

St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1175

Thursday, September 7, 2023

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Community Closet launches soon, providing clothes to those in need



Community Closet Board of Directors from L-R Jenny Calder, Jackie Saville, Brittany Petrie, Karen Kittmer, Mary Smith, Mary Stouffer

By Jake Grant

This month, a new volunteer-run initiative, known as the Community Closet, opens its doors to serve the community of St. Marys and surrounding area with free clothing for those in need. Located at the St. James Anglican Church, locals will be able to access the clothes they need free from any financial barriers.

The idea for this Community Closet came about almost a year ago thanks to Karen Kittmer. In the fall of last

year, Karen was visiting a school that had its very own closet near their entry way. It was filled with donated school supplies and clothes for children who were less fortunate. Seeing this and aware of the limited number of services that offer free clothing in St. Marys, Karen was inspired to help her community. She brought forward her idea of a Community Closet to the Town and got in contact with Brittany Petrie, the town's community outreach worker. Brittany confirmed the

Continued on page 2

Evan's Touch the Truck is back and bigger than ever

On September 9th the 10th Annual Evan's Touch the Truck event will be making some noise at the Milt Dunnell Field once more. After a 3 year COVID related hiatus, committee member Ashley Agar shares, "We are excited to announce we are back and bigger than ever before! We have more companies participating than in prior years and have added food trucks, a free shuttle and community member inflatable horse races. St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee and Stratford Mayor Martin Ritsma are just two of the people scheduled to race head to head."

This year's event will host its classic activities: a tattoo tent, raffles, a 50/50 draw, the Little Drivers Zone and the Erin Voss Art car. The Erin Voss Art car is unlike any other vehicle participating as throughout the event it is transformed when event-goers add their own artistic flair by painting the vehicle. Many St. Marys residents will fondly remember Erin Voss, a young St. Marys area resident who died as a result of a brain tumour, similar to that of Evan, the event namesake. The organizers expect that the free shuttle, which leaves from the Pyramid Rec Center and runs from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and will also service those that want to visit the Farmer's Market located at the back of Milt Dunnell Field, will be well received.

The interactive car show-style event was created in 2011 after the 3-year-old cousin of Evan's Touch the Truck committee members was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour. The vision was to bring awareness to the children fighting cancer, as well as to financially support Childcan, a London-based charity that provided care, guidance and support to Evan and his family as he went through his journey with cancer.

Continued on page 2

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COMMUNITY —

Evan's Touch the Truck is back and bigger than ever

Continued from page 1

Evan passed away in early December 2015, at the age of 7. Prior to his death, Evan made international headlines

as his then hometown of St. George put on a Christmas parade for him in mid-October, to ensure he would be able to celebrate one last Christmas with his family. The movie "Uma"

was inspired by Evan's story, as well as the Children's book "The Boy Who Moved Christmas", by Eric Walters.

As of press time, Evan's Touch the

Truck has raised more than \$120,000 for Childcan and has grown into one of Ontario's largest Childhood Cancer Awareness events.

Community Closet launches soon, providing clothes to those in need

Continued from page 1

large demand for clothing and that this was in fact a high priority need. Now in partnership with the Town and eventually the Church, Karen's notion was brought to life.

Ideas only go so far if there isn't a clear mission statement behind them and when asked about their goal it seemed clear why this idea was made possible. "Due to the increase in the cost of living, people in Perth County are having difficulty affording necessities in life such as food, clothing & shelter. Currently in St. Marys, there are a limited number of services that offer free clothing to those in need. This type of service within our community will provide all residents of St. Marys & surrounding areas with the opportunity to have access to free clothing. No one should have to

choose between necessities in life, therefore the mission of this project is to eliminate the financial barriers for residents to have access to clothing," said Brittany Petrie.

In a recent interview with the Independent, Jenny Calder, vice-chairperson of the Community Closet, stated it is wonderful that so many people are willing to help the cause. "There's lots of different partnerships involved that worked together with us to make this happen. The town is supporting us through Brittany's role and she just being able to use her time and support us has been a huge contribution. The church providing volunteers and offering us this space for permanent use is fantastic, and with help from local businesses and partners we've secured donations that fund things like clothing racks and storage totes."

On September 16th, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., the St. Marys Community Closet has its grand opening and is welcoming all sorts of clothing donations. They are accepting donations of new or gently used adult and children's clothing, outerwear, footwear, and reusable bags. Some areas that could really use some help would be toddler size 2-5, all boys and men's, small women's, children's pajamas, closed toe shoes and warmer clothing for fall/winter.

Jenny Calder reminds us that "we don't have a lot of storage space so we need to make sure that when people are bringing things in, it is stuff that people will be able to take and use in the coming months rather than something we'll have to hold onto until next summer." The Closet encourages people to bring season specific clothing in order to help everyone out.

For those able to donate, drop-off times occur every other Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. at the St. James

Anglican Church (65 Church St. S) starting September 16th. The Meridian Credit Union (134 Queen St. E) is also accepting donations during their business hours (Mon-Fri 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. excluding statutory holidays).

The Community Closet Shopping Launch date is September 25th from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. and shopping days will continue every other Monday following this date as well as on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at the same times (2 p.m. to 6 p.m.)

Want to get involved? Volunteers are still needed to help staff their storefront! Volunteers must be 18 years or older and will need to complete a required training course in advance. If interested, apply on their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/stmaryscommunitycloset.

You can also contact the St. Marys Community Closet at stmaryscommunitycloset@gmail.com or by phone at 226-261-0098.



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COMMUNITY —

Additional EV Chargers coming to town

By Stewart Grant

Town of St. Marys CAO Brent Kittmer shared some positive news at the August 22nd Council meeting that, as a result of a successful government grant, three additional EV charging stations will be coming to town.

Since each of the charging units has two ports, that means that 6 total ports will be added to the Town's growing inventory of Electric Vehicle chargers.

"The only thing that we need to pay is to make sure that there is access to electricity in the area," said Kittmer, who indicated that one charger was likely to be installed at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, another at the Jones Street parking lot, and another at a parking space right on Jones Street within the downtown core.

"These will be owned and operated by the Ivy network," Kittmer reported. "Once we have access to electric-



ity there, the Ivy Network will then install the charger and they are the ones that operate it and look after the billing. The Ivy Network, you may be familiar with them, they are the ones who own and operate all

the chargers at the ONroutes along the 400-series highways. It's a really good partnership for us."

"The good news for us is that there is some additional funding coming

up that will be from the MTO for additional chargers, so if we do receive more funding, we do have other priority locations where it's easy to get access to hydro that we also think would make sense from a tourism perspective, places like the Quarry, an additional one at the PRC, maybe another in the downtown core. We are slowly building up our inventory of these chargers and the good news being that so far, none of these have cost us a cent except for some small capital charges."

Later in the Council meeting, Director of Corporate Services / Treasurer Andre Morin responded to a question from Councillor Craigmile who had wondered about charging stats for the Town's charging port at the train station. "For 2023, from January 1st to now, we've had 43 charging sessions for a total of 133 hours... so not large numbers. For 2022, we had 80 sessions for a total of 262 hours of charging time."

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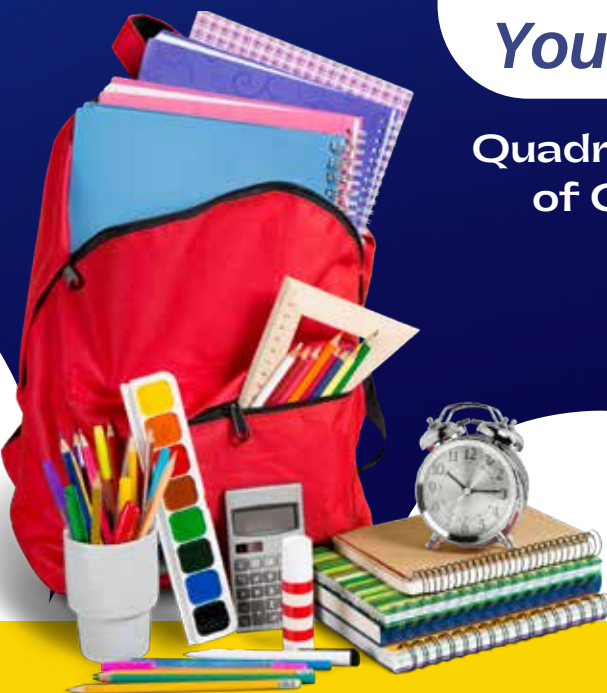
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EDITORIAL —

Fall Fairs and Festivals everywhere



By Stewart Grant

September is one of my favourite months of the year. The transition from summer to fall is one of new routines, particularly if you have kids going back to school and/or starting into winter sports.

September is also a time when, for many groups of volunteers, months and months of planning culminate into the execution of successful community events.

One of the things that I enjoy about growing our newspaper business to communities beyond St. Marys is finding out about all the interesting things happening within a short drive of here. In putting together a schedule for our different papers, I've noticed that you could literally go to a local fair every weekend of September if you wanted to, including last weekend which was Mitchell's Fall Fair.

This weekend, the Kirkton Fall Fair will be held (see story on page 10), as will the Tavistock Fall Fair. Western Fair also begins on Friday, and

runs through to the 17th. Here in St. Marys, we have a big event of our own with the return of Evan's Touch the Truck (see story on page 1)

Next week, the Wellesley Township Fall Fair takes place (a mid-week Tuesday/Wednesday affair from September 12-13) while the New Hamburg Fall Fair runs September 14-17 and the Embro Fair is September 15-17. In Goderich, they are hosting the first annual Salt and Harvest Festival September 15-17.

The fourth weekend of September brings the Stratford Fall Fair (21st to 24th) and the Thorndale Fall Fair (22nd to 24th), while St. Marys will be buzzing with its Doors Open St. Marys event.

Finally, Wellesley will host approximately 30,000 people on Saturday, September 30th for the 47th annual Apple Butter and Cheese Festival.

There is no shortage of community events to attend this month. The biggest challenge is finding the time to attend some of them.

Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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There is no tired like the first week back at school tired.

It is so nice to see Summer in September.

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

Bravo

We have 4 Bravos this week.

1) Bravo to the volunteers and staff who made the United Church's VBS (vacation Bible school) a success this summer! The kids loved it!

2) Bravo to Sal from Snapping Turtle for coming to my rescue. I misplaced my iPhone and discovered, after hours, that I had left it at Snapping Turtle. I contacted Sal and he came to the shop, after 6:00 p.m. so I could retrieve my phone. It was such a kind gesture and it was so appreciated.

3) Bravo to John Frayne who went out of his way by coming to my house to help an older gentleman with a complicated cabinet repair. He didn't stop till the problem was solved and would only accept my smile as thanks.

4) Bravo to the summer camp staff and all the lifeguards for a great summer, you're the Best. Thanks for making the summer a success.

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

Boo

We have 1 Boo this week.

1) Boo to the poor effort on the flower boxes at the bridge. It is September now and from a block away about all we can see are the wooden boxes. How is it that smaller towns like Sebringville, Mitchell, Seaforth etc. can afford to start their boxes early so they are full by now. Rather embarrassing for a town that attracts tourists.

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

Quote of the Week

<inaudible>

- U.S. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell appeared to freeze for roughly 30 seconds during a press conference last week when asked about whether he planned to run for re-election in 2026. The 81-year-old is one of many prominent U.S. politicians on both sides of the aisle who have been reluctant to cede power to the next generation. Meanwhile, the 2024 election appears to be headed towards a rematch between Joe Biden (currently 80) and Donald Trump (currently 77).

St. Marys Independent

36 Water St. St. Marys, ON, PO Box 2310 N4X 1A2
Info@stmarysindependent.com
Phone: 519.284.0041

Publisher / Editor

Stewart Grant • stew@granthaven.com

Graphic Design / Layout

Tyler Carruthers • info@stmarysindependent.com

Sales Representative

Stewart Grant • ads@stmarysindependent.com

Billing Administrator

Cindy Boakes • boakescindy1576@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant

Wendy Lamond • wendylamond74@gmail.com

Contributors

June Grant, Nancy Bickell, Mary Smith, Nancy Abra, Lauren Eedy, Spencer Seymour, Sarah Cairns, Paul Knowles, Jake Grant



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The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS
OF THE WEEK

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Believe you can and you're halfway there

COMMUNITY —

Books donated to the St. Marys Public Library



On Friday, September 1, 2023, the Rotary Club of St. Marys presented a cheque to the St. Marys Public Library to cover the costs for books donated to the library in recognition of our guest speakers for the coming year. The books selected for the children's library reflect Rotary's 7 areas of focus. Pictured (L-R) back row-Sarah Andrews, CEO St. Marys Public Library, and Rotarian Linda Schuyler; front row (L-R) Kate Long, Cataloguing and Acquisitions Clerk at the Library, and Rotarian Diane O'Shea. (Contributed photo)

STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



BADMINTON

Adults (14+) can join badminton at St. Marys D.C.V.I on Wednesday evenings starting September 13 from 7 to 9 PM. A one-time membership fee of only \$20 is required to join.

townofstmarys.com/activenet or 519-284-2160

SHOWER PROGRAM

Thursdays, 9 AM - 1 PM | Pyramid Centre

This program provides free showers to those in need. Showers are private, secure and accessible for individuals of all abilities.

Visit Guest Services or call 519-284-2160



FALL SWIM LESSON REGISTRATION

Registration for fall swimming lessons (starting September 18) opens on Tuesday, September 5 at 5 PM.

townofstmarys.com/activenet or 519-284-2160

FALL/WINTER AQUATICS PROGRAM REGISTRATION

Registration for fall/winter aquatics programs such as aquafit, lane swim, and public swim opens on Thursday, September 7 at 3 PM.

townofstmarys.com/activenet or 519-284-2160



EARLYON NATURE POP-UP

Saturday, Sept. 16 @ 9:30 - 11:30 AM | Sparling Bush (179 Waterloo St. S)

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Senior of the Week



Our senior of the week is Ken Kittmer. Ken was born in Lakeside and turned 90 years young this past May. He has 5 children, 14 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren. He is a retired Uniondale Firefighter and one of the originals that joined in 1973. Ken worked for Hutton Transport for years and now works for the St. Marys Post Office.

If you would like to nominate someone for Senior of the Week, Contact us at 519-284-0041 or info@stmarys-independent.com.

COMMUNITY —

Business profile: Feet First St. Marys

By Wendy Lamond

The preventive and treatment solutions for foot-care become more and more important as we age considering the amount of time we spend on them. RN Karen Kittmer saw this necessary need and has started a professional footcare service. Karen, who is married to Brent, the town's Chief Administrative Officer, has been home for approximately eight years caring for her four young children. At a point in her life when she was looking to do something for herself, Kittmer's main goal was to get out and help as many people as possible. Kittmer, who grew up on the outskirts of St. Marys, attended the four-year program at Western University to become a Registered Nurse. Since then, she has worked at Stratford General Hospital, Coronation Care Centre, and Wildwood Care Centre. It was here that Kittmer found her passion for helping elderly clients and their family members.

The business 'Feet First St. Marys' was started in mid-August of this year. To make things easier on her clients, Kittmer's business is mobile, and she will travel to your home for appointments and is not limited to location and has helped people in London, Milverton, Exeter and Stratford.

Services include basic and advanced footcare. You will have an initial assessment, vitals check, lower extremity check, medication history and medical history. Only clean and sterile equipment are used. Basic footcare can include filing the nails, cleaning, and moisturizing the skin, providing patient information and education as well as corn and callous care. Kittmer will also be able to assess deeper issues and give referrals to health care providers.

One other service that Kittmer provides, which is close to home for her, is respite care which can give family/friend caregivers temporary relief from the



emotional and physical demands of caring for a friend or family member.

The Kittmer family is very involved in St. Marys activities including hockey. Kittmer herself is on the Community Board of Directors for the new Community Closet project which is opening September 16th.

Feet First St. Marys is on the Southwest Healthline and Facebook and can also be reached at 519-657-6657 or feetfirststmarys@gmail.com

Weekend Quiz

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- 1) What is the longest river in Europe?
- 2) Samuel Morse was the inventor of what revolutionary device?
- 3) What is the shortest complete sentence in the English language?
- 4) How many legs does a lobster have?
- 5) What is England's National flower?
- 6) In a game of chess, who makes the first move?
- 7) True or False? Squash has been featured as an Olympic sport.
- 8) The song "Over the Rainbow" was written for what film?
- 9) What was the best-selling Nintendo Wii videogame?
- 10) What is the only sea without any coasts?

This week's answers are found on pg. 27

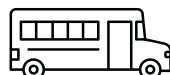
FREE ACCESSIBLE SHUTTLE

to Milt Dunnell Field

Saturday, September 9, 2023
8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

For easy access to the St. Marys Farmers' Market (8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.), ride the free shuttle, departing from outside the Friendship Centre, Entrance "C" at the Pyramid Recreation Centre. The shuttle will run on a continuous loop.

Parking will be extremely limited at Milt Dunnell Field due to the 10th annual Evan's Touch The Truck event!





ALUMNI

GOLF TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, SEPT. 23
RIVER VALLEY GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

Shotgun start at 10:30 a.m. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m.
Four-person Scramble format
Steak dinner and prize table following golf
Everyone is welcome



CONTACTS FOR MORE INFORMATION
BRIAN HUGHES -- HUGHES52@GMAIL.COM
RICK FIFIELD -- RICKFIFIELD@ROGERS.COM
SCOTT GRAHAM -- SCOTTGRAHAM06@GMAIL.COM

COMMUNITY —

Tree Power returns to St. Marys

The Town of St. Marys and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) have once again partnered on St. Marys Tree Power to make native hardwood trees available and affordable for residents of St. Marys!

"We're very pleased to bring this program back to our town this year as it was so well received in 2022," said Morgan Dykstra, Public Works and Planning Coordinator for the Town of St. Marys. "This is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to our urban tree canopy."

St. Marys residents can purchase a tree online beginning September 12 at 10 a.m., at www.stmarystreepower.ca. The trees will be available for pick up in St. Marys on Saturday, October 14. Available tree varieties include: Autumn Fantasy Maple, Downy Serviceberry, Native Red Maple, Red Oak,

Sugar Maple, and Tulip Tree.

"We were able to secure some really great tree species and are happy to be working with the Town of St. Marys to once again offer the program to its residents," said Rob Davies, UTRCA Forestry and Recreation Supervisor.

The program's goal is to create a greener and more beautiful community by adding native trees. The UTRCA Tree Power program began more than 10 years ago in London. This is the second year Tree Power is being held in St. Marys.

The following program partners have contributed funding and in-kind donations: Town of St. Marys, St. Marys Green Committee, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

Please visit www.stmarystreepower.ca for more information.

Scrapbookers share their passion while raising money for seniors' programs

Scrapbooking Garage Sale on Saturday, September 16



A committee of volunteers and the St. Marys Friendship Centre are teaming up to hold a Scrapbooking Garage Sale on Saturday, September 16, 2023. The event will run from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Pyramid Recreation Centre (317 James St. S., Entrance C).

A variety of gently used or new crafting supplies will be available for purchase tax-free. Admission to the event is free. Please note that this event is cash only.

"We want to thank the dedicated scrapbooking volunteers who have planned this sale to raise money for local seniors' programs," says Thom-

as Redman, Senior Services Program Coordinator.

The sale will include an array of items including paper, handmade greeting cards for all occasions, stamps, cartridges, embellishments and more.

Once stocked up on the latest supplies, attendees may be interested in attending the Friendship Centre's monthly Scrapbooking Crops and upcoming classes.

For details about the sale, classes, or vendor registration, contact 519-284-2340, ext. 621 or email tredman@town.stmarys.on.ca.



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COMMUNITY —

Traffic network's "ripple effect" makes solving dangerous intersections no easy task

By Stewart Grant

A letter from concerned resident Chris Swarthout sparked an interesting discussion during the August 22nd Council meeting regarding the overall Road Safety Network Plan.

Swarthout submitted a letter to Council on August 14th about Park Street where it meets King Street at the curve, and the stretch of Park Street that goes past Cadzow Park to Water Street.

"My concern is there is no stop sign from Elizabeth Street until you reach Water Street. People have increasingly used this street as a way to avoid the lights downtown. Not all people, but some, and repeat offenders think this street is a raceway. They're able to pick up considerable speed in between Elizabeth Street and Water Street."

He continued, "There have been several near misses at the curve with people going too fast and cutting the corner. I watched someone lose control of their vehicle and fishtail into my neighbour's laneway. Moments before, he and his kids had been playing hockey there. It could have been a disaster, if not deadly. Cadzow Park is also along this stretch of road with children and families crossing the street all day long. It's only a matter of time before someone gets seriously hurt or killed due to people being careless and speeding along this stretch of road."

Swarthout's letter, which Council resolved to pass to the upcoming Community Policing Advisory Committee (CPAC) meeting on September 20th, provided helpful feedback on a problematic traffic area in town.



Police, Paramedics, and a tow truck were all called to the corner of Jones and Church Streets on August 3, 2023 to respond to one of the many collisions that have occurred at this troublesome intersection. (Stewart Grant photo)

It also provided another example of how traffic patterns evolve over time due to the choices of drivers to avoid certain areas (in this case, the traffic lights downtown).

Councillor Marg Luna, citing the recent accident at Jones and Church Street, expressed frustration that a short-term solution couldn't be enacted to prevent future accidents. "I'm not understanding why we need to wait for a plan to be presented before we can do something about these concerns," she remarked to Jed Kelly, Director of Public Works.

Kelly said that staff has been collecting information and are developing criteria on how to analyze that intersection against other intersections and are preparing to present a list of possible mitigation strategies for

Church and Jones at the September CPAC meeting.

Councillor Jim Craigmile remarked, "I tend to agree a little bit with Councillor Luna, however I know that there's numerous intersections in town that are bad and one of the things that I don't have a grasp on is that are we directing a lot more traffic onto some of those roads because they're avoiding other bad turns. So, I can see the one from Mr. Swarthout here and I can see that one on Church, that they're probably avoiding other areas, so we've increased traffic on that area."

Kelly agreed, saying, "Anytime you have a change in the road network, it's going to ripple out like a stone in a still pond. You put a stop sign here, and suddenly you create traffic over there. We certainly saw that on Huron and Waterloo, for example. We put stop signs in for pedestrian connectivity when the school moved, and we turned Waterloo effectively into a local collector. To generate that kind of data, you'd have to be looking at a much larger traffic study to see how that traffic pattern would move through the network."

Luna agreed on this cause-and-effect impact, noting that she is one of many residents who have opted to use the Church and Jones intersection to avoid the Queen and James Street intersection which is at times "impossible" to make a left-hand turn onto Queen. "I'm still not happy that we're waiting [to fix Jones and Church] but that's just my opinion."

Councillor Brogan Aylward wondered about the feasibility of increasing

police presence in response to Mr. Swarthout's concerns.

Town of St. Marys CAO Brent Kittmer said, "One of the advantages of having the Stratford Police Service is that they are very responsive, so that's why in the resolution we've forwarded [Swarthout's letter] to the CPAC agenda because when it's on that agenda, the police will read it and they almost always pick up these concerns as areas where they will do extra patrols."

Kelly added, "Generally the process for the last five years since we've had the radar signs, is when we receive a complaint like that, we deploy the radar signs, try and get a two-week data set, and we provide that to the police."

The radar signs have recently been deployed to Church and Jones, not necessarily for tracking speed enforcement but in this case to gain valuable data on the levels and timing of traffic.

Councillor Fern Pridham asked Kelly about whether letters such as Swarthout's provided helpful feedback on areas of the town that were experiencing traffic concerns, and he responded, "Absolutely."

To that end, Councillor Luna asked Town Clerk Jenna McCartney to clarify the process for public involvement at the upcoming CPAC meeting, "Anyone is welcome to bring their concerns ahead of time, they can send in correspondence." She also confirmed that the September 20th meeting is open to the public and can also be viewed on the Town's YouTube page.

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COMMUNITY —

Sunrise for Goderich newspaper



Pictured above, Goderich Sun publisher Stewart Grant and editor Kathleen Smith are interviewed by Rob Bundy of FauxPop Media on August 15th in FauxPop's beautiful studio within Goderich's old train station at 1 Maitland Road North. The Goderich Sun, which Grant considered launching back in 2015, finally came to life in 2023 when Postmedia downsized the local staff (including Smith) at the community's long-time newspaper, the Goderich Signal Star.

IMPROVING SHORELINE PAGE 5 | TEMPEST CAPTURE CUP PAGE 7

Goderich Sun

VOLUME 1 • ISSUE 1 | SEPTEMBER 1, 2023

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Goderich says goodbye to Mayor Myles Murdock

KATHLEEN SMITH
Editor

Mayor Myles Murdock passed away on Aug. 17 surrounded by his loved ones, and on Aug. 26, the community gathered to say goodbye. The funeral was held at Goderich District Collegiate Institute (DCI), where Myles taught for 25 years. From members of the public and former students to dignitaries and old friends, over 400 attended the funeral.

During the funeral, several eulogies were made, beginning with Myles' daughter, Alicia, who Myles raised from the age of eight. Within her eulogy, apart from the chains of laughter that come from remembering stories, Alicia stood up everything the fall with one statement: "Any one can be a father, but it takes someone special to be a dad," she said to a full gymnasium.

Alicia explained how hard it is to get who Myles was and what he was all about, into a few words, as he was many things to so many people.

"He was a man with a huge heart, one that he wore on his sleeve and encompassed all those that he was connected to," Alicia added.

"It was truly the very best dad a girl could ask for. He was incredibly supportive, a listener, a shoulder when I needed one, and always had the best and biggest hugs Myles loved with his whole heart."

Other eulogies were made by siblings, long-time friends, colleagues, and dignitaries.

According to everyone who spoke, he was a man who could hold a room. Myles would walk in with a smile and rather than work the room, he was genuine. Myles took time for everyone, even if it meant spending an extra moment.

From each outpouring of love and support for Myles, it was apparent that Myles will be remembered for his warmth, his character, and his integrity. As a legend in Goderich, it was this town that soon became his home, in

Goderich hosts first annual Salt & Harvest Festival

KATHLEEN SMITH
Editor

On September 15-17 Goderich Tourism and Royal LePage's Boutique Realty are teaming up to host the Goderich Salt and Harvest Festival in downtown Goderich.

Along Highway 21, inside and visitors will have a drive-in by a more than eight feet tall salt ocean, which gives the entrance to North Harbour Road. This beacon signals the entrance to the largest salt mine in the world, right in Goderich.

This unique would wander into 1,800 feet below the ground level, appearing out under Lake Huron, creating a massive network that is physically larger than the Town of Goderich.

The Goderich Salt Mine is an engineering feat, which goes widely unnoticed above ground.

This year, Goderich Tourism has big plans to celebrate the world's largest naturally occurring 'salt' located in Goderich.

The focal point of the weekend will be Saturday, September 16 with concerts, food, fun and team building place across town. Headlining the Corporate Mineral Concert on the Courthouse performance stage will be Coleman Hill. The band 'Fall It To Swesney will open.

The Salt & Harvest Show Garden will be open throughout the day for folks to take a break between inflatable, petting zoo, car show, indoor Venetian Market, food truck alley, hot air balloon tours, and hop-on, hop-off bus tours.

For one weekend a year Lake Huron and Goderich are no longer freshwater destinations but instead salted to taste.

For tickets head to www.saltandharvest.ca to get a schedule of events and to book tickets for the concert, bus tours and boat tours. Tickets are not available at the event.

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September 1st was the online-only launch of the Goderich Sun, which is the fifth newspaper under the Grant Haven Media banner, joining the St. Marys Independent, Wilmot-Tavistock Gazette, Stratford Times, and Woodstock Ingersoll Echo. The Goderich Sun will start with monthly online editions on the first Friday of each month before adding a print component in 2024. To read the September edition, visit www.goderichsun.com or www.granthaven.com.

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What's New at McCully's

Aarden Farms Sweet Corn is available at the store and the corn stand on #19!

We have local beans, carrots, potatoes and hot house peppers, tomatoes and cucumbers.

We now have local Blueberries and Raspberries and Niagara Peaches as well as local plums, nectarines and strawberries..

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COMMUNITY —

“We’ve got a good thing growing”

Kirkton Fall Fair tradition returns this weekend

By Stewart Grant

This weekend, the tradition continues for the “little fair with big heart”.

Catherine Liscumb, President of the Kirkton Agricultural Society, says that “simple fun” is one of the reasons why the Kirkton Fair has continued to be popular, going strong since 1869 - missing only the COVID year of 2020.

“One of the things that we hear quite a bit is that people like that you can pay one admission at the gate, and everything else is covered, aside from buying food of course. We don’t have a traditional midway, but we’ve got lots of simple fun that’s all included such as pony rides, a bale pyramid, grain bin basketball, etc. It doesn’t need to be super-expensive for kids to have simple fun.”

Along with the traditional fun that people expect from the Fall Fair, the Kirkton Ag Society has also been making a conscious effort to promote education surrounding agriculture. They’ve expanded the agriculture education tent this year and will have a



number of different animals on display. One fun exhibit is “Guess whose poop it is?” where people can try and match up the excrement with each animal.

Friday’s admission is by donation only, while daily admission for Saturday and Sunday is just \$10 per adult and \$5 per school age child (JK to Grade 12). Younger kids’ admission is free.

The gates open this Friday at 6:30 p.m. with people able to enjoy the Exhibit Hall, food trucks, and inflatables for the kids. The fireworks display will take place at dusk.

Saturday will be full of activities from

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at which time the popular Truck and Tractor Pull will begin. Food Trucks and Beer Garden will be open during this time.

Sunday features a Community Breakfast from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., and a Church Service at 10:00 a.m. The fan favorite Demolition Derby and Classic Car Show will begin at 1:00 p.m. For more details, please see the Kirkton Fair ad on page 9.

There’s also a wealth of information on the Kirkton Fair’s brand-new website at kirktonfair.com. It was expertly designed this year by Nova Mae Design in Stratford. The Fair also main-

tains an active presence on Facebook and Instagram.

Last year, Liscumb said that over 5,000 people took advantage of the great weather and attended the 153rd version of the Kirkton Fair. While the fair certainly draws attendees from towns like St. Marys and Exeter who no longer have their own fairs, she said it’s amazing to hear all the different places across southwestern Ontario that people travel from.

A survey conducted at the 2022 Fair showed that about 42% of the attendees said they were from the Kirkton/Woodham area, while around 38% were split between St. Marys, Exeter, and Lucan. The remaining 20% of patrons were from various places including Mitchell, Granton, Grand Bend, Strathroy, etc.

Liscumb said that the planning for this year’s Fall Fair began in January at the Ag Society’s Annual Meeting. She said she is so grateful to the dedicated group of Board of Directors and volunteers that make an event like this possible.

Friday

- 6:30-9:00 pm: Inflatables and food trucks
- 6:30-7:30 pm: Exhibit Hall open for viewing
- Dusk: Community Fireworks

Saturday

- 10:00 am - 4:00 pm: Great events and activities for the whole family including parade, baby show, inflatables, dog herding demo, pig races, zucchini races, pedal tractor pull, pony rides, 4-H dairy show, agriculture awareness tent, food trucks, pumpkin catapult and exhibit hall
- 4:00 pm start: Truck and Tractor Pull
- Food Trucks and Beer Garden

Sunday

- 9:00 - 11:30 am: Community Breakfast and Exhibit Hall
- 10:00 am: Church Service
- 1:00 pm start: Demolition Derby and Classic Car Show
- Food Trucks

COMMUNITY —

A Splashing Success!

Wrapping up another Splendid Season at the Kirkton Woodham Swimming Pool

As the sun sets on another memorable season, the echoes of laughter and the joyous sounds of splashing water fade away at the Kirkton Woodham Swimming Pool. From the first sunny day that welcomed swimmers to swim lessons to the final cannonball plunge, this season has been a resounding success, creating cherished memories for families, friends, and swimmers. Let's dive into the highlights and accomplishments that have defined this fantastic aquatic journey.

The Kirkton Woodham Swimming Pool is owned equally by the Municipality of South Huron and the Township of Perth South with oversight provided by community volunteers through the Kirkton Woodham Pool Committee. Daily operations have historically been carried out by the Municipality of South Huron staff with the financial cost of operations being shared equally by the municipalities. However, beginning in 2023, the daily operations of the facility have been transferred to the Township of Perth South. The transition of general pool operations was initially a bit bumpy. With the knowledge gained and a commitment to continuous improvement, we are confident that the upcoming 2024 season will see a more streamlined and enhanced pool experience for



everyone.

The season began early in the spring of 2023 with lifeguard recruitment efforts. Like pools across Ontario, we encountered significant challenges in the hiring of lifeguards, a critical role responsible for ensuring the safety of swimmers. Lifeguard recruitment continued throughout the season as we recruited a sufficient number of lifeguards to schedule around their year-round jobs,

recreational interests, family vacations, and transportation challenges. Although it was necessary to cancel some programs due to lifeguard shortages, we optimistically look forward to less challenging recruitment in the spring of 2024 and the expansion of the programs offered at the pool.

The offering of swim lessons makes up the majority of the programming at the pool. The Kirkton Pool of-

fers the Lifesaving Society's Swim for Life Program taught by certified Swim Instructors with a focus on teaching water safety and swimming skills. During the summer a total of 252 children participated in lessons. Of those participants, 11% participated in the Parent & Tot program, 32% participated in the Preschool program, and 56% participated in the Swimmer program.

On August 3, 2023, there were a record number of attendees at the annual Kirkton Pool Fun Night which featured food, prizes, a lifeguard demonstration, and a free swim. Approximately 125 swimmers took part in the free swim. This night was a success thanks to the many community sponsors and the Kirkton-Woodham Volunteer Pool Committee. A special thank you to them all!

As we reflect on the journey of transitioning pool operations between municipalities, we extend our gratitude to the community for their patience, understanding, and support during this period of change. As we dive into the preparations for the 2024 season, we are confident that the collective efforts of the pool committee and Perth South staff will ensure an even more successful and enjoyable pool experience in the year to come.

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SPORTS —

Four-goal second period lifts Lincs over Stars

By Spencer Seymour

After falling behind by a score of 2-0 less than a minute into the second period against the St. Thomas Stars last Thursday, the Lincolns' offence roared to life, exploding for four unanswered goals en route to a 5-3 victory in their third of four exhibition games.

According to Head Coach Jeff Bradley, the preseason matchup was yet another useful opportunity to view the team's confirmed roster members and those trying out.

"This time of the year, it's not about wins and losses and how we played as much as it is about getting a look at everyone," Bradley said. "Right now, until we have our team fully locked in and all of our guys are here, it's more about using the time to evaluate all the guys we have here, both the returning guys and the new guys. It's been really good all preseason from that standpoint."

The first period saw just one goal scored, with Nicolas Glanville nabbing a shorthanded goal to put the Stars ahead 1-0. Then, just 18 seconds into the second, a point shot by Dawson Watson snuck through heavy traffic to put the Stars ahead by two.

Almost exactly nine minutes later, Wesley Wilding finished off some strong puck movement on a Lincolns' powerplay, lifting a shot as he was falling over the arm of St. Thomas netminder Wyatt Sloetjes to cut the Stars' lead in half. Wilding's goal was the first of three St. Marys goals scored in just three minutes and 36 seconds.

The next two goals came on consecutive two-on-one rushes by the Lincolns just a minute and four seconds apart, the first of which was scored by Jaden Lee. Later in the period, Luca Spagnolo potted the fourth St. Marys goal of the period. Bradley told the Independent that both Lee and Spagnolo, who both turned in excellent outings in their preseason debuts, will likely have even more opportunity to display the full lengths of their skill this coming season.

"I wasn't surprised at all, that's exactly what we expect out of them," Bradley said of Lee and Spagnolo's performances. "They are both returning players who are going to be leaders and key contributors for us. Obvious-



ly, they showed they were really good last year but when you're playing behind older veterans, you don't get as much of an opportunity to fully show your skills. We know what they both bring, on and off the ice. They love playing for the Lincolns and when you add that to the skill they have, they are both going to be effective players for us."

Just over a minute after Lee's goal, defenceman Rowan Reid netted the second two-on-one goal for the Lincolns. Reid was one of several rookies vying for a job by whom Bradley was impressed.

"Rowan [Reid], Hayden [Barch], and Will [Coward] all stepped up and showed that they are ready to contribute. They looked like really good players and could play at this level. All three of them played with skill and poise. I'm surprised they aren't already signed by another team. They are really good all-around guys and they can adapt well to a Junior 'B' Game."

Matthew Perdue played the first 40 minutes of the contest in between the pipes and stopped 26 of 28 St. Thomas shots. Bradley praised the 20-year-old Brampton native's effort in goal.

"Matt played well for us in goal. He had the one mishap on the first goal but he rebounded really well. He kept us in it at times with some very good stops."

The lone assist on Spagnolo's goal went to blueliner Josh Cornfield, who missed the second half of last season the playoffs due to an injury. Brad-

ley said he was very happy to see an impressive lack of rust displayed by Cornfield.

"There was a bit of concern due to the injury and how long he was off the ice but it was all alleviated while watching him play. I said last year about Josh that it's very rare to find a guy who can control the play and move the puck as well as he can. His vision is incredible and he just needs to get his feet moving again so, as good as I thought he looked, I'm sure he will get even better with time."

In the third period, Donovan Appleford forced a turnover and went forehand-to-backhand to cut the Lincolns' lead to one. Neither team found the back of the net until Seth Coomber's empty-netter with 31 seconds left in

the game.

The game also marked the Lincolns debut for forward Marcus Dashevsky who signed with the team earlier this Summer after spending last season with the Powell River Kings of the British Columbia Hockey League (BCHL). Bradley said that the native of Richmond, B.C. delivered exactly what the organization anticipated he would.

"We got what we expected. He hasn't skated most of the Summer but he's played in one of the best Junior leagues in Canada. Just to play in the BCHL in the first place, you have to make sure you do everything right. He does that and he sets a good example for other guys. If he has to make a pass on his backhand, he does it. If he has a check to make, he finishes his check. He communicates before the faceoffs. He's just an all-around guy who we know we can play in any situation."

Even though he didn't get on the score-sheet, one of the most impressive performances was by Owen Voortman, for whom Bradley had high praise thanks to his physicality and strong play in all three zones.

"To me, [last Thursday night], he was dominant. Owen's physicality was incredible and looked like a beast out there. If he brings that kind of dominance consistently, he could have a very bright future in hockey, there is no doubt about that."

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SPORTS —

Coach McCutcheon: U15 OBA Boys have come a long way

By Spencer Seymour

Late-inning heroics for Lucan in Game Three ended the U15 OBA Boys St. Marys Rockies' season last Monday with Lucan taking a 9-8 victory.

Despite the undesired result, Head Coach Scott McCutcheon told the Independent that the players turned in a very strong effort in the playoffs as well as throughout the season.

"It's disappointing not to win the last game of your season, but I'm very proud of this group," said McCutcheon. "They have come a long way from the start of the season. I would like to thank all the players for a wonderful season. They don't have anything to hang their heads about. I would also like to thank coaches Greg Swan and Owen McIntosh for all their help this season."

When asked about the development of the U15 OBA squad, McCutcheon described how the group continued to find ways to get better.

"When we started in May, we were behind the eight-ball compared to much of our competition that had been working indoors all winter. With the limited amount of practice time we

had available, the team was able to quickly get some batting practice reps in and lots of fly balls and ground balls. They gelled very well as a team throughout the summer months."

Their final game of the year saw Zach Larmer keep Lucan's hitters on their heels when he pitched three innings and recorded four strikeouts. Evan Ballantyne added six K's three-and-a-third innings, many of which were thanks to an on-fire breaking ball. Simon Greig scored twice and posted two hits, while Ballantyne and Ty Wheeler each earned two hits and a run scored.

Before an 11-9 defeat in Game Two forced a third and decisive game, the Rockies defeated Lucan in convincing fashion with a final score of 10-3. In four innings of work, Greig racked up three strikeouts and didn't give up many quality hits. In relief, Ballantyne struck out four from the mound.

At the plate, Ben Ewing and Grier Mahoney each posted two hits and brought two runs over the plate. McCutcheon said the team's offence was "well-sustained from start to finish." He also said the team's offensive performance, both during the regular

season and in the playoffs, was seldom matched.

"This team was easily able to create offence and runs," McCutcheon remarked. "It showed in our playoff run. Once we got going offensively, we were usually very hard to stop."

"This was the first season that many of our guys played this many games.

The LDBA is a great league with lots of great competition. Teams from St. Thomas, Wyoming, North London, and West London all pushed us to be better players and a better team. The boys came to play each and every game. Hopefully, these boys keep playing baseball in St. Marys for the next few years to come."



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Fall athletics tryouts begin this week at DCVI

As students, teachers, and parents get set to return for another school year, St. Marys DCVI has announced the beginning of its tryout and meeting schedule for its Fall sports. The following is the Secondary students' athletics schedule for this week, as reported by the school on its social media channels.

Golf - Meeting on Wednesday at Lunch, Tryout on Thursday

Senior Girls Basketball - Tryout on Thursday at 7:00 a.m.

Junior Girls Basketball - Tryout on Thursday at 3:00 p.m.

Senior Boys Volleyball - Tryouts Thursday and Friday at 7:00 a.m. both days

Junior Boys Volleyball - Meetings Thursday and Friday at Lunch both days

Field Hockey - Meeting Thursday at Lunch, Tryout Friday at 7:00 a.m.



Cross-Country Running - Meeting Friday at Lunch

Elementary students are reminded to listen to the announcements for information about Soccer and Cross-Country.



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ST. MARYS, ONTARIO

SPORTS —

Minor Soccer sees great registration increase

By Spencer Seymour

St. Marys Minor Soccer saw their registration numbers increase dramatically this past season according to the organization's Summer newsletter sent to its member families last month.

"This season, we hosted 29 house league teams from U3-U8," the newsletter read, signed by the St. Marys Minor Soccer Board. "Our travel season hosted an additional 20 teams. That is a total of 532 registered players. Our association more than doubled this year which is amazing."

Additionally, according to the Summer newsletter, registration for Spring Summer 2024 is now open and closes September 15th. Credit card payments will be available for those who wish to pay early. E-transfers are due March 1st, 2024. A late fee of \$50 will be charged after this date unless a payment arrangement has been arranged.

Registrations after September 15th will only be accepted on team availability and will be subject to a late fee. Opening registration early will help Minor Soccer get equipment organized sooner and allow the organization to properly assess if tryouts for certain divisions will move forward. The newsletter also reported that registration fees will not need to be raised for next season.

Volunteers and indoor coaches are both being sought by the organization. If you have interest in helping with either of these avenues, you can email stmarysminorsoccer@gmail.com.

This year's fundraising efforts were greatly successful as well with the newsletter announcing that Minor Soccer raised \$4,735. This money will be invested back into the organization, with new purchases including two sets of Agility Poles, three sets of Agility Ladders, three Canopy/Shelters, and four Team Benches.



St. Marys Pickleball's weekly play



It was another action-packed week of pickleball at the outdoor courts with 34 members playing Monday night and 20 players on Wednesday night. On the left, Linda McFadyen and Mike Richardson take on Carol Venn and Jerry Terhaerd. Venn and Terhaerd won this game 11-8 in a game with many long rallies. In the photo, McFadyen tries a lob shot but their opponents are well-positioned to make an overhead smash. On the right, Megan Richardson and Jody Stone battle Barry Stone and Hans Scheele. Stone and Scheele won 11-9. The photo shows Richardson attempting to punch a shot down the line. Other games included Lisa Evans and Chris Evans versus Patty Brine and Mike Brine. Team Evans won this one 11-6 but the game was closer than the score. The Brines put up a good fight but lost a few key points in the match which opened the door to victory for their opponents. Libby Hill and Barb Nicholson challenged Jantje Scheele and Brian McKinnon in an entertaining game that was close throughout the entire match. Hill and Nicholson won this match 9-7. Annette Wrigley and Mike Richardson faced off against Linda McFadyen and Rob Wrigley. Wrigley and Richardson won this won 11-6. Both teams made great shots and exchanged healthy banter. (Photos by Spencer Seymour)

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SPORTS —

Minor Sports Scrapbook



Harper Murrell looks on at the rest of the field of play as he slides safely on base during a Red Rock Construction U14 OBA Boys St. Marys Rockies game this weekend. (Photo credit: Mike Chennette/McGinny Photography)



On the left, Maverick Aiken scores a sliding goal in Monday's U10 Boys Tier Three St. Marys Storm game. On the right, Finn Reid drives towards the net with the ball. The team played games this past Sunday and Monday.



Everett Crummer takes a quick shot off the rush during the U9 Boys Tier Two St. Marys Storm game on Monday night.



Dean Feeney fires a sharp shot towards the opposing keeper during this past Sunday's U10 Boys Tier Two St. Marys Storm game.



Lincoln Vandenburg carries the ball down the field during a recent U8 Boys Tier Three St. Marys Storm One game. (Photos by Spencer Seymour)

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COMMUNITY —

Worldwide Porch Music Day



Two St. Marys residences participated in the Worldwide Porch Music Day, celebrated in countries all around the earth on August 26. The homes of Kelly and Keith Baker, 111 Water Street South, and Marie and John Stevens, 96 Robinson Street, hosted several local musicians to a few hours of song. Musicians included (alphabetically arranged): Kelly Baker, Noel Banavage, Linda Howard, Alan Lounds, Ray Miller, Tom Osgerby, Joe Sbrocchi, Frank St. Germain, John Stevens, and Bruce Zinger. Based on the success of this year, it is most likely that it will continue next year with, hopefully, more porches in our lovely town. (Contributed photos)

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COMMUNITY —

Melodies at the Museum final performance



The musical group called the Jazzmax performed last Wednesday night, August 30th to an appreciative crowd on a very cold night. This concluded the Melodies at the Museum concert series for another year. (Nancy Bickell photo)

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HISTORY —

HISTORIC ST. MARYS: The Convent

By Mary Smith

Labour Day has come and gone and now a new school year is underway. St. Marys residents who are relatively new to this community may not know that just a few decades ago, the first day of school was always a particularly significant event for the occupants of this pleasant house on King Street North. In 1913, it was opened as a convent – a home for a small group of Sisters of St. Joseph who came to St. Marys to take charge of the school just next door. For seven decades, the nuns were an integral part of the complex surrounding Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church. The last of their order left St. Marys and the convent in 1985, almost 40 years ago, and the house is now private property. But the Sisters of St. Joseph remain part of the history of the school, the parish and the whole community.

The British North America Act of 1867 created the new country of Canada through the confederation of four colonies. The act also protected the rights of minorities to faith-based education in all parts of the country. In St. Marys, Ontario, where most of the residents were protestant, the minority was a small but strong Catholic population. In 1861, a Catholic Church, built of St. Marys limestone, was opened on the hill in the north ward, on the site of Holy Name of Mary Church today. It was a simple, rectangular building, facing east. The establishment of a school, however, was not without controversy. A group of prominent citizens tried to organize an anti-separate school movement in St. Marys in the early 1860s. It apparently never amounted to much more than several petitions sent to government leaders and once the right to Catholic education became a federal law, the movement faded away. The residents of St. Marys accepted that a new school in the north ward would be part of this community.

The missionary priest, Father Boubat, was assigned to St. Marys in 1866. The Reverend Bartholomew Boubat had been born in France in 1832. He studied classics and theology in Spain before coming to Canada in 1857. That year, he was ordained in Sandwich, Ontario, by the first Bishop of London and had already served in six parishes in the diocese before arriving in St. Marys. Remembered as a kindly and cultured man, his demanding work as a missionary priest shows that he must also have had energy and stamina. His frequent reassignments allowed



This house at 158 King Street North was built in 1912 as a convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph.

the diocese to use his special skills in developing the pioneer parishes. While in St. Marys, he had the rectory built and got the separate school underway.

The spacious rectory was intended to double as the school with two rooms on the west side for this purpose. However, this arrangement did not last long. Tradition says that Father Boubat's housekeeper strenuously objected to disruptive children in the rectory. By 1870, a small frame school was built north of the church near the Grand Trunk Railway Sarnia line but it did not meet the needs of the parish for very long. Various temporary accommodations were made, including renting space in the old stone schoolhouse on the southwest corner of Queen Street and James Street South. This building served many purposes through the last half of the 19th century. As well as a temporary classroom, it was the first meeting place for a number of local congregations until they were able to build a church on their own permanent sites.

In 1876, Father F. Delehanty was appointed priest in St. Marys. He had great energy and determination and it was during his time that a two-room stone school was built on property to the north of the church. Also, during this period, Father Delehanty was able to acquire additional town lots adjacent to the church. He was

aided by the generosity of Patrick Whelihan, a local businessman who was a great benefactor of the parish. Eventually, the entire block north of Widder Street between Peel and King Streets became the property of the Roman Catholic Diocese of London, creating an impressive setting for today's Holy Name of Mary Catholic Church when it opened in 1893.

The two-room school continued with a succession of lay teachers but with just a small tax base, it became increasingly difficult to meet provincial curriculum requirements. In 1912, the congregation and the priest at that time, Father John Ronan, sent a request to the Mother Superior of the Sisters of St. Joseph in London asking for teachers to take over the Catholic school in St. Marys. This religious order had been established in London in December 1868. According to the attractive, 36-page booklet, *Sisters: The History of the Sisters of St. Joseph of London* (published in 2007 by St. Joseph's Health Care), the sisters "shaped education, health care and social services in London for more than 130 years." Their accomplishments in education, as well as health care, caught the attention of other parishes in the diocese. The first mission outside London was in Goderich where a convent school was established in 1878. In the 1880s, convents with schools were also opened in St. Thomas and Ingersoll. Again, according to the book,

Sisters: "Requests for the services of the Sisters continued to multiply as the population in Southwestern Ontario increased, partly due to immigration. Between 1906 and 1914, convents were opened in Sarnia, Knightsbridge, Seaforth, St. Marys, and Woodstock." With this experience, Mother Celestine knew exactly what she was looking for when she came to St. Marys in 1912 to select an appropriate site for the convent on the spacious grounds of the church. She chose a location to the north east of the rectory, facing onto King Street North. It was just a short walk to the church and to the stone schoolhouse to the west.

On August 22, 1912, this short article appeared in the *St. Marys Journal*: "A two-storey brick residence is being erected on the R. C. Church grounds to serve as a home for the Sisters of St. Joseph who will take charge of the Separate School at the beginning of the new year. Two sisters will teach in the school, one will give lessons in music and a lay sister will act as housekeeper. Miss Angela Barry, daughter of Mr. John Barry, will have charge of the school in the fall term." As it turned out, the house was not quite ready for occupancy at the beginning of January, although Father Ronan urged the contractor to hurry along. However, on Friday, January 24, 1913, the four new residents of the convent were welcomed to St. Marys by Father Ronan and several long-standing members of the congregation, including the chairman of the Separate School Board. They told the newcomers that their "highest hopes were realized in the prospect of confiding their children to the zealous care and instruction of the Sisters of St. Joseph."

That quotation is taken from *The Chronicles of St. Joseph Convent, St. Marys, Ontario* – a journal kept for every year that the Sisters of St. Joseph were in residence, outlining the significant annual events in the life of the parish and describing the achievements of the school, its instructors and its students. This two-volume, historic record has been transcribed and a copy is available for research in the archives of the St. Marys Museum. Each volume is more than 80 typed pages in length and the recorder provides great detail about the everyday life of this small but very busy religious community of working women. What these chronicles have to tell us is worth a separate column in another edition of the *Independent*.

COMMUNITY —

Rae Announces Over \$3.4M for Local ER's and Hospital Beds

Matthew Rae, MPP for Perth-Wellington, recently announced over \$3.4 million in funding for local emergency rooms and Acute Medical and Surgical Beds.

"This funding will help reduce emergency department wait times and expand bedded capacity locally," said MPP Rae. "Our local emergency departments and health care professionals go above and beyond each day. Our hospitals are an integral part of our rural communities, and I am glad to see our government continues to make investments in them."

The Government of Ontario is investing an additional \$44 million this year in 165 high volume and

smaller emergency departments to reduce wait times and provide more efficient healthcare. The province is also investing up to \$1.17 billion in 2023-24 to support bedded capacity at hospitals across Ontario.

Relevant to St. Marys Independent readers, amounts of \$150,000 and \$260,000 are earmarked for the Emergency Department at St. Marys Memorial Hospital and Stratford General Hospital, respectively.

A further \$2,555,000 has been allocated for bedded capacity at Stratford General Hospital.



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See any St. Marys firefighter for tickets

COLUMN —

HOSTING UKRAINE: A Happy Encounter, Gratitude, and an Ask

By VJ Knutson

Ric and I celebrated our wedding anniversary at the Westover Inn recently. At first glance, I was concerned that there would be nothing for me to eat – I’m that annoying person with all the food allergies – but our server was quick to suggest some accommodations. Relieved and excited for what was to come, Ric and I settled in, enjoying the ambiance, and our precious alone time.

The meal was excellent, and given the occasion, we decided to indulge in dessert, which also proved to be a win. Imagine our delight when, at the end of dinner, we discovered that the cook was none other than one of our Ukrainian friends. Tatyana and her husband and son arrived last Spring and are now residing in St Marys. Next time you’re dining at the Inn be sure to give a nod to the Ukrainian cook!

I’d like to give a shout out also to all who have contributed to the GoFundMe for Alina’s Cirque de Soleil Dream. Donors are listed on the site, but I have also received a donation by direct cheque from Heather @ Chocolate Barrs, Candy Shop, Stratford. On behalf of Alina and family, thank you so much Heather! You’ll be pleased to know that Ric matched your donation.

I wrote a few months back about Heidi and Harold Van Gelan who have generously hosted three families, soon to be four. If you recall the article, they had two families living in their house at one time, totalling seven extra people. Kostya and Viktoriya moved on quickly and welcomed a baby girl in the Spring. Nadiia, Dima, their two children, and Grandmother, arrived in February and moved out

this past weekend. Nadiia wrote to me last night asking for help.

“We are very grateful to Heidi and Harold and all the people of St Marys who support Ukrainian families,” her message read. “I am asking for help in buying a used chair lift for my mother. She is 76 and has problems with her legs. She can’t walk up and down the stairs and the unit that we rented has a long staircase and all the bedrooms are upstairs. My husband and I both work at factories in St Marys. This month, one of our teens needed dental work, which we will pay off monthly over the next two years, and with the high cost of rent, we are not able to afford a chair lift now. If you know of an organization that can help, we would really appreciate it. My mother has a letter from the doctor supporting her need.”


Heidi tells me they have researched all the traditional programs for seniors and none cover the cost of chair lifts. They have found a few used lifts for \$1000 - \$2000. As Ric and I had one installed, we are aware that getting the right fit is important. I know it has been a life changer for us. I still have some money set aside from donations, and will be certain to offer it for this cause. If you can help, or know of an avenue to access help for Grandma Laryssa, please let me know. Beverley Grant and I have a special account set up to receive funds for our St Marys Ukrainian families, but cannot offer tax receipts. To receive a receipt, the Presbyterian will accept donations.

Till next time.

Reach me at english.knutson@gmail.com.



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1			3	4				
3			7	5				
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Solutions on page 27

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Purple Hill 'Ram Rodeo' a huge success

By Nancy Abra

The Purple Hill Ram Rodeo and Country Music Showcase was a huge success, attracting thousands of spectators and participants to the Purple Hill Country Music Hall east of Thorndale. The event, which ran from August 25 to 27, 2023, featured thrilling rodeo action, children's activities, vendors, food, beer gardens and country music performances by some of Canada's finest artists.

The weekend kicked off with a dance party on the Friday evening with the Southbound Dance Band with approximately 250 people enjoying the evening of country music in the rustic atmosphere of the Purple Hall Opry House.

Over 2500 people on both Saturday and Sunday packed the stands to watch the hard-hitting rodeo competition which included bull riding, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, steer wrestling, tie-down roping, team roping, pole bending and barrel racing. The participants competed for cash prizes and points in the RAM Rodeo Tour standings. There were ac-



tivities on both days for the children also as they enjoyed free rodeo lessons with the Canadian Country Cowgirls, pony rides, bouncy castles, and face painting.

"I want to extend a special thank you to the Thorndale Fair Board" said George Taylor, "for the use of the por-

table grandstand as all the seating was at a premium and filled up fast. Also, many thanks to the Dorchester Lions and Thamesford Village Deli for great food and all the other vendors who were here."

The country music showcase was another highlight of the event with half-

time shows between the rodeo events and on both evenings of outdoor concerts on a stage overlooking the rodeo arena. On Saturday night, the Canadian Country Music Hall of Famers, The Good Brothers celebrated their 50th anniversary in music with special guest Meredith Moon, the daughter of Gordon Lightfoot. On Sunday night, the Canadian Country Showband and the Purple Hill Grand Ole' Country Opry starred Paul Weber, Naomi Bristow, Mike Pollard, Caroline Burchill, Shelley Rastin and Hector Sturgeon. Other performers during the weekend included Shane Cook and the Woodchippers, Matt Wood and Kiln Country.

The event was sponsored by RAM Trucks Canada and hosted by George and Anna Taylor, the owners of the Purple Hill Country Music Hall. "Many thanks to the volunteers, community sponsors and people who came out" Taylor remarked. "This event wouldn't be possible without them. It is these people that make it possible to bring an exciting event like this to our community."

What is 'I Love Thorndale'?

By Nancy Abra

Since it was established in 2012, I Love Thorndale (ILT) has been a driving force in fostering collaboration and communication within the Thorndale community. Its mission is clear: to bring residents, service groups, clubs, and businesses together under the same banner of community pride.

ILT has grown into an integral part of the I Love Community not-for-profit organization. The primary goal of ILT is to create awareness about the wealth of existing clubs, groups, local businesses, and resources in Thorndale. It emphasizes the value of supporting local businesses, and the positive impact of service clubs and groups. The primary aim is to recruit new members, ensuring these vital elements continue to thrive and contribute to the community in numerous ways. Through its website, complete with a custom local business directory at www.ilovethorndale.ca, ILT has emerged as the central hub for providing relevant communication within the village.

The ILT directors extend their heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support received for over a decade. The financial contributions and the dedication of a handful of volunteers have enabled the organization to host numerous community events. These gatherings have not only strength-

ened community spirit but also provided valuable exposure to local businesses and offered many opportunities for youth, often in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club.

In September 2023, recognizing the challenges of limited manpower and volunteers, ILT made a strategic decision to delegate the organization of most events to other businesses and service organizations that have been steadfast partners. While ILT will continue to offer support, these organizations will take the lead in organizing the valued community events.

ILT remains committed to its mission: to serve as a hub that unites local service clubs, residents, and businesses, while creating a vibrant environment for the entire Thorndale community. The organization is thrilled to introduce website updates, courtesy of JWA Group, and looks forward to intensifying efforts to promote business partners through enhanced marketing initiatives.

Many thanks are extended to the community businesses, members, and residents for being part of the I Love Thorndale's journey as they continue their mission to strengthen community bonds and promote the essence of Thorndale that is held so dear to everyone.

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Word List

- Civic Holiday
- Lahaina destroyed
- BC wildfires
- India moon landing
- Trump GA arrest
- Museum melodies
- Spain World Cup
- Putin kills Prigozhin
- Teddy Bear Reunion
- Frank Doyle
- Hurricane Idalia

THE WEEK AHEAD

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

St. Marys Public Library events - See Page 25

Friday, September 8

- Kirkton Fall Fair - see ad on Page 10
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 pm
- St. Marys Cement community liaison meeting at the St. Marys MOC - 10 am

Saturday, September 9

- Kirkton Fall Fair - see ad on Page 10
- St. Marys Farmers Market at Milt Dunnell Field - 8 am to Noon
- Evan's Touch the Truck at Milt Dunnell Field - 8 am to 2 pm
- Car, truck & tractor show in St. Pauls
- Classic Car Cruise at 197133 19th Line, Lakeside - 1 to 5 pm
- Celebration of Life for Cameron Roy Stiltz at Purple Hill Country Hall - 1 to 3 pm
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 pm

Sunday, September 10

- Kirkton Fall Fair - see ad on Page 10

Monday, September 11

- St. Marys Horticultural Society Fall Carnival Show at the Legion hall - 7 pm

Wednesday, September 13

- St. George's Anglican Church, Thorndale Chicken BBQ dinner - 4:30 to 6:30 pm
- United Way Community Hoedown at the St. Marys Golf Club - 6 to 9 pm

The SUNSET DINER

The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

Why do bees have sticky hair?



Because they use their honeycombs.

Thomas Marriott (3)

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

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PET OF THE WEEK

Each Pet of the Week will receive a FREE treat bag from St. Marys Veterinary Clinic



This week's Pet of the Week is Louie, a three-year-old German Shepherd/Lab mix. Louie is an avid fan of tennis balls and always enjoys going for a run. Ever the protector, Louie is always a bit suspicious of people outside her family, unless, of course, they're offering a tennis ball.



St. Marys Veterinary Clinic is pleased to be the sponsor of the **PET OF THE WEEK**

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COMMUNITY —

New lights installed at James St. N



The Town has recently installed lights that will assist users of the trail crossing James St North and it will also assist students heading to school starting this week. (Gord Barnett photos)



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COLUMN —

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Having a fine, wine time in the Eastern Townships



By Paul Knowles

Let's start with two obvious truths. First, (as you know if you read this feature on a regular basis), I like wine. Second, it is unlikely that you will be able to choose from a broad selection of Canadian wines in your local LCBO unless you opt for wines from Ontario. Occasionally, something from another province may appear on the shelves, but in general you are much more likely to find wine from South Africa, California, Australia, France or even Hungary than from Nova Scotia or Québec.

In fact, when the federal government eliminated rules that limited importing wine from province to province, Ontario passed new legislation making such wine-sharing more difficult.

This annoys me.

In the past year or so, I have visited wine districts in Nova Scotia and in Québec. And as fond as I am of Ontario wines, I was delighted to find some really great

wines being produced in these other provinces. And less delighted that I cannot arrange to get them once I am back home.

But at least on our visit to l'Orpailleur Vinyard in the Dunham valley, in Québec's beautiful Eastern Townships, we got to taste a lot of great wines and better still, to buy a case which, now in my wine rack, will last... a little while.

So if you are a wine lover, don't completely despair. Instead, when you plan your travels, make sure you devote some time – quite a bit of time if you can – to discovering the Canadian wine regions the LCBO doesn't seem to want you to know about.

l'Orpailleur was a revelation to me. I knew nothing about Québec wines. But spending an hour or so with Wine Tourism Manager Lucie Bilodeau was like taking a quick graduate course in Québec wines followed by a luscious tasting of their excellent products.

I never would have guessed that the history of small, independent wineries in Québec goes back almost as far as it does here in Ontario. Here, Inniskillin Winery was the pioneer, in 1975 receiving the first winery license issued in Ontario since before prohibition. l'Orpailleur planted its first

vines only seven years later in 1982.

The winery was founded by four partners, two who came to Canada from France, to be joined in their brave new enterprise by two Québec partners. The four remain involved in the winery to this day. They were not only committed to making wine, they also have invested heavily in research and development to identify or hybridize the best grape varieties for the area.

The folks at l'Orpailleur are proud of their history and they tell their story on a display of interpretive panels. This makes a visit by any newcomer from Ontario a much more meaningful experience as you learn the story behind the wines you are about to enjoy.

And the story has its dramatic elements. Lucie told us that 1985 brought the first highlight, the production of the first wines. But 1986 was a disaster since frost destroyed the entire crop.

The conclusion this engendered from the patient vineyard owners? "You have to believe!" explains Lucie. They did and their faith paid off. It took until 1996 for them to sell wine through the SAQ, the Québec equivalent of the LCBO, but they persevered.

And the l'Orpailleur pioneers helped spark a burgeoning industry in the province. Today there are about 130 wineries in Québec.

Lucie loves telling these stories and one of the most intriguing involves the name of the winery and the branding of one of their most popular wines, Cuvée Natashquan.

It's all because one of Québec's most distinguished poets, songwriters and thinkers has been a friend of the winery since its inception. Gilles Vigneault is the singer-songwriter who produced the iconic song, "Mon pays," often considered an unofficial anthem of Québec.

When the owners were debating a name for their winery, Vigneault suggested "l'Orpailleur," (in English, "gold panner") which he argued was what the pioneer winemakers were trying to do.

"Nastashquan" is named for Vigneault's home village, situated on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence.

The stories are great and so we discovered, are the wines. Lucie brought out four bottles for us to taste and presented me with a taste test, which I accidentally passed. The second tasting was a wine fairly new to the winery; I, with great good luck, correctly identified



l'Orpailleur vinyard was founded in 1982, in Dunham, Québec. (All photos by Paul Knowles)

it as a Chardonnay and the number of bottles opened for tasting magically morphed into seven!

And LCBO, pay attention!

All seven were excellent wines, from the basic l'Orpailleur blanc (a blend of Seyval, Vidal and Frontenac) through the Nastashquan, the sparkling brut and the gently flowery Gewurztraminer, a wine variety that can be overpoweringly cloying or beautifully balanced. They managed the latter very nicely.

So the moral of the story is – lobby your MPP for more inter-provincial wine cooperation, but in the meantime make your way to the Eastern Townships to tour the amazing Wine Route and many, many more attractions.

Santé!

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.



l'Orpailleur's grapes are grown in their own vineyards.



The Optimist Club of Downie is Joining with the St. Marys Lion's, the St. Marys Kinsmen, and two Stratford Rotary clubs to host a car, truck and tractor show

September 9th in St. Pauls

COLUMN —

Straight from the Shelves

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Interested in learning how to sew? The Library has you covered! We will be offering a variety of classes for various skill levels as well as drop-in sewing times. All classes are free to attend, and we will provide thread and fabric. Below are the dates and times for classes in September and October.

Sewing Machine Basics

- Thursday, September 21st (2:00pm-3:30pm)

Intermediate Sewing

- Tuesday, October 3rd (5:30pm-7:00pm)

Basics Quilting Class

- Monday, October 16th (5:30pm-7:00pm)

Intermediate Quilting Class

- Monday, October 30th (5:30pm-7:00pm)

Drop-In Sewing Time

- Thursday, September 28th (2:00pm-4:00pm)

- Tuesday, October 10th (5:00pm-7:00pm)

- Monday, October 23rd (2:00pm-4:00pm)

To sign up for any of these classes, please visit tinyurl.com/SMPL-Bookings. All classes are 16+. For more details, please visit our Facebook page.

Up This Week

Friday, Sept. 8th: Crafty Tales (9:30am), Movie in the Park – Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse (Dusk at Cadzow Park)

Saturday, Sept. 9th: Dungeons and Dragons (10:30am), Game Days (1:00pm-4:00pm)

Monday, Sept. 11th: Mahjong! (6:00pm-8:00pm)

Tuesday, Sept. 12th: Open 10:30am-8:00pm

Wednesday, Sept. 13th: EarlyON Play and Read (9:30am), Mahjong Intro (1:00pm-2:00pm, 6:30pm-6:00pm), Mahjong! (2:00pm-4:00pm, 6:30pm-8:00pm)

Thursday, Sept. 14th: Scrabble (6:00pm-8:00pm)

WANTED FOR MIXED CRIBBAGE NIGHT

Folks that want to play Cribbage on a casual basis can come to the Royal Canadian Legion every Tuesday night starting October 3rd and ending in April with a break for Christmas.

Game time is 7:00pm-9:00pm (?)

Skill level is not important as it is just for fun. Let us know by the end of September if you wish to play, or show up the first night.

You are NOT OBLIGATED to play every night.

Cost is \$2 from each player per game night.

You DO NOT have to be a Legion member to play.

Contact Vic Mansfield 519-284-1542 or Don Feeney at donfeeney@quadro.net



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LOOKING BACK



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

Hot mink

25 years ago (1998)

Members of the St. Marys Optimist Club have been busy the past few Saturdays working on the new Youth Centre, located below the post office. A dedicated crew hauled out truckloads of cement block, as a number of walls have been removed to create a more open space. It is hoped that the Youth Centre will open before the end of the year.

After four weeks of renovations this summer, the historic "Green Bridge" on Water Street is again open to the public. The 100-year-old, steel truss bridge officially re-opened during the third week of August, reports Town Operations Manager Bruce Grant. The price tag for renovations was just over \$97,600.

Peter Hughes, 15, won his fourth championship at the Junior club tournament held at the St. Marys Golf Club. Fifty-three golfers took part in the annual event.

50 years ago (1973)

There is always something different to report, especially in a small town. For instance, an observant local citizen brought a partial set of "uppers" into the Journal Argus last Friday. If they fit, they might be yours, all trials welcome.

Grand Bend beach on Labour Day Monday was so hot that would-be bathers actually had the soles of their feet burned from walking on the sand.

A first start has been made on equipping the Cadzow Park Recreation Centre for its new role as a Senior Citizens Centre. A deal for a used piano in A1 condition was completed recently. Len Love tells us the change-over at Cadzow is expected about October 1.

75 years ago (1948)

Repairs to the swing bridge on Huron Street were made by Streets and Highways Committee workmen this week.

The scarcity of bricklayers is holding up the completion of the houses on Coupland Heights as well as the Baptist Tabernacle parsonage and Sunday school hall on Robinson Street.

One thing the mink population just cannot seem to take is intense heat. Last week, despite the frequent replenishment of water supply, many local ranchers lost animals.

The Percy Noels roller skating rink on Elgin Street east had a gala opening on Friday and has been attracting over one hundred skaters nightly ever since. On the opening night, more than 150 people were on the smooth concrete floor.

100 years ago (1923)

During the regular Council meeting, Wm. Barrett, Superintendent of the Cemetery, reported eight internments for the month of August with \$64 collected for grave digging and \$134 collected for the installation of monument foundations.

"I have seen many towns in the past fifty years, but never one of its size with the natural beauty of St. Marys," said Mr. John. D. Wright of Lafayette, Illinois.

While R.E. McIntosh was engaged in threshing on his farm near Motherwell on Saturday evening, the straw stack caught fire and before the separator could be got out, the whole barn caught fire and burned to the ground.

St. Marys United Church
Strawberry Supper

Thursday September 21
St. Marys United Church
5:00 - 6:30 pm

All tickets **\$25** - Takeout Only
Tickets available by calling Shirley Porter
519-284-1496 or Church office
519-284-3016 or from any Church members

Community Liaison Committee

The next Community Liaison Committee Meeting will be held on Friday September 8th at 10am at the St Marys Municipal Operations Center. Members of the public who wish to observe are welcome to attend.

Residents who wish to speak in front of the Committee may submit a detailed request in writing at least 3 days prior to the meeting in writing to the Committee. The request will be considered by the Committee and approved prior to the meeting. Please submit all requests, questions, and concerns for the meeting to kara.terpstra@vcimentos.com by September 6th, 2023.

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| 2) The Telegraph | 7) False |
| 3) "I am." | 8) The Wizard of Oz |
| 4) 10 legs | 9) Wii Sports |
| 5) Red Rose | 10) The Sargasso Sea |

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

THANK YOU

It was a great Teddy Bear Reunion

Special thanks to all my friends and family for all of the help.

Thanks to Jerry Marshall Tent Rentals, RVS Drapery, The Fire Department, The Kinsmen Club for bringing tables, Ulch Transport for the stage.

Thanks for all of the donations from local businesses and private donations. After paying for all of the activities and prizes we have \$1500 to buy bears for the hospital.

Special thanks to Mary Jane Ball for the beautiful quilt.

Thanks to everyone for a great day!

Marlene Forman

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The things she used to say

The many things she did for us

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CELEBRATION



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40th Wedding Anniversary Open House

Larry and Elsie Coulthard

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CELEBRATION OF LIFE

Stiltz

Celebration of Life for Cameron Roy Stiltz at Purple Hill Country Hall. Address is 20903 Purple Hill Road in Thorndale. Date is September 9th from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. and phone number for Purple Hill is 519-461-0538.



www.gardenontario.org/site.php/stmarys

Fall Carnival Show Open Meeting

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11TH AT 7:00 PM

ST. MARYS LEGION HALL

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Topic: Birds and Bugs in the Garden



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