

# St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1186

Thursday, November 23, 2023

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## St. Marys Healthcare Foundation Reaches \$3 Million Campaign Goal



L-R Back: Brian De Groot, Steve Hearn, Scott Graham, Dr. Gatfield, Kelly McDonald-Jaros, Lynanne Mason, Bernice De Decker, Amy Cubberley, Ken McCutcheon  
L-R Front: Cindy Bilyea, Dr. Schiedel, Kim Ross Jones, Melissa Wilson, Erin Reynolds, Linda McFadyen, April Barker. Regrets - Amanda McCurdy, Mike Brine, Brandon Boyd, John Stevens, Pat Craigmile, Andrew Williams

The St. Marys Healthcare Foundation (SMHF) is ecstatic to announce that it has reached its campaign goal of \$3 million for the Here For You Today, Building For Tomorrow capital campaign. These funds are being used to renovate the East and West Wings of the St. Marys Memorial Hospital. Construction on

the East Wing is ongoing and has included the following upgrades;; new ducting and electrical throughout the hospital, new headwalls and patient lifts in all patient rooms, barrier-free washrooms, and a new mechanical system for the isolation room. More than 400 community

Continued on page 2

## Perth County OPP on scene of fatal collision

One person has died as a result of a motor vehicle collision in Perth County last Thursday.

On November 16, 2023 at approximately 4:30 p.m., the Perth County Ontario Provincial Police (OPP), along with Perth County Paramedic Services, and the St. Marys Fire Department, responded to a serious motor vehicle collision on Highway 7/Elginfield Road, between Perth Road 118 and Perth Line 9, in Perth County. Two passenger vehicles had collided.

One person was extricated from one involved vehicle and transported to hospital where they were pronounced deceased. A second person was transported to hospital with non-life threatening injuries. There were no other injuries reported.

The Perth County OPP, with the assistance West Region Traffic Incident Management and Enforcement (TIME) Team, continue to investigate the collision.

The areas surrounding Highway 7 between the two roundabouts at Perth Road 118 and Perth Line 9 remained closed for a number of hours for the protection of emergency responders and to facilitate the investigation.

Updates will be provided as they become available.

Anyone with information regarding this or any incident is asked to call the OPP at 1-888-310-1122 or online at [www.opp.ca/reporting](http://www.opp.ca/reporting). Should you wish to remain anonymous you can call Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 (TIPS) or leave an anonymous online message at [www.P3tips.com](http://www.P3tips.com) where you may be eligible to receive a cash reward of up to \$2,000.

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# COMMUNITY —

## \$3 Million Campaign Goal Reached

Continued from page 1

members, businesses and service clubs have generously donated, contributing to the success of this campaign.

"This is absolutely outstanding and a testament to the incredible leadership of the Foundation and the wonderful support of our community," said Andrew Williams, President and CEO of HPHA.

This capital campaign succeeded because of a community-wide effort. From local children organizing fundraiser lemonade stands, businesses making donations, and municipal councils voting to support on behalf of the community, every contribution mattered.

"I want to thank campaign chair Ken McCutcheon for his leadership throughout this campaign! This has truly been a team effort by all the foundation directors and staff," said Cindy Bilyea, SMHF Board Chair.

With the Foundation reaching its campaign goal, continued fundraising efforts will focus on new and upgraded equipment for the St. Marys Memorial Hospital and community healthcare support. Visit the Foundation's website at [stmaryshealthcare.foundation](http://stmaryshealthcare.foundation) or follow on Facebook at [St.MarysHealthcareFoundation](https://www.facebook.com/StMarysHealthcareFoundation) to learn about all of the supported initiatives, ongoing fundraising efforts, and how you can get involved.

For more information, please contact:

Bernice De Decker, Communications and Fundraising Coordinator  
[bernice@stmaryshealthcare.foundation](mailto:bernice@stmaryshealthcare.foundation) | 519-284-1332 x3450

or Cindy Bilyea, Board Chair  
[cindy@stmaryshealthcare.foundation](mailto:cindy@stmaryshealthcare.foundation) | 519-284-1332 x3450

## Town Hall offering tours on Giving Tuesday

### Food and monetary donations encouraged

The Town of St. Marys is inviting residents to say farewell to the pink walls of our beloved Town Hall.

On November 28 from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m., Town Hall will be open to anyone who wants to explore the building before it undergoes a major interior renovation. The building is currently closed to the public as crews prepare to remodel the entire first floor which includes Council Chambers.

The event is an opportunity to learn more, and view displays about the project. It's also a chance to celebrate GivingTuesday, which falls on November 28 this year. GivingTuesday is a global movement that encourages charitable actions. Those attending the Town Hall event are encouraged

to bring an item for St. Marys Library's food pantry or Friend's Fridge, or a monetary donation for the local food bank.

St. Marys has celebrated GivingTuesday since 2017, when it was proclaimed by Council for the first time. This year's theme is "Won't You Be My Neighbour," which is being promoted to remind community members that they are a part of something bigger.

Those who are interested in joining the movement can visit the GivingTuesday St. Marys page at [www.givingtuesday.ca/partners/givingtuesdaystmarys](http://www.givingtuesday.ca/partners/givingtuesdaystmarys). For more details about GivingTuesday, visit [www.givingtuesday.ca](http://www.givingtuesday.ca).



## Cohen Frayne Memorial Tree of Angels

Colleen and Scott Frayne are so happy to share the news that the Tree of Angels, in memory of their son Cohen, has once again been placed in the lobby of the St. Marys Memorial Hospital.

The concept is the same as in previous years – Come take an angel, buy a gift, leave the gift unwrapped under the angel tree. The gifts will all be taken to the Salvation Army to be distributed to local families at Christmas time. They will be accepting new, unwrapped toys and clothes until December 10th.



On Saturday, November 18, members of the United Church held their craft and bake sale. L-R Jayne Tinney, Mary McArthur, Cindy Jones. Back Row: Doris Richardson, Sue O'Grady, Rev. Robert Lawson & Dave Proudlove. These people helped out to make the day a great success. (Photo credit: Nancy Bickell)

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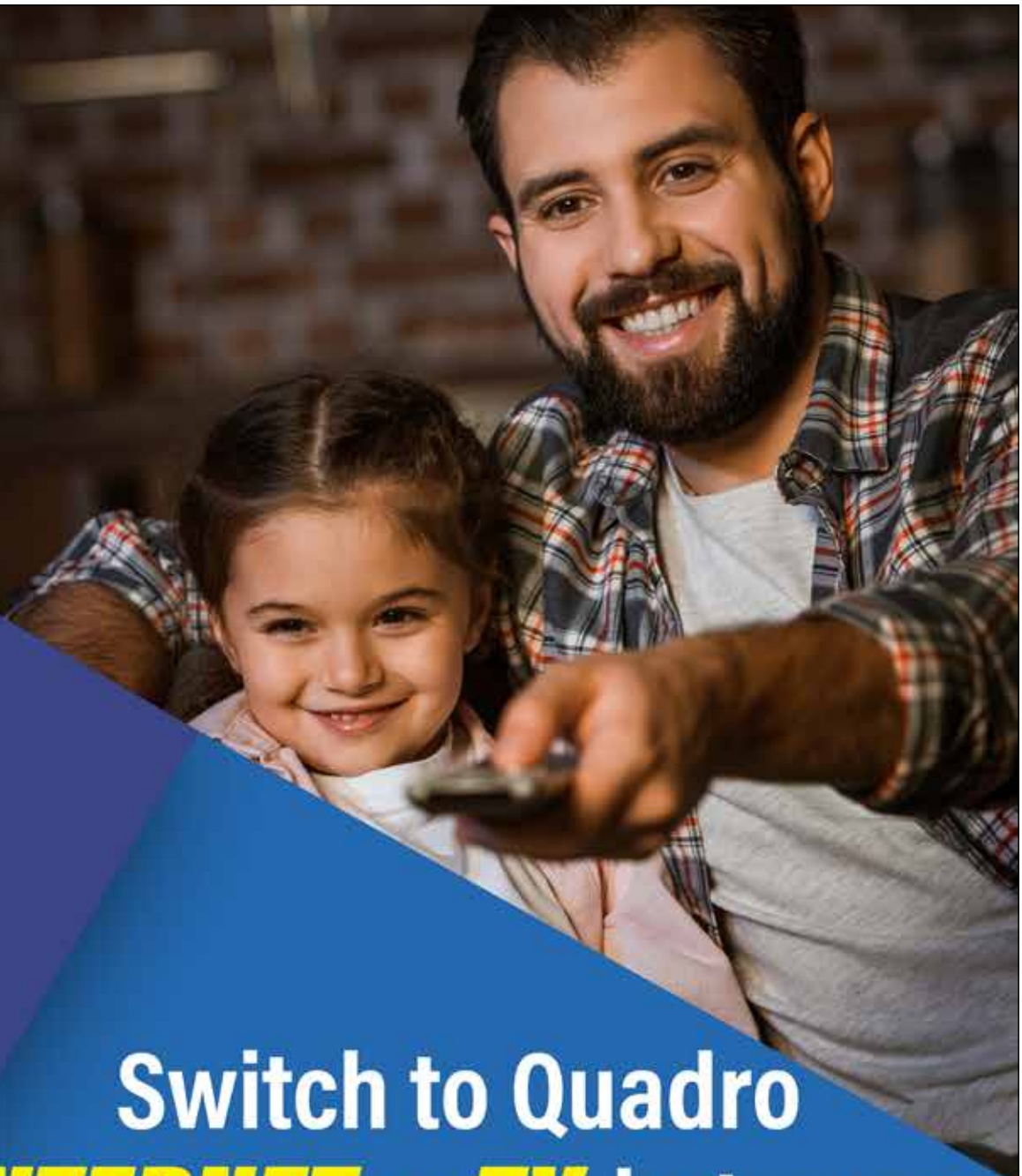
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# COMMUNITY —

## "Love your neighbour?"

As part of Giving Tuesday, the "Love your neighbour?" project has been collecting stories of good deeds done by neighbours in St. Marys and area. They plan to put the stories together into a book.

Here is one of the touching submissions they received:

This story is now 21 years old but I will never forget the kindness of the people in my neighbourhood all those years ago.

I purchased the most rundown house in a beautiful neighbourhood and my two young kids and I moved in the fall of 1999. It had been rented and was in need of serious repairs inside and out, we began with the inside.

Then in 2002 my cousin and I power washed the entire stucco exterior, Thank goodness it was only one story and we got it all finished in record time.

It was time to choose a new colour to restore this unique 1940s home.

We began, primed it all then began the painting. We weren't fast but we were committed to finishing by Labour Day.

Sometimes your world can change in an instant, this was one of those times for sure... I received a diagnosis of Non-Hodgkins Lymphoma following a routine small surgery. My cousin had to return home, the chemo date was set and the house was not finished. It probably seems odd to have even thought of the house but it had been a labour of love and we were so proud of what we'd done.

I crashed, overwhelmed and frightened. A friend suggested a weekend

away and I gratefully accepted.

Here's where the neighbours come in...

When I returned after the weekend it was still dusk and I got out of the car without really paying much attention to my surroundings. I walked around to open the side door and could see something very, very remarkable, this side of my house had been painted. Then I walked around the perimeter and it was all finished. I just stood there and cried.

How did this happen? Who did this? The next morning a neighbour knocked at my door, and told me the story. They knew the paint was in the garage, they knew about my diagnosis, after all neighbours know everything important, thank goodness! Most of all they knew how to be kind and they knew the results that pitching in can produce, I'm sure they had some great moments together.

I've never been so moved, so helped, so grateful... what an incredible neighbourhood and town we all live in!

Thank you again to some wonderful neighbours!

*If you have a story about something your neighbour has done for you and would like to share it to be included in the book of good neighbour stories being prepared as part of Giving Tuesday, you can contact the "Love Your Neighbour? Tell us why" project by email (Celebratestmarys19@gmail.com), visit the Facebook page for Celebrate St. Marys, or pick up a flyer about the project at the St. Marys public library or the Friendship centre.*

### Bravo

We have 5 Bravos this week.

1) Bravo to Melanie from Tim Hortons who went above and beyond her regular duties to help an elderly gentleman with mobility issues. She noticed him struggling to regain his balance after getting up from his chair and went over to lend a hand until he was steady on his feet. This same gentleman was then having problems trying to get on his scooter in the parking lot and again Melanie went outside to help. Bravo to you, Melanie. You are a kind and caring individual.

2) Bravo to Stew Slater, Mary Smith and their "pop-up celebrities" for sharing the history and their stories of our local Amish families. What an interesting & entertaining evening it was. Thanks also to Janice Fread for the "church cookies!"

3) Bravo to the St. Marys Kinsmen. Friday night's Santa Claus Parade ROCKED! A BIG thank you to all who made this event happen... and the weather cooperated nicely.

4) Bravo to the volunteer drivers that deliver the meals for the Friendship Center. They do a great job.

5) Bravo to the Legion and to the Town for the Veterans banner program that gets more comprehensive every year and is a great tribute to those who have fought for our freedoms. One suggestion however, is that it would be nice if the banners could be installed earlier so that they can be seen for more than just two weeks.

\*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 religious fanatic, who felt it was appropriate to put literal trash in my mailbox. No one wants your cruel agenda pushed around our lovely town. Please use your faith to preach love, not hate. And please don't set foot on my property again.

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

### Quote of the Week

**"Early diagnosis is so important because the earlier a mental illness can be detected, diagnosed and treatment can begin, the better off that person can be for the rest of his or her life."**

- Former first lady Rosalynn Carter who passed away on Sunday at the age of 96. Mrs. Carter was a passionate champion on mental health, caregiving and women's rights.

## St. Marys Independent

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## The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS  
OF THE WEEK

Sponsored by:



395 Queen Street West

It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving.

Only by giving are you able to receive more than you already have

Giving Kindness does as much good as receiving it.

If you want to fly, you have to give up the things that weigh you down.

## Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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According to my kids' Christmas lists, they think this parenting gig pays pretty well.

My neighbours are all putting up their Christmas lights but I still have pumpkins rotting on my porch.

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



## LETTER TO THE EDITOR —

# A Message to the Congregation and the Community

As I was planning my return to Saskatoon in late October (for family and personal commitments in November), I watched incredible act of kindness develop day after day. I saw a church family (and wider community) respond to the immediate needs of my daughter-in-law and grandson.

To all who planned, organized, and volunteered to help Young and Lincoln where, when, and how they needed some assistance, I will be eternally grateful. It was amazing to see this plan come together with so many wonderful people. And to

all those unexpected individual acts of kindness by so many individuals, thank you so much.

One of the messages Jason left us last spring read "Do something nice for someone unexpectedly and without explanation". To me, what you recently did (and are still doing) for our family is a living example of Jason's wish.

I know you will keep Young and Lincoln in your thoughts and prayers, just as Marg and I do the same for all of you.

*Bruce Richards*

## 175th Anniversary Guest

*By Gwen Ament*

To help celebrate the 175th Anniversary of St. Marys Presbyterian Church, over two years ago a planning team invited the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada to come as a guest. Little did we know that we would be hosting the first Indigenous person to hold the highest office of the PCC!

On Sunday November 26 The Rev. Mary Fontaine (B.A, M.Div.) will be sharing in our 10:30 am worship. Mary Fontaine is Nehiyaw (Cree) from Mistawasis Nehiywak, Saskatchewan, where she grew up attending the Mistawasis Presbyterian Church with her family.

The relationship between Church and Indigenous peoples has been marked by a troubling history of disrespect and abuse. More than 230 residential schools operated across Canada beginning in the 1880's with The Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan being the last to be closed in only 1996. From the 1880's until 1925 the PCC ran 11 residential schools and following church union in 1925 continued to run two until 1969.

On June 11, 2008 the Prime Minister Stephen Harper issued a public apology on behalf of the Government of Canada to Indigenous Peoples acknowledging Canada's role in the Indian Residential Schools system.

The PCC first formally apologized for its role in running residential schools in 1994. The church renewed its commitment to living out its confession in 2019, when it formally repudiated the Doctrine of Discovery (number 49 of the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to action). St. Marys Presbyterian has

reviewed all 94 Calls to Action some of which involve local government, schools, churches, and individuals, and is endeavouring to learn and grow in right relationship with First Peoples.

We are honoured to welcome The Rev. Mary Fontaine on November 26. She is the Founding Director of Hummingbird Ministries (2005), an Indigenous-led healing and reconciliation ministry, one of eight Indigenous led ministries supported by the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Through healing circles and the performing arts, Hummingbird educates the public and raises the profile of Indigenous people, especially for Indigenous children. Mary writes plays and narrated stories expressed through dance performances by the children. Hummingbird's annual events provide opportunities for reconciliation, bringing many cultures, faiths and classes of people together with Indigenous people. Mary preaches at local churches and special occasions such as the 2019 General Assembly.

Mary discerns the Spirit at work in Indigenous wisdom and spirituality and sees how this can enhance the church she loves in various ways including relationship-building and care of the earth. She hopes in the Indigenous vision (similar to Revelation), that one day, the nations will gather beneath the tree of peace and learn to love and live in harmony with one another, a message that we all need to be working on living into being in these challenging times.

All are welcome to this special worship on November 26 to hear Mary and there will be a potluck following the 10:30 worship.

## STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



### HOLIDAY MAKE & TAKE

Nov. 28 & 29, 8 PM | Library

Join in on the after hours event and make a rustic holiday twine star. Enjoy good company and refreshments while you craft.

[townofstmarys.com/library](http://townofstmarys.com/library) or 519-284-3346

### SHOWER PROGRAM

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### WINTERLIGHTS

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### DROP-IN SEWING TIME

Nov. 29 & Dec. 11, 8 PM | Library

Bring your own project and thread, or grab some from the fabric bag. Use the Library's sewing machines or surger and create a masterpiece from 2 - 4 PM!

[townofstmarys.com/library](http://townofstmarys.com/library) or 519-284-3346

### Contact us

519-284-2340

[communications@town.stmarys.on.ca](mailto:communications@town.stmarys.on.ca)





# ACTION

## HEALTH CARE

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### Senior of the Week



Our senior of the week is Margaret Webster.

Margaret lives at Kingsway Lodge and turned 98 in September. Margaret and her late husband Tom were married for 72 years. They had 4 children together, 7 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. In her spare time Margaret likes writing letters and cross stitching. Margaret and her family moved around a lot as her late husband was a fighter pilot in Squadron 440. Margaret was born in Toronto but has lived in, to name a few, Ottawa, St. Hubert, and Colorado.

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

## COMMUNITY —

### St. Marys Craft Show has over 2,000 attendees



Volunteers George and Joyce Vivian greeted visitors to the St. Marys Craft show and also accepted their donations to the food bank. Staff at the Friendship Centre report that over 2,000 people attended the craft show which offered something for everyone with 60 vendors participating. Funds raised at this annual venture support programs and services of the Friendship Centre and senior services. The Friendship Centre would also like to thank everyone that donated to the local food bank. (Nancy Bickell photo)

### Shorts, sandals and Christmas?



It's not often you decorate for Christmas wearing shorts and sandals. Jay from Lyric Flowers did just that last Wednesday at Tim Hortons hanging garland before the big weekend ahead.

## Weekend Quiz

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- 1) Who is the author of the Hunger Games trilogy?
- 2) How many syllables are there in the word Mississippi?
- 3) What color band identifies a referee in hockey?
- 4) 'Sarcophagus' is another word for what?
- 5) Julius Caesar ruled what empire?
- 6) What U.S. president coined the phrase "war on terror"?
- 7) What is the capital of Uganda?
- 8) A female goat is known as what?
- 9) What is the diameter of the Basketball hoop in inches?
- 10) Who is known as the 'Unabomber'?

This week's answers are found on pg. 35

# Hughes

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# Weekly Specials

## Tuesday - Wing Day

Enjoy our gluten friendly smoked jumbo wings for 50% off.

## Wednesday - Panzerotti Take Out Special

Fried mushrooms, crispy bacon, pepperoni and cheese all inside a delicious fried pizza dough - **\$13.99**

## Thursdays - Burger and Pint Deal

Fresh made burgers and select pints on sale all day.

## Friday - Pan Fried Perch Dinner

Two pieces of perch and our awesome crispy fries served with lemon and citrus aioli - **\$13.99**

## Saturday - Pasta Night

Every Saturday night you can choose from a selection of hand crafted pastas to enjoy - **\$13.99**

## Seasonal "Festive Walking Special"

During the Christmas season we have brought back our "walking special". While enjoying our town's festive light display, stop in for some gourmet hot chocolate and fresh baked cookies.

*Some restrictions apply*

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## ST. MARYS GIVES 2023:

# WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOUR?



*St. Marys Giving Tuesday 2023 is dedicated to Sheila Greason - a true giver and a neighbour to many*

Giving Tuesday is November 28th...Won't You Be My Neighbour! Listed below are the St. Marys Giving Tuesday Partners (as of November 19, 2023 - 7:00 pm). All of these Businesses/Individuals/Charities and Groups will be doing something special on Giving Tuesday to give back to our Community. We encourage you to support this amazing movement and these incredible "neighbours" in our Community. When we all do a little it becomes a lot! Each initiative is unique, for more details follow St. Marys Giving Tuesday and each Partner's social media and go to St. Marys Giving Tuesday on the Giving Tuesday Canada web site - <http://www.givingtuesday.ca> for details of what will be happening on November 28th. St. Marys you continue to make yourself so proud! Better Together Always! Thank you!

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 Campbell's Canteen and Catering  
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 Celebrate St. Marys  
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 East on Jones  
 First Baptist Church  
 Harris-Greig Automotive  
 Hearn's Ice Cream  
 Holy Name of Mary Catholic School  
 Holy Name of Mary Church Social Committee  
 Honey Bee Good  
 Hubbard Pharmacy  
 Hyggeligt Fabrics  
 Jacobs Liquidation  
 Jayne Fuller  
 Kinette Club of St. Marys  
 Kingsway Lodge & Fairhill Residence  
 Lauren Whitney Lifestyles  
 Little Falls Co-op  
 Little Falls Crafters Market  
 Little Falls Public School  
 McKinley Hatchery  
 Meeting of the Streets Garage Get Together  
 Monika H's Artistic Gifts of Kindness

Nail Effects  
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 Snapping Turtle Coffee Roasters  
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With every donation to the Dolly Parton Imagination Library, we are one step closer to ensuring local families have access to quality books for their children now and every month of the year. The St Marys Imagination Library Fund is a tool to make the St Marys Imagination Library self-sustaining over the long run. This means that children from birth to five years of age will get a new book every month, regardless of race, language, economic status, or religion. It's the gift that keeps on giving!

In order for that gift to be received though, our Endowment Fund needs to reach our goal of raising \$300,000.

"The St. Marys Imagination Library Fund is an endowment fund held within the Stratford Perth Community Foundation, a charitable public foundation serving our region. Donations made to the Fund are invested and a portion of the investment income earned will provide a grant to the St. Marys Imagination Library Program every single year, ensuring there will always be books for the children of St. Marys."

So how can you help make that happen? Time to top up your charitable donations for the year!

Do you have room in your budget for another donation? Every charitable donation you make is eligible for Federal non-refundable charitable tax credits come tax time. It pays to give back!

For those looking for gift ideas this holiday season, a Corporate Donation makes for a thoughtful present that stays right here in St Marys for local families. Early literacy is a key step to preparing children for school and has been proven to increase potential success later in life. Your gift not only touches the recipient, but it also extends further to the wider St Marys community as a whole.

You can also consider making your donation stretch further with monthly giving!

If your donation dollars are already tapped out for the year, we ask you to please consider the St Marys Imagination Library for 2024. Literacy affects everyone on all levels. Reading is an essential step before you can move on to other more complex tasks. It really is key to greater understanding, education, and lifelong accomplishments. You can be a part of that.

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# COMMUNITY —

## Firefighter Mike McKone named Firefighter of the Month for November

The St. Marys Fire Department is pleased to announce Mike McKone as its "Firefighter of the Month" for November.

McKone joined the St. Marys Fire Department as a firefighter in 2022. He previously served with the Uniondale Fire Department for 11 years.

When asked about what he loves most about being a volunteer firefighter, Mike said: "Responding to calls for rescue and fire emergencies, taking part in rescue scenarios, and administering medical aid are all in a day's work."

When asked how he became interested in firefighting, Mike responded: "I had been trained in first aid for many years, and decided this would be another way to help people."

He continued: "One of my most memorable moments was my first time driving a fire truck. I still remember the adrenaline rush as if it was yesterday."

Off duty, Mike dedicates his time to his wife Lori, his four children Jonathan, Cara, Alexandria, and Cameron, and his three grandchildren Lucas, Layla, and Posy. Mike is employed at Veterinary Purchasing.

"Mike was selected as Firefighter of the Month for his 12 years of dedicated service to the fire service," said Fire Chief Richard "Andy" Anderson. "He brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the



fire department. He unselfishly volunteers his time and efforts for numerous community and charity events. He is an inspiration for others to follow."

"Mike truly loves being a volunteer firefighter" said Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Edwards. "He is never one to shy away from hard work and is always willing to lend a hand."

## Stuff the Cruiser Toy Drive



On Saturday, November 18, the Stuff the Cruiser Toy Drive for the St. Marys Salvation Army was held at Canadian Tire Store in St. Marys. Everyone has been very generous with large amounts of cash and toy donations. From left, Jennifer Morris, C.F.S.; Gracie Dafoe, Family services worker and Constable Darren Fischer. (Photo credit: Nancy Bickell)

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# ARTS AND CULTURE —

## Behind the Scenes at St. Marys Community Players

Article by: James Giles

Editor: Alice Rixson

St. Marys' visitors often pause to admire the beautiful limestone Town Hall with its large entrances, window arches and stonework. Designed by George Wallace Gouinlock, a prominent and prolific Canadian architect, it was built in 1901.

In addition to being the hub of St. Marys' municipal government and Public Library, the Town Hall is also the home of the St. Marys Community Players (SMCP), a troupe of volunteers who enjoy entertaining theatre goers. A not-for-profit community theatre group established in the 1940s and revived nearly a half century ago, it has evolved into a premier amateur theatre in South Western Ontario.

SMCP stages spring and fall productions and recently ended a successful run of *Opening Night* by Norm Foster, adding it to its list of successful productions that include *Oklahoma!*, *Guys & Dolls*, *Music Man*, *On Golden Pond*, *The Odd Couple*, *The Mouse Trap*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, and *Cabaret*, just to name some.



St. Marys Community Players backstage volunteers Ray Doerksen and Dan Wells

With the performers in the spotlight, the backstage team guarantees that the actors shine. The offstage crew ensures all the moving pieces and parts come together for seamless productions. The efforts required to put on any show are frequently vast-

ly undervalued. Those operating behind the scenes assist with productions and organize everything before and during the show, including props, scenery, lighting and sounds. The behind-the-scene group supports the designers and performers.

St. Marys' local Don Wells and rural resident Ray Doerksen are two SMCP veteran backstage hands responsible for set design, construction and decoration.

Don came on SMCP's scene in 2012. Hailing from Lethbridge, Alberta, he started work as an air traffic controller assistant in Edmonton. Switching careers, he attained his Bachelor of Arts in Drama from the University of Alberta and landed a job with the CBC as a stagehand, then as a television production assistant.

When introduced to pottery making, the experience stimulated his creative juices and, after lessons, Don left the CBC to pursue his artistic career, settling in High River, Alberta for the next 31 years as a sculptor. He and his wife Sherran then retired and moved to St. Marys to be near family.

Don attended the SMCP production of *Blythe Spirit* and was inspired to

join the construction crew and toiled on the set of the Spring musical *Oklahoma!* in 2012. He has been donating his time and efforts ever since. Don designed more than a dozen productions, some complicated, multi-level sets and is the "master carpenter", guiding volunteers in the execution of sets. "I get to be creative, associate with interesting people and gain a real sense of fulfillment," proclaims Don.

Ray is another transplant from the prairies. He relocated from Winnipeg, Manitoba to St. Marys in 2004 and joined SMCP in 2014. Ray's primary role is painting and decorating sets as well as sourcing props. Formal training aside, Ray has a very strong background with and a sense of design. "I love doing period plays and finding furniture and props for specific periods. It also helps that I have a barn full of antiques that often make an appearance on the SMCP stage," he said. For his favourite play, *You Can't Take It With You*, Ray rustled up more than 75 props for the production.

Most audiences would be surprised with the number of *faux* props that appear on stage. Ray believes the purpose of a set is, "...to look good from afar, but it can be far from good." This motto was given to him by the late David Cullen, another valued SMP volunteer, on his first day of painting sets. Although he has had acting roles in the past, Ray admits that he's not one who longs to be front and centre on the stage.

Ray and Don agree that they have a lot of fun together and they always feel great when the play comes together on opening night.

SMCP relies on volunteers and is always pursuing new members. All those interested are welcome. Age and experience don't matter. Just visit the St. Marys Community Players website [stmaryscommunityplayers.ca](http://stmaryscommunityplayers.ca).

Please send comments and propose topics for Arts & Culture articles to [smindependentarts@gmail.com](mailto:smindependentarts@gmail.com).



Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas  
in Downtown St. Marys  
Merchants' Open House

Friday, November 24

Shop Downtown

View the Lights at Milt Dunnell Field

Saturday, November 25

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Victorian Christmas Carollers

Sunday, November 26

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# Santa Claus parade another huge success



Santa Claus came to town on Friday night. Eighty entries in the Kinsmen parade kept the spectators entertained for well over an hour. There was lots of music and lights and the weather ended up perfect on a night when the community came together to get in the festive spirit. (Photo credit Wendy Lamond)



From left to right, Ellie Beech, Charlie Sharp, Jolee Beech, and Della Sharp enjoyed the Santa Claus Parade as it proceeded down Queen Street on Friday night. (Stewart Grant photo)



DCVI students participated in the Santa Claus Parade playing instruments, holding banners, waving with the mascot, and promoting the drama plays happening at school. Principal Scott Richardson pulled the float and the band marched under the direction of Donna Mitchell. (Photo credit: Donna Mitchell)



Looking East on Queen street during the parade on Friday night. There was a great turnout all along the route. This submitted picture captures the many parade goers that gathered downtown.

# Downtown Christmas beautification complete in time for Downtown Merchants' Open House

By Wendy Lamond

The St. Marys BIA has finished up with its holiday decor downtown. The Christmas Working Group of the BIA looked after the wreaths and red ribbons as well as the bridge on Queen Street. The Beautification Working Group was responsible for arranging the pots, flowers, benches, and swag. The street pots on Queen were provided by the Flower Shop and More, Bench décor and pots in front of the old Buck or Two and Baseball Hall of Fame storefront by Green Haven Designs and the Swags on the Buck or Two and Baseball Hall of Fame storefront by Lyric Flowers. The result of all their hard work has made downtown a festive, beautiful place for us all to enjoy.

Regular BIA meetings are now done for the year and will resume in January.

According to Board member Lisa Fewster, some things that the Committee plans to focus on in the new year include marketing, social media presence and being engaged with the members by providing questionnaires to see what can be improved upon and what is working.

In the downtown you will find benches by the old Buck or Two to sit and enjoy coffee or hot chocolate. There is a Selfie Stop at the old Baseball Hall of Fame storefront where you can snap some pictures when you are out Christmas shopping or taking in the Downtown Merchants' Open House this coming weekend.



Pictured from left to right are Shelley Bonnett, Cathie Szmon, Claire Chapple, Chantelle Lynch, and Lisa Fewster trying out the selfie station the BIA created.

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**COMMUNITY —**

# Town of St. Marys opening doors with attainable housing action plan

The Town of St. Marys is addressing the housing crisis head on with a new action plan. Called "Opening Doors," the plan was developed by a housing expert, following consultations with developers, builders, and community members.

The plan aims to tackle St. Marys' shortage of affordable housing options. Like many Canadian communities, the Stonetown has very few rental options available. When vacancies do arise, rents are often higher than what the average earner can afford.

"We have people working good jobs, earning a decent wage, who can't find a house or afford rent in St. Marys," says Mayor Al Strathdee. "That's a problem. Everyone deserves a place to call home."

The Opening Doors Plan seeks to alleviate the issue by adding 200 new rental units to the town's housing stock by 2027, with 30 of these falling into the affordable/attainable hous-

ing category.

The plan identifies four areas that the Town should focus on to achieve its housing goals: policies, programs and incentives, land, and implementation team. Together, these focus areas direct the Town to review its by-laws, processes, grants, and landholdings to ensure they are being used in a way that advances its housing goals.

A copy of the Opening Doors plan is available on the Town website at [www.townofstmarys.com/housing](http://www.townofstmarys.com/housing). Residents can read the plan and view a summarized list of the four focus areas, their associated initiatives and progress to date. Those interested can subscribe to the page to receive an email when new information is added and milestones are reached.

Questions about the plan can be directed to Grant Brouwer, Director of Building and Development at 519-284-2340, ext. 215 or [gbrouwer@town.stmarys.on.ca](mailto:gbrouwer@town.stmarys.on.ca)



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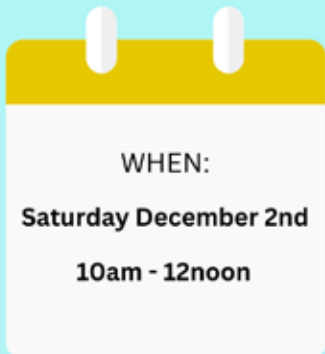
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**November 28th**



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# Perth County Paramedic Awarded OAPC Humanitarian Award

Perth County is pleased to celebrate Primary Care Paramedic Jacqueline Ussher who recently received the 2023 Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs (OAPC) Humanitarian Award.

The Humanitarian Award was introduced in 2012 and "Recognizes an act or acts of unselfish donation of time and/or money by paramedic or emergency medical services professionals to relieve the suffering of humanity. Such activities may include disaster relief (at home or abroad) or the compassionate and altruistic support provided to refugees. It is not an annual award and only presented on merit." (OAPC website)

Jacqueline has shown unwavering commitment and humanitarian service, particularly during the COVID-19 Pandemic. In a time when the world was focused on the global crisis, Jacqueline identified a local issue that was exacerbated due to the pandemic - food security. Recognizing this urgent need, she devoted her time and effort towards the House of Blessing foodbank to ensure continu-

ous supply of food for those in need. Her volunteerism was not driven by recognition or additional compensation, but by her passion and dedication to making a difference in her community.

"On behalf of County Council, we are pleased to congratulate Jacqueline on this tremendous achievement," said Warden Rhonda Ehgoetz. "This award recognizes the many ways our Paramedics go above and beyond each day."

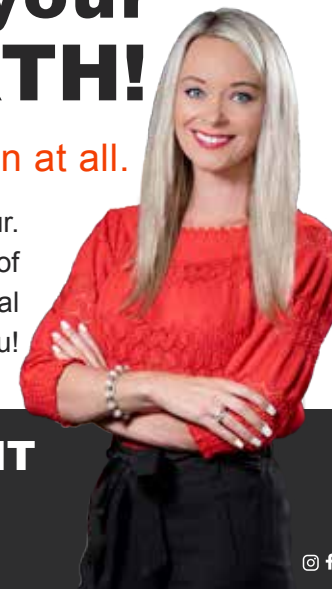
"While it's impossible to quantify the impact of Jacqueline's efforts in pounds of food, it's unquestionable that her work has made a significant difference in the lives of countless individuals," said Mike Adair, Chief of Perth County Paramedic Services. "She is a shining example of the care and compassion our Paramedics show in the community each and every day."

For more information about the OAPC Awards, visit: <https://www.oapc.ca/exceptional-individuals-recognized-outstanding-contributions-paramedicine/>

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# GIVING TUESDAY INITIATIVE



In support of Giving Tuesday, we are collecting items for Winter Care Kits for those in need in our Community and surrounding area. The Perth County Emergency and Outreach Team put together these kits to distribute to individuals who can benefit from them.

**ITEMS WE ARE COLLECTING:**

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ST. MARYS, ONTARIO



## SPORTS —

# DCVI Jr. Girls become WOSSAA Champions

By Spencer Seymour

In 40 years of coaching high school basketball, Tim O'Connor had yet to coach a team that won a WOSSAA Gold Medal. That changed last Wednesday, however, when the "scrappy, hard-working" Junior Girls basketball team from St. Marys DCVI won the WOSSAA title, defeating F.E. Madill 36-18.

O'Connor told the Independent that it was a "special moment" in his coaching career and credited the team for their sky-high compete level.

"It's definitely special," said O'Connor. "I've had great teams and I've coached so many great kids over the years at St. Mike's, DCVI, and Minor Basketball. I have so many great memories from coaching but this is a special one. I think my speech about how proud I am of these girls would have been the same whether we had won or lost because they always work incredibly hard. There hasn't been one moment this season when I felt like they weren't trying."

Coach Ava Bettger also noted what impressed her most about DCVI's Junior Girls was their close-knit bond, a secret sauce to the team's work ethic and success.

"The way that they play together has been really impressive," Bettger said. "I don't know them outside of basketball but the fact that they come here, they're all friends with each other, they're all communicating with each other, and they're all passing to each other, it creates a real sense of team and community. I think that feeling amongst the group is what has impressed me the most and I think it strengthens the team because everyone feels more confident."

To get to the championship game, the Salukis defeated Woodstock Collegiate Institute 31-21, led by a luminescent 16-point performance by Charlotte Richardson, who then added eight points in the Gold Medal clash against Madill.

The final game saw Claudia Laino Salgado lead the team in points with nine, while Libby McCurdy added five and both Marin Chateauvert and Sophie Richardson chipped in four,



The St. Marys DCVI Junior Girls basketball team are your 2023 WOSSAA Champions! Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Charlotte Richardson, Regan Jones, Marin Chateauvert, Naomi DeVries, Holly Black, and Alanna Saville. In the back row, from left, are Ava Bettger, Libby McCurdy, Sophie Richardson, Marieke Van Lierop, Cammie Lobb, Claudia Laino, Chloe White, and Tim O'Connor. (Photo credit: Spencer Seymour)

including a three-pointer by both. Cammie Lobb also hit a three-pointer while Naomi DeVries scored two and Alana Saville connected on one of two free throws.

Chateauvert and DeVries, the team's co-captains, spoke to the Independent after the Gold Medal game and both echoed that the vibes around the team were immaculate.

"Everyone always wanted to win and do the best that they could so it made it really easy for everyone to always try as hard as they could to not let the other team score," Chateauvert said. "Our coaches always pushed us to keep working and to have the mentality of 'if you make a mistake, it's fine, just keep trying.'"

"The environment was good," added DeVries. "Everyone felt that they could always keep trying because they weren't afraid of making a mistake because they knew the rest of the team was supporting them."

The team's leaders elaborated on the team-wide positivity, noting that everyone wanted to keep the spirits of the squad high.

we talked about wanting them to be a team that competes hard, everyone was nodding their head," O'Connor continued. "They wanted to be a team that rolls up their sleeves and challenges every shot. They have a really good battling mentality."

Bettger further discussed the team's defensive skill which she, alongside O'Connor, acknowledged as the team's key to success.

"I think a lot of hard work goes into that defensive consistency that they have and a lot of help defence as well. Coming down the floor, there are going to be times when someone gets by you. It happens to everyone sometimes, but they are able to communicate with each other and help sort themselves out."

O'Connor and Bettger formed a unique complement of styles to one another in the coaches' chairs, with Bettger bringing a calming element and unique perspective to O'Connor's process. Meanwhile, Bettger explained how she has been able to benefit from O'Connor's experience.

"This is my first year coaching so I've learned a lot from Tim. I think he sees a lot more than I do so sitting beside him, hearing what he says during the game, and just learning different drills and practice styles, has all been a great learning experience for me. He's just a great guy and you feel good around him."

Co-captains Chateauvert and DeVries both had nothing but good things to say about their coaches, both of whom were given thank-you notes after the game from the entire team.

"Tim and Ava never really let us give up because they would keep pushing us," DeVries explained. "In one of our games against Stratford, we got down by eight points early on but they didn't give us up and helped us keep pushing."

"They taught us a lot," Chateauvert added. "Obviously, they taught us a lot about basketball but they also taught us a lot about having the mentality to compete and grind and do your best so that you can win against really good teams."

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## SPORTS —

# Sr. Boys volleyball team captures WOSSAA title

By Spencer Seymour

When the lights were brightest and the pressure was turned all the way up, the St. Marys DCVI Senior Boys volleyball team found the consistency that they searched for all season long in their WOSSAA Championship victory last Thursday.

Head Coach Steve Chateauvert said that the team found their stride when the playoffs began, crediting the team for “two really good weeks of volleyball.”

“We played really well in the Huron-Perth Playoffs, avenging a regular season loss to Madill by beating them in three straight sets in the quarter-finals,” Chateauvert told the Independent. “We played St. Mikes in the semis and played really well in the first two sets but ultimately lost. In our WOSSAA qualifying match in Goderich, they had a ‘never-say-die’ attitude and came back from being down two sets to none to win the final three.”

At WOSSAA, the Senior Boys met Woodstock Collegiate Institute in the semi-finals and Chateauvert had glowing reviews after the team beat Woodstock 3-0 with scores of 25-15, 25-20, and 25-16.

“The boys had an air of confidence about themselves the whole day and were determined to play at a high level. Arthur Douglas and RJ Martin were unstoppable at the net and Wil Boreham did a great job not only getting them balls they could hit but



The St. Marys DCVI Senior Boys volleyball team won a Gold Medal at WOSSAA last Thursday, beating Monseigneur Bruyere three sets to one in the final game. Pictured in the front row, from left to right, are Trevor Richardson, Charles Black, Arthur Douglas, RJ Martin, Wil Boreham, and Sebastian Linares. In the back row, from left, are Steve Chateauvert, Ethan Connoly, Colton Hawkins, Oliver Black, Owen Littlejohn, Peyton Lobb, Trevor Aarts, and Cyler Pickering. (Contributed photo)

also just generally leading the team all day.

“Defensively, we were very strong with several good blocks and a determination to not let the ball hit the floor,” Chateauvert continued. “We passed well, which led to a good offence and we served very consistently, which is something that we’ve struggled to do all season.”

Their win over Woodstock put the

Salukis in the final against Monseigneur Bruyere from London. After two back-and-forth sets to open the game with countless lead changes and the two teams splitting a 1-1 tie, St. Marys began pulling away in the third. After a 25-17 score in the Salukis’ favour in the third set, they sealed the WOSSAA Gold with a 25-22 final in the fourth.

Chateauvert explained how the key elements the group had been trying

to maintain consistently throughout the season finally all came together when they needed it most.

“The three things I wanted them to focus on all season were energy and enthusiasm, communication, and being ready for anything. They certainly did that [last week] and the result was a WOSSAA Gold and a trip to OFSAA.”

Chateauvert noted that an important part of the team’s success came from their older players leading the way.

“I think that we had a few veterans on the team that just really wanted this. They really wanted to win and to go to OFSAA and they were able to get the team to buy into what we needed to do to play our best. Our energy and enthusiasm never wavered. We had 13 guys committed to doing what they needed to do to help the team. For some, their role was on the court, for others, it was supporting their teammates by being loud and encouraging. They came together as a team both on and off the court and were rewarded for their commitment to our three goals.”

“Wil Boreham led with his vocal leadership, his determination to win, and a ‘lead-by-example’ effort. Arthur Douglas was important both with his positivity and his play. And RJ Martin brought a calm demeanour in addition to his strong play which helped the guys stay locked in during the tough moments.”

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**SPORTS —**

# St. Marys bowlers earn spots at Provincials



The St. Marys Bowling Lanes' Girls Triples team made up of, from left, Leia Slaney, Alexis Fares, Coach Helen Brockman, and Natalie McKeen, which placed second at Echo Bowl in Brantford. They scored 235 points over average and earned a place in the Provincial Championships which will happen on Sunday, January 21st, 2024, at Hopedale Bowl in Oakville.



The St. Marys Bowling Lanes' Boys team made up of, from left, Landon Ball, Tyler Sims, Nate Sims, and coach Chris Collins also captured a second-place finish with 125 points over average, meaning they will also be competing at Provincials on January 21st at Mike's Lanes in Stratford. The St. Marys Bowling Lanes also thanks Quadro Communications for sponsoring their lineage fees. (Contributed photos)

# Great pickleball season wraps up

As outdoor play winds down at the St. Marys courts, the St. Marys Pickleball Association (SMPA) would like to thank the Town of St. Marys for providing a wonderful facility for both pickleball and tennis. The SMPA continues to grow each year as new players young and old join the association and learn the world's fastest-growing sport.

During this season, club play was held on Monday and Wednesday nights from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.. Players also enjoyed "pick-up play" on Friday evening and Sunday morning. Women's "pick-up play" was on Tuesday and Thursday morning. SMPA is pleased to undertake initiatives to "Grow the Game" in St. Marys and support charitable and community events.

The SMPA would like to extend a special thank you to all of the businesses that sponsored play at the outdoor courts in 2023, a list that includes:

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## Community Liaison Committee

The next Community Liaison Committee Meeting will be held on Friday, December 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](mailto:kara.terpstra@vcimentos.com) by December 6th, 2023.

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## SPORTS —

## Jr. Boys volleyball team earns Silver at WOSSAA

By Spencer Seymour

The St. Marys DCVI Junior Boys volleyball team came away with the Silver Medal at WOSSAA last week.

According to Head Coach Ian Moore, the team had every reason to be proud of themselves after advancing to the Championship game at WOSSAA.

"I'm thrilled with how they did considering how a bunch of them haven't played a lot of volleyball," Moore said. "They have come a long way since September. Their fundamentals, passing, volleying, serving, hitting, and blocking have all improved as has their ability to put all those pieces together in a rally and as a team."

To reach the WOSSAA Final, the Junior Boys first had to go through a strong opponent from Woodstock Collegiate Institute. The Salukis jumped out to a two-set lead, winning the first

two straight 25-15 segments. After a bit of tension caused them to drop the third set 25-21, they rebounded in the fourth, winning 25-23 to punch their ticket to the Gold Medal game.

In the final game, the Salukis ran into a highly potent squad from London's Monseigneur Bruyere whose lineup consisted of two club-affiliated players. Although the Salukis dropped the final game, Moore was happy with the group's all-around performance.

"All of our starters did well with Donovan McGregor going in to give setter Lucan Binn a break," Moore said. "In our games at WOSSAA as a whole, Simon Bishop and Justin Ropp did well on the left side. Rumley Snider and Henry Switzer were good in the middle. Lucas Binning and Donovan McGregor did great in the setter's role and Zach Larmer was strong on the right."

## U12 Snipers battle for two straight road wins

By Spencer Seymour

Neither came easy for the U12 St. Marys Snipers but they managed to scratch and claw their way to two high-scoring victories last weekend.

Head Coach Evan Habermehl told the Independent that, with the team's big home-ice tournament coming up in a matter of weeks, the two games offered an insight into the calibre of play to be expected.

"Both of our games this weekend were hard-fought," said Habermehl. "The girls have had a run against some much tougher competition the last few games. They have had to step up and play at a much more competitive level recently and they've risen to the occasion. This weekend was a big eye-opener to some of the competition that we will be running into at the Snipers Tournament in December."

Beginning on Saturday against Forest Blue, the Snipers found themselves deadlocked at the end of the first period, with both teams finding the back of the net twice. The Snipers regrouped for the second and outscored Forest 7-3 in the second frame en route to a 9-5 victory.

"Both Forest teams have been really good this season and Forest Blue came out strong against us on Satur-

day. The girls have been showing a great amount of grit by continuing to apply pressure in the second half of the game after being tied or down at the end of the first. Our goaltenders Maelle Hachler and Olivia Hendriks also have been really stepping up to keep the girls in the game."

The next day, St. Marys was back on the road, this time in London for the second half of their back-to-back. After an eventful first period that included both teams combining for six goals in five minutes and 21 seconds, the Snipers led 5-3 going into the second. St. Marys took complete control of the game, adding eight goals in the second.

According to Habermehl, the team's ability to step up their game when faced with greater competition is thanks to their work ethic.

"A big part of them rising to the occasion comes down to their effort. I think, after winning so much so decisively at the start of the year, they had to start playing harder to match the effort of their opponents as the other teams started finding their stride. They started seeing the game better and worked harder to make fewer mistakes while focusing on making good passes and getting their stabs right."



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# SPORTS —

## SKC students earn strong results in Orangeville tournament

By Spencer Seymour

Three Stonetown Karate Centre (SKC) students brought an impressive slate of results back home from the Orangeville Martial Arts Championships earlier this month.

Fox Houston, competing in the 11-12-year-old Junior Black Belt Division, grabbed first place in the Creative Weapons competition. Houston also finished second in both Traditional Weapons and Traditional Forms, while also taking third in Open Forms.

In the 35+ Women's Division, Shannon Campbell represented the local karate centre and captured third in Point Fighting.

Sensei Jalyne Lorentz competed in the 15-17 Black Belt Division and had a great day, including three first-place

finishes. Lorentz took the top spot in Traditional Forms, Open Forms, and Creative Weapons. She also finished second in Traditional Weapons.

According to Sensei Jeremy Lorentz, the newly added tournament gave the local students a chance to test themselves against some unfamiliar competition.

"This tournament is new to the WKC Canada tournament circuit," Lorentz noted. "It's a nice addition given its distance from us. It brings new competitors and dojos that we don't always see at more local tournaments, especially as our students are already preparing for next year's Provincial Tryouts. We are very grateful for the organizers and volunteers of these events, making it possible for all students to participate in and experience the sport of karate."



Pictured from left to right are Sensei Jalyne Lorentz, Shannon Campbell, and Fox Houston, three Stonetown Karate Centre students who competed at the Orangeville Martial Arts Championship earlier this month. (Contributed photo)

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## SPORTS —

# Lincs' win back-to-back in explosive weekend

By Spencer Seymour

In the weeks and months to come, the St. Marys Lincolns could very well end up looking back on last weekend as a major turning point in their season after back-to-back wins and a long-awaited offensive outburst.

The Lincolns have now won three straight games and have points in each of their last four games. In their six games this month, the Lincs have a 4-1-1 record and, as of Monday of this week, sat just one point back of the Strathroy Rockets for third in the Western Conference and three points behind the London Nationals and LaSalle Vipers who both entered the week tied for first in the West with 27 points.

One notable roster change was announced just hours before the game on Saturday in Strathroy with the Lincolns deadlining forward Colton Henderson to the Chatham Maroons for forward Cohen Bidgood. The Peterborough native is a 2023 seventh-round pick of the London Knights and, in 19 games with the Maroons, had six goals and 18 points. General Manager Pat Powers was excited for the multi-talented Bidgood to bring a mature yet feisty style to the Lincolns' highly-skilled forward group.

"Cohen is a straight-line, hard-nosed player who plays with maturity beyond his age," said Powers. "He's a physical player who loves to be involved in all facets of the game; between the whistles and after the whistle. He will bring character, grit, and skill."

It wasn't difficult for Bidgood along with the entire Lincolns' lineup to find physicality to engage in on Saturday in Strathroy as the animosity between the two teams boiled hot and fast. Before the first period was done, four players had been ejected for fights, including Ryan Cornfield who took on Matthew Balloch in a fist-filled scrap. Head Coach Jeff Bradley told the Independent that Cornfield's fight in particular lit a spark under the rest of the team that would go on to push them to victory.

"We've been a very cohesive team all year but that was a galvanizing win for us. The last two games we've played against Strathroy, we've accomplished a lot of what we set out to do defensively. To see them go at guys who are

a bit higher on our depth chart, it reassures our guys that we're playing the right way. The other side is seeing a first-year guy like Ryan [Cornfield] getting in his first junior fight and not backing down, it pulls the rest of the team into the fight."

"After Ryan's fight, we didn't stop. We kept driving the net hard. We were hard to play against. Typically, when there is a fight, whoever wins gains momentum but in that case, I think it helped us. The guys in the dressing room were thrilled with what Ryan did and it helped the entire team."

After 40 scoreless minutes, most of which saw play controlled by the Lincolns, the Rockets got a fortuitous bounce as a tennis ball-like-puck bounced into the St. Marys net during a net-front scramble. It seemed to many like yet another example of the Lincs doing so much right only for one thing to unfairly sink them.

"I had that feeling of 'here we go again,'" Bradley admitted. "We didn't have the best second period but I thought our first and third were really good but they get that one flukey goal after our penalty kill does everything right on an unfortunate bounce. But then, for Luca [Spagnolo] to get the tying goal after taking a bad penalty was important and showed he wasn't giving up. After that, the big thing for us was that we weren't satisfied. We just kept going and didn't stop until we had it won."

As noted, after it was Luca Spagnolo who took the penalty on which the Rockets capitalized, just over four minutes later, Spagnolo, playing in his 60th career GOJHL game, potted the game-tying goal. Just under six-and-a-half minutes later, after a continuous push by the determined Lincolns, Captain Adam Barkley whacked a rebound home while on a powerplay to put the Lincs ahead 2-1. Just 80 seconds later, Matt Prendergast made it three straight games with a goal as he buried an insurance marker.

In the third, the newly acquired Bidgood was ejected for goaltender interference, meaning the Lincolns were down to nine forwards for over half of the final frame. Bradley credited the team for their high-octane play even with a full forward line missing for most of the third.

"I thought we played great. It's nice to beat a team who you're battling to

jump ahead of in the standings and I think the last two times we've played them, we've had their number a little bit. We went from 12 forwards down to 10 by the end of the first and then, when Cohen [Bidgood] got kicked out, we were down to three lines. I think it speaks to our depth, our desire to win, and how everyone buys in and knows what they have to do to be successful."

Bradley also acknowledged the stellar performance in between the pipes by Colby Booth-Housego, who made 30 saves in the Lincolns' win.

"That was at least one of Colby's best games so far this season, if not his best. There haven't been a ton of times this year that we needed some big saves to keep us in the game quite like [on Saturday] but when we were down 1-0, they got a mini two-on-one and Colby made a huge stop."

The win over the Rockets felt like a corner had been turned by the team, specifically in the third period, and 24 hours later, any doubt of such a turning point was erased when the Lincolns' offence erupted, scoring five goals in the second period including four in six minutes and 33 seconds en route to an 8-2 win over the St. Thomas Stars.

"To get the scoring we got, we're obviously happy with it," Bradley noted. "We didn't love our first period and their powerplay got the best of our penalty kill a little bit in the third but the circumstances of the game also played a factor in that. But we liked how physically engaged we were and how we were getting bodies to the net. We got a lot of our goals as a result of those aspects."

Once again the bench boss was thrilled with the goaltending the team got, as well as both a first-year player and 20-year-old stepping up in various ways.

"In the first period, when we gave up a few too many quality chances, Colby was there to hold down the fort for us while we sorted ourselves out in front of him. Seeing Blake [Elzinga] get two goals was nice to see, he's sticking with it and always gives us a good effort so we're really happy with him. And, with Adam [Barkley] out, obviously, a key leader is missing and I thought Billy [VanSumeren] stepped up and was a very vocal leader for us."

Blake Elzinga got the only goal of the first period after his line with Bidgood

and Jimmy Schiedel caused chaos in the Stars zone, leading to a battle at the side of the net which Elzinga was able to use to tap home the icebreaker. Elzinga went on to score again in the middle stanza on a breakaway with just 71 seconds left in the period. Members of all four lines got goals in the game for St. Marys.

"We saw the depth play a factor on Saturday and then it came up big for us on Sunday as well. That's the nice thing about having the depth we have because not only does it mean we have plenty of guys who can step up and fill other roles when some guys go down, but it also creates accountability."

Billy VanSumeren also scored twice, both of which came in the second period. Jaden Lee also scored to snap an 11-game goal drought. Interestingly, like Spagnolo the night before, both Lee and VanSumeren were playing their 60th career game in the GOJHL and both found the back of the net as well. The Lincs also got goals from Spagnolo, Owen Voortman, and Ethan Weir.

All but one of the Lincolns' goals came at even-strength, an area that has been one of the team's biggest issues to start the season. Bradley explained how the team's long-awaited offensive outburst was driven by the players demanding more out of themselves collectively.

"I think the turning point was the Hamilton game. Our leadership group had a players-only meeting before the game so they could talk amongst the group and I think ever since that, we've seen things starting to turn the corner. All the credit goes to the players because sometimes, it has to come from inside and it seems to have made a big difference."

Beginning December 1st, the Lincolns will be collecting items for the Salvation Army's holiday drive. The most needed items are toys for kids, tweens, and teens, and toiletries or hygiene products, but non-perishable food items will also be accepted. The Lincs play three games in four nights this week, including a Thursday night trip to Sarnia before hosting the LaSalle Vipers at the PRC on Friday and then visiting the Chatham Maroons on Sunday.

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# SPORTS —

## U11 B Girls overcome short bench to reach tourney finals

By Spencer Seymour

The St. Marys Landscaping U11 B Girls St. Marys Rock didn't have the easiest path to the finals of the Stratford Aces Festival Cup last weekend but nevertheless, the squad battled their way to an appearance in the championship game.

When the tournament began, the team was already down a player due to injury and then, lost another to illness during the tournament. After winning their first game 2-0 over Burlington, they suffered a tough blowout loss to Peterborough. Head Coach Adam Haight noted however that they were resilient in the face of their biggest loss of the season and turned it into fuel for the remainder of the Festival Cup.

"They did a great job at refocusing and going back to the basics of what we've been working on so far this year," Haight told the Independent. "Rather than letting

the one game get them down, the players actually bonded together and played their next games as a cohesive team."

A much tighter, back-and-forth contest against London in their third game of the round-robin narrowly didn't go the Rock's way with St. Marys dropping it 3-2, making their final game against the Huron Heat a must-win. The girls came up with a 1-0 victory, creating a three-way tie and setting up a semi-final rematch against London.

The ever-resilient Rock, with some adjustments made to the defensive coverage of two highly-skilled players, avenged their earlier loss to London, winning 1-0 to get to the finals. Unfortunately, two third-period net-front flurries by Huron helped the Heat squeak out the 2-1 win, but Haight had nothing but high praise for his team's resilient effort throughout the tournament.

"The players have worked hard on a few key skills thus far in the year - breakouts, being first to loose pucks, and getting the puck to the other team's net. All of the coaches and I have also been reinforcing the importance of back-checking throughout the year. This really seemed to kick in during the tournament and the girls shut down a lot of our opponents' attempts to gain our end."

"We are really proud of the players and the effort and heart that they exhibited during the six games over three days," Haight continued. "The team is a very uniform group and had the success they achieved in this tournament as a result of playing as a team and everyone grinding until the final whistle blew. Additionally, our goalie Evelyn McAllister played phenomenally, facing more shots than she's seen so far this year and even put up three shutouts during the tournament."

## Bender, Dingman among Sabrecats at X-Country provincials



The Stratford Sabrecats recently competed at the Athletics Ontario Provincial Championships' Cross-Country races. Two of the team's eight top-25 finishes came from St. Marys runners, including Ezra Bender who finished 11th in the U20 Boys division, and Kaleb Dingman who took 13th in the U16 Boys category.

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COMMUNITY —

# Perth County Launches NEW Winter Severe Weather Guide

Perth County launched a New Winter Severe Weather Guide today. The new booklet is available in both print and digital versions and includes important information on staying safe and informed during winter severe weather.

The County has seen several severe and significant winter weather events in the last couple of years, which has increased the demand for safety information. The guide is packed with helpful information including types to prepare for in severe winter weather, definitions and weather terminology, links on where to find accurate road and weather information, and more!

“Winter weather is fast approaching, and although we are not strangers to this type of weather, the storms are increasing in frequency and intensity,” said Rick Fraser, Perth County’s Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator (CEMC). “The County wants to ensure residents are equipped with the important information and knowledge to stay safe and informed. Last year we saw far too many motorists taking unnecessary risks in dangerous road conditions, placing them-

selves and our emergency services at risk. We want to make sure residents use caution, abide by travel warning and advisories, and stay safe this winter season.”

Copies of the new Winter Severe Weather Guide are available to pick up free of charge at local municipal offices and other locations across the County:

- Perth County Courthouse: 1 Huron Street, Stratford (entrance now via St. Andrew Street)
- Municipality of North Perth: 330 Wallace Avenue North, Listowel
- Township of Perth South: 3191 Road 122, St. Pauls
- Township of Perth East: 25 Mill Street East, Milverton
- Municipality of West Perth: 160 Wellington Street, Mitchell
- Stratford-Perth Archives: 4273 Line 34, Stratford

To view a digital copy or to learn more about Emergency Preparedness in Perth County, visit: [www.perthcounty.ca/emergency](http://www.perthcounty.ca/emergency)

# Tim Hortons Holiday Smile Cookie



3 generations of ladies, Vicki Barber, Amanda Barber and Brooke Concannon, donated a good part of their day decorating holiday smile cookies for the local Tim Hortons in St. Marys.

This was the first year for the Holiday Smile Cookie Campaign which lasted for 5 days. In total, 5,624 holiday smile cookies were sold, generating a profit of \$8,436.00 which will be divided equally between the Tim Hortons Foundation Camps and our local Salvation Army food bank. (Nancy Bickell photo)



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## HISTORY —

## HISTORIC ST. MARYS: Amish Neighbours

By Mary Smith

Last Thursday evening, November 16, at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, about 60 people attended the St. Marys Museum's most recent seminar, *The Amish in Nissouri*. It was led by Stew Slater, who wrote a fascinating two-part article for the *Independent* in July 2023, paying tribute to his Amish neighbours. On Thursday evening, he described the Amish presence in the Uniondale-Wellburn area from the time of the first families' arrival in 1959 to the present. Today, their church community has dissolved. Almost all of the families have sold their property and left to join other communities in the United States or elsewhere in Ontario. Throughout the evening, Stew called on "pop-up" panelists in the audience to share some of their experiences with their Amish neighbours through the years.

The Museum could not have chosen a more appropriate topic for the days leading up to Giving Tuesday. The local theme for this year – being a good neighbour – was emphasized throughout the evening as memories were shared. In the late 1950s, however, some local residents were a bit anxious about changes taking place in their well-established, rural community. Allan Slater, the first pop-up panelist and Stew's father, recalled that when the Amish families began to settle in the area, they bought property from some well-known farm families who were selling out and leaving for one reason or another. That was a source of regret.

Allan related how many rumours spread about the newcomers. For instance, they probably wouldn't send their children to school. That would mean a decline in the number of students and their small country school might have to close. Allan said that as a young man, just graduated from the University of Guelph, he was hired by the township school board as a truant officer and directed to visit the Amish families to tell them that their children had to attend school. It only took a visit to one family to realize that a truant officer wasn't necessary. Of course the Amish planned to send their children to the nearest, one-room school. When rural schools consolidated in the mid-1960s, Amish children attended Wildwood Park Public School for a time as well. Debbie Munro, another pop-up panelist, had gone to elementary



Stew Slater and Amy Cubberley with a 50-year-old map, showing Amish farms in the Uniondale-Wellburn area. The map was a school project created by the first students at Brookside Parochial School after it opened in 1970 for Amish children to attend.

school with Amish classmates. She remembered as school kids, they were all the same – they were treated the same, they played together, and the Amish got into trouble from time to time, the same as all the other students.

However, the Amish community was not as comfortable with the larger consolidated school as they had been with the one-room schools. Their own parochial school, Brookside, opened in the fall of 1970 at the front of the Yoder farm on the Uniondale sideroad, and from then on, Amish families sent their children there. The first teacher was Catherine Troyer (later Stutzman.) She was still elementary school age when she arrived in Nissouri and she attended Union School, S. S. No. 15, for several years. She learned some classroom management techniques from the teacher there, Stew's great-aunt, Nellie Slater. Amish students stopped school after Grade 8 and, at Brookside, there were some boys just about ready to leave. Catherine came up with an inspired way to engage their interest. She had her students work cooperatively to produce a map of the Amish farms in East Nissouri. She had the older boys walk the creeks running through this part of the township so that they could be plotted accurately on the map. The Canadian Pacific Railway line across the northeast corner was also de-

picted. This very detailed 50-year-old map is a treasure, preserved by the Stutzman family. It was on display during the seminar and it is the picture with this week's column.

The Amish in Nissouri decided soon after their arrival that the adults could take on extra work in the community. Some men were skilled carpenters and had construction businesses. John Stutzman

operated a sawmill on his property, and Amanda Yoder had a special work area on the Yoder farm where she processed her neighbours' poultry for their freezers. Sadly, her poultry business was shut down by government regulations. She did high-quality, efficient work but could not meet the industry's refrigeration requirements. Some of the Amish women worked at Ray Sheldon's fruit and vegetable farm while others were childcare providers. Several families through the years were vendors at area Farmers' Markets. Many people in the audience remembered the very popular stall selling fry pies and donuts when the St. Marys market was located in the parking lot off Jones Street. The Mennonite proprietors of Green Haven Bakery acquired the secrets of the fry pie recipe before the Amish families left this area and so it is still possible to purchase these tasty treats locally.

There was interaction with non-

Amish neighbours when Amish families came into St. Marys to shop. They were a common sight at the Hitching Post and in the grocery stores. Although in more recent years, the Amish tended to hire drivers for their shopping expeditions, the town provided them with places to tie up their horses when they came by buggy. Ken Irwin, another pop-up panelist, recalled, as a young boy, accompanying his father whose job was to pick up the full milk cans and deliver them to the local cheese factory. He also acted as a messenger service. The Amish did not have telephones but they could leave a note on top of a milk can for another Amish farm down the line and Mr. Irwin would deliver it. The women also discovered that he had a sweet tooth and would leave a bag with a cookie or two on top of the milk can as well. Ken said that no matter how old he got, his Amish friends always called him "the milkman's son."

A final pop-up panelist, Dwight Bennett, who grew up in St. Marys, has many interests in common with the Amish, such as working with horses and traditional farm equipment. He spent a great deal of time visiting Amish farmers and they became good friends. He and his wife, Mary Lou, have been guests at several Amish weddings and Dwight described them for the seminar. All weddings are special, of course, but Amish weddings are occasions of great celebration. There might be as many as 500 guests who have travelled many miles to be present. Trestle tables are set out and laden with abundant food. Dwight stated that his strongest impression was of the tremendous generosity and support for the young, newly-married couple, guaranteeing that they would have a good start to their married life. Weddings are also a wonderful day-long, social time, for visiting, catching up with relatives, and, especially for the young people, singing together.

All the memories shared last Thursday evening had a nostalgic note because the Amish families had almost all left this area. John Stutzman, in the audience, was waiting for their house to sell and then they too would be on their way to Michigan to join family members already there. As Stew explained, the Amish community had decided it was time to leave several years ago but the pandemic delayed their plans.

Continued on page 25



# HISTORY —

## Amish presence will be missed

Continued from page 24

Farmland in this area has become too expensive to buy more property for adult sons and their families. In June 2023, the Independent ran advertisements for a large auction on Saturday, July 8, at the Graber farm in Zorra Township. Sean Camp of Lucid Musings took a series of remarkable photographs of that event and several of them were shown to end the evening. The Graber brothers were the auctioneers. Dwight described how they had always been fascinated with auctions and had practised the auctioneer chant, selling imaginary items to each other in the barn each evening as they were milking.

For the people at the seminar, there were so many happy memories but not nearly enough time to share them all. The Amish have been good neighbours and most definitely will be missed!



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**COMMUNITY —**

**New Serviceberry Tree at Cadzow**

*By Nancy Vermond*

Responding to a suggestion from the August "Nature Day in Cadzow" organizers and participants, the town of St. Marys recently planted a serviceberry tree on the west side of Cadzow Park. The tree will have white flowers in the spring and berries for the birds in the fall. Shauna Baldwin, of the Nature Day team, her daughter Aubree, and the children in Shauna's care came to the park last week to welcome the tree and decorate it for the winter holidays. Thank you, St. Marys Public Works, for planting this new little tree in the park.



Maria, Evi, Octavia, Shauna Baldwin holding Lincoln, Aubree, and Josie stand with the new serviceberry tree at Cadzow Park. (Photo credit: Nancy Vermond)

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# A Family farm to an International business

By Nancy Abra

Many rural villages were established from the agricultural sector, supplying the farmers' needs and a marketing outlet for their products. As time progressed, many of these generational farms have specialized or diversified to be economically viable.

Pat Elliott began Elliott Grain Limited in 1986 on the farm started by his parents, Bill and Shirley Elliott. This original farm, located on Fairview Road just north of Thorndale, consisted of 100 acres and a beef feed lot. Elliott began his business almost 40 years ago with one grain 15,000-bushel storage bin to currently 700,000-bushel storage units. In 1997, Elliott saw an opportunity and built a dry bean processing plant. Over the years Elliott Grain has expanded and diversified. They currently grow edible beans, corn, and wheat.

In addition to the farm, Pat and his wife Jane created Fieldcrest International Commodities Ltd. in 2004, a marketing and logistics company for edible beans – cranberry, black, white and kidneys grown in this area. Fieldcrest specializes in selling these specialty dry beans processed through their facility for both the domestic and international markets.

This farm operation is an intergen-



Elliott Grain Limited (Photo credit: Nancy Abra)

erational family business. "We are proud to have two of our children building careers in agriculture" Jane Elliott remarked. "Both Shawn and Brooke hold active roles in Elliott Grain Ltd and in Fieldcrest. And they both are growing their independent farm business. Shawn is heavily involved in the cash crop side of our farm businesses. And Brooke has started her career in the marketing

logistics side of Fieldcrest."

Jane said that Brooke, herself, and Bettie Gibbs, who leads the operation and is a marketing specialist at Fieldcrest, recently attended ANUGA, a world food and drink trade show in Germany. "This was a huge trade show with exhibitors from all over the world and thousands of attendees." Jane remarked. "At this trade fair we met with some long-term buyers,

reconnected with previous buyers, and established a few new contacts. Growing our trade business," she added, "is good for the local economy because it provides more crop growing options for our area farmers. The variety of food products exhibited at this event was truly staggering and the food innovation very impressive."

The Elliotts participate in various ways in community projects, events, organizations, and clubs. Pat recently received his Lions Club award for 40 years of membership to the club and community. A few years ago, Jane had a major role in the Splash Pad project for Thorndale because she felt it was important to add recreational and social opportunities for families and now enjoys taking her grandchildren there during the summer. "Community involvement is part of giving back" Jane commented "that we believe is a rewarding and important part of our life. We are grateful to have opportunities to get involved in this great community."

"We have supported 'I Love Thorndale' over the years", Jane stated, "for the same reasons we support other organizations and community functions. All Thorndale volunteer organizations including 'I Love Thorndale' build community, connectedness and add value to living and doing business in Thorndale."

## Sharing and Giving time of the year

By Nancy Abra

It is that time of the year for sharing and giving to others who may be struggling. The 'Community Care Connection' is a group that began in the Thorndale United Church for a way to reach out and help their community and beyond. Last year they collected new and gently used clothing, blankets, non-perishable food, toys and toiletries to help support charities in the area.

Last Saturday the 'Community Care Connection' had a collection event at the Thorndale United Church for people to drop off their donations. Penny Jones who headed this up said, "As a result, we received lots of non-perishable food,

clothing, toys, and games. All of these will go to the St. Marys Food Bank for their Christmas Hamper Program for those in need in St. Marys, Thorndale, and surrounding area. We greatly appreciate the community for their support as we continue to help others."

This year, the 'Community Care Connection' will be partnering with other Thorndale groups and businesses. They will be at the Thorndale Farm Supplies Christmas event on Saturday Dec 9th from 10am to 2pm, collecting women's personal items and baby needs for ANOVA, a women's shelter in London and collecting warm hats and waterproof gloves for Mission Services in London.



A photo of the "Community Care Connection" collection event held on November 18 taken by Penny Jones, organizer of this event.

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# COLUMN —

## HOSTING UKRAINE: A Few Announcements

By VJ Knutson

I'm writing this article with COVID brain (not that it's noticeably different from my usual fog), so forgive the lack of continuity. You see, I've forgotten all the things I was planning to write about, and like that very important task that is forgotten en route, I'll probably remember after I hit send. Anyway...

I hear, through the Ukrainian grapevine, that the Santa Clause parade was a big success. Sonia Waind, our ESL volunteer, and her husband extended an invite to our new families to watch the parade from their front porch, and by all accounts, many came to partake in the goodies and enjoy the sights. I couldn't resist sharing this photo of baby Tommy with parents, Mariia and Bogdan, enjoying his first Christmas parade.



Mark your calendars for December 8th. That's the evening that Alina Shyshkivska and her Cirque friends will be performing at DCVI in support of Alina's Cirque de Soleil dream. Tickets are \$25 per person, at the door, and this family friendly show starts at 7:00 pm. I know we took our three granddaughters to watch a performance last year, and they were spellbound.

As Christmas fast approaches, I would like to remind my readers that scammers are working extra hard to get

your cash, and they are good at what they do. My best advice is to hang up, call your bank, or whatever business

they say they are representing, and do not give out any personal information. Any service provider already has

your account number, address, and financial details. Be careful out there.

This time of year can be difficult for many. Financial constraints, loss, loneliness, among other stressors can play havoc with our mental health. Not everyone, in the midst of Christmas glitter, is feeling the sparkle. In times like this, it is important to reach out to others. If you are not comfortable with talking to a friend, Ontario offers online help. Connex Ontario (connextontario.ca) is a free and confidential service that can help connect you with the services you need, provide strategies to get through the season, and offer other solutions.

It is easy to connect, and services are offered in many different languages. Call, text, or email through the website. To speak to someone in a language other than English or French, call 1-866-531-2600, identify your language, and a three-way call will be set up with an interpreter. (Note: Ukrainian is not yet offered, but a Russian speaking individual is available).

Be kind out there, everyone, and stay healthy (says the woman with COVID).

Till next time.

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

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COLUMN —

# FROM THE GARDEN: The Roles of Mother Nature



**By Nancy Abra**

There are many of us who refer to 'Mother Nature' as an entity or physical being. She is often depicted as a woman who holds various roles and powers. She is a gardener who nurtures trees, flowers, fruits, and vegetables and provides them with the elements to grow. Mother Nature could be considered an educator who teaches the animals, birds, and insects how to adapt, survive and evolve in their habitats. She also teaches us how to respect, protect and learn from the environment.

Mother Nature may also be considered an artist. The stunning colours of an early morning sunrise, a sunset at dusk or even a rainbow are

created from her elaborate paint box. And her artistic talents are expressed as she sculpts the mountains, valleys, and rivers into magnificent landscapes. All these suggestions of Mother Nature's roles or occupations ring true for how many of us look at the wonderments of nature. But could Mother Nature be also a mathematician?

The 'Fibonacci' sequence is one of the most famous formulas in mathematics. Each number in the sequence is the sum of the two numbers that precedes it. It starts 0,1,1,2,3,5,8,13 and progresses from there. This sequence is a simple numbering system pattern, and it can be found in many forms in nature. Math has never been one of my strong points and I am amazed how Mother Nature has mastered the Fibonacci sequence in a way to optimize the growth, efficiency, and the beauty of her creations.

The Fibonacci sequence pattern can be found in the arrangement of leaves on a

stem or branch which allows the leaves to attain the sunlight they need. The petals on flowers also follows this sequence. For instance, the lily has three petals, a buttercup has five petals, the chicory has twenty-one petals. Each petal on these flowers has a placement in a circular design for the best possible exposure to light, pollinators, and other factors.

This sequence pattern can be found in the seed pods on a pinecone. Each cone consists of a pair of spirals with each one spiralling upward in opposite directions. This spiral pattern can also be found on pineapples, cauliflowers, and broccoli. This Fibonacci sequence pattern can also be found in the curvature of shells of mollusks and other animals.

Another excellent example of Mother Nature's math skills is the sunflower. The petals are arranged in a particular sequence and the centre of the sunflower is also another form of this sequenced pattern. It forms two spirals of



A sunflower from Nancy Abra's garden (Photo credit: Nancy Abra)

patterns – one set originating from the centre in a clockwise direction and the other in a counterclockwise direction. This pattern allows the seeds to utilize the optimal space and protection for germina-

tion and dispersal.

Whether Mother Nature is using her paintbox, directing the creatures, or teaching us a lesson, you have to admit she dominates many roles in nature and is pretty amazing.

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Solutions on page 31

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

## Word List

- Worldwide
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Inspiring
- Unite
- Generosity
- Community
- Make a difference
- Fundraising
- November
- Power of people
- Give time
- Smile

## THE WEEK AHEAD

**SPONSORED BY:** **McDonald's St. Marys**  
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- PRC & Friendship Centre events - See the Stonetown Crier on Page 5
- St. Marys Public Library events - See Page 33
- Friday, November 24**
- St. Marys Merchants' Open House
- Stonetown Arts art show & sale at the Studio (2nd Floor, The Flower Shop) - 10 am to 5 pm
- Royal Canadian Legion hot dog/ sausage lunch at Noon
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 pm
- St. Marys Lincolns vs LaSalle Vipers at the PRC - 7:30 pm
- Saturday, November 25**
- St. Marys Merchants' Open House
- Music for our Neighbours at St. James Anglican Church - 9 am to Noon
- In conjunction with church bazaar and sale
- Stonetown Arts art show & sale at the Studio - 10 am to 5 pm
- Royal Canadian Legion Craft & Gift Market - 10 am to 3 pm
- Craft and Vendor Market at Stratford District Secondary School - 10 am to 3 pm
- Kingsway Lodge vendor sale at Fairhill Lounge - 10 am to 3 pm
- Nail Effects 25th year celebration - 11 am to 2 pm
- A.N.A.F. Men's Dart league - 12:45
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 pm
- Harmony of Friends concert at First Baptist Church - 7:30 pm
- Sunday, November 26**
- St. Marys Merchants' Open House
- Horsedrawn carriage rides - Noon to 4 pm
- Stonetown Arts art show & sale at the Studio - Noon to 4 pm
- St. Marys Lincolns vs Chatham Maroons at Chatham Memorial Arena - 7 pm
- Tuesday, November 28**
- Giving Tuesday
- Wednesday, November 29**
- St. Marys Lincolns vs London Nationals at Western Fair Sports Centre - 7 pm



## The Riddle Kid OF THE WEEK

Why does a banana wear sunscreen?



So it doesn't peel!

**Jalyn Arn (6 - almost 7)**

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

## TONS OF FUN FOR KIDS EVERY WEEK!

## PET OF THE WEEK

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



Sally is a 13 year old Jack Russel, Miniature Greyhound mix. Her proud owners are the Mallalieu family. Sal enjoys her nightly walkies, car rides, treats, and likes to sit on her own chair at the window. Sal loves to meet people when she goes out and is very affectionate. She is always welcoming when it comes to being petted.



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

Fall can be a beautiful, fresh time to walk your pet!

Here are some tips to help keep you and your furry friend safe

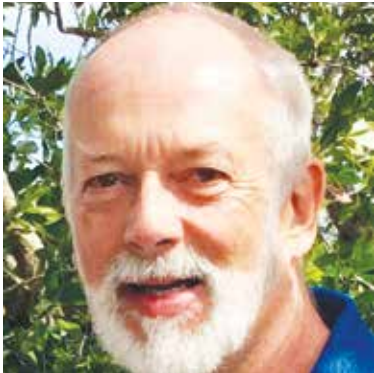
- \*Steer clear of leaf piles that may contain ticks
- \*Make sure that you and your pet wear reflective clothing after dusk so that you are clearly visible
- \*Do not allow your pet to eat wild mushrooms or any other compost
- \*Beware of slippery walkways

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## COLUMN —

## OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: When a travel plan gets even better



By Paul Knowles

If you remember the TV show, "The A-Team", you will remember the phrase, "I love it when a plan comes together". Well, you know what's even better? When a plan turns out to be an even better plan than you planned!

Read it again. Eventually, that will make sense.

And that is what has happened with the trip I am leading to Wales and the Cotswolds next May.

Some background: last year, I collaborated with the excellent folks at Stonetown Travel to plan and lead a coach tour of southern England, which we dubbed "Canterbury to Cornwall". I had no idea how it would go, but, in my obviously biased opinion, it was great. A great tour, great destinations and, most importantly, a great group of fellow travellers. It was so enjoyable that I agreed to put together another itinerary and lead a group to another part of the British Isles in 2024.

I only want to take that on

if we're visiting places I am very familiar with. I think I owe it to my group to have a good idea of our destinations. I knew I wanted to go to the Cotswolds, that beautiful part of England often called "The Heart of England". A visit there must include Stratford, Coventry, and Oxford, all without spending a lot of time on the bus. And yes, I have been to the district several times and loved every minute of it.

But as I looked at a map of the U.K., I realized that we could include a few days in Wales, a destination often overlooked, as part of this tour. And yes, I have been to Wales but at the time I planned the trip, it had been about 25 years since my last visit there. I recalled enough to choose the charming town of Abergavenny as our headquarters for a three-night stay.

And that's where the plan turned out to be even better than I had planned. Because in September of this year, I got a call from a website publisher. "Would you like to go to Wales next week to write about the Abergavenny Food Festival?" I would have to leave in a week.

Really? I jumped at the chance, thanked the nice people at [vacay.ca](http://vacay.ca) and packed my carry-on.

The time in Wales was amazing and I got lots of material for travel articles but at least as importantly, I got to visit the very town and surround-

ing area that I had already planned for our Wales and the Cotswolds trip. And that opportunity meant I could connect, personally, with people in Wales and arrange unique experiences that would never have been possible if I were planning the trip based on decades-old memories. I got to visit the hotel we will be staying at. I met the owner of a vineyard where we are going to have a tasting of wine made in Wales – great stuff (I did check it out, assiduously), but never available in Canada. I talked to the folks at historic and scenic sites and was able to arrange some unique experiences for our group.

My time in Wales was so good that when I returned home, I re-jigged the tour itinerary to add one day in this fascinating country. My new plan is definitely better than what I had planned!

Of course, we will also be visiting amazing sites in England. We'll be staying in Stratford-upon-Avon for a few days which will include attending a play at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and visits to all sorts of sites connected to the great playwright himself.

I can't wait to re-visit Coventry Cathedral, one of the most emotionally powerful places in the world. The story of the bombing of Coventry, including the cathedral; the decision to maintain the ruins as a memorial; and the construction of the new ca-



The High Street in Abergavenny, where the group will stay for four nights. (All photos by Paul Knowles)

thedral right next door is a powerful narrative, full of poignant details that I will keep to myself until we are at the site.

We'll also stay in Chipping Campden, a beautiful Cotswold town, and in Oxford, where there is so much to experience – including music in one of the historic churches.

I was especially excited to learn that a new visitor spot has opened near Oxford – Bletchley Park, famed site of the top-secret decoding operation that cracked the Nazi's communications code, the Enigma Code. This has been made famous in historical accounts, books, and movies. I jumped at the chance for our group to pay a visit.

I am very grateful to the people at Stonetown Travel, including Stewart Grant,

that very busy guy who owns the travel agencies and also this newspaper and its sister publications, for offering me the chance to put my travel experience into practice by introducing others to some of the most interesting parts of the world.

I am also grateful for the sheer coincidence that took me to Wales in September, turning my plan into a better plan than I had planned!

For more information, contact me or Louise Bell at [louise@stonetowntravel.com](mailto:louise@stonetowntravel.com).

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



Music abounds in Wales; these musicians were entertaining outside a pub... which also abounds.

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# COMMUNITY —

## Golden Penguin Awards



The Golden Penguin Awards are given out annually by the Front Porch Show to individuals or groups that have shown a sustainable effort in bringing the community together.

This year's recipients are Marlene Forman for her

work in creating the Teddy Bears' Reunion year after year and The St. Marys Independent, represented by Wendy Lamond and Stewart Grant for publishing a newspaper that keeps our community well-informed and united.

**SERGIO'S SLOW ROAST PORK LOIN**  
**DINNER WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS FUNDRAISER**  
**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD**  
**5:00-6:30PM**  
**\$25**  
**EAT IN OR TAKE OUT**  
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**COLUMN —****Straight from the Shelves**

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

Thursday, Nov. 23rd, 2023

The festive season is upon us! Get in the spirit of the season with our next After Hours at the Library event: a Holiday Make and Take. Join us on Tuesday, November 28th or Wednesday, November 29th at 8:00pm to make a beautiful rustic twine star. Enjoy good company and refreshments while you craft. This is an 18+ event and there is a recommended donation of \$20. Sign up here: [tinyurl.com/SMPL-Bookings](http://tinyurl.com/SMPL-Bookings).

**This Week's Recommendation**

As the temperature gets colder, many of us can be found dreaming of warmer climes and sunnier destinations. How about paying a visit to the Happy Trails campground in Normal, Kentucky? Just be warned that the park has seen better days, and a dead body was just found in the lake. Will the park's new owner, Mae West, be able to overcome her recent circumstances, return Happy Trails to its former glory, and stay out of prison? Find out in Tonya Kappes' "Beaches, Bungalows & Burglaries", book one in the Camper & Criminals series. Find this title in eAudiobook form on Libby.

**Up This Week**

Friday, Nov. 24th: Open 10:30am-5:00pm

Saturday, Nov. 25th: Open 10:00am-4:00pm

Monday, Nov. 27th: Open 10:30am-8:00pm

Tuesday, Nov. 28th: Book Club\* (11:00am), Euchre\* (1:00pm-3:00pm), Festive Make and Take (8:00pm)

Wednesday, Nov. 29th: EarlyON Play and Read (9:30am), Mahjong Intro (1:00pm-2:00pm, 6:00pm-6:30pm), Mahjong! (2:00pm-4:00pm, 6:30pm-8:00pm)

Thursday, Nov. 30th: Euchre\* (6:00pm-8:00pm), Scrabble (6:00pm-8:00pm)

\*Registration required.

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BACK**

BY AMY CUBBERLEY

**A surprising choice****25 years ago (1998)**

In the latest paper drive on Saturday, the St. Marys Boy Scouts collected over 51,000 lbs. of paper. It all goes to a company in Aylmer and is made into household insulation.

The historic significance of having a third female member elected to Council last Tuesday was noted by Mayor Jamie Hahn. Sandy Tays, 26, was the person chosen among the five candidates in a secret ballot by councillors and the Mayor to replace former Councillor Dave Cunningham who recently moved from St. Marys for new employment.

Another St. Marys girl has taken her talents to the London Devilettes hockey association. Morgan Marziali, 11, is off to a successful start in her first season with the Devilettes.

**50 years ago (1973)**

The drag-line operation at the Water Street bridge over Trout Creek is being carried out by Logan Construction to remove silt and clay buildup over the concrete embedded sewer pipe which crosses the bottom of the creek.

Work is continuing on an 83-mile stretch of pipeline designed to carry natural gas and heating oil from Sarnia to Streetsville. Construction has reached a point just south of Embro. The \$8 million project is being carried out by Majestic Construction, Toronto.

Jules De Brabandere, Alex Innes, and Arnold Schabel were elected delegates to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture Annual Conference in Oshawa.

**75 years ago (1948)**

The new stage curtains ordered some time ago from the A.H. Lofft Co have been installed in the Town Hall auditorium. This new curtain is of heavy red material.

One hunting party traveling through town on Tuesday has bagged a very large bear, and another party had two similar bears and some deer carcasses strapped to their cars.

Several rods of hydro line were knocked down along the Mitchell Road by the falling of a large tree during the high winds on Wednesday morning.

**100 years ago (1923)**

The underwriters are making an increase in farm fire insurance rates from 50 to 66 ½ percent, the companies stating they will either have to have a much higher rate for this class or else quit writing it.

The almost total absence of nuts of all kinds on the forest trees this year is leading weather prophets to predict a mild and open winter.

So far, no action has been taken this fall to get the curling club organized for the coming season. If a curling club is not organized this season, it will be as far as is known the first time in forty years that the local curlers did not throw the granites.



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### Wanted

\$ Cash Paid \$ for your RECORDS and LPs. Jazz, Blues, Rock, Pop, Fold, Soundtracks, and more. Selectively buying CDs, Cassettes, Turntables, and Stereo Equipment. For more information: Diamond Dogs Music 114 Ontario St. Stratford/ 226-972-5750

### Wanted

A working camcorder that will play Hi-8 digital tapes. Phone 519-284-3774

### Wanted

Looking for a self motivated, cheerful, positive individual with high values to work with a spiritually-minded man, working through autism. Flexible hours, some weekends and/or possibly overnight. Willingness to learn and sense of humor would be helpful. Please call 519-871-7765

### Wanted to buy

All collectibles including sports cards, beanie babies, Funko pops and stamps. Highest prices paid. Free appraisals. Call or text Stan anytime 519-868-3814.

### Snow Removal

Help! Snow is coming! We are a mature couple looking for an individual to shovel our single car driveway and a small area walkway in the Southvale Rd area of St. Marys. Please call 519-284-3754.

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Two-bedroom apartment for rent, backing onto the river. Bright, cheerful, clean, and modern. \$2000/month plus hydro. Free wifi. Call or text Mark at 519 998 1337. Photos at <https://bit.ly/Apt-in-St-Marys>

## QUIZ ANSWERS

- |                         |                   |                   |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1) Suzanne Collins      | Empire            | 6) George W. Bush |
| 2) 4                    | 7) Kampala        |                   |
| 3) Orange bands         | 8) Doe or Nanny   |                   |
| 4) Casket, Coffin, Tomb | 9) 18 inches      |                   |
| 5) The Roman            | 10) Ted Kaczynski |                   |

## SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

## IN MEMORIAM

*Pearson*

In loving memory of my wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother Reta, who passed away

11 years ago on Nov. 29, 2012

**Mom**

If remembering brings you closer

Then you never went away

For the thoughts of you are with us

Each and every day.

There will always be a heartache

And many a silent tear

But precious are the memories

Of the days when you were here.

**With love, from Gord, Nancy, Cindy, Doug  
and families**

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## ANNOUNCEMENT

### Happy 50th Wedding Anniversary



### Keith & Joyce Thomson November 23, 2023

**Congratulations Mom & Dad!  
You two inspire us every day**

*With love Bear, Jacqui, Ali, Rich,  
Katie and Ainsley*

## OBITUARY

*Hodgson*

**Howard Stanley Hodgson  
1932- 2023**



*It is with deepest sorrow we say goodbye to Howard Hodgson as he joins his wife of 56 years, Eileen (2009). He is survived by his children Margaret Kapp (Luitje), Sandra Richardson (Bill), Deborah Oliver (Frank), Stanley Hodgson, and Bill Hodgson (Heather). He is survived by a number of Grandchildren and*

*Great-Grandchildren. Predeceased by Great-Grandson Austin Beemer. Also predeceased by his parents William Sherwood Hodgson and Sarah Ann Barkley, sister Ruth, brothers David, Roy, Ken, and Ray and sister Edith. Family and friends are invited to the ST. MARYS UNITED CHURCH, 85 Church St. St. Marys, on Saturday, November 25, 2023 for visitation from 1 pm until the time of the funeral service at 2 pm with Gary Mallalieu officiating. Burial in St. Marys Cemetery. Memorial Donations may be made to Golden Years Wildwood Care Centre. Online condolences at [www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca](http://www.hodgesfuneralhome.ca).*

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