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Wilmot Mayor cannot afford to buy a home in her municipality

Natasha Salonen sounds the alarm about housing affordability in the Waterloo Region



Wilmot Mayor Natasha Salonen.

By Veronica Reiner

Wilmot Township mayor Natasha Salonen said she cannot afford to buy her own home within the municipality she leads.

Salonen, 28, was elected as mayor last fall. She earns about \$90,000 annually, between her mayoral duties, role as a regional councillor, and board member work with Anova and the Grand River Conservation Authority.

"It started with looking at houses in the area, and looking at what I could get approved for as a mortgage, and those just really aren't lining up with what houses are going for," said Salonen.

"A big part of that, too, is really just the supply in Wilmot, and how quickly houses are turning over."

According to the Waterloo Region Association of Realtors, the average home in Wilmot Township sold for \$916,167, up

eight per cent from last year. The average sale price for all residential properties across Waterloo Region in July was \$795,778.

The average home in the region sold in 16 days last month, compared to 18 days in July 2022.

Salonen currently lives with her parents in Baden, and helps to take care of her father, who has amyotrophic later-

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Tavistock Fire welcomes new Chief Mike Donaldson

By Gary West

There are times over the summer months, during holidays, that getting three fire department officials together can be a job in itself.

We were lucky recently to catch up with three local men who have been an integral part of the Tavistock Station of the East Zorra-Tavistock fire department over the last number of years.

Retiring fire chief Greg Bender (Barney) recently handed the reins over to incoming Chief Mike Donaldson. Fire captain Scotty Zehr, who is also a councillor on East Zorra-Tavistock council, and a fire committee member, was also offering his congratulations to Greg for a job well done.

Greg Bender first became a firefighter in the year 2000, under then-chief Clare Brenner. He was named a captain after taking over from Dale Smythe.

Bender was promoted to Deputy Chief upon the retirement of Maury Sauder in 2018, and, one year later, was named Chief when Paul Roth retired.

He and his wife Karen have four children and also four grandchildren, which is keeping him busy along with his company Double B Machine and Fabricating.

The 57-year-old Bender, said it was time to dedicate more time to his family, adding he doesn't really miss the sound of the pager going off at all hours of the day, especially at night.

With all the good recruiting that has been accomplished at the Tavistock station over the last couple of years and with his son, Luke, now part of the crew, he felt it was an

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COMMUNITY —

Tavistock Fire welcomes new Chief Mike Donaldson



At the Tavistock fire station is from left, newly named fire chief Mike Donaldson, retiring chief Greg Bender, and Scotty Zehr, a 12 year fire captain along with also being a member of East Zorra-Tavistock council.

Continued from page 1

opportune time to retire.

His wife Karen agreed and respected her husband's decision, even though she knew it was difficult for him because, she said, "Greg was one who has always wanted to contribute to the Tavistock and area community in any way he can."

The decision was also made easier due to the fact that his Deputy Chief, Mike Donaldson, was ready to take up the challenge of becoming Chief.

The new Chief has been in fire service for over 28 years. He followed in his father, Ted's footsteps - who was on the Hickson fire department for 20 years, retiring as a captain.

Mike Donaldson joined the Hickson fire department in January 1995, moved to Plattsville in 2002, and was on the Plattsville fire department for one-and-a-half year, before moving back to Hickson in 2003 and re-joining the Hickson fire department. He moved to Tavistock in 2018, switched stations from Hickson to Tavistock, and started as a firefighter,



The family of retired Tavistock fire chief Greg Bender. Back row, from left Jacob, Reis holding Sage, Brittany. Middle, from left, Greg, Karen, Joanna holding Ollie. Front, from left, Chase holding Parker, Hilary and Luke holding Emmett.

moving to Captain, and finally to Chief in May 2023.

In 2008, Mike fulfilled a lifelong dream of becoming a career firefighter when he was hired by Mississauga Fire and is currently an acting captain with a promotion to full Captain to occur sometime in 2024.

The new Chief says he "is thankful to former Hickson fire chief, Sherman Kropf, for taking him on in Hickson twice, and giving him a chance". Without him doing that, Mike said, he "wouldn't be where he is today."

The young Donaldson, is married to wife Lisa, who has worked in quality control at Saputo for over 28 years, has three children, Erica, Taylor and Owen, and does recognize the sacrifice his family makes when his pager sounds.

If area readers have ever witnessed the quick and organized work that firefighters and first responders do diligently, when called upon to a fire or serious accident, you will know how valuable men like Greg Bender, Mike Donaldson or Scotty Zehr are, along with the rest of their Tavistock family of firefighters.

Wilmot Mayor cannot afford to buy a home in her municipality

Continued from page 1

al sclerosis (ALS) and uses a wheelchair. "I'm very fortunate that I can give back to my parents, and it works out that I have a place to live," she said.

She is also working to pay off student debt after earning a Bachelor of Arts in Human Sciences degree from the University of Oxford in England.

"Also, keeping in mind, I don't have a huge amount of years working prior and paying off my student debt," noted Salonen. "Even if I could afford it - I don't need a 2,000 square foot home with granite countertops and six bathrooms. But there isn't really that much in supply in terms of starter homes on the market - they don't really exist anymore."

Her experience resonates with many people in her age group, where soaring costs have made home ownership unattainable. Salonen noted that some of her friends have wanted homes in the Waterloo Region, but moved to Woodstock instead, where homes are more affordable.

The average price of homes sold last month in the Oxford County area sold for \$659,943, according to the Woodstock Ingersoll Tillsonburg & Area Association of Realtors.

Salonen said she has focused on what she can do to make homeownership more affordable at a local level, as that is what she can personally impact in her role. "In Wilmot, for example, we have a bylaw that allows people to put in a secondary unit now into their houses for rentals, so people can do an in-law suite or a basement apartment or something if they want," she said.

"That still requires somebody putting an up-front investment in doing that, but it's an option to create more rental opportunities. The rental market is very dry in Wilmot, too."

The Township of Wilmot council, in July, agreed to submit an application to receive funding from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation Housing Accelerator Fund. The total potential grant amount is

about \$3,210,000. The funding would cover the cost of new units generated above and beyond the average annual growth.

Salonen noted she has taken steps of her own to address the housing affordability need in the community.

"I've been working with developers for the last few months, I'm building relationships with those that own land in our area and talking to them about different types of housing," said Salonen. "Don't get me wrong - there is definitely a need for single detached homes that people want. That's great, but also, let's look at other types of housing."

Total residential sales last month in Waterloo Region included 364 detached (up 8.3 per cent from July 2022), 120 townhouses (up 7.1 per cent), 74 condominium units (up 15.6 per cent) and 44 semi-detached homes (up 22.2 per cent).

Salonen said there are plenty of seniors that reach out that are looking to downsize - they do not want to go into a long term care facility, but they find that there

is nowhere to downsize.

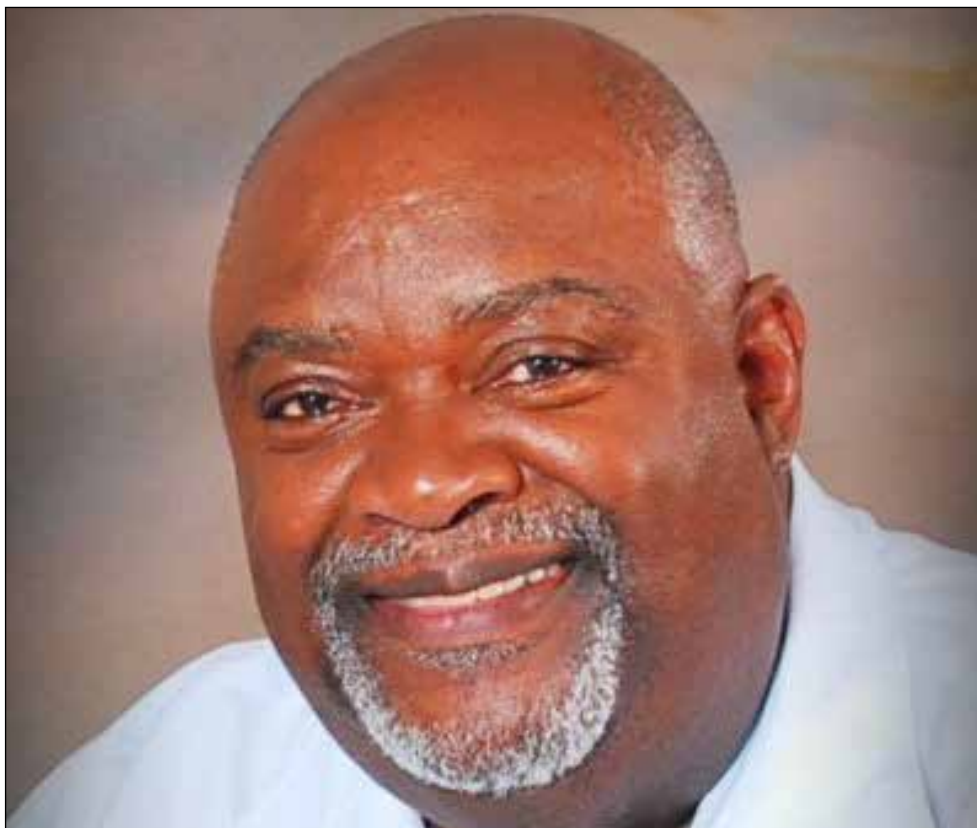
"That also leads into another issue of accessibility - I think nationally, we need to be talking about inclusive design in homes, because we have an aging population in Canada. That usually comes with mobility issues, and most of our houses are not accessible," said Salonen.

In order to truly solve housing affordability, a collective approach is necessary, she added.

"A big thing is I think there needs to be an organized national approach, whether it's the federal government that does it, or just all levels of government coming together," said Salonen. "I think that should include academics, developers, employers, universities and colleges - because international students have a big pressure, especially in Waterloo Region, on our housing market - I think we all need to come into a room, and sit down and discuss what varying policies can impact both immediate and long term change in the housing market."

COMMUNITY —

WRDSB drops code of conduct investigation against trustee Mike Ramsay



Waterloo Regional District School Board employee Mike Ramsay.

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

The Waterloo Regional District School Board has dropped its code of conduct investigation against board trustee Mike Ramsay.

According to a statement by Joanne Weston, Chair of the WRDSB Board of Trustees, the Integrity Commissioner has determined that the alleged contraventions of the code of conduct in the complaint are outside the time limited window set by section 28 of the code, because they occurred more than six months before the complaint was submitted to the Integrity Commissioner.

As such, the Integrity Commissioner determined that a formal inquiry would not be required.

"I am more angry than relieved," said Ramsay. "The statement from the Chair of the Board about the Integrity Commissioner's decision is both self-serving and inaccurate. The statement would

have us believe that the complaint was thrown out simply due to time limits. In fact, the Integrity Commissioner made it clear that it would duplicate previous investigations.

"It's lousy that the Chair chose to proceed with a full formal investigation, when it was clear the allegations failed to meet both time limit and violated double jeopardy rules."

Because the complaint involved one or more WRDSB employees, it continues to be treated as a private item.

Trustees are governed by the Education Act, which differs from the governance of municipalities.

"We have a school board to govern," said Ramsay. "Our students need our help. We need to align our board's policies with Bill 98 to ensure they get that help, especially post-pandemic. The Chair is aware that I am happy to engage constructively on the way forward."

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FEATURE —

Three candidates vying for the title of Wellesley Fall Fair ambassador



Anas Alsakani



Katelyn Bartlett



Katie Musselman

By Veronica Reiner

The Wellesley Fall Fair ambassador program is in full swing, with three contestants vying for the title - Anas Alsakani, Katelyn Bartlett and Katie Musselman. All candidates are currently going into their final Grade 12 year at Waterloo Oxford District Secondary School.

Contestants can be nominated by other community members, or they can nominate themselves.

"We usually reach out to the community to see if there is any young person in the community that they feel would be interested in being a candidate for the fair ambassador competition," said Joanne Stewart, who runs the program.

"From there, we take those names and information and we contact them. We let them know they're nominated, and ask whether they would like to participate in the fair ambassador competition."

Anas is based in Wellesley village, and sponsored by the Wellesley & District Lions Club. His long term goals include getting into the engineering program at the University of Waterloo, owning an apartment building, and becoming a business owner.

"My reason for competing is to get to know the community. I moved to Wellesley in 2020 during the pandemic, and I never got the chance to truly experience this community," said Anas. "Competing offers me

an opportunity to gain unique skills and experiences, while making stronger connections where I live."

He describes himself as adaptable, creative thinker with a knack for new ideas, good with hands on work, strong interpersonal and listening, and works well with others.

Katelyn is from Wellesley village, sponsored by Schmidtsville Restaurant. Her long term goals include obtaining a nursing degree, becoming a travel nurse to further explore the country, along with learning about other countries.

"I love our tightly knit town and I have always been eager to contribute more of my time into the community. The past few years have been really tough on everyone and the community due to COVID," said Katelyn.

"I want to further encourage everyone to come out to the fall fair so we can have the fantastic traditions I remember having when I was a kid. In participating in the Wellesley Ambassador program, I look forward to learning more about the community, others around me, and even myself."

She is involved in the rugby team, field hockey team, and Jazz choir. Katelyn has waitressed at Schmidtsville, as well as worked at Wellesley's Esso gas station. She also has a passion for horseback riding, and has been riding at Terrian Equestrian

Services since she was nine.

Katie is from St. Agatha, and sponsored by Baden Automotive. She is an avid member of more than 20 clubs for the Waterloo and Oxford 4-H organizations. Katie has been involved in and exhibited at the Wellesley Fall Fair, including featuring plants and vegetable exhibits, arts and crafts, baking, and scarecrow competition.

"I think that being the next fair ambassador would help me to grow as a person. A fair Ambassador is a friendly face that is approachable, reliable, personable, and responsible. I think that I have stability in these areas although there is always room to grow and improve," said Katie.

"The COVID-19 epidemic has caused many people to drift farther away from a sense of community that truly is so important. I am no exception. I feel as though I am missing a part in my community, and I think that I truly could give back to the township of Wellesley in the ambassador role."

Katie worked as a cabin leader at Hidden Acres Mennonite Farm, as well as Cookridge Dairy Barn. She is a member of the Junior Horticulture, a volunteer at Art in the Park, a member of the Wellesley Youth Advisory Council, and recently joined the Nith Valley Eco Boosters. She volunteered at the Wellesley Youth Dances hosted by the Wellesley & District Lions Club.

After the contestants were finalized, they, along with their parents, met up for dinner with Joanne and the current fair ambassador Ali Khan at Kennedy's restaurant in St. Agatha. This was to give contestants an opportunity to get to know one another, as well as obtain background information on the role of the fair ambassador and help answer any questions that they may have.

Contestants also participated in a public speaking workshop on Wednesday, August 23, at the Wilmot Recreation Complex. "That gives them some information on how to prepare their speech, how to answer impromptu questions, how to present yourself, and it's a very, very good workshop. It's several hours, so there's a lot of information there," explained Joanne.

The winner will be decided at the Wellesley Fall Fair, which will take place on Tuesday, September 12. Contestants are judged on their presentation "Me" board, an interview with the judges, a two to three minute speech, and an impromptu question.

The Wellesley Fall Fair Ambassador competition is a youth leadership opportunity, open to any young person in Wellesley Township, or within 15 kilometres of Wellesley Township, between ages 17 to 23. Ambassadors represent the fall fair at local, provincial and national events, develop public speaking and leadership skills, and network with local community members.

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette

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FEATURE —

Three contestants vying for Tavistock Fall Fair Ambassador title



Nicole Danen



Ashley Aarts



Janeen Overdeest

By Lee Griffi, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Three Tavistock and area women are in the running for the crown which will be handed out on Friday, September 8 at the Memorial Hall.

Ashley Aarts

Ashley is being sponsored by the Tavistock Men's Club. The 17-year-old will be attending Brescia University College at Western in September where she will be working towards completing an honours degree in French and Classroom Studies and would like to eventually become a teacher. She graduated from St. Michael's Catholic Secondary School in Stratford and currently teaches dance and works at McCully Hill Farm store.

Nicole Danen

The 19-year-old is sponsored by the

Tavistock Opti-Mrs Club. Nicole is in her second year of studies as she works toward a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture. She works at B-W Feed in addition to her duties on the family farm. In her spare time, she plays fastball, stepdances, is active in the 4-H Club and Oxford Junior Farmers and enjoys socializing with friends. Nicole hopes to work in the agriculture industry and potentially take over the family farm.

Janeen Overdeest

Janeen is sponsored by the Princess Elizabeth Women's Institute. The 20-year-old has completed two years at the University of Guelph where she is studying accounting and hopes to pursue a career in the field once she graduates. Her summer job is with Libro Credit Union in Woodstock, and she enjoys skiing, outdoor activities, reading, and helping out on the family farm.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Two people charged with possession and theft after reports of a suspicious vehicle

The Perth County Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) charged two individuals after a suspicious vehicle call.

On August 17, just after 2:35 p.m., Perth OPP officers stopped a vehicle in Perth East after a report of a suspicious vehicle and a theft at a local business on Main Street South in Perth East Township.

As a result of the police investigation, John MacDougall, a 62-year-old Walkerton resident was arrested and charged with three counts of "possession of property obtained by crime under \$5,000 - in Canada."

A 27-year-old Waterloo resident was arrested and charged with three counts of "theft under \$5,000 - shoplifting."

Both accused are scheduled to appear at the Ontario

Court of Justice in Stratford on September 25 to answer to the charges.

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 1-800-222-8477 or leave an anonymous online message at www.P3tips.com.

Driver facing impaired charged

A Milverton resident was charged with impaired driving.

On August 14, at about 11:29 p.m., Perth OPP stopped a vehicle for speeding on Perth Road 140 in Perth County.

During the investigation, the officer noted the driver had been drinking alcohol. A roadside screening device was administered, the driver was subsequently arrested and transported to a local operations centre for further testing.

As a result, a 39-year-old Milverton resident was charged with "operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus)," "speeding," and "driving motor

vehicle with open container of liquor."

Police initiated a 90-day Administrative Driver's License Suspension (A.D.L.S.) and a 7-day vehicle impoundment. The accused is scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Stratford on September 18 to answer to the charges.

Stratford woman charged after collision

A Stratford woman was charged after a single vehicle collision on Line 50 in Perth East on August 17.

At about 5:17 p.m., officers responded to the incident. When officers arrived on scene, the driver was showing signs of impairment. The driver was arrested and transported to a local operations centre for more testing.

As a result, a 23-year-old Stratford woman was charged with "operation while impaired - alcohol and drugs," and "operation while impaired - blood alcohol concentration (80 plus)."

The accused was released from custody and is scheduled to appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Stratford on September 4 to answer to the charges.

COMMUNITY —

Oxford County officially has a new MP

By Lee Griffi, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Arpan Khanna was sworn in as Member of Parliament for Oxford last week following his victory in the June 2023 federal by-election. Nearly 300 Oxford residents, family, friends, and Ernie Hardeman, MPP, attended the historic ceremony in West Block on Parliament Hill. "I am honoured and grateful to be sworn in. My promise to the people of Oxford is this: I will champion our community. Whether you are a farmer, single parent, autoworker, or a newcomer to our riding, I will be a strong voice for our community values," said Khanna. "I will do my best to represent Oxford in the House of Commons proudly," he added.

Khanna said it was a moment he will never forget. "It was a very humbling experience. There were so many residents from Oxford there who drove nearly seven hours to be a part of it. I was told it was one of the largest swearing-in ceremonies Ottawa has ever seen. I wanted to reach out to residents so they could be a part of the moment. In Oxford County, these things don't happen often whether it's federal or provincial. I was honoured to have so many people come out." He added he was blown away by the love and trust of his supporters. "I am so grateful for everything."

Despite not officially becoming a member of parliament until recently following his byelection victory on June 19, Khanna said he has spent the last two months working hard to get to know the riding better. "I have been travelling across Oxford County meeting folks from all walks of life



Eric Janse, Acting Office of the Clerk at the Government of Ontario, Arpan Khanna, MP for Oxford, and Khanna's wife Sim and son Arvin.

whether business owners, farmers, or citizens, I've been knocking on doors to meet people and hear their concerns. My job is to take issues and concerns from my constituents to Ottawa, even those who didn't vote for me."


Khanna's constituency office is now open and is located in the same location as former MP Dave Mackenzie on Huron Street in Woodstock. "We have hired some great

staff who are here to serve the community. My number one criteria was to hire staff who believe in public service, believe in giving back. We have a very staff who are very focused on customer service." He added there are a number of problems they can help with. "Any issues involving passports, employment insurance, Canada Revenue Agency, immigration, Canadian Pension Plan, disability, veteran affairs, anything that comes from

a federal ministry. We are getting a lot of calls right now regarding CERB repayments." Khanna said if people have any other concerns his office will be able to triage and get support elsewhere.

The 33-year-old plans to hold pop-up events across the county to provide opportunities to hear directly from constituents. "My team and I will come out to different parts of the riding. A lot of people feel Woodstock is a bit of a drive, so we'll be setting something up in Tavistock to hear concerns and help people with any issues they are having." One issue Khanna said he is passionate about is homelessness, something Woodstock is currently struggling with. "That is something I am very focused on, and I will potentially be bringing forward some solutions. I did meet with local mayors and community partners, but we may look at some sort of private members bill to support those needing help the most." He added supporting farmers is also a priority.

Khanna is the eighth Member of Parliament to serve the federal riding of Oxford. The House of Commons is scheduled to resume Monday, September 18, something he is looking forward to. "I'm excited about it. Ottawa is where the nation's decisions get made and I think it is important to have a grassroots voice and I think I bring that to the table. I'm not afraid to speak up, I'm not afraid to push back, and that's what people want to see. People want to see that their public servant is serving them. Pierre (Poilievre) sees it the way I do, we are public servants. I work for the people of Oxford. They pay my salary, and they are my bosses."


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COMMUNITY —

Ivy Rose Creative – a special place where children and parents grow

By Lee Griffi, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Ivy Rose Creative is the creation of Stratford native Victoria Morris. The Tavistock business opened in March of this year and is a play space for children that offers programming designed by Morris who is a Registered Early Childhood Educator with 16 years in the field. Her classes and workshops have been planned with a variety of early learning theories and practices in mind and are built to help support early learners' growth and development and provide parents the confidence and knowledge to continue to support their learning at home.

The business offers a wide range of options such as drop-in craft and play, aerial yoga, baby social club, and the space is also available to book private events such as a child's birthday party. Victoria said that while children benefit from everything there is to do, parents also do. "I get to see people making friends and coming back, especially with the baby groups. They plan to come and meet here and that really is the goal."

One of the first visuals anyone would notice setting foot inside the studio are the silks, or aerial yoga hammocks, which are suspended from the ceiling. The programming offered by Ivy Rose Creative is unique in that it helps children grow without making it obvious. "We are drawing on all sorts of development and early learning areas where kids are thinking they are just swinging and climbing and having fun, but they don't know their body is learning to control emotions, breathe deeper, and self-regulate. There are only five kids at a time for each course and class and they usually all become quite close friends. They laugh and have a good time and build on their skills quite quickly."

Victoria has a degree in child psychology and development and after that, went back to school for early childhood educator. "I'd been working in the early learning field in Mississauga since I was done school. I left a very good job there when I met my husband and when you meet a country boy he isn't moving to Mississauga, I was moving to him," she laughed. "I built my career back up from the ground in Mitchell and Stratford and took some time off when I had my girls." She added her desire to keep upgrading her education is something close to her heart. "Children's yoga, early learning specialist, literacy, infant massage, I did a bunch of different things, and I am one of those lifelong learners. I am always looking for the next course because I like to learn and do new things."

Victoria said her new business really started with putting together what she calls busy bins which were kits of activities geared towards kids with new siblings to give mom a break. "It could be independent early learning activities that were appropriate and themed to the child's interests so mom could have a break when

she had to feed her baby, change the baby, or tend to the baby. That's where it took off and I started doing a lot of online consulting for families during the pandemic." She added families needed support on how to help their children learn at home while parents were struggling. "Sometimes it was just as simple as telling parents they were doing a good job so that is where my business really took off with a lot of virtual coaching and consulting." She said that by the time the world was back to normal, she was teaching 12 classes in different locations in Woodstock, New Hamburg, and Stratford.

Victoria's daughter Violet suffers from a rare form of juvenile arthritis, something that inspired the decision to open the business. The now 7-year-old was first diagnosed at the age of two with five impacted joints. "The last checkup she had 17 joints impacted. She gets weekly injections at home and physiotherapy. She has had bone marrow biopsies and has had major issues with her iron levels. She has been on a rollercoaster but she's a trooper. She gets a lot of relief by using the silks." Along with the motivation from her daughter, Victoria also explained her mother has been instrumental in starting the relatively new endeavor. "She retired and moved to Stratford after Violet was born and she is now in palliative care. We always wanted to open a play-style café together but then she got sick, and I was given this opportunity so we decided to do it so she could see it so that has been accomplished. It feels like this place honours that. I feel a little bit of her every time I come in." She added her husband Scott and other family members have all been extremely supportive.

She had to take a step back from her work career about five years ago due to her daughter's diagnosis. "I needed something that worked for my family because we were spending full days in London getting infusions for Violet." She added she needed something flexible that still filled her cup. "I believe in a job that gives back, that doesn't feel like work, so I started Ivy Rose Creative. Ivy and Rose are my daughter's middle names, and they are flowers that grow and bloom and all that sappy stuff, but they really are the reason I am doing what I am doing."

The business continues to grow and in September will be offering a new class. "I just brought on a new small business, and it is called Mighty Minds. Stephanie will be doing cheer confidence programs. It is the sport of cheer taught by a child and youth worker who was a professional cheer coach. After talking to her I decided to do something different that no one had seen before by pairing cheer with self-esteem, body positivity, affirmation, and kindness, as opposed to how cheer can sometimes come across as very competitive."

For more information, you can go to the Ivy Rose Creative Facebook page or their website at <https://www.ivyrosecreative.ca/>.



Victoria Morris and her 9-year-old daughter Penny demonstrate how to use the 'silks' located at Ivy Rose Creative on Woodstock Street North in Tavistock.



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COMMUNITY —

KWSP Humane Society in crisis mode

By Veronica Reiner

The Humane Society of Kitchener Waterloo & Stratford Perth (KWSP) said they are functioning in crisis mode after feeling more than strained this summer.

There is a large volume of animals coming in (345 total currently in their care between both centres), kennels are constantly full, and there is a waiting list of 139 pets needing help next. KWSP Humane Society staff are also receiving a high volume of calls from pet owners needing help.

“This is the first time we are seeing such high numbers in the past decade,” noted KWSP Humane Society spokesperson, Nasreen. “We are asking community members to show some compassion to us. Staff members are being constantly yelled at and we’re just asking people for some patience and kindness as we try to help them as fast as possible.”

KWSP Humane Society Director of Community Outreach, Calla James, noted that this phenomenon is not unique among the local humane society.

“Shelters across North America are at breaking points and have been for a while,” said Calla. “We are shortstaffed, adoptions have slowed despite reducing adoption fees, donation sizes have decreased, demand for outreach programs has skyrocketed, demand for low-cost veterinary services has skyrocketed, there’s a high volume of animals coming into our centres, and call volumes for surrendering have significantly increased.”

Those looking for help from the KWSP

Humane Society are typically citing financial reasons, as well as lifestyle changes. These lifestyle changes include travelling, moving to a different place for a job, etc. “People are looking to choose between feeding their family or feeding their pets or paying a medical bill for their pet or affording rent,” said Nasreen.

Over the last year, there has also been a significant jump in callers looking to surrender young, large-breed dogs that are exhibiting behaviours that their owners cannot handle. Based on their ages, they are typically obtained during the pandemic, have not received any training, and have not been socialized.

“We have almost 140 pets on our waiting list needing help, but the stray and abandoned animal volumes continue to keep our kennels full. This year alone, we have taken 1,066 stray and abandoned animals into our care! Callers are increasingly angry, and the staff is burnt out. We not only need our community’s help, but we are also asking for their kindness and patience as we do our best to help people and pets as quickly as we can,” said Calla.

The KWSP Humane Society has also seen a steep increase in the number of people reaching out to use their low cost veterinary services as well as their Pet Pantry, which is a program that supports pet owners in an emergency need of pet food and basic supplies due to a personal crisis or financial limitations. The demand for the Pet Pantry increased 200 per cent from 2021 to 2022. In 2022 alone, the KWSP Humane Society helped 2204 pets through the program.

The KWSP Humane Society aims to keep owners and their pets together at all costs before turning to surrender as an option. In addition to the Pet Pantry program, the organization has launched programs including:

Low cost rabies and microchip clinics: to help pet owners ensure their pets can be vaccinated and microchipped, so they can be returned home when found.

Emergency boarding services (when capacity allows): available through social services and emergency service referrals for anybody experiencing a crisis and needing short-term boarding to source alternative care. Nasreen noted this service has also seen a spike.

Veterinary outreach services: available through social services referral, for pet owners who are experiencing homelessness or who are vulnerably housed to access vet care for their pets.

Home to Home platform: recently launched earlier this summer for their two animal centre locations. It is a platform that allows pet owners to self rehome their pets, helping to alleviate the stress in shelters. The platform is available for no cost and can be accessed through the KWSP Humane Society’s

website.

“There isn’t a better time than now to support the KWSP Humane Society,” said Calla. “We are a self-funded charity that receives no level of government funding for our charitable programs and services. We are also in desperate need of foster homes to support both our centres. Anything you can do to help us is appreciated.”

Those looking to help out can do so in the following ways:

Adopt – view available animals on their website and submit an online application.

Donate – via a one-time donation or become a monthly donor.

Foster – complete an application form under the How to Support tab.

Support programs – view the current wishlist of items needed under the How to Support tab. Share – like and follow the Humane Society on Facebook, X and Instagram and share posts of animals looking for new homes.

For more information on the KWSP Humane Society’s initiatives, visit kws-phumane.ca.

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COMMUNITY —

Car enthusiasts from across Canada visit the 42nd annual Moparfest in New Hamburg



A view of the stands at the 42nd annual Moparfest on Sunday, August 20. (Photo credit: Veronica Reiner)



A bird's eye view of the scene from the stands at Moparfest. (Photo credit: Lillianne Dunstall)

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

More than 1,500 vehicles from across Canada packed New Hamburg for the 42nd annual Moparfest.

The event took place at 351 Jacob Street in New Hamburg at the fairgrounds on Saturday and Sunday, August 19 and August 20, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. It is the largest all-Mopar car show in Canada.

There were many highlights throughout the weekend, including an appearance by Tom Sarmento from the Dukes of Hazzard TV show.

Other attractions included a car display, a DJ booth on both days, an engine blow, Toys for Tent fundraiser (where people

bring an unwrapped toy to get a ballot to win a Napier gift set), door prizes, food tents and beer gardens, silent auction (under the grand stands) bike draw, long distance award, and more.

Helen Nemeth of Cambridge won the Grand Prize of a 2022 Jeep Compass Trailhawk 4X4. First early bird winner (March 6) and recipient of \$500 was Sherry Erb of New Hamburg. The second early bird winner (June 5) was Brent Berger of Pembroke.

The New Hamburg Legion hosted a breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, and served at least 617 people, according to Ward 4 Councillor Lillianne Dunstall, who worked at the breakfast. It cost \$15

and included sausage/sliced ham, scrambled eggs, baked beans, hash browns/toast and coffee/juice. Dunstall added that they served guests from all over, including Quebec, Sudbury, Thunder Bay and Nova Scotia.

On the official Moparfest Facebook page, a volunteer identified as Michelle wrote, "We couldn't put on this event without the truly amazing group of volunteers we have. A huge thanks to all of them!"

The post noted that winners, along with photos, will be posted online soon, as well as souvenir photos will be available in early September.

"We will absolutely be addressing the

entry line as we know it took a while to enter the park. Thank you for your patience with this and we are really sorry for the overheating issues that some people faced," wrote Michelle.

Tom Rosso, a participant who travelled from Baltimore, Maryland, in the United States, said in an online post that his first trip to Moparfest was a blast.


"An absolute honor especially on our first visit," wrote Rosso. "Considering we came 500 miles to a show and knew no one, it felt like we were home. A big thank you to every Canadian Mopar fan that came by to look at and talk to us about our car. Our car show community just got a whole lot bigger."



Cars on display at Moparfest. (Photo credit: Moparfest)



Tom Rosso's vehicle displayed at Moparfest. He travelled from Baltimore, Maryland to be there. (Photo credit: Tom Rosso)



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COMMUNITY —

No Wellesley Idol this year

By Veronica Reiner

There will be no Wellesley Idol competition this year.

There were a number of factors that led to this, according to former organizer Wendy Richardson, including a very busy schedule of the organizers as well as reduced awareness of the program.

"I used to take bookmarks to all the schools in Waterloo County and Stratford with all the information on it. With COVID, that didn't happen," explained Wendy. "So we lost a lot of people.

"When we put those bookmarks out, we would get a lot of response. Without that, we weren't really getting a lot of response."

Those who were previously involved as judges and mentors, including Allister Bradley and Tim Louis, have a much busier schedule this year and not as much time to dedicate to the program.

"Bottom line is that we haven't recovered from the pandemic, we have to staff up again and could use some community volunteers to help with next year's operation," said Allister to the Wilmot-Tavistock

Gazette.

Wendy added that Allister will sing on Tuesday night of the Wellesley Fall Fair, September 12.

Wellesley Idol, a youth talent competition, has taken place since 2005 as the idea of Marg Runstedler and the Wellesley Apple Butter & Cheese (ABC) Festival.

While it has changed in its format over the years, the mission has remained the same:

- to celebrate the joy of music in the community,

- help young singers develop confidence,

- provide friendly, positive feedback from experienced industry professionals, and

- nurture the development of young singers with aspirations of building a larger audience, through scholarships and mentoring.

The program is a 100 per cent volunteer effort and is the financial support of sponsors, which has included the ABC Festival since the beginning.

Region of Waterloo meeting with provincial ministers to advocate for local priorities

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

Representatives from the Region of Waterloo will meet with provincial cabinet ministers next week to discuss solutions to critical municipal issues, including housing and homelessness, paramedic offload delays, transportation improvements, child care access and mental health support.

A delegation of regional councillors will travel to London, Ontario, for the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's annual conference, from August 20 to August 23.

Over a dozen delegation meetings will take place as the Region of Waterloo highlights and seeks partnership commitments on key priorities, including two-way all-day

GO train service and their plan to end chronic homelessness.

"The Region of Waterloo delivers essential services to thousands of people and provides strategic leadership in a community known for innovation and collaboration," said Region of Waterloo Chair Karen Redman. "We have incredible relationships at the provincial level, and we want to build on those, discuss the very real hurdles municipalities are facing, and move forward together to create a world-class community."

In Ontario, many programs with province-wide objectives are still funded at the local level. Reliance on property taxation and outdated revenue streams continues to be a challenge for growing municipalities across the province.

"As we head into our 2024 plan and budget process, these conversations with provincial ministries are pivotal," said Regional Councillor Michael Harris, Chair of the Administration and Finance Committee. "Without provincial support, we are facing a projected 10 per cent property tax increase merely to maintain existing service levels and are being asked to do more with less."

As part of ongoing advocacy work, Chair Redman will also co-chair a meeting of the Mayors and Regional Chairs of Ontario and Ontario Big City Mayors with the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing.

The Annual Association of Municipalities of Ontario conference begins Sunday, August 20.



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COMMUNITY —

Wellesley Township Recreation Centre building on schedule

Two regulation soccer fields expected to be ready for summer 2024

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

The build continues to take shape both indoors and outdoors at the new Wellesley Township Recreation Centre. The facility, designed in consultation with more than 20 community groups, will provide regulation soccer fields to help meet the demands of this growing sport in the township.

Last summer, Brian and Rhonda Mainland donated to the Something for Everyone Capital Campaign. What makes this donation special is they made it in the name of their nephew, Jack Lichty, who passed away suddenly in 2020 at the age of 14. One of the two soccer fields will

now be named the Jack Lichty Field. The Mainlands feel that naming the soccer field in Jack's memory is a perfect way to honour his life.

"We feel blessed to be part of this community and wanted to support a project that the entire township would be able to participate in and enjoy," say the Mainlands. "Jack was a happy, energetic character who loved spending time with family, friends, and his community. We felt that making a donation in Jack's memory was an opportunity to permanently honour his life."

Chris Martin, Chair of the Something for Everyone Capital Campaign was very

grateful for the Mainlands gift, and was very touched when told it would be made in Jack's honour. "To know that for the next 50 years, children will be playing on 'Jack Lichty Field' made it incredibly special," says Martin.

Jack's parents, Sarah and Dale Lichty, say their family has been very involved in Twin Centre sports through the years, and naming the new pitch after Jack is a touching way of showing community support for their family.

"This will be a perfect place to remember him," said the Lichtys. "Jack was a very energetic, kind, affectionate and happy guy. He was very active and spent so

much time playing hockey and soccer for Twin Centre. The township keeps growing, and facilities like the new recreation centre are the heart of a community. (The current facilities) were a huge part of our lives, and we have so many happy memories from those times."

In addition to the soccer fields, the 62,000 square foot Wellesley Township Recreation Complex will feature services including youth and seniors' centres, a multi-purpose gym and community hall, a hockey rink, an outdoor skatepark, and walking trails. The arena is on track to open in Fall 2023, with the soccer fields scheduled to be ready for summer 2024.

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COMMUNITY —

OBITUARY

BENDER, Geoline Ferne

It is with sadness, but gratitude for a life well-lived, that we announce the passing of Geoline Bender, surrounded by family, at the Maples Home for Seniors, Tavistock on Sunday August 13, 2023 at the age of 91.

Born on October 16, 1931 in South Easthope Township, she was the daughter of the late Salome (Erb) and Daniel Brenneman. She married Nelson Bender on June 6, 1951 and together they shared over 30 years of life together until his sudden passing on January 21, 1982. Dear sister of Bruce and Mary Brenneman. Much loved aunt of Richard & Grace Bender, Jim Bender & Sonya Schwartztruber, Mary Ann Bender, Linda & Bill Schumm, Brad & Michelle Brenneman, Karen & Larry Frey, Darrell Brenneman & Marsha Kritzer, Daphne Neeb, Roger & Rosanne Bender, Brian & Marlene Bender, Bruce & Debbie Bender and Paul Bender & Deb Bell. She is also fondly remembered by many great and great/great nieces and nephews as well as many others who lovingly called her Aunt Geoline. Predeceased by sister Beatrice (Ivan) Bender, brothers Lester and Roland Brenneman, brothers-in-law Delton (Lavelle) Bender and Armand (Katie) Bender, nephew Larry Bender. Geoline was an active member of the East Zorra Mennonite Church; her faith family was very important to her.

She is remembered as hard-working - picking apples, helping Nelson on the farm, baking for the Stratford Market and then many years as a Health Care Aide at the Maples. After her retirement, she continued as a very active volunteer at the Maples until well into her 80's.

She was known far and wide for her amazing butter tarts. Perhaps she found most contentment putting around in her flower beds where her love of flowers was self-evident. She will be remembered for her compassionate heart, love of children and their love of her, hand-written notes, sense of humour, and her frequent and distinctive laugh.

Family and friends were received at the Francis Funeral Home, Tavistock on Saturday August 19th from 2 to 4 and 6 to 8pm. Burial took place on Sunday August 20, 2023 at the East Zorra Mennonite Church Cemetery, 16th Line, at 1:30pm. A memorial service followed at 2pm in East Zorra Mennonite Church.

As expressions of sympathy, donations to East Zorra Mennonite Church 16th line, the Mennonite Central Committee or Diabetes Canada would be appreciated and may be made through the Francis Funeral Home by calling 519-655-2431.

Personal condolences can be posted at www.francisfh.ca

THANK YOU

Riedel

We would like to say thank you to everyone for your support and kindness this year as we cared for Audrey.

Thank you to Pastor Hans Borch for his visits and prayers during Audrey's hospital stay, her return to her home and since her passing.

To the Personal Support Workers-Lucy, Alison, Heather, Sam, Dawn and the rest of the Home Instead team for your care to ensure Audrey was comfortable and able to be in her home.

To Dr. Brown, and the teams at both the Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance and Home and Community Care Support Services South West for providing exceptional and ongoing health care.

Thank you to Peter Francis and the team at Francis Funeral Home for your services and guidance. To many others for your donations, cards and tributes in honour of her.

Most importantly, thank you to Audrey's friends and neighbours who dropped off food, visited and phoned her to help her pass the time when she could no longer get out. She always loved to talk and was so happy when friends dropped by to visit. It was all greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Curtis, Christine and Paul, Derek and Heather

OBITUARY

ROTH, Sandra Jean
(Bender)

Passed away peacefully, surrounded by her loving family in the early hours of Thursday, August 17, 2023, in the comfort of her home at Nithview. Sandra was born 79 years ago and has been a lifelong resident of the Wilmot Township community.

Sandra created a wonderful family and her legacy lives on through them. She is lovingly remembered by her five children:

Tammy Roth (Andrew Gordon), Terry Vigneux (Bill Dubreuil), Kim Lichti (Chris), Tracey MacLaurin (Scott) and Doug Roth (Stephanie Shore). She was a devoted and very proud grandmother of Sydney, Madison, Adam, Ryan (Hailee), Jonathan (Stephanie), Michael, Abby, Garrett, Ben, Lucas and Grayson, and her great-grandchildren Aria and Rhett. Sandra will be missed by her sisters Miriam (Don) Higgins, Karen Lebold and her brother Robert (Gladys) Bender, and by sisters-in-law Dorene Rudy-Snyder and Marianne Schlegel, and her remaining aunts, cousins, nieces, nephews and many, many friends. Sandra will also be dearly missed by her special friend Delmer Bender and his family. She was loved and supported by all her wonderful neighbours while on the farm, in Baden and her Nithview community and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

Sandra has now been reunited in passing with her father and mother, Reuben and Alice (Litwiller) Bender, grandson Connor Lichti, sister Doreen Snyder, brother-in-law Doug Snyder, sister-in-law Eileen Bender, brother-in-law/uncle Ezra Bender, brothers-in-law Harold Lebold and Ray Schlegel, and many cherished friends.

Family was at the forefront of Sandra's life for which she built a strong foundation for her children. Sandra was a woman of great resilience which was truly revealed through her many health challenges, which she endured with grace, a zest for life, and a smile on her face. She exuded kindness and acceptance of all. Everyone who knew Sandra was touched by her infectious smile and warm personality. Sandra was happiest when in the company of her family and friends, sharing food, conversation, visiting and playing games. Sandra's home was always open and welcoming to others by offering food, a listening ear, or shoulder to cry on. Sandra's heart was truly larger than life.

Sandra's faith was at the core of who she was. She was a lifelong, active member of Steinmann Mennonite Church where she served in various roles. All throughout her life, Sandra was very passionate about volunteering and giving back to her community. For example, she was a proud co-founder of the Wilmot Family Resource Centre and Haysville Co-op Preschool. A few other organizations and causes that were close to her heart included Interfaith Counselling Centre and the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Sandra was very selfless, and was one of the most generous and giving individuals.

The family extends a heartfelt thank you to the many health practitioners and caregivers that supported Sandra throughout her health journey.

Relatives and friends are invited to honour Sandra's life through visitation on Wednesday, August 23, 2023, from 6 - 8 p.m. and again on Thursday, August 24, 2023, from 2 - 4 p.m. and 6 - 8 p.m. at Steinmann Mennonite Church, 1316 Snyder's Road West, Baden. A 'Celebration of Life' will be held on Friday, August 25, 2023, at 11:00 a.m. at Steinmann Mennonite Church. For those unable to attend, a livestream can be accessed through the Steinmann Mennonite Church website: <https://smchurch.ca/>

As expressions of sympathy, donations can be made to Steinmann Mennonite Church, The Heart & Stroke Foundation or Wilmot Family Resource Centre. Personal condolences and donation information are available at www.markjutzifuneralhomes.ca

Funeral arrangements entrusted to the Mark Jutzi Funeral Home, New Hamburg.



Welcome!

Big sisters Ginnie and Dorothy are excited to announce the arrival of Lacey Belle Weicker on July 17 2023, weighing 8lbs 4oz. Proud parents are Jesse and Ashlie Weicker and excited grandparents are Wayne and Nancy Weicker (Hickson) and Bob and Vera Holst (Fordwich). Lacey Belle is already being loved on by many aunts, uncles and cousins.

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COMMUNITY —

The Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Weekly Quiz

- 1) What is the first element of the periodic table?
- 2) What Canadian hockey player wears number 87 on the Pittsburgh Penguins?
- 3) What former U.S. president cameoed in the film "Home Alone 2"?
- 4) When was the first lightbulb invented?
- 5) Which is the largest of the 5 "Great Lakes"?
- 6) What does the Spanish word "vamos" mean?
- 7) In what country would you find the mountain of Kebnekaise?
- 8) Based on its weight, what is the strongest muscle in the human body?
- 9) How old was Queen Cleopatra when she died?
- 10) The line, "I have a bad feeling about this" is quoted throughout which beloved movie franchise?

Answers found on page 22

BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

August 24: Happy Birthday to Spencer Doehn (8), and anniversary for Curtis and Emily Griffin (5th) and Stephen and Tara Parker (4th).

August 25: Happy Birthday to Bryce Durbin (7), and anniversaries for Michael and Kirsten Stock (11th), Wayne and Amy Armstrong (16th), and Frank and Angela Meconi.

August 26: Happy birthday to Stella Zacher (9) and Jordan Trachsel, and anniversary for Scott and Julie Kimpel (28th).

August 27: Happy birthday to Max van den Borre (19) and anniversaries for Zenon and Stacey Bender (12th), and Jesse and Krystle McCauley (13th).

August 28: Happy Birthday to Julia Petrie (24) and Madeline Zehr.

August 29: Happy Birthday to Emma McCauley (12) and anniversaries for Jeff and Michelle Roth (25th), William and Francine Riquelme (8th), and Anthony and Tiffany Tabbert (8th).

August 30: Happy Birthday to Melina Clemmer (22), and anniversaries for Dave and Rose Berg (38th), Josh and Kari Puklicz (20th), Scott and Rachel Shewfelt (15th), and Adrian and Heather Konstant (9th).

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.

August 15-22, 2018 Edition (5 years ago)

The Awesome Athletics took home the trophy as this year's winners of the Tavistock Kids Annual Road Hockey Tournament sponsored by the Tavistock Bible Chapel. The Awesome Athletics consist of R.J. Martin, Evan Britton, and twins Riley and Jayden Cook-Reiner.

Tavistock Public School and Waterloo-Oxford DSS alumni Chris Newcombe, 25, has signed a pro volleyball contract with a team in Switzerland.

The Tavistock Athletics Novice Tier 2 girls took home gold at the Grand Valley Ladies Softball League year-end tournament. Team members are Ashtyn Wedow, Dani Ramseyer, Kalea Keyser, Izzy Bauman, Rianna Forthuber, Kennedy Faulhafer, Avery Richardson, Rayne Bowden, Kaya Keyser, Belle Houle, and Alaina Hartman.

August 20-27, 2008 Edition (15 years ago)

The Tavistock '96 squirt boys capped off a very successful year being crowned this year's Ontario Rural Softball Association (ORSA) champions on August 8th in Ennisville. Team members are Brendan Hammer, Wade Mogk, Angus Rowland, Travis Ramseyer, Carson Lamond, Devin Kaufmann, Shawn Schultz, Cody Brown, Jared Yantzi, Dakota Clement, Dakota Pletsch, and Aaron Jutzi.

271 players, 36 coaches, and 20 teams took part in this year's Tavistock Optimist Soccer Club season.

August 19-26, 1998 Edition (25 years ago)

Six young ladies will compete for the title of "Queen of the Fair" at this year's Tavistock Agricultural Society Fall Exhibition: Marcia Brown, Alison Chesney, Jessica MacLeod, Becky Riehl, Krista Roth, and Adrienne Routly.

Have you heard about the difficulties that the year 2000 may create for computers and other electronic devices? If not, the can2K seminar to be held at the Tavistock Library

on August 26th may be for you.

Some great horses have come out of the Tavistock area over the years like the famous trotter, The Eel, owned by the late F. W. Entricken. The tradition has continued with Sommer's Canada Farm Arabians as well as Ken and Carol Mogk Stables with their success at the Sires Stakes. Another champion has emerged, this time from Darby's Stable, located just east of the village at RR1 Tavistock owned by Byron and Darlene Kropf. Their pinto, Midnight Lilly, has just returned from the 1998 National Pinto Championship Show in Tulsa, OK with four awards.

August 22, 1973 Edition (50 years ago)

Merchants in the village held their first Sidewalk Sale last Thursday, Friday and Saturday. The results were good from the businessmen polled.

Perth County Council favours upgrading Highway 7, and has appointed a group of Councillors to participate in a feasibility study.

Victoria and Grey Trust Company is advertising GICs at 8.75%.

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COMMUNITY —

Wellesley Township seeking resident input for recreation master plan

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff

The Township of Wellesley is now working on its Recreation Master Plan. The last plan was completed in 2014 and helped the township to plan and grow its parks and recreation services for about a decade.

The township said it is the ideal time to continue strategic planning with the new Wellesley Township Recreation Complex on the way. The Master Plan will provide direction to council as to how to maximize benefits to our community facilities, along with other aspects of all recreational infrastructure, development and service provision across the range of indoor and outdoor assets in the township.

The plan will also help define goals for the short, medium and long term that will aim to meet community needs. It will serve as a rallying point for community recreation

pursuits.

The objectives of the Master Plan are:

Identify the township's needs for current and future residents.

Update the inventory and general analysis of the recreation facilities and open space.

Conduct a service and programming delivery review.

Prepare a general financial plan for both capital and operating budgets.

Assess staffing resources for current and future needs.

Develop recommendations for facility optimization, organizational options, financial modelling, funding and revenue generating opportunities.

"We take the Township's recreation facilities, parks and open spaces very seriously,

and we want to ensure that we use an informed and strategic approach to the distribution of assets and, of course, make the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex truly something for everyone," said Wellesley Mayor Joe Nowak.

"We have contracted the firm of McQueen Galloway Associates to develop our Master Plan for our incredible Township."

The Master Plan will be developed through the consideration of stakeholder needs, recreation trends, best practices in recreation, and the township's growth capacity. Recreation and programming service providers will evolve throughout the duration of this five-month process.

Danny Roth, the Director of Recreation for the township is serving as the Project Manager for the Master Plan. "Engaging our recreation organizations, partners and

community stakeholders is of critical importance to this Master Plan," said Danny. "We want to encourage all residents to participate in our upcoming stakeholder workshop."

The workshop will take place at Crosshill Mennonite Church at 2537 Hutchison Road on September 14 at 7 p.m.

Consultants will give a short presentation, then community members get the chance to share insights on the gaps and priorities for parks and recreation in the township in a small table format. Other engagement opportunities will be made available as we move through this process. Individual conversations can also be arranged by reaching out to tracey@mgagroups.ca or by calling 905-749-2152.

Maples residents treated to Tavi Chill



The Tavistock Maples activity directors were inside Tavi Chill, ordering ice cream for residents waiting outside. They included server left, Christine Beam filling cones for Tanya Michaud (front) with Sara Moniz and Trevor McLaughlin (behind).

By Gary West

It was hot and sunny on Monday afternoon of this week, when 12 residents from the Maples Home for Seniors were treated to an ice cream at Tavi Chill in uptown Tavistock.

The seniors all thought it was a real treat,

and thanked all those volunteers who work at the Maples for taking the time to bring them to one of Tavistock's busiest locations in the heat of the summer.

The toughest job seemed to be what flavour the residents were going to order from the dozens of flavours on offer.

Nith River Promenade construction



Construction is currently underway for the Nith River Promenade. The contract, which was awarded to Lyncon Construction Inc. in May, includes trail and lighting enhancements. There is no public access during the construction period, and the project is expected to be completed by October 30. (Photo credit: Veronica Reiner)

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COMMUNITY —

Close to 70 antique tractors on display last week at Gid Jantzi's in Poole



Gid Jantzi in the tractor seat and from left, his children, and grandchildren, Curtis and Krystle Priestap (Brunner), Kayden Erb, Cindy Fenton (of Alberta), Bentley Erb, Melissa Erb (of Milverton). Missing were sons-in-law Murray Fenton and Paul Erb.

By Gary West

Sometimes not a whole lot happens in the little village of Poole, in Perth County - which is situated about halfway between Wellesley and Milverton in Mornington Township - but last week was a day to remember for the Gid Jantzi family.

Close to 40 antique tractors from members of the North Easthope Antique Tractor Club (Neat) motored many miles, to the long established hamlet, and the home of the Jantzi family, for a breakfast of coffee and bacon and egg on a bun.

Gid Jantzi himself has close to 30, mostly

Cockshutt tractors, and was happy to tell the history of how he owned and now, as his hobby, has restored such a large number of the red machines.

The self-made mechanic began working in 1970 for Roth Drainage, a company that installs field tile for farmland drainage, located north of Almulree.

By 1974, he had purchased his first bulldozer, an Allis-Chalmers HD 16, which he still has in one of his shops today. His life's work has always involved excavation work, in one form or another.

For the 75-year-old, mechanics and



Many farmers who came to Gid Jantzi's last week, watched as neighbour Charles Walker demonstrated his drive belt powered Baker Fan, where the power came from his 1877 wood fired steam engine.

repairing old tractors and motors has always been in his blood since he was a teenager, and his three daughters said, "one of his favourite things to do in life was to find a tractor that wasn't running and figure out the problem, and then work on it till it ran."

He said the first tractor he ever bought on his own was a Cockshutt 1850, which he was interested in since his neighbour that he worked with had one. He thought, with its 90 horsepower, it would be a good one to start with.

Jantzi has also been an avid participant in

tractor pulls over the years.

He started as a young man, and went all over Ontario transporting many of his tractors to these pulls, making sure his red machines were tuned up to be successful in winning various competitions around the province that he entered.

It was a day to remember for the long-time village native, as welcoming many of his friends and neighbours to his yard and especially having his three daughters, (one from Three-Hills Alberta), northeast of Calgary, along with sons-in-law and grandsons there to join him for the day.

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COMMUNITY —

WRDSB opens registration for its International and Indigenous Languages program

By Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette Staff
The Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) has opened registration for its 2023-2023 International and Indigenous Languages Program (IILP) as of August 8.

For more than 20 years, the IILP has offered elementary and secondary students the opportunity to learn a new language, or improve their skills in their mother language, allowing them to communicate better with their family and community. Classes are offered on Saturday mornings for both elementary and secondary students.

More than 20 languages are offered under the IILP program, and it aims to build on what WRDSB students learn in the classroom throughout the week. The IILP aims to help students develop their oral communication skills, reading skills and writing skills.

For elementary students: classes are in-person and run Saturday mornings from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Registration closes on March 23, 2024, or earlier, if the class is full. Elementary classes start on September 30 and finish on June 1, 2024.

Languages have been offered, and may be offered again this year pending sufficient enrollment numbers, include Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Dari, Farsi, German, Greek, Gujarati, Hindi, Hungarian, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Nepali, Punjabi, Romanian, Serbian, Telugu, Tamil, Urdu and Vietnamese.

For secondary students: classes are virtual. In person classes may be offered in some languages on a case-by-case basis, based on interest in this format. Classes run on Saturday mornings from 8:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Registration for full credit courses closes at 4 p.m. on October 13. Secondary classes start on September 16 and finish on June 15, 2024.

The following languages are offered for secondary students: Arabic, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, Romanian and Serbian.

Registration is done online by completing a Google Form available on the WRDSB website. One registration form should be filled out for each child registered. All registrants will be contacted once their application has been accepted and processed.

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 snapped by Heidi Lowrick, and shows the view from a room in Wilmot. (Photo credit: Heidi Lowrick)

Gazette Puzzles

A Day at the Beach

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SPORTS —

Don Green Memorial Slo-Pitch tournament a success



The Don Green Memorial Slo-Pitch tournament drew in hundreds of people to the Wellesley ball diamonds and park pavilion on August 11 and August 12. The event included slo-pitch action, along with a community barbecue, beer gardens and prizes. The proceeds raised from the event are put right back into the Wellesley community. The tournament is named after the late Don Green, a Wellesley Township resident who was well-known across the agricultural industry in southern Ontario. (Photo credit: Wellesley & District Lions Club)

By Veronica Reiner

The Don Green Memorial Slo-Pitch Tournament was a success this year, according to organizers.

The event took place from Friday, August 11 to Saturday, August 12 at the Wellesley park pavilion and ball diamonds. About 16 teams participated in the slo-pitch tournament. Blair Cressman, who helps to organize the event, estimated that about 300 to 400 people attended over the weekend.

"We had a great weekend, a little bit of a storm there on the Saturday morning, but that blew over and we had sunshine for the whole rest of the day," said Cressman. "It didn't affect the tournament in any way."

At the tournament, there were several divisions - in the A division, the Cali Bears team won. The Mad Batters won the B division, while the Queen's Bush Clippers won the C division. In the co-ed division, the Dirty Mitts won.

Most of the winners donated their prize money back to the Wellesley & District Lions Club. "It is still a fun recreational tournament, and there's no playoffs or anything, but there still is quite a bit of different competition between the different teams," said Cressman.

Wellesley resident Alex Roth won \$1,515 in the 50/50 raffle, and also made a sizeable donation back to the Wellesley & District Lions Club of his winnings. There was a home run derby that also took place in women's and men's division, with Amanda Rose winning the women's division.

Paul Wurdell from the Nithburg Nuts team was the top seller of 50/50 tickets, selling over \$1,000 worth of tickets. "Every year, he is our top seller of tickets," said Cressman. "All of the teams are encouraged to help sell tickets for the 50/50, and Paul is a real champion of helping to make the 50/50 a big success."

The food sales were particularly high this year, with a number of items completely

sold out by the end of Saturday evening. There were hot dogs, hamburgers, french fries, free popcorn, and beer gardens sponsored by Molson Coors.

There was also local sponsorship from Erb Transport, who supplied a truck for food and beer. The sausage was sponsored by Wellesley Gourmet Meats & Cheese. Food and beverages were purchased at Pym's Village Market.

The event typically generates between \$7,000 to \$9,000 a year, which goes right back into sports and recreation initiatives in the Wellesley community. For example, it goes towards sponsoring local sports teams, including Twin Centre Minor Hockey, Twin Centre Hericanes Girls Hockey, Wellesley Soccer League, and Twin Centre Minor Baseball.

The Wellesley & District Lions Club is also a \$50,000 sponsor to the new Wellesley Township Recreation Complex.

"So a big part of that is we're going to

be a sponsor for the Lion's hall, which is a large meeting room up above on the second floor of the new complex, and it's overlooking the arena's surface on the east end," said Cressman.

"That'll act as a large meeting room with bar service that can be used for the Blueline Club at the Applejacks games. That was something we really wanted to put our name to. That could be used for our meetings about once a month."

He added that the hall can hold about 100 people, and the Wellesley & District Lions Club is considering naming it the Lion's Den.

Another project that the Wellesley & District Lions Club did last year was to help put up four street lights along a path that connects the south end of Wellesley through the township recreation property, between Parkview Drive and the pavilion. The project was done in collaboration with Wellesley Township and Poole Electric.

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SPORTS —

Senior AA hockey joins the OHA

Royals looking forward to the move

By Lee Griffi

The new Ontario Elite Hockey League (OEHL) will begin play this fall following an agreement to join the Ontario Hockey Association (OHA).

"We need to evolve our brand," said Kyle Wynette, President of the Tavistock Royals and defending AA champion of the former Western Ontario Athletic Association. The Royals, going into their 41st season, are one of 12 AA senior teams in the new league under the OHA and Hockey Canada umbrella. "We want to be able to grow and bring our game to a bigger audience while preserving quality senior hockey in these small-town communities. To the kids in the school who show up every weekend to our home games, these guys are NHLers to them. These are their local heroes that they look up to."

The 2023-2024 OEHL teams are Creemore Coyotes, Durham Thundercats, Lucknow Lancers, Milverton Four Wheel Drives, Minto 81's, Ripley Wolves, Saugeen Shores Winterhawks, Seaforth Centenaires, Shelburne Muskies, and Tavistock Royals. The Georgian Bay Applekings, with Thornbury as home base, and Erin Outlaws are expansion teams.

The OEHL clubs will play a 22-game regular season beginning October 6. "We want the kids to come out and parents to come with them," said Wynette. "We want senior hockey to continue to be a staple of weekend entertainment in our small communities. It's often the best ticket in town on a Friday or Saturday night and is a place where communities come together to cheer on their favourite team. We've often said that Senior AA is the best-kept secret around, now it's time we grow our fan base."

"We are excited to add the OEHL to the OHA. Through this endeavor, 12 teams will be added to our Senior Hockey category bringing our total number of teams in the OHA up to 124," said OHA Chair Marc Mercier. "In addition, this is an opportunity to grow alongside the OEHL and to give adult players in Ontario enhanced competitive opportunities to continue their playing days as a valued part of the OHA family." The objectives of the OHA are to foster and encourage the sport of amateur hockey, to conduct competition in the various categories established, to determine teams for entry into the inter-branch competitions that may be provided by Hockey Canada, and to provide for the affiliation of other hockey organizations.



Wynette said conversations had been happening for several years to get the league to the point where they are now at. "We were talking about the league in general and how we could better market it to potential sponsors. We worked with a marketing firm, and ultimately, it came down to, hey, you are part of an association. If we were a standalone league, they could probably find us a good partner, but being a part of an association, we may not have access to that. We recognized we needed to evolve."

The new league is in direct competition for players with the Western Ontario Super Hockey League, including franchises in Stratford, run by Jamie Petrie, and Woodstock, run by Tavistock native Jeff Zehr. Stratford asked to join the WOAA AA Senior League a few years ago, but the league had a hard cap on population, so they were turned down. "It is 20 thousand right now or the next biggest centre, which used to be Tillsonburg. It is all about preserving quality senior hockey in small towns. It's hard to compete with big centres. We can't have an AA team in Kitchener, for example, as they would draw all the ex-Rangers."

Wynette believes the new league will help draw players to their small-market teams. "I started reaching out

to some of the people who were most vocal earlier this summer and said hey guys, we need to protect our brand in these small towns. We have always prided ourselves on being the best hockey available, but it's hard to compete and recruit when we have two major centres recruiting beside us."

One of the driving forces behind the move is to provide insurance for players, something not easily accessible under the previous WOAA affiliation. "It has been getting harder and harder to get insurance for these leagues, and for many years, we thought we were a part of Hockey Canada, but there was no official tie. We now have access to their insurance program, which is a big thing." Wynette added they also must follow the same rules and regulations as all other leagues, which includes a number of training exercises. "We fall under their constitution and their training requirements for our staff. We will have to get criminal background checks completed, but most of us have done that through minor hockey. Our coaches will also have to be D1 certified now."

The OEHL has a board of directors made up of one official from each team, and a commissioner has also been hired. Rick Richardson, who is also the commissioner of the Allan Cup, will lead the league in its first year of existence as it finishes up an incorporation process as a non-profit organization. Up next is a search for sponsors. "There is some big corporate interest. If you look around and think of small-town, rural hockey, what will fit? There are some notable companies operating in Canada that would fit really nicely with our brand," said Wynette.

As for what's happening on the ice, the Royals are welcoming back a big chunk of last season's championship team. "We had a really good turnout at an invite-only pre-camp skate. We're working on some guys, but you never know until we actually get to camp. Essentially all our forwards are returning, and the biggest gap will be on defense. Geoff Killing is semi-retiring, I would say. I think you'll see him on the ice, but he is stepping back as captain of the team." Wynette said the D-core was a big part of the Royals' success last season, but two or three may not be returning. Jensen Van Boekel will return as the team's number-one goaltender, and a few local players who are now too old to play junior are also expected to be on the roster.

Shakespeare's Dianne Herold honoured by Tri-County Fastball

By Gary West

It was a busy weekend for ladies fastball in Milverton, where seven teams from the Tri-County area competed for championship honours in the year-end playoff tournament.

Teams from Milverton, Shakespeare, two teams from Tavistock, Stratford, Sebringville and Zurich all played in this tournament which has been held for many years in the area.

In the final game on Sunday afternoon, hometown Milverton, with one run in the first inning, squeaked out a 1-0 win over the Shakespeare Stingers, to capture the Tri-County Ladies Fastball League Championship

Trophy.

Dianne Herold, who played for 35 years, and later coached for Shakespeare, was honoured during Sunday's competition with the Outstanding Dedication and Service Award for her decades of time spent in the league.

She wanted, upon receiving the award, to give a shout-out to her first coaches the late Ray and Verna Roth, who encouraged her to start playing ball in Shakespeare at the age of 11.

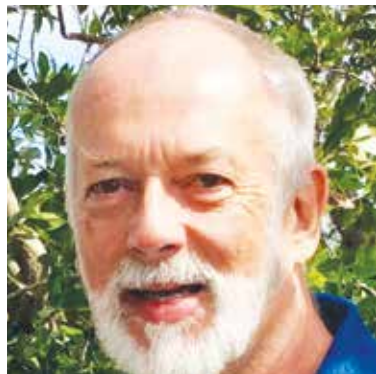
She says she is still at the ballpark most nights, cheering on her eight great nieces and nephews who are still playing on various local teams.



Dianne Herold, who resides in Shakespeare, is shown receiving the Outstanding Dedication and Service Award during the Tri-County Ladies Fastball year-end tournament played on the weekend in Milverton. (Photo contributed)

TRAVEL —

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Where Churchill could escape the weight of history



By Paul Knowles

I studied history during my time at the University of Waterloo and one of the ideas I encountered was the now-dismissed “Great Man Theory”. The weaknesses of the concept are pretty immediately obvious: there is a gender issue; there is an unbalanced focus on leaders who captured attention; there is a less-than-subtle suggestion that leadership is based on genetics; and there is a clear, overall sense of myth vs. fact.

I don't believe you can explain history on the basis of a few, prominent men.

On the other hand, there is little doubt that a few people have had a disproportionate impact on the history of our world. And I recently had the chance to visit the home of one of them.

Chartwell, in the southern England county of Kent, was the much-loved home of Winston Churchill. Churchill of course has become a character of mythical proportions. And my job

here is not to defend his status as “saviour of the world” or “inept military commander” or “drunken politician” or “Nobel Prize winning writer”. Perhaps he was all of these.

Most certainly, Churchill was a man whose enormous footprints are all over the history of the 20th century.

So an opportunity to spend time at his home was not to be missed and I was delighted to take my travelling companions on a visit to Chartwell.

Chartwell is now a National Trust site protected by that important British heritage organization. The property includes three distinct locales of interest: the house, the gardens, and the studio. I would be hard pressed to choose a favourite among the three.

The house, quite honestly, tells us more about Winston's wife, Clementine, who furnished the home. And the great news is she was the final person to live there so the National Trust has been able to preserve – not merely restore or re-furnish – the home of the Churchills, complete with many elements of their lifestyle and their tastes.

It's well worth the walk-through. I especially enjoyed the dining room where it is so easy to imagine the Churchills and their friends relaxing over a good meal, most probably accompanied with champagne, Churchill's tittle of choice.

The house includes Churchill's

study. In this room where he worked, standing at desks built for such posture and dictated his speeches, articles and books to a secretary, visitors can feel close to the man himself. Before leaving the house, there is an exhibition room including a monitor showing films of Churchill making a speech. His voice and prose are as compelling as they were during World War II.

But I think you get even closer to Winston Churchill in his gardens where he built some of the brick walls himself and where he constructed the ponds, and in his studio.

Churchill was a devoted and busy painter. He admitted that he would have been crushed under the load of his responsibilities had he not been able to retreat into the life of an artist. His studio, a downhill walk from the house, contains dozens of his paintings, including a couple painted during a visit to the Canadian Rockies. It's amazing that the estate has managed to retain so many of his highly sought-after works. The walls of the studio are full of his art, a genuine treat for any art lover, historian or anyone interested in the life of this fascinating man.

When Churchill first began to paint, he knew he enjoyed the hobby but he wasn't sure he actually had any talent for it. And, already a famous world leader, he didn't think anyone would actually tell him the truth if he asked for an assessment of his work. He was “Winston Churchill” after all!



In the gardens at Chartwell. (All photos by Paul Knowles)

So he submitted a painting to a juried art show under a pseudonym and he won an award! That painting hangs in a room in Chartwell today.

The Chartwell gardens are worth a visit in their own right. Lush wisteria, an entire pathway lined by butterfly bushes, delicate California lilac, springtime rhododendrons, and exquisite roses are just a few examples of the amazing flora in the gardens that surround the house.

Chartwell is a popular spot for visitors – over 230,000 come here each year and yet the spacious grounds (covering 80 acres in its entirety) seldom seem crowded. We were among only a handful of visitors in the studio during our visit and on the grounds, there were empty benches and chairs available for relaxation and taking in the view of the

Weald of Kent.

Being a National Trust property, there is of course a good gift shop and a tea shop. These amenities are well removed from the house and grounds so Chartwell remains what it was in the days of its most famous owner – a convivial home, a fascinating art studio, and lush, well-tended gardens.

It is obvious why a man with the weight of the world and the weight of history on his shoulders was able to relax, refresh and create in this environment. One well worth visiting, whenever you are in England.

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.



Winston Churchill's home, Chartwell.



The exquisite dining room, decorated by Clementine Churchill.

COMMUNITY —

Practical Art, owned by Shakespeare resident, opens new location in St. Marys

By Gary West

There is a well established business, owned by a Shakespeare resident, at a new location east of St. Marys on Highway #119. The company is known as Practical Art.

Practical Art was founded by Michael McNeil, who grew up in Perth East and still resides in Shakespeare, with his wife Cheryl and daughters.

The company started out as a custom furniture business in 1992.

When business partner, Steve Pietens, joined the company, the pair began to focus on hand-crafted metal decor artwork, made from recycled and salvaged materials. Their vision at that time was to create products, which were both stylish and functional-hence the name.

After 30 years of travelling to shows across Canada and the United States, Practical Art is now excited to open their new manufacturing and retail facility at R.R.7 St. Marys, to service the local community and beyond with hand-crafted metal artwork.

The team has now grown to include talented sales experts, metal craftsmen, administrators, and graphic designers.

With a leisurely walk through their showroom, Practical Art offers a large variety of interior and exterior decor products that are crafted by their metal-working experts. They have become well known for their garden sculptures, like cardinals and ladybugs, and more recently, they are thrilled to offer customizable, metal signs, and even custom logos for area businesses.

They have now also taken on large-scale commercial projects with their expanding and spacious new location.

Their grand opening celebration recently took place on Saturday, August 19th. It featured refreshments, a raffle for exciting prizes, and a free gift. Doors were open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. With any purchase of \$50, the purchaser received a \$20 gift card to be used on their next visit.

To view their products online, visit www.practicalart.ca or email their office at jennylooujoan@gmail.com.



The Practical Art team, left to right, Cory Paton and Martin Rice (sales and metal artistry), Michael McNeil (owner and founder), Jennifer Rayson (office administrator), Charu Sachdeva (graphic designer), Pankaj Bains (web designer), Steve Pietens (metal artistry).

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR - AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023

August 22nd	front lawn of Castle Kilbride from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Weather permitting. This day, the Festival City Big Band (Jazz/Swing) will play.	2:30 p.m. until about 8 p.m. at www.blood.ca .	parade, cattle show, goat display, touch a truck, airband competition, and more.	pulls, vendor village, horse shows, dog show, silent auction, toilet seat races, farmers walk, demolition derby, and church service. Takes place at the New Hamburg fairgrounds at 251 Jacob Street.
Expressway Ford Cruise Night		September 5th		September 13th
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 28th	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.	September 13th	CCC Lunch Taking place at Wellesley Mennonite Church, 157 David Street, at 12 p.m. Community Care Concepts invites you to join us for lunch and fellowship. Cost is \$14. Must register by noon on September 8 by calling 519-664-1900 or toll free: 1-855-664-1900.
August 24th	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.	September 8th, 9th, 10th		September 17th
Castle Kilbride Summer Concert Series Thursday evenings, bring your lawn chair and enjoy unique music on the	August 28th	Tavistock Fall Fair Taking place at Queens Park at 1 Adam Street in Tavistock. Features silent auction, book sales, mid-way, bubble soccer, beer tent, fair ambassador competition, hunter jumper show, chainsaw carvers,	September 14th-17th	Brocksden School Museum Anniversary Members of the Easthope Historical Group are planning a special event at the Brocksden School Museum on Sunday, September 17th, celebrating the 170th anniversary of the school. It will run from 1:30 p.m. until 4 p.m., followed by refreshments and a short annual meeting.
	Blood Drive Taking place at the Wellesley Community Centre at 1,000 Maple Leaf Street. Booking times are available from around		New Hamburg Fall Fair Features a heavy horse pull, ambassador program, big creek tractor	

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|------------------|-----------------|
| 1) Hydrogen | Superior |
| 2) Sidney Crosby | 6) Let's go |
| 3) Donald Trump | 7) Sweden |
| 4) 1879 | 8) The masseter |
| 5) Lake | 9) 39 years |
| | 10) Star Wars |

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