confident and comfortable."

When the team won the provincial championship earlier this summer, that meant they were allowed to select one player from a team not going to the national



tournament. "We picked Connor Brooks from Napanee, and he has a great bat, and he played on Team Canada in the spring with Mason and Mitch (McKay's), Thomas

(Baker), and Reese (Yantzi)."

Zehr expects his biggest competition will come from several teams. "Nova Scotia will be very tough, as will the host team from Saskatoon. Last year (Saskatoon) were the bronze medalists, and they didn't get their bats until Friday as they were lost by the airline. Nova Scotia won a silver medal at last year's Canada Summer Games and basically has the same team back." He added last year's runners-up from Owen Sound will be also expected to compete again this time around as is the squad from Newfoundland.

The Merchants opened the tournament against Owen Sound Wednesday and also took the field against the host team. Fans can follow the tournament at <https://softball.ca/u23mens>. Game times on the site are in central time, two hours behind standard time. The Gazette will have a full recap of Tavistock's performance in next week's newspaper.

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SPORTS —

Tavistock's champion step dancer to compete in Italy

By Gary West

There is a young lady from the Tavistock area who has been making her family, friends, and area residents proud of what she has achieved over the last number of years through dancing.

Stepdancing and clogging that is.

Clara Roth, now 20-years-old, has been step dancing for more than half her life, since the age of seven.

Over the next couple of weeks, she will experience what many performers only dream of achieving.

She is thrilled to be representing Canada as a member of the American clogging team as they travel to Sardinia, Italy, over the next couple of weeks.

Clara has recently been invited to join a tour and perform with the crew known as "American Racket." She says this troupe comprises of cloggers and string instrument musicians from various states and regions, specifically focussing on the presentation of traditional clogging with live old-time string band music.

Clara's journey with American Racket began in 2018, when she had the incredible opportunity to meet and perform with them during a similar tour in Passo-Fundo, Brazil.

With a smile on her face, during a recent interview, she says she is thrilled to be



At home this week is the Roth family: Mom, Stephanie, and Dad, Mark, with Clara, who will also be travelling to Italy to watch their daughter perform. Absent is brother Drew.

representing Canada, and knows the experience will be one that she will never forget.

The festival she and the team will be participating in is called the "Festival of

Florinss," and the performances are organized by an international non-profit, non-government organization known as the international council of folklore festival organizations.

She said this organization has a formal relationship with UNESCO towards the preservation, safeguarding, and promotion of folklore and traditional cultures of the world. Clara says she is also looking forward to bringing a touch of traditional Canadian step dancing to the performances too.

When Clara is not dancing, is studying at Conestoga College to obtain her degree in international business. She lives with her parents, Mark and Stephanie, and younger brother, Drew, on a picturesque setting on the 11th Line, west of Tavistock.

Her mother and father were both educators, and she herself went to Hickson Public School and Northwestern Secondary School in Stratford.

Clara has just finished her second year of four at Conestoga College. She says she loves to travel and hopes to do a lot more travelling in the future.

The young, incredibly talented dancer thanks coach, Judy Waymouth, from Judy's School of Dance in Stratford, for the years of amazing training. This has shaped her to be the dancer that she is today.

She says she "has always loved to perform, and dance gives her the opportunity to travel with a fun purpose."

She welcomes everyone in the area to follow her journey on Instagram and Facebook "americanracket."

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - AUGUST 2023

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August 9th	Wilmot Council Meeting Hybrid council meeting taking place at 60 Snyder's Road West in Baden at 6:45 p.m. Also streamed on the Township of Wilmot YouTube page.	August 11th	Good Eats & Musical Beats Taking place at Fellowship Bible Church at 150 Hamilton Road in New Hamburg from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., including the fifth annual Pet Talent Contest. Including local food trucks such as the Funnel Cloud, Fo'Cheezy, El Milagro and the Serial Griller.	August 14th	Blood Drive Taking place at the Shantz Mennonite Church at 2473 Erbs Road in Baden. Booking times are available from around 3 p.m. until about 8 p.m. at www.blood.ca.
August 10th	Beef Barbecue at Tavistock	August 18th		August 22nd	Wellesley Council Meeting Hybrid council meeting taking place at 4805 William Hastings Line in Crosshill at 6:45 p.m. Also streamed on the Township of Wellesley YouTube page.
				August 22nd	Expressway Ford Cruise Night The Expressway Ford 16th Annual Cruise Night at Expressway Ford on the business lot on 1554 Haysville Road, Highway 7&8 in New Hamburg. Fords, Mercurys and Lincolns only. Music, 50/50 draw, awards. Lions Club charity barbecue, ice cream proceeds to Simple Dreams (children's charity).
				August 22nd	Board of Trade Cruise Night Taking place from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the New Hamburg Mill Block. This year will feature a vendor market. The Board of Trade is looking for local crafters, artisans and makers to showcase their products. Those interested can contact membercoordinator@nhbot.ca for more information.

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CORRECTION: In the July 20th edition of the Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette, a story appeared on page 4 about the Cruizin' on the Pond Baden event. The current owner of M&G Portables Inc., (and George Milligan's son), is in fact named Tom, not Ron. M&G Portables clarified that they donate their washrooms to the event and don't ask for anything in return. Organizers of the Cruizin' at the Pond event gave a gift certificate to M&G Portables to thank them for doing so for many years.

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Weekly Quiz Answers

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| 1) Philately | 5) Pinocchio |
| 2) 1600 Pennsylvania Ave | 6) Butterfly |
| 3) An Army | 7) Joey |
| 4) Manx | 8) Alpha |
| | 9) Genesis |
| | 10) Australia |

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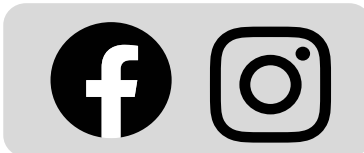
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