

# St. Marys Independent

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Issue #1197

Thursday, February 8, 2024

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## St. Marys' Rae family to appear on Family Feud Canada



The Rae family from St. Marys will appear in an episode of Family Feud Canada airing Feb. 12. Pictured from left are host Gerry Dee, Natasha Banks, Don Rae, Kathy Rae, Brent Rae and Shauna Rae. Photo courtesy of CBC

By Wendy Lamond

Last March, almost one year ago, the Independent published a story about a local family and their hopes to compete on the CBC game show, Family Feud Canada.

The story shed light on the application process, the family's interview with producers and what was involved in the overall selection process. As luck would have it, the Rae family impressed the producers so much they got selected to be contestants on the show.

Natasha Banks, the St. Marys woman who originally had the idea to apply to compete on the show, recruited her dad, Don Rae, mom Kathy Rae,

brother Brent Rae and sister-in-law Shauna Rae to round out the Rae team.

Banks said she always loved the show and spent a lot of time watching it while on maternity leave last year. She thought it would be something fun for her family to do, so she put in an application form.

After they completed the subsequent interview with one of the producers, it was just a waiting game to hear if they were selected. The family received an email from the game show saying they would need to be on standby for certain dates and then they received another email the

*Continued on page 2*

## Martin, Key, Stephenson, Heisler, Godfrey, Birnie to be inducted into Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum

By St. Marys Independent Staff

The Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum in St. Marys announced six new inductees this week including former Toronto Blue Jays allstars Russell Martin and Jimmy Key, and trailblazing coach Ashley Stephenson.

National team pitching legend Rod Heisler, one-time Blue Jays president and CEO Paul Godfrey, who played a significant role in bringing Major League Baseball to Toronto, and longtime Toronto Leaside baseball executive Howard Birnie will also be inducted in a ceremony at the hall of fame grounds in St. Marys June 15.

"Each member of this year's class has had a tremendous impact on the game of baseball in Canada," said chair of the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame's board of directors Jeremy Diamond in a press release. "We look forward to celebrating their outstanding careers in St. Marys this June."

### Russell Martin

Martin was selected in the 17th round of the 2002 MLB draft by the Los Angeles Dodgers. After a strong rookie season with the Dodgers in 2006, he hit .293 with 19 home runs and a career-best 87 RBIs in his sophomore campaign and was honoured with his first All-Star Game selection.

He followed that up with another All-Star season in 2008 and played two more seasons with the Dodgers before signing with the New York Yankees and belting a combined 39 home runs in 2011 and 2012. On Nov. 30, 2012, he signed with the Pittsburgh Pirates and proceeded to earn two consecutive Wilson Defensive Player of the Year hon-

*Continued on page 10*

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# COMMUNITY

## St. Marys' Rae family to appear on Family Feud Canada

Continued from page 1

night before to let them know they would be heading to CBC's studios in Toronto.

Once they arrived in Toronto, the family did a trial run of the show to understand how the game works and test their rapport with host Gerry Dee, after which the producers an-

nounced which families would be playing against each other.

"We were excited but also knew it wasn't a guarantee we would be picked even if we went to Toronto as they always have extra families there depending on how the games play out," Banks said, noting the whole experience was "super fun."

She said there is a lot of behind-the-

scenes work that goes into each episode such as wardrobe, preparing banter, family poses and a team slogan, and so much more.

The family can't say too much about the episode before it airs but noted Dee is very funny and nice in person, and they enjoyed chatting with him about teaching and sports.

"For me, any time I get to spend with

my family and make new memories is very special to me," Kathy Rae said. "It is something we will never forget."

She also said that she will never watch the game again without thinking about everything that goes on behind the scenes.

The Rae Family's episode will air on CBC Feb. 12 at 7:30 p.m.

## Deputy fire chief Kevin Edwards retires from St. Marys department after 23 years

By Wendy Lamond

St. Marys deputy fire chief Kevin Edwards has made the difficult decision to retire from the St. Marys Fire Department after 23 years of service.

Edwards joined the department in January 2001. He started out as a firefighter and because of his hard work, dedication and interest in rising through the ranks, he was promoted to captain in 2014 and became deputy fire chief in 2022.

"After a rewarding 23 years, I have gained a lifelong bond with many past and present members of the St. Marys Fire Department," Edwards said. "It has been an honour to give back to my community. The opportunities that have been given to me over the years have changed my life for the better."

Over the span of his 23 years with the department, Edwards responded to 2,200 emergencies. He was also recognized with the 20-year Fire Services Exemplary Service Medal for members of Canadian fire services who had served for 20 years, ten years of which have been served in the performance of duties involving potential risks.

"On behalf of myself and council, I would like to thank Kevin for his lengthy service with the St. Marys Fire Department," St. Marys Mayor Al Strathdee said. "Kevin's familiarity within and of the community is a

testament to his dedication."

Edwards participated in many events during his time with the department including Pig Tail Supper fundraisers, the always-popular Firemen's Breakfast, the scrap town-wide clean up, pork-chop dinners and the newest event, the car wash. He was always there to help with these projects and anywhere else he could.

Edwards has worked at Shur-Gain for many years and is on call there as well. Edwards said being available 24 hours a day, seven days a week for two places was taking its toll and is one of the reasons he decided to retire.

He said he will miss the guys on the department but just decided it was time.

"The St. Marys Fire Department wishes to acknowledge the retirement of deputy fire chief Kevin Edwards," St. Marys Fire Chief Richard Anderson said. "Kevin's departure is certainly a loss to the town as he has proudly served our community with professionalism, proficiency and determination over the last 23 years."

There will be an official ceremony in the coming months to show appreciation for Edwards' contributions with town officials, the public and members of the fire department.

Former captain Phil West has been promoted to the rank of deputy fire chief to replace Edwards.



St. Marys deputy fire chief Kevin Edwards recently announced his retirement after 23 years serving the St. Marys Fire Department and the community. Submitted photo

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# COMMUNITY

## Do you know someone who is "Strong As Stone"?

By St. Marys Independent Staff

Do you know someone who is "Strong as Stone" when it comes to giving back and serving the St. Marys community?

The Town of St. Marys is encouraging residents to recognize those who give back through its Strong as Stone program. The program allows residents to nominate locals whose selfless deeds contribute to the quality of life in our community. Eligible nominees are publicly recognized at a town council meeting, celebrated in the media and given an official certificate.

"We are incredibly grateful to all who give their time, talents and energy to help others," said Mayor Al Strathdee in a press release. "The Strong as Stone program recognizes those that have gone the extra mile to make St. Marys a more resilient community."

St. Marys residents of any age, or those from outside of the community whose actions benefit St. Marys, are eligible for nomination. Only volunteer and voluntary service can be



nominated. Elected officials and those who do good as part of their job are not eligible for nomination.

Nominations will be accepted until March 1. Nominees who meet the criteria will be announced in April as part of National Volunteer Week.

The application form can be completed online at [www.townofstmarys.com/StrongAsStone](http://www.townofstmarys.com/StrongAsStone). Paper copies are available at the St. Marys Public Library by advance request to corporate communications manager Brett O'Reilly at [boreilly@town.stmarys.on.ca](mailto:boreilly@town.stmarys.on.ca).

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## EDITORIAL

# Welcome to the (social outrage) machine

By Galen Simmons

As a local journalist always on the lookout for story ideas, I spend far too much time on community Facebook pages.

For the most part, these pages are invaluable repositories of important local information and events, and they serve to connect neighbours, friends, family and strangers to the wider community. And for their part, the people who run these pages do their best to uphold those values.

But there is a dark side to these online gathering spaces.

Many folks use these pages as a way to air their grievances with governments that spend too much (or too little), businesses that don't meet their customer-service expectations, neighbours who don't keep up with their lawn maintenance or snow clearing, dog owners who don't pick up after their furry friends, kids who maybe have a little too much fun on a Friday night – the list goes on.

Almost like clockwork, every time someone shares a strong opinion on a community Facebook page – especially if that opinion is negative – it opens the proverbial Pandora's Box and releases the opinions of literally everyone you know – and so many others you don't – into this world.

I can't count how many times I've seen someone who is perfectly pleasant offline latch onto an online argument like a dog with a bone – or my girlfriend's dog with one of my socks – and refuse to let go until someone threatens to quit Facebook for good. Problematic things are said, feelings are hurt and, in most instances, commenting is inevitably turned off.

And there always seems to be a pattern in how our local, neighbourhood keyboard warriors respond to a post. Some commenters agree with the poster's opinion and share their own experience with the subject matter. Others disagree with the poster and question (or attack) their perspective,

bias, political affiliations or intelligence (often all of the above). Then you have those commenters who respond to every single comment they don't agree with, somehow engaging in several separate arguments about the same thing at the same time.

Comedian Bo Burnham described this pattern best in his 2021 song, *That Funny Feeling*, when he said, "The backlash to the backlash to the thing that's just begun."

Then you have people like me who comment on the absurdity of the comment section playing out the same way again and again, post after post. I suppose those comments are just a much a part of the cycle they're criticizing, as is this editorial.

So, what's my point?

I'm not entirely sure I have one. If I did, it would be something along the lines of reminding our readers that no matter how upset you might be or how much you might disagree with a post or a comment, there are real people with real feelings, friends and family behind each of those opinions.

And these aren't just any people. These people live and work in our community. They live down the street or around the corner from us, shop at the same stores we do, and they all want the same basic things everyone wants – to love and be loved, to be respected, to find happiness and live a healthy life, and to contribute in a meaningful way to this community and this world.

I think if we treated each other online the same way most of us treat people in the real world, these social-media debates might actually result in something constructive. Instead of tearing each other down, let's build each other up and create an online community in which opinions and the people behind them are respected, and all ideas are considered.

I truly believe everyone has something valuable to contribute. We simply need to put our own opinions aside for a moment to hear what others have to say.

## Bravo

We have 1 Bravo this week.

1) Bravo to the individual who had the presence of mind to get the licence plate of the vehicle who almost hit me as I crossed Queen street and then came back to find me with the information.



## Boo

We have 1 Boo this week.

1) Boo to people going around at night onto private property and breaking into vehicles.



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

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

## Quote of the Week

*"He was such an incredible talent, and he loved his family like he loved his country. And we should not forget what a fun guy he was."*

- **Singer-songwriter Kid Rock commented on the loss of his friend, superstar country singer Toby Keith who passed away on Monday from stomach cancer.**

## Overheard at the Coffee Shop

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Thank you to Wiarthon Willie for predicting an early Spring.

The East Coast is looking to give some snow away. Any takers?

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](mailto: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!

## St. Marys Independent

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## The St. Marys Independent

THOUGHTS  
OF THE WEEK

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The most important thing in life is to learn how to give out love, and to let it come in.

When you love what you have, you have everything you need.

Don't ignore the love you do have in your life by focusing on the love you don't.

I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too heavy a burden to bear.



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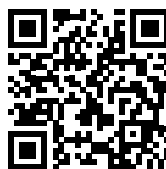
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# STONETOWN CRIER

The latest municipal news from the Town of St. Marys



## ADVENTURES IN WINTER BIRDING

February 17, 11 AM | Pyramid Centre

Join storm chaser, bird photographer and keynote speaker David T. Chapman at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, 2/3 Hall for The Adventures of Winter Birding!

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## SHOWER PROGRAM

Thursdays, 9 AM - 1 PM | Pyramid Centre

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- PA Day Camps
- Summer Camp (starting July 2)
- Specialty Summer Camps at the Quarry

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## EARLYON VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY

9:30 - 11:30 AM at Play & Learn and 12:30 - 2:30 PM at Baby Time

Celebrate the season of love and friendship on February 13 at the EarlyON Valentine's Day parties! Wear red, pink, white or purple!

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### Contact us

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## Senior of the Week



Our senior of the week is Connie Douglas who will be turning 75 on Feb. 11.

Connie was born in Listowel, Ontario and has lived in St. Marys for approximately 25 years. She has been married to Harold for 53 years. They have three children and five grandchildren who she adores. In her spare time Connie volunteers at the Friendship Center. She loves reading, doing puzzles and getting together with friends.

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

## COMMUNITY

# Downie Optimists raise money for local youth programs at annual supper



A large crowd packed the Downie Optimist Hall recently not only to enjoy good local food served up by members of the Optimist Club of Downie, but also to support many youth activities organized by the club. Contributed photo

By Gary West

Hundreds of hungry eaters were at the Downie Optimist Hall last week supporting the local Optimist Club as they hosted their yearly supper, which included pork ribs and pig tails, as well as the famous sauerkraut and scalloped potatoes from Kennedy's Restaurant and Catering in St. Agatha.

The Perth South Optimist hall in St. Pauls Station sees the local club support and run a number of programs geared toward youth in the community.

The club's membership continues to sponsor local baseball, soccer and hockey teams, along with a spelling bee, a bowling night for kids and, among

others, the Downie Optimist bike rodeo.

They also support local hospitals, local schools, the "Farm to You" educational display at the Stratford Fall Fair, and many other organizations and initiatives.

With its large membership, the club also offers water safety courses, public swimming and skating in St. Marys, and they also sponsor graduation awards at local schools.

Organizers thanked residents in the outlying areas for continuing to support their youth programs by purchasing their yearly Opti Cash Calendars, which help fund the club's many community activities.

## Weekend Quiz

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1. What number does M represent in Roman Numerals?
2. In the animated kid's show Franklin, who is Franklin's best friend?
3. Who was the longest serving host of the "Late Night Show"?
4. The Bay of Pigs invasion planned to overthrow who?
5. What is the Super Bowl trophy called?
6. Wikipedia launched in what year?
7. What do you call the metal piece that separates the pencil and the eraser?
8. What are the three secondary colours?
9. What social media platform has the most users?
10. Which vertebrate animal has the longest lifespan?

This week's answers are found on pg. 31

The St. Marys Public Library Presents

**DAVID T. CHAPMAN:**

*The Adventures in Winter Birding*

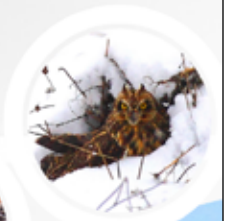
Join storm chaser, bird photographer and keynote speaker David T. Chapman on Saturday, February 17th at 11:00am at the Pyramid Recreation Centre, 2/3 Hall for The Adventures of Winter Birding!

This exciting program will provide insight for viewing beautiful birds in the cold season whether you enjoy bird songbirds that visit your feeders, but also some of the rarities that can sometimes stay around after the breeding season. This eye popping presentation on backyard songbirds, waterfowl and birds of prey will set you off on a lifelong journey of looking for all your favourite species.

This presentation is FREE. Register to save your spot, limited space available for walk-in attendance.

Sign up here:

<http://www.tinyurl.com/Adventures-in-Winter-Birding>



**COMMUNITY**

# Legion donates to Coldest Night of the Year fundraiser



Pictured L to R: Coldest Night of the Year Volunteers Marco and Louise D'Angelo, Colin Coburn, Carole Johnston, Joanne Carr, Doug Johnston. Contributed photo

By Wendy Lamond

On Saturday night at the Legion's weekly meat draw, President Bim Graham presented a cheque for \$797.61 to the Coldest Night of the Year volunteers' committee. There was also another \$400 raised from a donated turkey dinner that took place at the Legion as well.

The Coldest Night of the Year event is taking place on Saturday, Feb. 24 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. This is the 4th year that St. Marys has participated in

this important fundraiser.

The money raised will go back to the community and support programs such as the Community Outreach worker who supports residents that are in need of housing. It will also go towards supporting the Nourish Community Access market which offers fresh, nutritious produce and meats to those facing food insecurities.

If you wish to donate or participate, more information can be found at <https://cnoy.org/home>

## Ask the Arborist

By Joel Hackett | 519 272 5742 | [jtsquote@gmail.com](mailto:jtsquote@gmail.com)



Dear Arborist,

I have a number of large Norway Spruce trees on my property. A few years ago, the top of one of the Spruce trees disintegrated about 30 ft from the top and fell over. It looked perfectly healthy with no obvious marks or damage. Now, I am concerned about my other Spruce trees, especially by the house.

Maybe I should get the top 30 or 40 ft taken off? What do you think?

Micheal

Dear Michael,

The two main kinds of decay in trees are wet rot and dry rot. Wet rot is normally fairly obvious, but not always. A Norway Spruce will sometimes develop dry rot around 30 ft from the top of a full grown tree. Dry rot is decay caused by a fungal

infection, and is often very difficult to detect.

As for topping a tree, we don't normally recommend that. The reason is it will send up sucker shoots as new growth. The new growth is much weaker than the original trunk of the tree. If you do decide to top a tree it has to be done on a regular schedule of around 5 years at the most. Other available options for trees around buildings would be to pull back from the building to reduce weight, or to remove the tree entirely.

Sincerely

The Arborist

Joel Hackett is a certified Arborist residing in the St. Marys area. Currently, he spends most of the year running Joel's Tree Service. For contact call 519 272 5742 or email [jtsquote@gmail.com](mailto:jtsquote@gmail.com)

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# COMMUNITY

## St. Marys truck driver remembers ice storm of 1998

By Amy Vingerhoeds

Every now and then comes a winter storm and hydro outage that brings back vivid memories of the most challenging and unforgettable long haul of a local man's career.

Twenty-six years ago in January, 1998, Paul Weir of the Thorndale area drove a transport truck to St. Mathias, Que., a small village an hour east of Montreal in a region absolutely crippled by a massive ice storm.

There is nothing unusual about freezing rain and it seldom lasts for long. Freezing rain started on Jan. 5 in the Ottawa-Montreal region and did not stop for five days with the south shore of Quebec bearing the brunt of the damage.

In some areas, up to four inches of ice coated buildings, trees and hydro lines. While millions of people struggled with no power for weeks in freezing weather, ironically across the rest of North America, people were lining up in movie theatres to watch Titanic.

A few days after the ice storm began wreaking havoc, St. Mary's business BSC Animal Nutrition received a desperate call for help from a colleague in Quebec. They did not know how long the blackout would force them to be shut down. They needed a large generator to run their plant in order to keep making mineral and feed for



St. Marys truck driver Paul Weir and wife Elizabeth Weir were instrumental in transporting a vital generator to a livestock-feed mill in Mathias, Que. during the worst of the 1998 ice storm that notoriously crippled the power infrastructure serving residents of eastern Ontario and Quebec for weeks. Contributed photo

livestock producers and they could not find anything anywhere.

Livestock farmers in rural areas were especially hard hit and the blackout was so widespread there were no generators available in Quebec that were large enough as hospitals

and essential services took priority. After countless phone calls, a trailer mounted generator was located that could be rented and picked up in Toronto.

Weir was a truck driver at BSC, a farmer and also a volunteer fire fight-

er for the Middlesex Centre Fire Department. He remembers receiving a phone call around 6 p.m. after a full day's work asking if he could haul the generator to Quebec as soon as possible. The national news was reporting nothing but devastation in the "triangle of darkness" and the region was in a state of emergency – it was a big ask.

As Paul Weir prepared to leave, his wife Elizabeth Weir had such a sinking feeling in her gut that she left their two young children – then five and three years old – in the care of her family, and accompanied her husband to help him navigate and stay awake.

The Weirs prepared the truck and they packed bags and some emergency supplies. They left St. Marys at 10 p.m. in heavy rain headed for Toronto to pick up the generator at midnight. It was insured for \$500,000 – possibly the most valuable cargo he had ever hauled.

The Weirs recall driving down the highway with conditions getting progressively worse as they headed east into the ice storm. Towards eastern Ontario, freezing rain coated the entire truck with ice. A couple times, the engine started to overheat and the ice had to be chipped off the grill.

It was cold and wet and slippery and miserable. There was no fuel or

*Continued on page 9*

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## COMMUNITY

# St. Marys truck driver remembers ice storm of 1998

Continued from page 8

food or restrooms available along the highway as there was no hydro. Truck drivers bringing supplies into Quebec were greeted with free hot coffee and treated like heroes. Paul Weir drove at a snail's pace through treacherous conditions, bone tired and afraid to stop with the very real possibility of slipping on the ice or getting stuck.

There were no working street lights on the main highways and the heavy cloud cover made the night feel even darker. Whole towns and cities were pitch black and there were hardly any other vehicles on the road. It was eerie and surreal. Off in the distance, Paul Weir remembers seeing blue flashes lighting up the sky "like bombs exploding." High voltage live wires were literally breaking off and exploding as hydro towers crumpled under the weight of thick layers of ice.

"I don't know what would have happened if those towers had been closer

to us," said Paul Weir as he and his wife recounted how apprehensive they felt.

They were still driving the next day, seeing firsthand the ice storm's iconic images of snapped-off hydro poles, jagged and broken trees, loose wires and other wreckage. Elizabeth Weir helped her husband navigate through the unfamiliar roads of Montreal, around detours and stranded cars without the aid of GPS or Google.

After driving 18 hours, they finally arrived at their destination around 4 p.m. – a drive that normally would have taken 10 hours. The mill in St. Mathias, Que. was eagerly waiting to unload the precious generator, hook it up and get back to work. One of the staff took the Weirs to their family home where they had set up temporary beds next to a wood stove in the basement.

Warm and dry, it felt like heaven. The exhausted couple collapsed into much needed rest and the village was still dark.

The next day, the Weirs visited the mill and found the generator humming, lights on and happiness in the air. Many of the village residents were dropping in to get pails of fresh water, take a shower, or pick up other emergency supplies that were being shared. The mill employees were working nonstop to make livestock mineral and feed for their farmer clients, but everyone wanted to personally express their gratitude with enthusiasm.

"We couldn't speak French, but we were treated like Royalty," Paul Weir recalled.

Remembering it like it happened only recently, Paul Weir said that the long haul to Quebec turned out to be longer and more dangerous than anyone realized at the time.

This story is one of thousands of powerful and amazing stories about

humans helping other humans because it was the right thing to do. Many might say that they were just doing their job, but listening to Paul and Elizabeth Weir tell this tale, one can't help but notice their sense of honour, quiet pride and humble disbelief around how they provided critical help in an emergency.

For many people in the outlying rural areas of both eastern Ontario and Quebec, power was not restored for three weeks or more and, even then, electricity could be precarious. That generator ran a feed company, kept a lot of livestock fed in both Ontario and Quebec and gave much-needed hope to residents of a one-industry village.

It helped them function for almost six weeks – no humble deed to say the least.



## NOTICE OF ANNUAL AND SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING OF TRADITION MUTUAL INSURANCE COMPANY

TAKE NOTICE that the Annual and a Special General Meeting of the Members of Tradition Mutual Insurance Company will be held at Downie Optimist Community Centre (3185 Road 122, St Pauls, ON, NOK 1V0), on March 27, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. to:

1. Approve the Minutes of the 2023 Annual General Meeting
2. To receive the Annual Statements and Auditors' Report for the year ending December 31, 2023;
3. To appoint Auditors for the 2024 fiscal year and authorize the Directors to fix their remuneration.
4. To elect three directors for a three-year term. The terms of the following directors are expiring: Leslie Showers, Gerald Weersink and Bob Debrabandere. All are eligible to be reelected, and are seeking re-election.

Be advised that any policyholder wishing to run for director, must state their intentions in writing to the Corporate Secretary at least 30 days prior to the annual meeting. Election forms may be obtained by contacting Don Evans, Corporate Secretary, at devans@traditionmutual.com. Candidates choosing to stand for election will be invited to complete an interview process.

5. To consider and if thought fit, to adopt, with such amendments as may be made at the Meeting, By-law 1 – 2024 passed by the Board of Directors January 10, 2024 which replaces By-law 2003-1 as the Company's General By-law relating to the transaction of its business and affairs of the Company. A complete text of the By-law # 1 - 2024 showing the substantive amendments to By-law 1-2003 is available for review by all members at the head office during regular business hours, or will be provided upon request. The substantive amendments are:

- Addition of requirement that directors have clear criminal record check
- Addition of director nomination procedure
- Addition of sections permitting virtual or hybrid meetings of members and directors, and amendments to the number of directors, reflecting changes to the Corporations Act.

NOTE: The Annual Statements for the Company for the year ending December 31, 2023 may be viewed on the Company's Web Site at [www.traditionmutual.com](http://www.traditionmutual.com) on or after February 12, 2024. A Member may obtain a copy of the Annual Statements by sending a written notice to the Company's head office at least 14 days before the Meeting.

Leslie Showers  
Chair of the Board

Don Evans  
Corporate Secretary



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## COMMUNITY

# Martin, Key, Stephenson, Heisler, Godfrey, Birnie to be inducted into Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum

Continued from page 1

ours. Following the 2014 campaign, Martin landed a five-year contract with the Blue Jays. In his first season with Toronto, he belted a career-best 23 homers to earn his fourth All-Star selection and help the club to their first postseason appearance in 22 years.

Martin played 14 big league seasons and ranks in the top 10 among Canadians in most major league statistical categories, including first in dWAR (16.5), third in WAR (38.8), and sixth in hits (1,416). He also holds Canadian major league postseason records in games (58) and hits (38).

"My first thought when I heard the news was man, I must be getting old," Martin said. "My next thought was what an honour to be inducted into the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame alongside other greats. I've never played the game for awards and accolades, but this is pretty darn special."

## Jimmy Key

Key was selected in the third round of the 1982 MLB draft by the Toronto Blue Jays. The crafty left-hander from Alabama rose through the team's ranks to make his big-league debut on April 6, 1984. In 1985, the Blue Jays' first division-winning season, the steady southpaw joined the club's starting rotation and posted a 14-6 record and a 3.00 ERA in 212-2/3 innings in 35 appearances to earn his first All-Star selection.

His finest season with the Blue Jays was in 1987, when he went 17-8 and topped American League pitchers with a 2.76 ERA while tossing a team-leading 261 innings. Four years later, he almost equaled his 1987 campaign, when he registered 16 wins and a 3.05 ERA and was named to his second All-Star team. In 1992, he notched 13 regular season victories and added two more in the World Series against the Atlanta Braves to help the Blue Jays capture their first championship.

Key ranks near the top in many of the Blue Jays' all-time pitching categories (minimum 1,000 innings pitched), including tied for first in ERA (3.42) and WHIP (1.20) and fourth in wins (116) and innings pitched (1,695-2/3).

"I would like to thank the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame and their executive committee for this great honour," Key said. "This recognition caps off nine great years that I played in Toronto for the Blue Jay organization. To be a part of the first professional baseball World Championship team in Canada, is the highlight of my career."

## Ashley Stephenson

Stephenson was a member of the first Women's National Team in 2004. She excelled with the team for 15 seasons and helped lead them to seven medals, including silvers at the WBSC Women's World Cups in 2008 and 2016 and at the Pan Am Games in 2015. She was also a force on four bronze medal-winning teams at the World Cup (2004, 2006, 2012, 2018).

After concluding her playing career, Stephenson became a coach and was part of the Women's National Team staff that led Canada to a bronze medal at the COPABE Women's Pan-American Championships in 2019. Three years later, she became



the first woman to manage the Women's National Team when she was the dugout boss for their five-game series against the United States in Thunder Bay.

Stephenson would make history again that November when she became the first woman to capture Baseball Canada's Lionel Ruhr Elite Coach of the Year Award. In 2023, Stephenson was hired as a position coach by the Blue Jays' High-A Vancouver Canadians. She will return to this role this season.

"This was one of the best surprise calls I've ever received," Stephenson said. "I played baseball because I love the game. Never in my wildest dreams did I think I'd play for my country and have some of the experiences and opportunities I've had. I hope girls and women see this as an example of what you can do through hard work, dedication and perseverance. The Hall of Fame is forever. I'm so incredibly honoured to be a part of it."

## Rod Heisler

Heisler pitched in a record 14 international competitions for the Men's National Team. His first national team assignment came in 1978 at the Amateur World Series. He would pitch for Canada at the same competition in 1980 and 1982. In 1982, he went 3-0 with a 2.35 ERA and was named the left-handed pitcher on the tournament All-Star team.

Two years later, Heisler started Canada's first game at the 1984 Olympics and allowed just two runs in 10-1/3 innings in a loss to Nicaragua. He pitched for Canada again at the 1988 Olympics. Heisler also toed the rubber for Canada at three Pan Am Games (1979, 1983, 1987) and three Intercontinental Cups (1981, 1983, 1985).

"When you first told me that I was being inducted I was so thrilled," he said. "I assumed that it was our [1984] Olympic team nominated and the guys were getting called about the news. Then when you said it was me, that took me by total surprise. Not in my craziest dreams would I have put myself in any

consideration for such an honour."

## Paul Godfrey

Godfrey played a crucial role in bringing Major League Baseball to Toronto. As an ambitious, young North York alderman in 1969, he paid his own way to Major League Baseball's Winter Meetings in Bal Harbor, Fla., to tell commissioner Bowie Kuhn that he wanted to secure a big league team for Toronto. Kuhn told Godfrey that he would have to have a baseball stadium in Toronto before they would even consider it.

Armed with that feedback, Godfrey returned to Toronto with his sights set on creating a stadium. In 1973, Godfrey was elected chairman of Metropolitan Toronto and, on his first day in his new position, he promised he would land a big league team for the city and see that a dome stadium was built.

In the short term, however, he needed a budget-friendly alternative, so he came up with the idea to retrofit Exhibition Stadium into a dual baseball/football stadium. In November 1973, he convinced Ontario premier Bill Davis to chip in half the estimated \$15-million cost to renovate the stadium. The resulting retrofit of Exhibition Stadium helped lay the groundwork for the ownership group of Labatt Breweries, CIBC and Howard Webster to secure a major league team in 1976.

Eight years later, Godfrey was appointed to the Crown Corporation that was in charge of the design, construction and selecting a location for what would become SkyDome. In 2000, Godfrey was hired as president and CEO of the Toronto Blue Jays, a position he would hold through the 2008 season.

"I was very surprised and thrilled with the news of being inducted in the Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame," Godfrey said. "It even brought tears of happiness to my eyes. Being inducted into this wonderful institution is one of the great honours of my life. I love baseball and joining this Hall of Fame is a thrill beyond belief."

## Howard Birnie

Birnie has been involved in baseball in his home city for more than 70 years as a player, coach and umpire. During his tenure as a baseball coach in Toronto from 1958 to 1988, he guided teams to seven city championships and one national championship with the Toronto Leaside All-Stars in 1964.

Birnie may best known as one of the country's most respected umpires. During his 34 years of calling balls and strikes, Birnie worked six national championships between 1979 and 1989, three international championships (1985, 1987, 1990) and two World Junior Championships (1986-87). He was also selected to umpire three Pearson Cup games, an annual exhibition contest between the Toronto Blue Jays and Montreal Expos.

"I was incredibly surprised to begin with then very much humbled and grateful to be recognized for simply doing something I have loved most of my life," he said. "With my past connections to the Hall, I know that the list of inductees is composed of a stellar number of people who have been involved in our game in different ways. My inclusion is beyond my dreams."

COMMUNITY

# St. Marys' Akoofilm Company's "Cry of Silence" film to hit theatres around the globe

By Galen Simmons

As it continues to win awards at international film festivals, a film written, shot and produced in St. Marys by local production company Akoofilm Company will soon be playing on silver screens for wider audiences around the globe.

To date, Cry of Silence – a dramatic thriller that tells the story of Maggie and Frank, a young married couple deeply in love, who settle into their new life together in a community terrorized by a serial killer – has won more than 70 awards at film festivals around the globe. Following that success and partially as a result of it, Akoofilm Company recently penned a worldwide theatrical distribution deal with House of Film in Los Angeles, a leading Hollywood distributor of high-quality, independent feature films and documentaries.

"It's very exciting for us," said Akoofilm Company producer and director Allen Kool, who co-founded the local production company with his wife and screenwriter, Robin E. Crozier. "We're extremely happy with how things are going."

While Kool previously signed a Canadian distribution agreement for the film with Hollywood Suite, a domestic distributor and group of specialty television channels Akoofilm has



Cry of Silence, a dramatic thriller by St. Marys' Akoofilm Company, will soon be played in movie theatres and on home televisions around the world thanks to a new, international distribution agreement with House of Film in Los Angeles. Pictured is a behind-the-scenes look during filming in St. Marys in 2022. Contributed photo

worked with in the past to distribute its first two films in Canada, he said this new, international agreement marks the first time one of his made-in-St. Marys films will go before wider international audiences around the world.

"We looked for bigger distributors that were in Canada, the United States and Europe, and I think we had half a dozen distributors based on our budget and who we are that came back. So, we weeded through those ... and we all decided House of Film was the best for us and for this movie.

"... A lot of the other distributors take on 100 movies or 30 movies or whatever, but this company only does about a half-a-dozen a year. They pick the ones they want, so they spend more time individually on these pictures as opposed to (looking at them) as just another number."

For Kool and his production team however, the hard work has only just begun as Akoofilm Company works with House of Film on theatrical and marketing posters, international trailers and everything else required before Cry of Silence has its European

Avant premiere in Berlin Feb. 14 and its worldwide premiere at the 2024 Cannes Film Festival May 14-25.

While the first part of this deal will see Cry of Silence played in international movie theatres and on broadcast television around the world, Kool said the agreement will also help the local production company get the film into the realm of online streaming.

"As a result of this, the next movie we're working on is a much, much, much bigger budget. This last one was about \$1 million and the next one is about \$5 million," Kool said, adding the success of each of Akoofilm's past films builds on the previous one, leading to bigger and better things for the St. Marys film company. "... Now we're looking at Canadian A- and B-listers and American A- and B-listers for the next movie. ... I can't tell you who they are, but they're household names; big stars that want a paycheck that's half a million or a million.

"... What I was proud of in this particular picture was we had a tremendous amount of support from not only St. Marys, but the Stratford area. We placed 100 local extras and background actors in this film and gave them all a credit. That's not normally done on any movie. ... I was really pleased to have been able to do that. ... I want to give locals their name on the big screen."

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COMMUNITY

# Multicultural Association of Perth Huron to celebrate local host families

By Galen Simmons

The Multicultural Association of Perth Huron is celebrating the invaluable support of the St. Marys-and-area host families that have provided housing and resettlement assistance to the Ukrainian refugees who moved to the area to escape war in their home country.

The association is inviting St. Marys-and-area host families, Ukrainian and other newcomers, and the community at large to the host-family celebration at the St. Marys Pyramid Recreation Centre from 4-7 p.m. Feb. 11. The celebration is meant to give the community and newcomers a chance to show their appreciation for those local families that opened and continue to open up their homes to Ukrainians in their greatest time of need.

"It will be the same celebration we had in Stratford in December," said association Stratford-area manager Yulia Suliatytska, who immigrated to Canada with her daughter from Ukraine to escape the war. "Our organization wants to say thank you for all host families that live in St. Marys who helped the Ukrainians for all this time, from the start of the war until today, and continue helping."

Knowing how valuable the support and guidance of a host family was to her and her daughter when they first arrived, Suliatytska herself recently opened up her home to another local Ukrainian newcomer in hopes of passing along that same support.

"If (your host family) is a good person, 100 per cent you will settle," said Iryna Tarashevsk, who arrived in Canada last month and is now living with Suliatytska. "Home is so important. Not only is it where your bed is, it's your safe place. If you have your safe place, you can conquer the world."



The Multicultural Association of Perth Huron will celebrate local host families with an event at the Pyramid Recreation Centre Feb. 11 from 4-7 p.m. Pictured from left are Ukrainian newcomer Iryna Tarashevsk, association executive director Geza Wordofa and the association's Stratford-area manager, Yulia Suliatytska, who also immigrated to the area to escape war in Ukraine. Photo by Galen Simmons

"... I don't need to worry where can I spend my evening or where can I sleep. I know the host, if they're a good person, they can help me to find everything I need. The first days and the first month are most important."

While housing is crucial to the resettlement process, Tarashevsk says having a person or a family with knowledge of Canada, local customs and where they can go to find what they need is just as important for a newcomer to integrate into the community.

"It's the same when you first start school and you don't know anybody. The teacher took your hand and said, 'Relax, I will show you everything.' It's the same with a host family," Tarashevsk said. "... It's no fun to go to work all day and then go back home

and just go to sleep. It's about living in the community."

While multicultural association executive director Geza Wordofa says the association is currently working with nine host families in St. Marys, the celebration – which includes live music, gifts for newcomer children and authentic Ukrainian food – is open to everyone.

"They're giving us the support newcomers need," Wordofa said. "It is very important for us to show our appreciation for them and their kindness toward newcomers coming to Canada."

While everyone is welcome, the association asks those who plan on attending to RSVP by email to [info@maph.ca](mailto:info@maph.ca) by Feb. 9.

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COMMUNITY

# United Housing reaching next step in organizational development

By Amanda Modaragamage, Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Last year, United Way Perth Huron (UWPH) announced its new United Housing initiative and, earlier this month, they appointed the person who will help lead those efforts.

United Housing's focus is as a nonprofit developer and operator of affordable rental housing. United Housing also aims to take a lead role in helping current property owners by fundraising, renovating and operating units so buildings don't sit unused; partnering with developers to help meet government requirements around affordable housing units; and creating workforce housing so people can afford to live in the community they work in.

Recently, the United Way Perth-Huron announced that former Stratford city councillor and mayoral candidate in the last municipal election Kathy Vassilakos had been appointed as director of United Housing.

"We're really excited to welcome Kathy," said UWPH executive director Ryan Erb. "It represents the next step in organizational development as we move this initiative forward, which is awesome.

"As our community continues to see so many people experiencing the effects of the current housing crisis, it's important we continue building United Housing. I look forward to working with Kathy on new and



Kathy Vassilakos, the new director of United Housing. Contributed photo

existing housing projects and securing the \$543,000 in funding we need to ensure United Housing, alongside many partners, achieves our community goal of a place to live for every person in Perth-Huron."

Vassilakos brings many skills to her new role. During her time on council, she worked within the community, as well as with other municipalities, organizations and levels of government. She brings a wealth of knowledge around housing thanks to her experience with the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's housing task force and the city's Grand Trunk Master Plan.

Vassilakos was instrumental in seeing the Britannia Street Housing Project come to fruition and she's

also served on many boards and committees including as co-chair of UWPH's social research and planning council and chair of Huron Perth public health.

She says United Housing's ultimate goal is to build as much rental housing as possible to fill a gap not only in our region but across the province.

"The goal is to have combination housing - deeply affordable housing, workforce housing and market-price housing," she said.

With potential building renovations already on the horizon, Vassilakos says partnering with local businesses and companies will help them reach or surpass their goal of providing affordable housing for everyone.

"We are hopeful that we can find good community partnerships and collaborations that stretch right across Huron-Perth.

"I'm excited to take on the director's role with United Housing," she added. "Getting new, affordable housing built is critical to the health of our region. Through my time on Stratford city council, I've seen the significant amount of work being done by both the City of Stratford and the County of Huron as the Consolidated Municipal Service Managers responsible for delivering and administering housing programs and services to our region.

For more information, visit [perthhuron.unitedway.ca](http://perthhuron.unitedway.ca).

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## COMMUNITY

# VP of Operations at Cowbell proves skilled trades open doorways to other careers



Chris Van Wieren explaining the beer-making process at Cowbell



For the last three years, Van Wieren has had three different, full-day co-op students at the brewery on the operations side of things. Two still work at the brewery.

By Kathleen Smith

Within Avon Maitland District School Board's (AMDSB) schools, students are offered opportunities to explore all five pathways: Apprenticeship; College; Community; University; and Workplace.

These opportunities with the Pathways Program allow students to learn more about who they are and what their interests and skills are.

St. Marys resident Chris Van Wieren, who is Vice President (VP) of Operations, at Cowbell Co. in Blyth can testify that skilled trades opened doors to a career he didn't think he would have when he left high school.

Van Wieren oversees operations on the production side of the brewery. When he first started with Cowbell, Van Wieren had helped construct the brewery in 2016-2017, as he is a plumber and a pipefitter by trade.

In July 2018, Van Wieren was recruited by the Cowbell leadership team, and just over five years later, his day to day involves working with the team to create new and delicious beverages.

Van Wieren is on the Pathways Advisory Committee (PAC) and sees value in giving students the opportunity to explore options outside of attending university.

Van Wieren explained that he had the grades to attend university but did not have the desire to spend four or more plus years in school, along with what the cost of it would be.

With that in mind, he took a co-op in his grade 12 year at a friend's dad's plumbing company. The day Van Wieren left high school he had already completed 1,200 hours (paid) for his apprenticeship.

Following that, Van Wieren began running commercial plumbing jobs

across southern Ontario including the Cowbell build in Blyth where he got to know Cowbell's leadership during onsite meetings and review sessions.

"The Cowbell build was ambitious from both a design and duration of build perspective, which required close alignment between everyone," said Van Wieren.

"As I worked alongside Cowbell's team during construction, I was able to build relationships that stuck even after the job was completed."

Cowbell successfully recruited Van Wieren into a maintenance role approximately one year after opening.

From there Van Wieren has worked his way up to Vice President (VP) of Operations based on a corporate structure that rewards strong work ethic, real life experience, ownership of results and a positive outlook.

Van Wieren further explained that being in the construction trade has more to it than just hands on work. He would interact daily on a professional level with architects, engineers, salespeople, owners, government inspectors, and other trades.

"This foundation allowed me to successfully continue those interactions in a completely different industry," added Van Wieren.

"It's very important for students (and parents) to understand that the skilled trades can open many different career paths."

Van Wieren is on the Pathways Advisory Committee (PAC), which is made up of community members in various areas – municipal, industry, education.

The PAC meets a few times a year where the Pathways Facilitators look for feedback and ideas that can help guide decisions for their program.

The focus right now is on the skilled trades and apprenticeship pathway, and how educators can better support students, parents, and communities in this area.

"We want to introduce the skilled trades and technology trades to students at a younger age and educate them and their families on this viable career path," explained Jodi Froud, OYAP Recruiter/Pathways Coordinator with Avon Maitland District School Board (AMDSB).

Within the options in the Pathways Program, through virtual, and hands-on experiences, students reflect on who they want to become and what goals need to be set to transition into one of the five pathways. This can include co-op placements and dual credit work.

Dual credit programs are ministry-approved programs that allow students, while they are still in secondary school, to take college or apprenticeship courses. Their courses count towards both Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

Within pathways, students are encouraged to explore multiple pathways to gain experiences and knowledge that will lead them to a better understanding of what each pathway can provide.

For the last three years, Van Wieren has had three different, full-day Coop students at the brewery on the operations side of things. Two still work at the brewery. One has found a home on the hospitality side of Cowbell, while the other still works in the operations department.

"Pathways is dedicated to ensuring every student has a path after high school," said Van Wieren.

"They are working to dispel some

myths about the skilled trades."

Pathways programming in schools includes specific programs such as Co-operative Education, Specialist High Skills Major, Dual Credit, Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, and other forms of experiential learning. This also includes what takes place at the new Pathways Innovation Centre in Stratford.

"The opportunities in high school vary and students' journeys can look different," added Froud.

"However, many students will participate in tech classes, do a job shadow, participate in a cooperative education program, gain skills, certifications, and experiences through the high skills program, potentially take a dual credit, and some of them register as apprentices."

Froud further explained that the program has many students participating in the skilled trades including those in the service sector, such as cooks, bakers, and hairstylists. This list also includes those in construction, motive power, and industrial sectors.

Van Wieren added that one of the topics of the past PAC meeting was how to get more students exposed to and excited about the skilled trades.

PAC discusses ways to engage students and have them understand that skilled trades offer many benefits including job security, good wages, advancement, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

"We talk a lot about the trades being more than just a job," Froud added.

"It is the entry point into so many other career paths."

For more information on the Pathways Program, visit <https://www.amdsb.ca/apps/pages/pathways>



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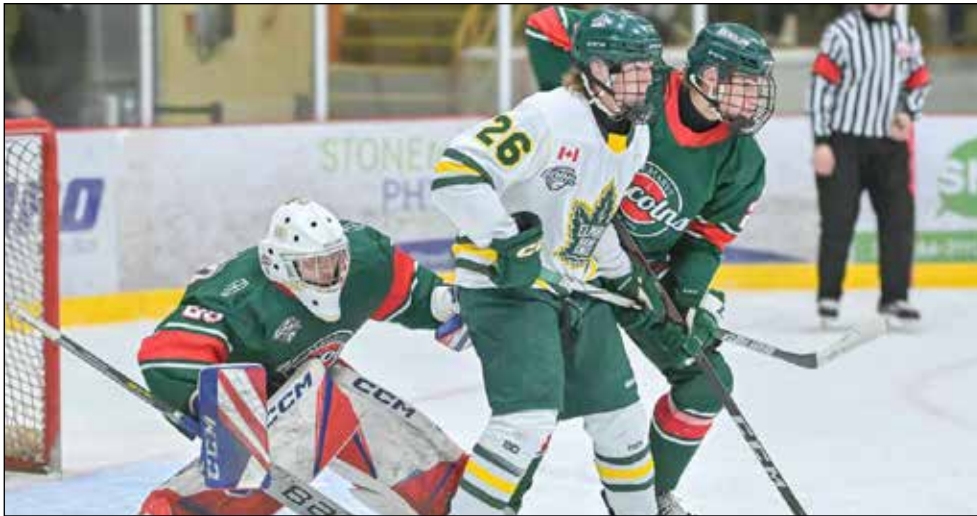
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## SPORTS

# Lincs split final pair of inter-conference games



Brandon Abbott looks around a net-front battle during last Friday's St. Marys Lincolns' game against the Elmira Sugar Kings. Abbott was excellent in the contest, making 27 stops against Elmira. Photo by McGinny Photography

By Spencer Seymour

As the race for the top spot in the Western Conference remained incredibly tight, the St. Marys Lincolns came up with one of two wins last weekend in their final two-game set of inter-conference games against the Elmira Sugar Kings and Pelham Panthers.

Beginning last Friday, the Lincolns found themselves defending a four-game winning streak against the visiting Elmira Sugar Kings, a team in need of points as they find themselves in a tight battle of their own for second in the Midwest and, going into last Friday, had dropped three in a row.

Elmira drew first blood with Nate Gravelle tipping a point shot by Alex Simioni past goaltender Brandon Abbott, giving a 1-0 lead to the Sugar Kings which lasted into the first intermission.

In the second period, the Lincolns got an answer in the form of a short-handed goal by forward Maddox Callens, who managed to get away on a breakaway while St. Marys was down a man. Despite not getting everything he wanted on the shot, the native of Langton, beat netminder Liam Reid to tie the game at one apiece. Since joining the Lincolns at the GOJHL trade deadline last month, Callens has scored in every home game with St. Marys.

The third period saw the deciding factor of the game turn out to be special

teams and, in particular, a lengthy five-on-three powerplay for each team. In Elmira's case, they got a goal from Brendan Gerber, a 2023 sixth-round draft pick of the London Knights. In the late stages of the third, it was the Lincolns' turn to have a prolonged five-on-three but they couldn't solve Reid and the shot-blocking penalty killers of the Sugar Kings, who held on for the 2-1 win over the Lincolns.

Head coach Jeff Bradley told the Independent that, overall, his team turned in a strong effort but their inability to score on the powerplay proved to be the difference between winning and losing.

"I thought we played pretty well but obviously didn't get the end result we were looking for," Bradley said. "We had difficulty scoring. Our powerplay ran dry while theirs got one in the third. Ultimately, it was a five-on-three that they capitalized on that won it for them and a five-on-three that we didn't capitalize on that lost it for us."

The head coach also noted he was happy with his team's defensive performance in all three zones of the ice.

"I thought our defensive play was really good. Our defencemen did a great job pressuring down the walls to keep pucks in their zone as much as we could. We took away Elmira's opportunities up the ice. We knew they were a team that likes to dump and chase a lot so we focused on breaking out this week and I thought we handled what



Ryan Cornfield levies a big hit during last Friday's St. Marys Lincolns' game against the Elmira Sugar Kings. Photo by McGinny Photography

they brought well.

"We were doing the things we should be doing," Bradley continued. "We defended well, we clogged the neutral zone pretty well and our forecheck was going pretty hard. Overall, I thought we did a good job answering pretty much everything that Elmira did but missing out on that five-on-three is what sunk us at the end."

Arguably the best Lincoln on the ice was goaltender Brandon Abbott whose 27-save performance likely deserved a better result. Nevertheless, Bradley praised the 20-year-old netminder for his calming, clutch display.

"It was nice to see Brandon really be on top of his game. It was unfortunate that we couldn't get the win for him, but I thought it was his best game since he's been here. He made timely saves in moments when we were under pressure, he made some really big saves both before we got the short-handed goal to tie it and after to keep us in it."

Turning his attention to the Lincs' struggles with the man advantage, Bradley explained that the big task for his group was to simplify their plan of attack on the powerplay.

"We just have to start getting pucks on net. We're doing a bit too much on the perimeter. We have to start getting a little bit hungrier around the net, get pucks to the net and then get bodies to the net. I think we need to get back to basics a little bit on the powerplay to

re-discover our mojo."

**Lincs storm back in response, beat Pelham 5-3**

In the final regular season game against an opponent outside the Western Conference, the Lincs were off to Pelham 48 hours later looking to get back in the win column against the Panthers. Despite some continued struggles for their special teams, a largely dominant effort by St. Marys saw them leave Pelham with a 5-3 victory.

Bradley credited his group for performing well for most of the game, despite it being out of the normal rhythm for the team.

"It's tough sometimes with games like this that are a bit out of the normal routine. Hockey players are creatures of habit so getting on the bus at 10 on a Sunday morning and up at 8 or 8:30 a.m. when you're not used to that every week is different for them. We faced a bit of adversity early on and came out on the other side. It certainly would have been nice to make it a bit less of a nail-biter, but we got the points at a time we needed them and hopefully it sets us up for a big week ahead."

In the first period, the Lincolns once again missed out on a pair of powerplays including a warm-up violation call that put the Panthers shorthanded before the opening puck drop. On the Lincs' second powerplay of the

*Continued on page 17*



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**SPORTS**

# Lincs split final pair of inter-conference games

*Continued from page 16*

first, a turnover sent Liam Wicks in alone on a shorthanded breakaway which he buried to record the game's first goal. Later in the first, with the Lincolns shorthanded, the Panthers' puck movement got the Lincolns all out of sorts and ultimately saw

Wicks tap home a backdoor play to put Pelham ahead 2-0 heading into the first intermission. Up until the final five minutes of the opening frame, the Lincolns largely kept the play down in Pelham's zone but couldn't get one by netminder Aidan Thomson.

That changed in the second period, however, when, led by the line of Chase MacQueen-Spence, Noah VandenBrink and Cohen Bidgood, the Lincolns stormed back and, under halfway through the second, not only erased the two-goal deficit but took a 3-2 lead of their own. MacQueen-Spence scored first, tallying his 18th of the year just two minutes and 20 seconds into the period.

Almost exactly three minutes later, Callens found the equalizer, tipping a point shot by Luke Bogart for his seventh of the season. The goal also gave

Callens goals in five straight and all but one of his first seven games with the Lincolns.

Bogart's assist ended the Grand Bend native's eight-game point drought and, even with a lack of offensive production as of late, the young blueliner has continued to be a bright spot in the eyes of coach Bradley.

"Luke has turned out to be an unbelievable first-year defenceman for us. It's really impressive for a guy who is still considered a rookie in this league because nothing seems to be too big or too much for him to handle. We believed he would turn out to be a great player for us and he has absolutely done that."

Exactly four minutes after Callens tied the game, VandenBrink snapped a five-game stretch without a goal by potting a powerplay marker assisted by MacQueen-Spence and Bidgood. Bradley credited that trio as leading the Lincolns' strong resurgence after falling behind at the end of the first.

"Seeing the response we had coming out of the first intermission was really good. I thought Chase, as well as his linemates Noah and Cohen, really led the charge for us in the second. That

line offers up pretty much everything you could want. Chase is turning out to be quite the centreman and playing in the middle lets him roam around a bit more to utilize his skills. Cohen sets a terrific example for the rest of the team with his work ethic and what he's able to do with the puck. Noah is a leader, purely and simply, and whether we need him to score goals, get assists and simply lead; he can do it all."

Just over halfway through the third period, Jaden Lee created a bit of breathing room for the Lincs on his 14th of the year assisted by Luca Spagnolo. With the goal, Lee has scored in four straight and in six of his last seven

games while Spagnolo now has points in five straight. With 3:59 left in regulation, Max Schaubel netted another powerplay goal for Pelham to make it a one-goal game once again, but that's as close as the Panthers would get with Owen Voortman ending a 12-game goal drought on an empty-netter in the final minute.

As Bradley alluded, the Lincolns began a significant week on Wednesday this week against two opponents both in the fight for first in the Western Conference when they went to La-Salle to play the Vipers. The Lincs are back at home on Friday to take on the London Nationals.

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# SPORTS

## St. Marys bowlers have strong showing at youth tourney



The Zone B Spring Master Youth Bowling Tournament took place on Feb. 4 at Fairmont Lanes in London. Pictured on the left is the team of St. Marys bowler Natalie McKeen and Fairmont bowlers Brian Lawrence and Lucas Kawac who placed first with 242 points over average. McKeen will bowl in the Provincials on March 24 at Victoria Lanes in Kitchener. Pictured on the right is the St. Marys team of Nate Sims, Derek King, and Landon Ball, who put up 143 points over average and finished fourth in the tournament, missing third by only three points. St. Marys' Nathan McKeen took the medal for the highest junior pins over average with 51. First-time master bowlers Erin Slaney and Rosie LeBlanc teamed up with Bernie McMillan and took sixth with 110 points over their average. The team of Aisla Fisher, Scott Rinn, and Nathan McKeen placed 18th. Contributed photos

## St. Marys Bowling Lanes host Bill Heard Memorial tourney



Pictured from left to right are Dawn Collins, Proprietor Jesse Brockman, and Helen Brockman. Contributed photo

The Bill Heard Memorial Tournament was held on Feb. 4th at the St. Marys Bowling Lanes. There were 48 bowlers in attendance for the Scotch Tournament of four games in which a bowler and non-bowler bowled every other frame. Non-bowlers picked a new partner for each game.

The winners of the first round were Helen Brockman and Dawn Collins. Game two went to Gerry Brockman and Adam Keller. Jesse Brockman and Felicia Krauskopf clinched game three. The winners of the final game were Scott Rinn and Charles Legault.

The winners of the Bill Heard Memorial Tournament were determined by the highest score over four games in each of the two categories. Tournament winners were Helen Brockman who totalled 849 points and Dawn Collins who scored 878. Second Place was Gerry Brockman who posted 809 and Scott Rinn who tallied 853. Third Place went to Charles Legault with 764 and Jesse Brockman who scored 725.

The tournament raised \$675 to help offset the YBC tournament lineage fees and did so to remember Bill Heard who was always thinking about the children and growing the sport.

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Keaton Ward brings the puck over the opposing blueline during one of the Social Thirty-One U11 A Boys St. Marys Rock games in last weekend's Rock Cup tournament.



Kolton McAllister rips a shot from the point during the A.N.A.F. U15 A Boys St. Marys Rock game last Thursday.



Luke Showers lobs a wrist shot in one of the St. Marys Fire Department U13 A Boys St. Marys Rock games in last weekend's Rock Cup tournament.



Evan Pym makes a play with the puck along the blueline during the St. Marys Legion U16 A Boys St. Marys Rock game last Wednesday.



Ryder Blight celebrates a goal in one of the Frayne Custom Cabinets U14 A Boys St. Marys Rock games in last weekend's Rock Cup tournament.



Connor Hall crouches down to make a defensive zone play during the St. Marys Cement Plant U18 A Boys St. Marys Rock game last Thursday. Photos by Spencer Seymour

# SPORTS

## U11 C Girls grit their way to 1-0 playoff win

By Spencer Seymour

Nothing came easy for the Hitching Post U11 C Girls St. Marys Rock this past Sunday when they travelled to Lambeth for a playoff game, but the team managed to ride their strong work ethic and defensive attention to detail to a 1-0 victory.

Head coach Jamie Matheson told the Independent that the team's excellent work in their own zone guided them to the victory.

"Our defence and our goalie in particular played really well," Matheson raved. "This year, we have been in a lot of one- and two-goal games so we're pretty accustomed to those tight, defensive match-ups and we have the defensive ability to win those kinds of games. Our defenders were aggressive and skating the puck well [against Lambeth] and it made a big impact on the final result."

Amelia Falkiner scored the only goal of the game



and Brynlee Pickel turned in an excellent shutout effort in between the pipes.

Matheson added that arguably the most vital attribute to the team's success against the Lancers was one of the team's key focuses all season – their compete level.

"Work ethic has been our biggest goal all year long. We want to be a team that constantly competes hard and we did a good job of that [on Sunday]. The girls are coming together really well and playing for each other at a time when we are short-staffed only having 10 skaters. The other coaches and I are thrilled with how they have developed this year.

"Their skating ability has really improved and their hockey sense is also really coming along," Matheson continued. "They are making strides in some pretty important areas and most importantly, they are working incredibly hard and bringing a really strong effort, which is the biggest thing we can truly ask out of our girls."

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A happy customer enjoying a nice, warm meal at Tim Hortons. Followed by dessert with a delicious Special Olympics donut.



Norma selling a Special Olympics donut to athlete Sean Darling. Contributed photos

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# HISTORY

## HISTORIC ST. MARYS: A Tenuous St. Marys Connection to Fame – Part One

By Mary Smith

Kent Monkman, a member of the Fisher River Cree First Nation, is a multimedia artist whose international reputation keeps growing. His art presents the interaction of the first inhabitants of Turtle Island with the colonizers whose invasion disrupted the rhythms of Indigenous life and corrupted the spiritual connection to the land.

The guide for this story is Monkman's alter ego, Miss Chief Eagle Testickle, a magnificent gender-fluid creation, who usually wears stiletto heels and frequently little else. Miss Chief is the central figure in Monkman's museum installations and in paintings now found in galleries around the world.

Monkman travelled and studied extensively and was intrigued by the large pictures hanging in North American and European galleries portraying historical events such as major battles or political triumphs. He reworks these pictures from the Indigenous point of view, often with humour.

For example, he recreated one of Canada's most famous pictures, *The Fathers of Confederation* by Robert Harris. In this painting, 23 white men were commemorated at a conference table in Quebec as they met in 1864 to settle the terms of Confederation. In Monkman's version, Miss Chief sits on a Hudson's Bay blanket spread on a wine crate in front of the table. She addresses the delegates, inserting an Indigenous component into their deliberations. Monkman titled his work, *The Daddies*.

The painting was completed in 2016, just a year before the 125th anniversary of Confederation which, for many, was an ambiguous celebration as Canadians were finally becoming aware of the many injustices that had been done to Indigenous people in this country.

Recently, with longtime collaborator Gisèle Gordon, Monkman has published two volumes of *The Memoirs of Miss Chief Eagle Testickle*. In these two books, many of Monkman's remarkable and disturbing paintings are reproduced. Using the pictures and her stories, Miss Chief guides the readers toward a different understanding of the history of North America from the land's creation to current day.

There is an incredible amount of information about Kent Monkman on the internet, including many YouTube videos of his articulate, well-reasoned discussions of his



The Johnson & Wright Planing Mill was located between Station Street and Trout Creek, just east of Church Street, in St. Marys. Charles Clutton Wright's grandson identified him as the man on the extreme left in this photograph taken soon after the mill was opened in 1894. Contributed photo

work. From time to time in biographical information, a surprising fact is mentioned. Kent Monkman was born on Nov. 13, 1965, in St. Marys. While the impact of Monkman's work is the product of his Cree heritage, he acknowledges that his mother's people were English and Irish immigrants with a history of several generations in North America. It is his mother's paternal line, the Wright family, that is connected to St. Marys.

His mother, Rilla, was born in 1928 the youngest of Lawrence and Lena Wright's three children. Along with her two older brothers, Gerald and William (Gerry and Bill), she grew up in St. Marys. The Wright home was on Huron Street North just down the hill from Queen Street, not far from the banks of Trout Creek.

Rilla went to local schools where she was consistently the top student, attended Normal School (Teachers College) and left Ontario as a young woman to teach in Manitoba. There she met and married Everet Monkman, Kent's Cree father. Everet and Rilla were visiting St. Marys in 1965 when Kent, their third child, was born. They soon returned to the rest of their family in Manitoba.

The Wrights were well known in St. Marys. Rilla's father, Lawrence, was a carpenter and worked for his father, Charles Clutton Wright, who owned a planing mill on the southwest corner of Church and Station streets, the site today of the Royal Canadian Legion.

While Kent Monkman's Cree ancestors were good story-tellers – Miss Chief retells these stories – so were

many members of the Wright family. Rilla's Aunt Nelda researched her family's history and recorded it. Excerpts have been published in a book by Monkman's uncle, Bill Wright, called *Fragments That Remain*, which was published in 1994.

The Wrights' story began in Suffolk, England, in 1850 when Richard Wright, a Baptist lay preacher, decided to emigrate and took his family to Canada. They settled first in Saltfleet, a village near Hamilton. There, Richard was ordained and became the pastor for the small Baptist church in that community. He served in several different towns in southwestern Ontario including Dorchester, Aylmer, Stratford and Goderich, working to establish Baptist congregations.

His adult children – seven sons and three daughters – all went their separate ways in North America with their own homes and families. In their final years, Richard Wright and his wife, Bessie Clutton Wright, went to live with one of their sons in Chicago. Richard died there in 1872. Bessie lived another 20 years, dying in Chicago in 1892 at the age of 95. Her brother, Joseph Clutton, was another Canadian Baptist minister.

Rilla's great-grandfather, George Wright, was, according to Bill Wright, "probably the most adventuresome of the Wright ancestors." He was born in 1826 in England where he apprenticed first as a baker and then as a cabinet maker. He brought these skills with him when he came to Canada as a young man with his parents, Richard and Bessie, in 1850. However, his first job was working on the

railway in Essex County.

According to the family history, he and a friend swam across Lake St. Clair with a team of horses and made their way to Iowa where they took up a homestead. Tired of that after about a year, George crossed the prairies on a wagon train that was taking supplies to a fort in the west. Once there, he was left to get back east on his own. He made his way to St. Louis where he signed on as a ship's carpenter and travelled down the Mississippi to New Orleans.

In his next venture, he became co-owner of a schooner that sailed between the British West Indies and Key West, Fla., transporting lumber and fruit. It was wrecked in a storm and George "hung onto a rock all night." He swam to shore in the morning and was given some clothing and half a crown by the British consul. Still determined to make his way in the States, he started up a planing mill in Alabama. But the Civil War was underway, and he was conscripted into the Confederate Army. After ten days, he escaped with the assistance of a British spy and made his way back to Canada. (Unfortunately, there are no specific details about this intriguing part of George's adventures.)

Bill recorded the conclusion to his great-grandfather's story after his return to Ontario. "George married Emma Page; they had six children. The first three were born in London, the next in Delaware, then Betsy in Wroxeter and William in Harrington. Sometimes he worked as a baker and sometimes as a cabinet maker. He died in 1878 due to complications from yellow fever which he had contracted when he was in the south."

Charles Clutton Wright, the eldest child of George and Emma Wright, was born in London in 1862, but grew up in the St. Marys area. He was trained by his father in cabinet making. His father died in 1878. Charles, age 16, left school and went to work in St. Marys. Unlike George, Charles was not very adventurous. He did leave St. Marys on two occasions, first to Chicago to learn the trade of a wood turner. As a young man, he and a couple of friends went to Winnipeg hoping to take advantage of the building boom in Manitoba. However, Charles took ill with typhoid fever. When he recovered, he came back to St. Marys where he stayed. By 1894, he had formed a partnership with John Johnson in the planing mill shown in this week's photograph.

To be continued ...



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# COLUMN

## HOSTING UKRAINE: A cultural reprieve and call to action

By VJ Knutson

"Marina brought us a piece of Ukraine and when she made a farewell speech (saying) that next time we meet (would be) in Kyiv at her concert in a free, independent, native Ukraine, and the war would end, tears flowed naturally." - local Ukrainian newcomer Nataly Shyshivska

Marina Krut is a Ukrainian performer whose current Canadian tour is raising funds for the war effort. A group of Ukrainians from St Marys and Stratford had the opportunity to attend a performance last Saturday night. She is known for the instrument she plays - a 68-string Bandura, traditional to Ukraine.

According to Nataly, she played songs about the war including a lullaby. She also performed traditional folk songs and songs by Mykola Leontvich, who was purportedly killed by the KGB.

While I did not attend the concert, Nataly live-streamed segments of it from the candlelit stage to the deep, earthy sound of the Bandura, to the sweet voice of the performer. At one point, the audience all stood and sang along; at another, they waved their phone lights in unison with the music.

Another attendee, Halyna Patryliak, messaged me that being in the hall surrounded by Ukrainians felt as if she was back in Ukraine.

"Tears flowed and I could not stop them," she wrote. "I looked at the Ukrainians ... with children and understood that the war took away our native homes, destroyed our plans, career and other things."

While the Ukrainians were revelling in the afterglow of the concert, I participated in a three-hour session discussing next steps for our newcomers with expert Viki Scott. Since we first connected in spring of 2022, Viki has been warning me that, as the war progresses, the level of trauma accompany-



Ukrainians from St Marys and Stratford attend a recent concert by Ukrainian musician Marina Krut. Photo by Nataly Shyshivska

ing those fleeing would increase. I see it now.

Calls for help, as predicted, are on the rise. With fewer hosts available to help, many are making their own arrangements and landing in the hands of exploiters or worse. The result is a high level of hopelessness. Imagine fleeing what is now a full-on attack only to land in the lap of abuse here in Canada. The experience can be paralyzing.

The scramble for permanent residency means Ukrainians are being misinformed, taken advan-

tage of and suffering high anxiety. It's unacceptable that our government has not established a clearer path for Ukrainians who fear being sent back to war-torn Ukraine.

It's time, Viki Scott advises, that we begin advocacy work. We need to help the Ukrainians that are here and integrating into our society stay here.

I wouldn't know how to begin.

Until next time.

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

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# COLUMN

## WHAT'S FOR DINNER: Valentines menu at home



**By Lauren Eedy**

A prix fixe meal for two on Valentines Day isn't always the easiest in this economy. The following are some suggestions for a refined meal you can share with your loved ones without breaking the bank while still pulling out all the stops for a memorable evening.

### Cremini Carpaccio

Thin slices of mushrooms with a warm bacon dressing topped with peppery arugula.

Total time: 15 minutes. Serves 4-6

- 1 lb cremini mushrooms
- 3 slices of bacon, chopped
- 3 tbsp cider vinegar
- 3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- Handful of baby arugula and/or fresh flat leaf parsley
- ½ cup shaved parmesan
- Freshly ground pepper

### Method:

Thinly slice mushrooms on a mandolin (or using a very sharp paring knife) and scatter over a rimmed platter. Cook bacon in a skillet over medium heat, stirring until the fat renders and bacon is crisp, about 8 minutes. Add vinegar and oil to skillet and stir. Pour the bacon dressing over mushrooms and toss. Finish with arugula, parsley, parmesan and a few grinds of black pepper.

### Prosciutto, Brie and Apricot Crostini

An easy and romantic appetizer.

Total time: 15 minutes. Serves 8

- 1 baguette, cut diagonally into 1/4" slices
- 8 oz brie
- 4 oz thinly sliced prosciutto (about 6 slices), cut crosswise into 1/3" wide ribbons
- 1/4 cup apricot jam
- 1 tbsp chopped chives

### Method:

Preheat oven broiler. Put the baguette slices onto a baking sheet lined with foil. Cut the brie into 1/4" slices and top each piece of bread. Broil until cheese melts, 1-2 minutes.

Top each piece with some prosciutto, a dollop of apricot jam and sprinkle of chives.

### Classic Sole Meunière

A classic French dish, sole meunière means "in the style of miller's wife." It is an elegant, simple-to-prepare, rich dish. This will also work best with most types of white fish (tilapia, cod, snapper) but try to look for Pacific sole. Thin cuts do not take long to cook, but consider adjusting cooking times if you use a thicker white fish.

Total time: 15 minutes. Serves 2 (recipe can be doubled)

- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 3-4 oz sole fillets (X4), patted dry
- Kosher salt, freshly ground pepper
- 6 tbsp unsalted butter, divided
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 tbsp finely chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- Lemon wedges (for serving)

### Method:

- Place 1/2 cup of flour in a baking dish. Season four sole fillets (or white fish of your selection) with salt and freshly ground pepper. Working

one at a time, dredge fillets in flour, shaking off excess, and transfer to a baking sheet.

- Heat 2 tbsp unsalted butter and 2 tbsp vegetable oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Working in batches if needed, cook fish until golden underneath, about 2 minutes. Using a fish spatula, gently turn fish over and cook until golden on the other side and just opaque throughout, about one minute. Divide fish between two warmed plates, tent with foil. Wipe out skillet.

- Cook remaining 4 tbsp unsalted butter in the same skillet over medium-high heat, swirling pan occasionally, until butter turns golden and begins to smell nutty, about 2 minutes. Stir in 2 tbsp finely chopped parsley and 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice. Be careful here as butter may splatter.

- Spoon sauce over fish and serve with lemon wedges. Another option would be to add capers to your browned butter sauce. Suggestion: Serve with French green beans and toasted almond slivers.

### Easy Pots de Crème

A simplified version, these are like a fancy chocolate pudding. They can be made

up to three days ahead and can be topped with fresh berries, whipped cream or shards of good chocolate.

Prep time: 15 minutes. Additional time: 3 hours and 15 minutes. Serves 8

- 5 egg yolks
- 5 tbsp white sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¾ cup heavy cream
- ½ cup half and half
- 10 oz bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup very strong, very hot coffee

### Method:

Combine egg yolks, sugar and salt in a blender until smooth. Add heavy cream and half and half, blend again. Add chocolate and vanilla extract and blend until chocolate is finely chopped. Carefully pour hot coffee though the opening while blender is running; blend until chocolate is melted and smooth. Pour mixture into small serving dishes. Let cool to room temperature. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least three hours and up to three days.

## Sudoku

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

Solutions on page 31

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# Riddles

Why did the new boy steal a chair from the classroom?

Because the teacher told him to take a seat.

Why is history the sweetest lesson?

Because it is full of dates.

What did the student say after the teacher said, "Order students, order?"

"Can I have fries and a burger?"

What did the ghost teacher say to her class?

"Watch the board and I'll go through it again."

What do you do with dead elements?

Barium

Why did the music teacher go up the ladder during music class?

To reach the high notes

Which building has the most stories?

The Library

I usually wear a yellow coat. I usually have a black tip and wherever I go I make marks. What am I?

A pencil.

What do you get when you cross a teacher with a tiger?

I don't know but you better behave in its class

Why did the student bring scissors to class?

He wanted to cut class

## - Word Search -

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V X I I E K Y G Z H E F I F T Q Q Q Q K  
T C J Y N S A N F R A N C I S C O X R U

### Word List

Second Sunday

February

NFL champs

Las Vegas

Allegiant stadium

Kansas City

San Francisco

Lombardi trophy

Most watched

Halftime show

Usher

American culture



The **Riddle Kid** OF THE WEEK

Why can't you do a math test in the jungle?



There are too many cheetahs

Lily Johnston (11)

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

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## PET OF THE WEEK

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



Our pet of the week is Max. He is an eight year old Sheltie that loves the snow. He also loves walks, plays with soccer balls, takes squeakers out of toys and takes your spot on the couch. He loves his Thynne family!



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# Thorndale News

A section within the  
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## Essential Collection of Thorndale's Social History

By Nancy Abra

For over a century, the Thorndale Women's Institute has been a prominent part of the community of Thorndale in promoting education and wellness initiatives, and supporting programs and services while working towards the personal growth and improvement of all women.

One of their major projects, as required for all Women's Institutes (WI), is the Tweedsmuir Community History Collection. This compilation is a set of newspaper clippings, human-interest stories, special community events documenting the historical growth and development of the local community as well as their branch history.

These collections are valued by authors researching local history for their books, family genealogists and they are an im-

portant social insight into the community of Thorndale, its past and as it grows. The Tweedsmuir Community History Collection is even more important to the community and Thames Centre as there is no archives in the County of Middlesex.

Last week, a few members of the Thorndale W.I. gathered at the Thorndale Library to get caught up on their Tweedsmuir records. Stacks of local newspapers were searched through, and articles were clipped out featuring photos of events and people as well as human-interest stories pertaining to the community of Thorndale. The next major step is to compile them into their assigned books for historical reference and records of this growing community. These books will be stored at the Thorndale Library.



Members of the Thorndale Women's Institute recently met at the Thorndale Library to pour through stacks of local newspapers and clip out articles and photos pertaining to the community to preserve in the historical Tweedsmuir records. Photo by Nancy Abra

## Thorndale Wastewater Treatment Plant sited for expansion

By Nancy Abra

The Municipality of Thames Centre is considering an expansion of the Thorndale Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP), located on Ideal Drive, to accommodate future residential, commercial and industrial development.

The WWTP has a designed capacity of 674 cubic metres per day, which services approximately 1,500 Thorndale resi-

dents. Based on data compiled from 2018 to 2023, the plant has shown good operational performance and good effluent quality.

Currently the WWTP is operating at approximately 50 per cent with average daily raw flow, which is meeting the needs of Thorndale. With the expected growth of new residential, commercial and industrial development, the plant will exceed its capacity in future years. There are also

portions of the community of Thorndale that are not currently connected to the WWTP and are expected to be in the future, which will use up the available capacity of the plant.

As the Municipality of Thames Centre anticipates the upcoming population and commercial growth, it must ensure the wastewater-treatment plant can accommodate this development. As a result, the municipality is undertaking a municipal

class environment assessment for the proposed expansion of wastewater capacity for the community.

On Jan. 25, the municipality held a public information meeting at the Thorndale Lions Community Centre outlining the existing conditions, growth considerations and strategy for expected needs over the next two decades.

## Did you know ...

By Nancy Abra

Did you that Thorndale has a nickname? Many towns and cities have nicknames that stem back to their early roots or landscapes and Thorndale is no exception.

One of the early settlers to this area was

James Shanly, who purchased 600 acres in 1837 on Nissouri Road, north of the Thorndale County Road. This property overlooked the valley of dense growth of hawthorn bushes along the Thames River. Some sources claim that Shanly named this new home Thorndale after

his home in Ireland. Other sources may argue that he chose the name of Thorndale to describe the natural terrain and the native thorn bushes.

When the Logan family was surveying their property in the 1850s for a potential village site and plans for the railroad, the

name Thorndale was chosen in recognition of the Shanly family's importance to this area.


So, when you look at this town's history, it is only fitting why many longtime residents of this area affectionately refer to Thorndale as "Prickly Valley".



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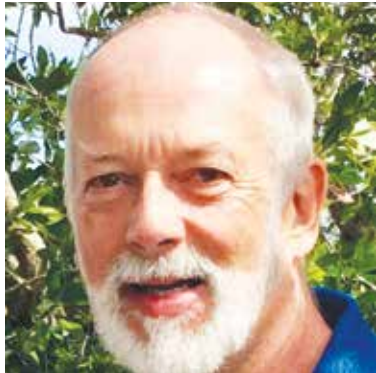
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COLUMN

OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO: Family-friendly must-sees in... believe it or not ... Sudbury



By Paul Knowles

Let's be honest. When we hear the name, Sudbury, family entertainment is probably not the first thing that comes to mind. In fact, this northern Ontario city is probably not on your bucket-list radar at all.

But the truth is Sudbury is home to two of the most intriguing family destinations in the country: Science North and Dynamic Earth. Both offer hands-on, science-based activities for people of all ages with a special focus on kids. Both are state-of-the-art facilities. Both deserve a visit.

The first thing you will notice standing tall alongside Dynamic Earth is Sudbury's iconic symbol, the Big Nickel. This sculpture – the largest coin in the world – was created in 1964 to symbolize the importance of nickel mining

in Sudbury. Today it is one of the most popular selfie-spots in the country. And it only made sense that when Dynamic Earth was launched in 2003, it was built side by side with Sudbury's long-time attraction, the Big Nickel.

The sculpture is one of those unique things that just oozes trivia. The Big Nickel is an exact replica of the 1951 Canadian nickel. It weighs 13,000 kilograms. It's about 64,607,747 times the size of a real Canadian nickel.

By the way, today's actual nickel is only two per-cent steel (94.5 per cent) and copper (3.5 per cent), but enough about the ginormous coin.

When you venture inside Dynamic Earth, you will find everything you could want to know about earth science and mining, most of it presented via hands-on experiences that perfectly combine entertainment and education. Highlights include a guided underground mining tour and an outdoor science park.

The facility closes in the coldest month but re-opens for the season in mid-February.

Dynamic Earth is run by the same people who operate Science North, a well-known

destination that opened in Sudbury in 1984. The official ribbon cutting was actually done by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip on Oct. 4 of that year.

Science North is the second-largest science centre in Canada (Dynamic Earth is eighth-largest). Science North offers a wider window into all things scientific, but still emphasizes hands-on experiences for both kids and adults.

One of the highlights at Science North is the Vale Cavern. When I visited the centre, it was hosting a Travel Media Association of Canada conference and one of our banquets was in this space. Frankly, it blew me away. This is a gigantic meeting space, also used for screening movies, which is blasted out of solid rock. It is one of the most magnificent rooms I have ever been in.

When I was wandering around Science North, I was fascinated by a beaver lodge located on the third floor and occupied by a lone beaver whose name, I learned, is Kash. Interesting, I thought, but unusual, in that this wild animal was kept in isolation from others of its kind. I have since learned that the beaver, who was born in a zoo, is being relocated to a facility which is home to other



Both Dynamic Earth and Science North offer many hands-on scientific experiences for both adults and kids. All photos by Paul Knowles

beavers. A loss for visitors but undoubtedly the right decision for a science facility that is committed to being up to date, both in its exhibits and in its overall philosophy.

The exhibit will now house turtles and fish.

Kash's departure does not mean there is less to do at Science North. The facility is also committed to offering a creative and dynamic series of temporary and permanent exhibits. One of the most popular is the second-floor F. Jean MacLeod Butterfly Gallery, where the visitors are not allowed to touch the exhibits but the living, flying exhibits may well pay a personal visit to the visitors!

The institution is faithful to the second noun in its name. Much at Science North is about Ontario's northern ecosystems. Visitors will encounter (safely, of course) a porcupine, snakes and even flying squirrels. A scurry of southern flying squirrels was introduced at Science North less than a year ago and has already proven to be a very popular draw.

An entire floor of Science North is dedicated to playful,

hands-on experiences including the chance to lie on an actual bed of nails.

There is also the Toddler Treehouse, a play area for infants and toddlers from newborn to age five. I was impressed with this aspect of the facility because many family destinations struggle to meet the needs of the youngest members of the family. That's not a problem in Sudbury.

But not everything at the destination involves indoor activities. Science North is located on the shores of Sudbury's Ramsey Lake and, in the warmer months, visitors can enjoy a one-hour boat cruise on The William Ramsay.

To return to my original premise in this article; it's likely that you haven't included Sudbury in your list of proposed family trips. Check out Science North and Dynamic Earth, and I am guessing you will change your mind.

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).



Dynamic Earth side by side with the Big Nickel



Visitors to Science North can experience the odd sensation of lying on a bed of nails.

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NEW HAMBURG EVENT

February 14, 2024

Wilmot Recreation Centre, Room A

10:00 a.m. presentation

Doors open 30 mins. before presentation



ST. MARYS EVENT

February 15, 2024

Pyramid Recreation Centre, End Zone

1:30 p.m. presentation

Doors open 30 mins. before presentation

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**COLUMN**

# Straight from the Shelves

By Laura McAsh, St. Marys Public Library

The St. Marys Public Library proudly welcomes back fan-favourite storm-chaser, photographer, and keynote speaker, David T. Chapman. Join us in the 2/3 Hall at the Pyramid Recreation Centre on Saturday, February 17th at 11:00am for "The Adventures in Winter Birding". This captivating program will provide insight on how to view birds in the winter, regardless of if you enjoy watching birds while hiking or from the comfort of your own living room. The focus will be on the songbirds that visit your feeders, as well as rarities that may stick around after the breeding season. This exciting program is free to attend, but registration is encouraged as limited space will be available for walk-in attendance. Sign up here: [tinyurl.com/Adventures-in-Winter-Birding](http://tinyurl.com/Adventures-in-Winter-Birding).

**This Week's Recommendation**

Start your new birdwatching hobby with our bird-

watching kits! Each kit includes binoculars and print materials to help you identify the feathered friends that cross your path. Call, come in, or place a hold online to borrow one of our kits today!

**Up This Week**

Friday, Feb. 9th: Crafty Tales (9:30am)

Saturday, Feb. 10th: Dungeons and Dragons (10:30am)

Monday, Feb. 12th: Open 10:30am-8:00pm

Tuesday, Feb. 13th: Open 10:30am-8:00pm

Wednesday, Feb. 14th: EarlyON Play and Read (9:30am-10:30am), Mahjong Intro (1:00pm-2:00pm, 6:00pm-6:30pm), Mahjong! (2:00pm-4:00pm, 6:30pm-8:00pm), Books and Brews\* (7:00pm)

Thursday, Feb. 15th: Scrabble (6:00pm-8:00pm)

\*Held at Broken Rail Brewery (480 Glass St., St. Marys)

# LOOKING BACK



BY AMY CUBBERLEY

## The bloodiest town

25 years ago (1999)

The Great Northern Concrete Toboggan Race is coming to River Valley Tube Slide this Saturday. The competition will bring together approximately 500 civil-engineering students from over 30 universities across North America, some coming from as far away as Alaska, Vancouver and Colorado.

Dianne Cockwill of St. Marys won the grand prize, a bicycle, donated by Sam's Home Hardware at Friday's Jr. B Lincolns game, which was attended by 550 fans. Danielle Leslie and Jarrod Pridham both won autographed Lincolns hockey sticks in the draw.

After 30 years as a medical doctor, Bruce Marshall is making house calls again, but it is not with a doctor's bag anymore. Bruce and his wife Brenda volunteer to deliver books from the St. Marys Public Library to seniors in the community.

50 years ago (1974)

We hear a move is afoot to purchase several swans through donations from local school children to place on local streams. The idea behind the donations is to encourage children to take a greater interest in the birds once they arrive on the local scene.

The new carpet is now in place on the main floor of the Stonetown Friendship Drop-in Centre and most of the painting has been completed. Everything appears to be moving along well toward the official opening on Feb. 26.

The annual "Blood Blitz" sponsored by St. Marys Kinsmen and the hospital auxiliary has been scheduled for March. Kinsmen hope that the blitz will top the over 300 donations received during the 1973 blitz. Kin are using the slogan, "Make St. Marys the bloodiest town in Canada".

75 years ago (1949)

The finishing touches are being put on the Baptist Tabernacle parsonage next to the church on Robinson Street. The plastering is nearly complete and the heating system is about ready for operation. The pastor, Rev. L.G. Hunt, expects to occupy the new residence within a few weeks.

The uncertainties of the present winter have played with plans to provide the local young folk with adequate outdoor skating facilities. A rink cleared off on Trout Creek between the Church Street and Wellington Street bridges was effectively ruined by the thaw.

100 years ago (1924)

The Baptist congregation of St. Marys has joined the Methodist congregation in the Evangelistic Campaign now being held.

An innovation in local hockey circles will be started shortly. It is planned by the Inter-Church Executive to form what is to be known as an "Inter-Church All Star Team" from the best players of all six teams in the league. This team will likely either play a London or Stratford junior hockey team in the near future.

St. Marys citizens will be interested to know that city engineer Near of London, a St. Marys Old Boy, has brought his department through his first year in that city, with an expenditure of \$3,500 less than was estimated.

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## QUIZ ANSWERS

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. 1000                  | 6. 2001                  |
| 2. Bear                  | 7. Ferrule               |
| 3. Conan O'Brien         | 8. Green, Purple, Orange |
| 4. Fidel Castro          | 9. Facebook              |
| 5. Vince Lombardi Trophy | 10. Greenland Shark      |

## SUDOKU ANSWERS

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

## OBITUARY

# Campbell



Douglas David Campbell, age 80, of Avonbank, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, January 31, 2024 at Victoria Hospital. Born in Stratford, son of the late David and Hazel (Donaven) Campbell. Doug is survived by his loving wife Donna (Gilchrist) Campbell

of 58 years. Proud father of his children Rob, Jason, Mike and Jessica. Loving grandfather of Matthew, Riley, Kayla, Brody, Mackenzie, Reid, Sara, Welsey and Jackson.

Doug along with his wife Donna, provided care and a pillar of strength for many children and their families for over 50 years.

Doug and Donna owned and operated Avonbank Upholstery for many years before retiring. In his retirement Doug enjoyed driving school bus.

Doug will be fondly remembered by his siblings Bev Abbott (Jim), Joanne Godden, Stephen (Waverley) and his sisters-in-law Margaret Adams (Jim), Dorothy, Karen and his many nieces and nephews.

Besides his parents, Doug was predeceased by his daughters Kimberley (1988) and Sherry Lynn (2015) and his brother Kenny along with his sisters Geraldine Baumbach and her husband Ken and Florence Landers and her husband David, brothers-in-law Gerald Godden and Bob Gilchrist and his sister-in-law Nancy Gilchrist in infancy.

In keeping with Doug's wishes his body has been cremated and a celebration of his life will take place at later date. Interment will take place in Avonbank Cemetery in the spring. As expressions of sympathy memorial donations may be made to Share Word Global or World Vision through the W. G. Young Funeral Home, 430 Huron St, Stratford, ON. [www.wgyoungfuneralhome.com](http://www.wgyoungfuneralhome.com)

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### CORRECTION:

We would like to issue a correction on the Hope for Haiti story from last week. The Hope for Haiti St. Marys is not affiliated with the US organization that started in Naples. It is a coincidence that the name is the same. The Rayjon Share Care Center out of Sarnia is the charitable group that works with Hope for Haiti in Canada. We apologize for the incorrect information.

## THANK YOU

### Nairn-Buuck (McCarthy)

Since Mary's recent passing the family has been overwhelmed with the support and kindness from so many friends and neighbours.

The food, flowers, cards, and tributes were greatly appreciated.

She will be remembered as a cherished mother, grandmother, sister and aunt. The many stories will ensure that she will always be in our memory.

Special thanks to Father David for the beautiful mass. The Legion Branch 236 Ladies Auxiliary as always, good work on the food and refreshments.

Sincerely,

The Graper, Febrey, McCarthy and Glover families

## THE WEEK AHEAD

**SPONSORED BY:**  **McDonald's St. Marys**  
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PRC & Friendship Centre events - See the Stonetown Crier on Page 5

Delmar Foods 5th Anniversary - See ad on Page 13

St. Marys Library events - See Page 29

### Friday, February 9

- Royal Canadian Legion hot dog/sausage lunch at Noon
- A.N.A.F. meat draw - 6 pm
- St. Marys Lincolns vs London Nationals at the PRC - 7:30 pm

### Saturday, February 10

- A.N.A.F. pasta dinner - 5 to 7 pm
- Royal Canadian Legion meat draw - 5 pm
- Cystic Fibrosis Valentine's Gala at 353 McCarthy Rd, Stratford  
Doors open at 5 pm

### Sunday, February 11

- Multicultural Association celebration for host families/newcomers at the PRC - 4 to 7 pm

### Monday, February 12

- Perth County Official Plan open house in St. Pauls - 4:30 to 8:30 pm
- Community Dinner at the St. Marys United Church - 5 pm, Sponsored by St. James Lodge. Admission is free but donations are greatly appreciated
- Family Feud Canada with the Rae family from St. Marys - On CBC at 7:30 pm

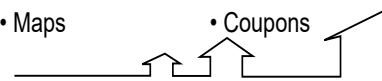
### Thursday, February 15

- Community Housing Consultation at the PRC - 5 to 8 pm

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